

## Polish Volunteerism and Philanthropy Survey

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Below are the results of a survey conducted in October 2001 by the KLON/JAWOR Association, the Volunteer Center Association and SMG/KRC Poland Media Research Institute. One thousand people were chosen at random in an attempt to represent adult Poles.

The survey concerns the willingness of people in Poland to offer bona fide help both directly to individuals and through institutions and organisations. We asked about material help provided (money and goods), and the amount of time spent giving help.

The results are unfortunately not optimistic. As many as 90% of those surveyed could not name an institution or organisation to which they had donated time in 2001. In other words, just 10% of those who responded were volunteers<sup>1</sup>. There is a lack of accurate, solid research in other countries, which makes comparison difficult. We can be sure, however, that this percentage is quite low when compared to other countries (USA 49%, Ireland 33%, Slovakia 19%). It is also low in comparison to surveys in previous years in Poland. The number of people who are willing to be a member of an organisation has decreased significantly as well (currently it is 4.5%). In this context, philanthropy is faring much better - donating money and goods are a much more common way of supporting an organisation.

### Helping Individuals

47.7% surveyed had directly helped individuals in 2001 (regardless of the form or the relationship to those who received the help).

Percentage of people who directly helped individuals in 2001 (regardless of the form or the relationship to those who received the help)	47.7%
Individuals who received help by category:	
▪ immediate family or relatives who do not live with me (e.g. siblings)	11.3
▪ farther removed family or relatives	3.1
▪ friends	8.3
▪ people whom I know or met previously, but are not my family or friends (e.g. neighbours)	6.9
▪ people I did not know previously who approached me for help (e.g. at home, on the street, or through an organised appeal that reached me)	25.4
▪ other	3.6

- 30% of the cases of helping individuals did not last longer than 1 hour a month.
- For 50% of the cases of financial and material donations to individuals in 2001, their combined value did not exceed PLN 100 (about Euro 26).
- The most frequent cause for offering personal help to an individual (in terms of donating money, material donations and time) is simply their poor financial situation (55%). One third of Poles offered help specifically for victims of the floods in Poland in 2001. Approximately the same number declared that in 2001 they personally assisted sick or handicapped individuals, giving money towards medical treatments and rehabilitation. 13% helped elderly people.

<sup>1</sup> In the questions given to those surveyed, we did not use the terms „volunteer” and „volunteering” since they might not have been understood. Our intuition was confirmed: 40% of Poles don't understand the terms (20% never came across them and the other 20% had heard of them but could not explain their meaning). We asked them if they had devoted their time (work) to the type of organisation or institution we mentioned without receiving remuneration. The list of the types of institutions at which one could work as a volunteer include: the Church, faith-based groups, missions, religious movements, etc., political parties, groups and movements, as well as trade unions. The same list applied to the questions on philanthropy, both donations of money and goods.

### **Donations for Organisations and Institutions**

- 37% of respondents gave help by donating goods or their time to organisations and institutions in 2001.
- For 60% of the cases of donations to institutions and organisations in 2001, their value did not exceed PLN 100 (about \$ 25).
- 60% of the donations were made on the street. 24% of the support was made by purchasing goods where the revenue was earmarked for social goals. 11% of donations were made through a transfer of money through the post office, 3.5% were made by Audiotele (telephone fundraising) or by SMS fundraising. Only 3.7% took advantage of the option to deduct their donations from taxes.
- Over 60% of Poles would be willing to donate 1% of their taxes towards organisations if they were to be given the option.

