

Snapshot on

Giving & Volunteering in Michigan

Highlights from a 2009 survey of Michigan residents

Introduction

Giving and volunteering are integral to the ability of charities to successfully serve Michigan residents. Charities are seeing the demand for their services grow, leading them to rely even more heavily on individual giving and volunteering. Nationally, individuals contributed \$307.65 billion to charities in 2008 (Giving USA 2009). Charities could not operate without the support of individuals. Since an individual's trust in the nonprofit sector and its ability to effectively carry out programs affects his or her giving and volunteering habits, this study also assesses the public's perception of nonprofit organizations, and is critical to an individual's decision to support a charity and their perception of the sector as a whole.

In Spring 2010, 997 Michigan residents were asked about their experiences with charitable giving and volunteering during 2009 and their perception of and trust in Michigan's charities. The following are the results of a survey conducted by the Institute for Public Policy and Social Research at Michigan State University. The survey was conducted as part of the quarterly State of the State Survey (SOSS) series.

Executive Summary

Findings from the survey include:

- Over 85 percent of Michigan residents (85.2%) made a contribution to a charity in the previous year.
- Over 50 percent of the adult population (52.9%) volunteered in 2009. Women (57.4%) are still significantly more likely to volunteer than men (47.6%), but male volunteer rates have increased noticeably by more than ten percent from 2008.
- The percentage of residents who see charities as important to community quality of life increased from last year, with almost nine out of ten residents (89.4%) agreeing with this statement.
- 93 percent of respondents said the need for charities is greater today than in the past.
- Nearly nine out of ten Michigan residents (88.3%) believe that charities should retain their tax exemptions.

Trust in Michigan's Charities

Public perceptions are an important element of community trust for the charities that provide services. The survey asked a series of questions in order to understand how Michigan residents feel about their charitable organizations. Overall, the nonprofit sector in Michigan is strongly supported and trusted, with charitable organizations seen as an important factor in individual well-being.

More than four out of five Michigan residents agree that charitable organizations are honest and ethical. Sentiment ranged from strongly agree (31.0%) and somewhat agree (52.2%) to somewhat disagree (14.3%) or strongly disagree (2.5%).

The need for charities today compared to the past is strongly felt, with 93.0% percent of respondents agreeing strongly (59.1%) or somewhat (33.9%) with this sentiment. Disagreement was noted as somewhat (4.6%) or strong (2.4%).

Charitable organizations are widely seen as being effective, with more than three out of four respondents agreeing

strongly (21.3%) or somewhat (54.2%) that charities are more effective today than five years ago. Less than a quarter of respondents somewhat (19.9%) or strongly (4.6%) disagreed with this statement.

Charities are also seen as important to community quality of life, with over 89 percent of Michigan respondents agreeing strongly (41.9%) or somewhat (47.5%) that charities improve their communities, while there was some disagreement (7.6%) or strong disagreement (3.0%).

These findings represent a trend over the years of an increasing number of Michigan residents viewing charitable organizations as widely effective and important to community quality of life.

The survey asked respondents whether charitable organizations should be exempt from paying certain taxes. Almost nine out of ten Michigan residents (88.3%) felt that charities should retain their tax exempt status.

Giving in Michigan

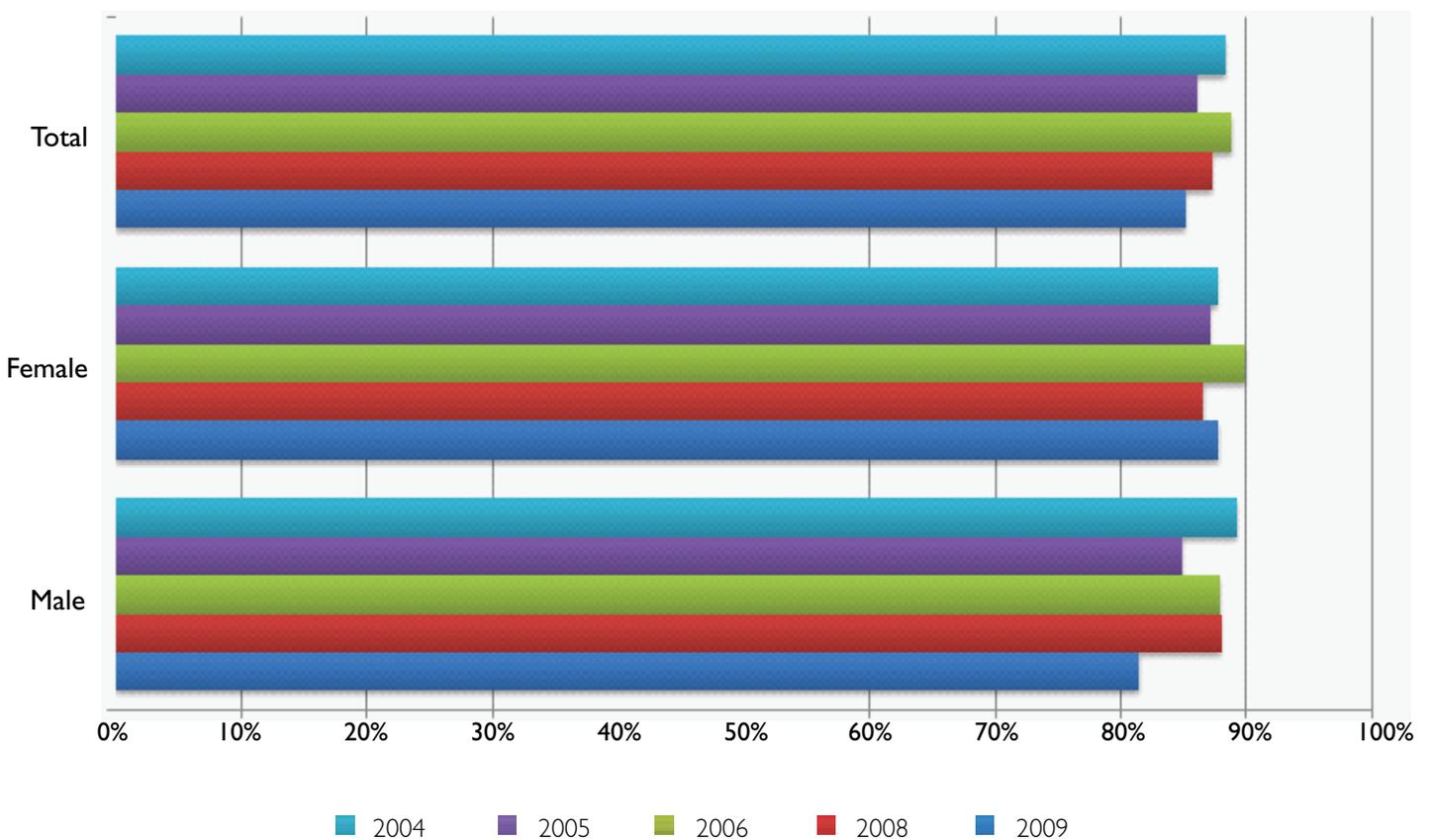
A survey of Michigan residents found that more than eight out of every ten people (85.2%) had made a contribution to charity in the previous year. Although rates of giving are still similar to the past five years, charities are reporting that the size of donations have decreased, with 60 percent of Michigan nonprofits reporting a decrease in revenue in 2009 from the previous year.

The percentage of women giving increased from 2008 to 87.8 percent, and the percentage of men making donations decreased to 81.5 percent. This represents a three-year trend of a slow decrease in the number of people making donations to charities, down from 88.9 percent in 2007. Although we are seeing a decrease, 93 percent believe charities are needed more now than in the past and an increasing number of respondents view charities as being effective (75.5%) and important to their community quality of life (89.4%).

Giving varies by age, with the age groups most likely to make a contribution being 65+ years (89.0%), 30-39 years (86.9%), 60-64 years (86.7%), 50-59 years (86.0%), 40-49 years (82.9%) and 18-29 years (79.2%). This represents a nearly 10 percent decrease in the number of individuals in the 60-64 age range making donations to charities compared to last year and a decrease of 7.5 percent of 50-59 year olds making contributions compared to 2008. Giving rates for younger people (18-29 years) remain high, with nearly four out of five (79.2%) making contributions.

Giving rates varied across the state, from lower rates in East Central Michigan (73.4%) and Detroit (78.9%) to higher rates in the Northern Lower Peninsula (85.1%), Southwest Michigan (87.2%), Southeast Michigan (91.1%), and the Upper Peninsula (96.8%).