### **Volunteering through an Organisation or Institution**

- There are about 30,000 active nongovernmental organisations (NGOs) in Poland. 87% of them work with volunteers to various degrees.
- 10% of respondents declared that they participated as volunteers in the activities of organisations or institutions in 2001.
- Poles would like most to engage in volunteerism when it deals with a charity organisation for the poorest (20% of responses). 30% would want to donate financial and material help towards these goals.
- 82% of Poles feel that each person has a moral obligation to help those in need. 74% feel that the work of social service NGOs (such as associations, foundations) are more needed now than five years ago. 73% surveyed feel that those who do socially beneficial work can offer something that paid personnel can not.
- What did the volunteerism consist of? One third of the volunteers working through organisations or institutions were directly involved in helping people in need. 18% of volunteers fundraised. 17% organised events, campaigns and festivities. 14% of volunteers donated their spare time for unpaid participation on boards, councils, commissions etc. 20% of Poles who were asked if they had heard of the Volunteer Center responded positively.
- 84% of volunteers feel that one should simply help those who are in need. 68% work as volunteers because it brings them joy and they are interested in it. 67% claim that they just cannot turn down a request for help. 66% believe that if they help others then they can expect the same in return. 48% would like to gain more skills by volunteering. 23% of the people who volunteer say they want to repay good deeds done to them.
- 70% of those who do not participate in volunteerism or who do not donate money to organisations or institutions claim that they do not do so because they have to take care of themselves and their family first. 59% claim that they were never asked for such help. 53% claim they do not have time for social work.
- One quarter of Poles say that they will be able to donate the same amount of time next year as they did in the preceding year. 7% feel they can donate more time. 63% are not able to predict today how things will be in the future.
- Poles would like most to engage in volunteerism when it deals with a charity organisation for the poorest (20% of the cases). 12%, if they were able to in the future, would like to participate in an organisation or institution having to do with health care and rehabilitation of the handicapped.

### **Opinions of Volunteerism and Nongovernmental Organisations**

- Volunteers and those who do not donate their time to social service work have varying opinions on volunteering and in general helping those in need. The starkest difference was found in the responses to the question of whether each person has a moral obligation to help those in need. 62% of volunteers believe that they do, which is 24 percentage points higher than those who did not donate their time towards helping those in need in 2001. Volunteers seemed to be more

convinced that social service work is something that does not have a price but rather has it's own intrinsic worth (such is the feeling of 46% of volunteers and only 32.3% of those who do not volunteer). Such opinions seem to form a pattern whereby those more sensitive to the needs of others are more eager to get involved in such work.

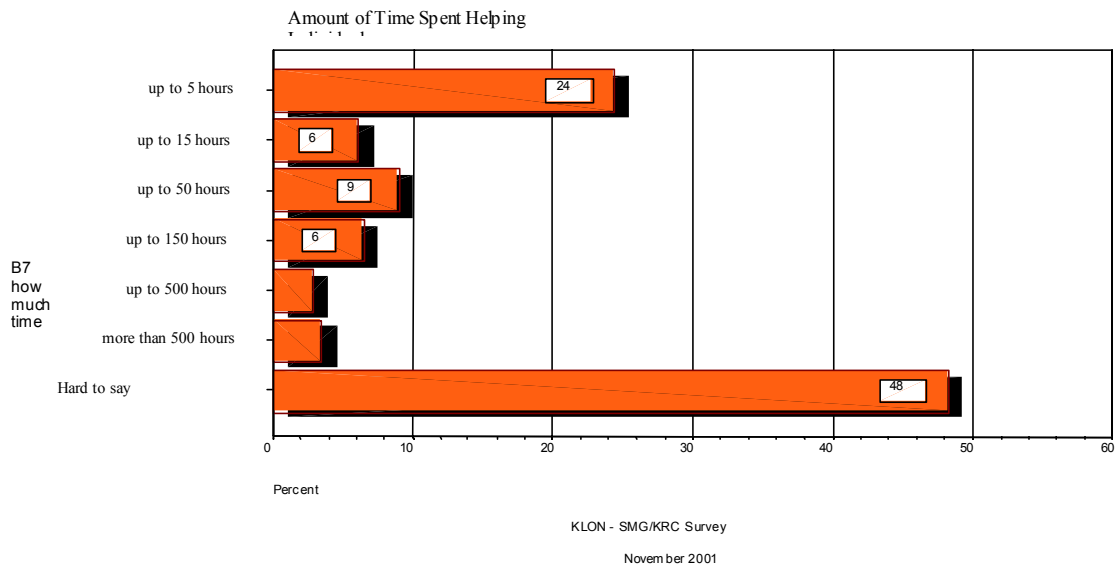
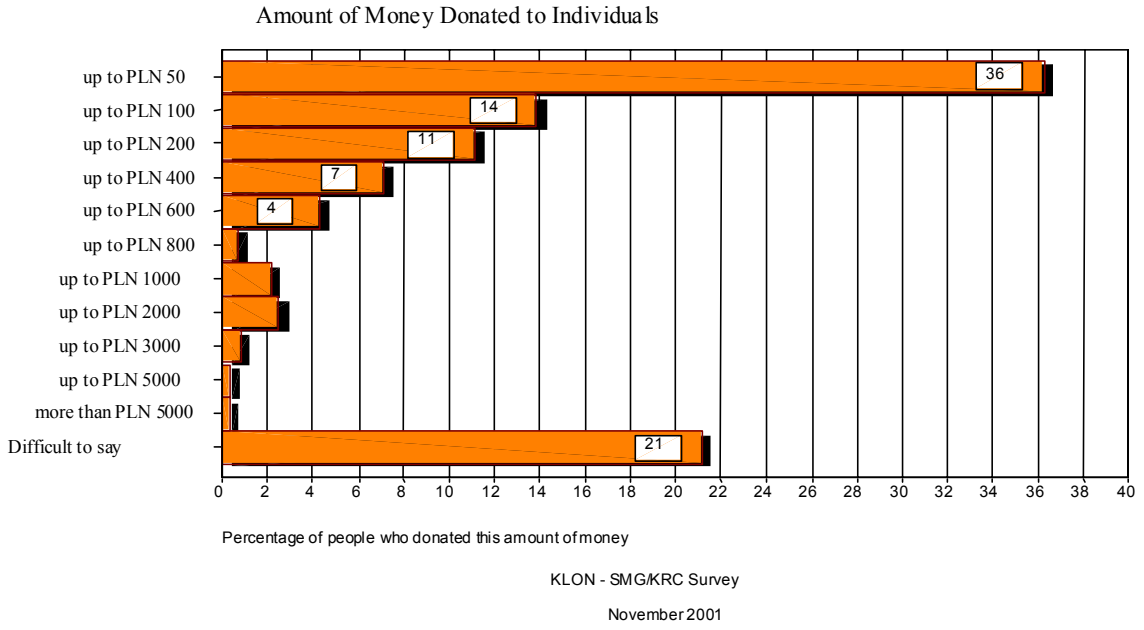
- Those who spent time doing volunteer work in institutions or organisations value their role in solving social problems in their neighborhoods more than those who do not volunteer (16.2% vs. 6%). It is a concern that in general so few people are able to identify any kind of important role being played by an organisation in their neighborhood. When it comes to the influence of organisations in solving social problems on a national level, one in ten Poles, regardless of their social involvement, strongly agrees that it is small. This view of organisations having little influence in solving social problems is opposed by 13% of volunteers and 4% of those who do not volunteer.
- Regarding the quality of work of NGOs that use volunteers, only one in ten Poles, regardless of their volunteer status, strongly believe that they are often not well organised and ineffective. 53.9% of volunteers and 28.6% of non-volunteers do not agree with this notion or are firmly against it.
- 51.1% of volunteers agree that the activities of social sector organisations (such as associations and foundations) are more needed now than five years ago. Those who do not agree or are firmly opposed to such a notion make up 4.9% of Poles. The remaining people, apart from the small percent which does not have an opinion on this matter, feel to varying degrees that there is an ever increasing role and necessity for the work of NGOs.

#### **Variance between Particular Groups of Respondents**

As stated above, 10% of Poles claim that they worked as volunteers at an institution or organisation in 2001 and 37% donated money and goods to them. The numbers differ greatly between the various groups of respondents, and these differences are quite telling. It is worth noting that the decision to volunteer is often tied to age, education level, and the income of the respondent.