Charitable Contributions in Michigan 2004-2009, Percent Contributing by Gender



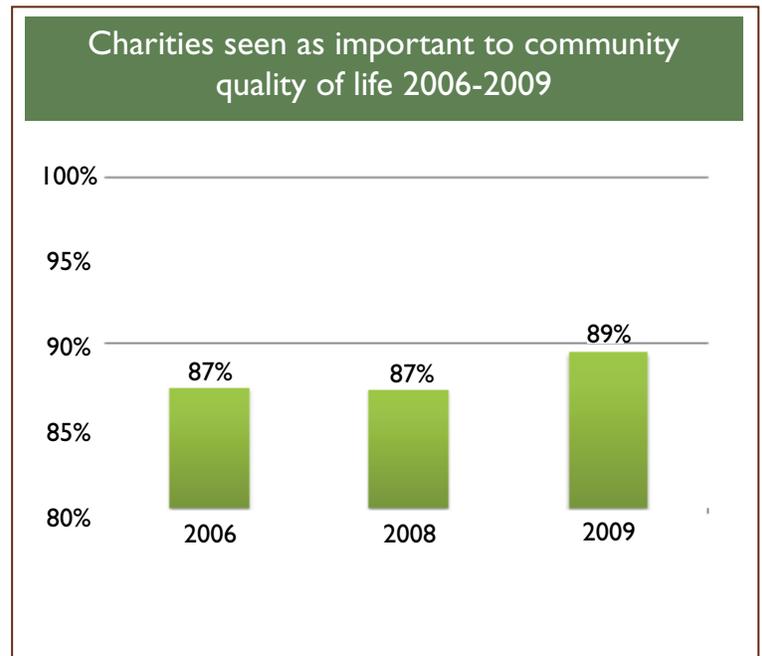
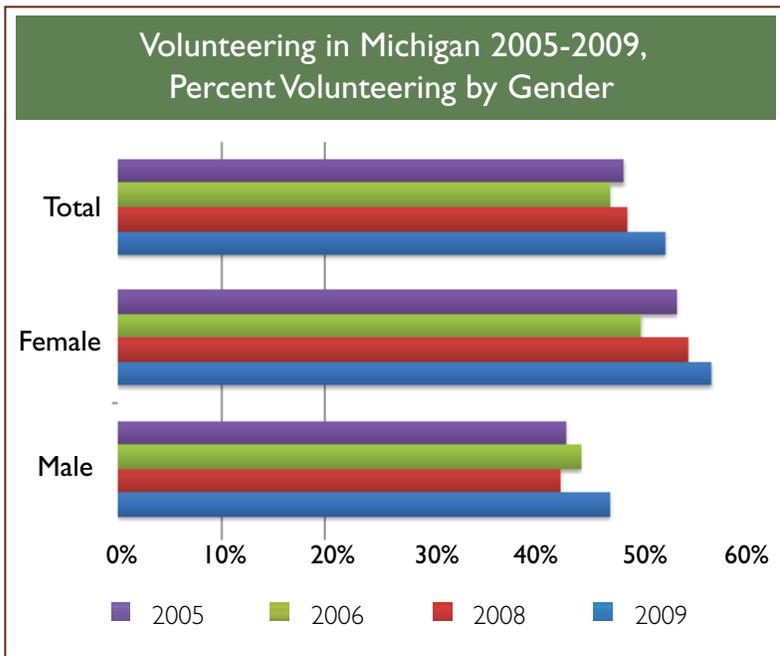
Volunteering in Michigan

Volunteering continues to be an important element in the lives of Michigan residents, with rates in this survey showing that 52.9 percent of the adult population volunteered in 2009, a small but significant increase of over three percent from 2008. Women (57.4%) were more likely to volunteer than men (47.6%). While there is still a discrepancy between the genders in their volunteer rates, for the first time in several years, the percentage of men who are volunteering has increased.

When asked about their level of volunteering compared to the previous year, 22.8 percent of residents said they plan to volunteer more in the coming year; 71 percent said they are planning to maintain the same level of volunteering as last year; and 5.6 percent said they were planning to volunteer less.

Volunteer habits change during an individual's lifetime. Age groups with above average volunteering rates (the average rate being 52.9%) include 60-64 years (62.2%), 50-59 years (57.2%), and 40-49 years (55.0%). Lower rates of volunteering occur for age groups 18-24 years (51.2%), 25-29 years (47.6%), 30-39 years (50.3%), and 65+ years (46.4%).

Education levels have a significant impact on an individual's participation in volunteer activities. The percentage of residents volunteering by education level ranged from high school graduates (38.5%) to college graduates (61.4%) and those with a graduate or professional degree (80.9%). Volunteering rates across Michigan ranged from higher levels in the Upper Peninsula (69.8%), West Central Michigan (62.0%), and Southwest Michigan (53.5%) to lower rates in the northern Lower Peninsula (43.0%) and Detroit (38.6%).



For the most up-to-date information and research regarding the Michigan nonprofit community, visit the Michigan Nonprofit Association Web site at www.MNAonline.org.

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