#### **Distribution of Answers to Individual Survey Questions**

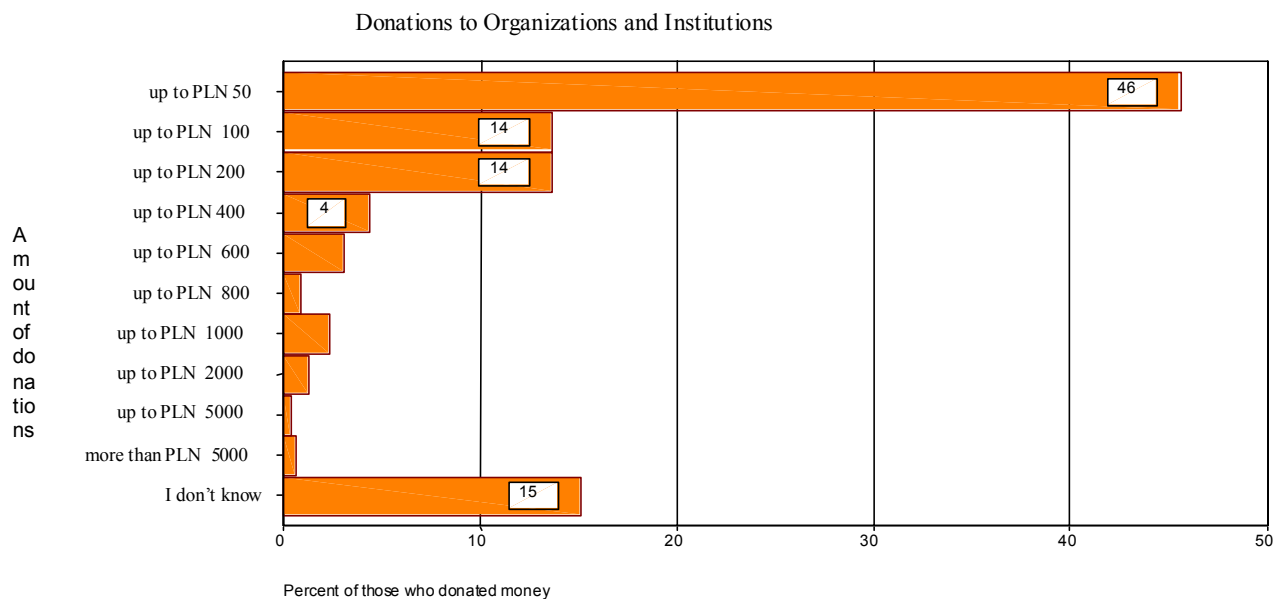
Percentage of people who directly helped individuals in 2001 (without regards to the form it took or the relationship with those who received the help)	47.7%
<b>Individuals who received help</b>	
Immediate family or relatives who do not live with me (e.g. siblings)	11.3
Farther removed family and relatives	3.1
Friends	8.3
People whom I know or met previously, but are not my family or friends (e.g. neighbours)	6.9
People I did not know previously and who approached me for help (e.g. at home, on the street, or through an organised appeal that reached me)	25.4
Other	3.6



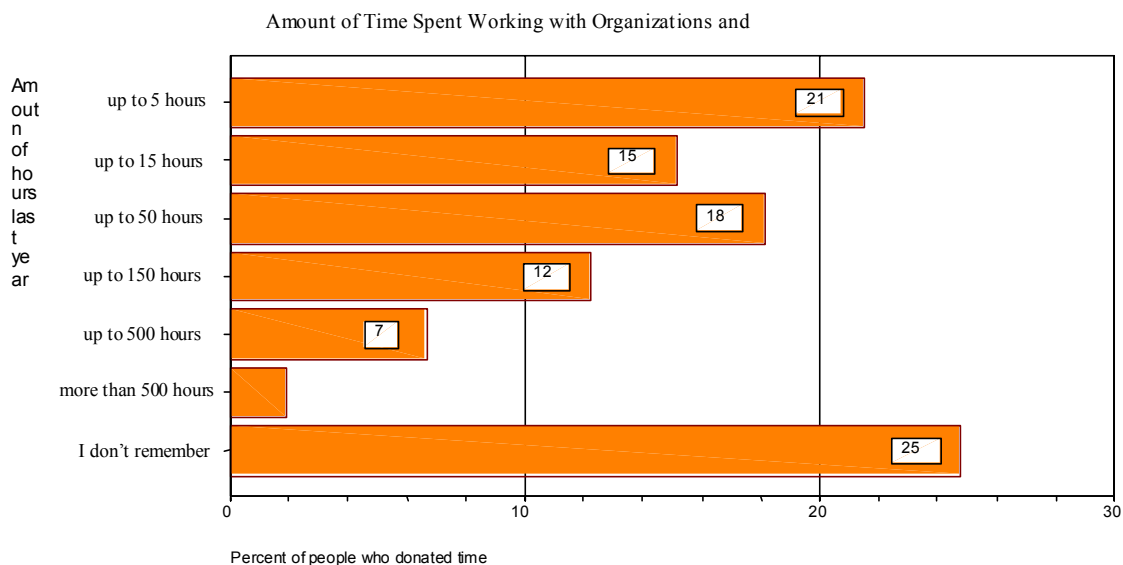
Reason for Helping An Individual	N	% of total	% of donators
Poor financial situation	251	25.1	54
Flood	138	13.8	29
Sickness / Handicapped (medical treatment, rehabilitation, assistance)	132	13.2	28
Elderly (assistance, helping in daily activities)	60	6.0	13
Helping with construction / renovation / cleaning-up (but not in connection with the floods)	41	4.1	8
Childcare	38	3.8	8
Educational help	38	3.8	8
Other	20	2.0	4

Percentage of people who gave help to organisations or institutions in 2001 (regardless to the form it took) - <i>no assistance provided by pollster</i>	37.0%
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Type of organisation or institution or the goals of its activities. Number of people who responded positively to the following questions. (N=1001)	People who helped them at some point in time without regard to the form it took	Money in the last 12 months	Time in the last 12 months	Whom would they donate money to	Whom would they donate time to
▪ aid in response to the 2001 floods	300	258	25	198	105
▪ ecological, environmental protection, animal rights and welfare	36	17	3	95	61
▪ charity work for the elderly and poor	173	130	28	300	201
▪ health care or rehabilitation for the handicapped	110	83	17	223	122
▪ education, raising and taking care of youth (in parents' organisations at school)	78	44	8	94	53
▪ preservation of local traditions and folklore	5	3	3	6	4
▪ sport, recreation, tourism	12	5	7	25	28
▪ science, culture or art	7	3	2	19	13
▪ local community (e.g. Community housing, neighborhoods, administration), and public security	13	9	6	21	16
▪ trade unions or other workers' organisations	10	3	2	3	3
▪ help for people and institutions outside Poland (humanitarian aid for refugees, disaster and war relief etc.)	20	8	2	27	14
▪ protecting human, consumer or minority rights	5	1	1	7	7
▪ faith-based, missionary, religious movement	176	120	22	120	63
▪ political parties, groups or movements	11	2	3	4	3
▪ other answer	46	42	7	53	33
▪ none of the above	484	81	901	333	511



KLON – SMG Survey  
November 2001



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Methods of donating money	N	% of the total	% of donators
Collection cans, money-boxes, street collection or at an institution	261	26.1	59
Gave money directly to individuals or organisations which needed it	186	18.6	42
Bought something which for which the profits go to a charity (eg. Caritas candle, charity auction... )	108	10.8	24
Postal order	51	5.1	11
Audiotele / SMS	15	1.5	3.5
Bought a ticket to a charity event (dance, concert ...)	10	1.0	2.3
Monthly donations taken from my paycheck or bank account	3	0.3	0.6
Online donation	0	0	0
Other	31	3.1	7

Reasons for Volunteering	% of people who think this is a major reason
I feel that one should help others (these are my moral, religious or political views)	84.1
It brings me happiness / I'm interested in it	67.8
I find it hard to say no	67.2
I believe if I help someone, then someone will help me in return	65.6
My family and friends do it as well	54.5
I want to acquire new skills, learn something new	48.0
I have a debt to pay (someone once helped me)	22.6

Why don't you participate in any activities at an organisation or institution	% of people who think this is a major reason
I have to think of myself and my family first	70.0
Nobody asked me to	59.4
Don't have time	52.7
Haven't come across any interesting offers for work	47.2
I don't feel that I have anything to offer	43.6
I'm not interested in it, I've never thought about it	41.3
I don't feel I'm physically able to do it	32.2
I've had bad experiences with such work	12.9

How did you start volunteering?	N	% of the total	% of people who donated money or time
I was interested by a mass media campaign (advertisement, article, billboard, TV, Radio, internet)	169	16.9	38
I was approached at home or on the street by a representative from an organisation, institution or Church	145	14.5	32
I knew about the activities of a specific organisation, institution or parish and I offered my help	120	12.0	27
A person in need approached me at home or on the street	98	9.8	22
I was approached by someone I knew or a family member	75	7.4	16
I met or knew someone in need and offered my help	55	5.5	12
Other answer	20	2.0	4
I can't remember / hard to say	20	2.0	4

Character of the volunteer work at an organisation or institution	N	% of the total	% of volunteers
Personal activities for those in need living with me (shopping, giving care, repairs...)	32	3.2	31
Fundraising (canvassing, writing grant proposals...)	19	1.9	18
Organising events, meetings, campaigns, or festivals	18	1.8	17
Unpaid participation on boards, committees, councils	14	1.4	14
Medical care, therapy, nursing at a shelter, hospital, work at an orphanage	9	0.9	8
Providing information (e.g. postering, flyering, working on helplines...)	8	0.8	8
Donating blood or willingness to be an organ donor	8	0.8	7
Advising, counseling or expert's work	6	0.6	6
Office work	5	0.5	4
Rescue - fire department, Voluntary Mountain Rescue Organisation, Voluntary Water Rescue Organisation	5	0.5	4
Other	17	1.7	16

Familiarity with the terms "volunteer" and "volunteering"	% of those surveyed
Never came across the terms	20.2
Yes, but difficult to say what they mean	19.8
Yes, I've come across them and I could explain what they mean	60

General opinions on the functions of NGOs and organisations that help those in need	% of respondents who agree with this opinion
Each person has a moral obligation to help those in need	82.4
The activities of social sector organisations (associations, foundations, etc.) are more needed now than five years ago	73.5
People who do social sector NGO work offer something that paid personnel can not	72.5
If the government took care of its responsibilities there wouldn't be a need for additional social sector work	62.8
Organisations that use people in the social service sector are generally well organised and effective	31.2
Social sector organisations (associations, foundations, etc) solve serious problems in my neighborhood	28.7
Social sector organisations (associations, foundations, etc.) have a considerable impact on solving serious social problems	28.5

How much money or time will you be able to give to help people or organisations and institutions	Money % of responses	Time % of responses
Much more	0.6	0.5
More	7.4	6.4
The same	27.4	24.3
Less	5.8	4.6
Much less	1.5	0.8
Hard to say	57.3	63.4

Did you deduct the amount of your donations from your personal income tax?	% of Respondents
Yes	3.7
No	89.7
Don't know/ don't remember	6.6

### Help given to Individuals

Characteristics of those Surveyed	Help given to individuals (in 2001)	Help given through and institution in 2001 - <i>without pollster assistance</i>
<b>Average</b>	<b>42.1%</b>	<b>37.2%</b>
<b>Region of Residence</b>		
Central Poland	41.9%	35.6%
East Poland	33.6%	39.5%
Southeast Poland	46.0%	43.8%
South Poland	48.8%	37.5%
Southwest Poland	45.7%	36.4%
West Poland	37.6%	29.1%
North Poland	40.3%	37.1%
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	36.3%	31.8%
Female	47.6%	42.4%
<b>Age</b>		
Under 25 years old	32.7%	30.4%
26-35 years old	36.2%	36.8%
36-45 years old	46.3%	36.1%
46-55 years old	52.5%	41.3%
Over 55 years old	44.9%	43.1%
<b>Civil Status</b>		
Single	34.4%	30.4%
Married	44.8%	40.8%
Widowed	46.9%	35.9%
<b>Education Level</b>		
Primary	28.6%	32.2%
Vocational	37.9%	32.4%
Secondary	48.6%	39.8%
Higher Education	60.2%	51.6%
<b>Work status</b>		
Permanently Employed or Irregularly	46.2%	37.6%
Unemployed	29.6%	38.1%
Retired	45.7%	39.8%
Student	34.8%	28.9%
Don't work / take care of the home	42.6%	40.4%
<b>Voted in 2001</b>		
Yes	48.9%	43.0%
No	35.2%	31.1%
<b>Participation in religious activities</b>		
At least once a week	47.4%	44.5%
A least once a month	41.2%	35.2%
Less than once a month	44.9%	22.4%
Never	45.9%	29.7%
<b>Monthly net income per family member</b>		
No income	34.5%	33.5%
Up to PLN 400	33.3%	30.8%
Between PLN 401 to 600	41.1%	38.2%
between PLN 601 to 1000	47.7%	38.5%
More than PLN 1000	50.3%	45.5%
<b>Number of Inhabitants</b>		
Village	38.0%	36.6%
Town up to 50,000	39.4%	34.9%
City between 50,000 to 200,000	47.6%	37.1%
City larger than 200,000	46.2%	38.5%
Warsaw	52.2%	50.0%

### Help Given to Institutions and Organisations

Characteristics of those Surveyed	Donated money to institutions and organisations (in 2001)	Volunteer work (spent time and worked with an institution or organisation in 2001)
<b>Average</b>	<b>43.5 %</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>Region of Residence</b>		
Central Poland	42.2%	6.2%
East Poland	45.2%	8.8%
Southeast Poland	47.2%	14.0%
South Poland	45.7%	8.5%
Southwest Poland	44.9%	15.9%
West Poland	40.7%	12.7%
North Poland	39.3%	7.6%
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	36.3%	8.0%
Female	50.4%	11.9%
<b>Age</b>		
Under 25 years old	36.3%	8.1%
26-35 years old	38.6%	7.8%
36-45 years old	44.1%	10.4%
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Over 55 years old	49.8%	10.1%
<b>Civil Status</b>		
Single	36.8%	10.1%
Married	47.3%	10.3%
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Primary	35.0%	6.5%
Vocational	38.3%	8.9%
Secondary	46.6%	10.4%
Higher Education	64.0%	18.5%
<b>Work status</b>		
Permanently Employed or Irregularly	44.0%	9.6%
Unemployed	38.8%	7.4%
Retired	48.7%	13.5%
Student	34.6%	9.6%
Don't work / take care of the home	51.1%	4.3%
<b>Voted in 2001</b>		
Yes	51.2%	13.4%
No	35.6%	6.2%
<b>Participation in religious activities</b>		
At least once a week	52.2%	11.2%
At least once a month	39.3%	11.1%
Less than once a month	26.5%	8.0%
Never	35.1%	8.1%
<b>Monthly net income per family member</b>		
No income	37.8%	6.6%
Up to PLN 400	40.4%	11.8%
Between PLN 401 to 600	42.5%	8.3%
between PLN 601 to 1000	47.3%	10.8%
More than PLN 1000	51.9%	14.0%
<b>Number of Inhabitants</b>		
Village	42.9%	9.3%
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City larger than 200,000	44.8%	7.7%
Warsaw	60.9%	6.5%