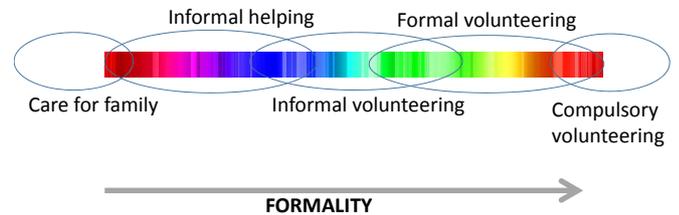


# Measuring Volunteering Participation in Social Surveys

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## What is a volunteer?



## Measuring Formal Volunteering

There are big variations in survey estimates of voluntary participation depending on question wording.

The Scottish Household Survey has a reliable and consistent two-stage question, which provides a good measure of formal volunteering (within the context of an organisation, association or group).

## The Dataset

Scottish Household Survey

Nationally representative annual survey of 12,000 households.

Detailed questions are asked of one random adult within the household.

The volunteering questions are asked of half the sample until 2011, and the full sample from 2012.

## First stage

Respondents are first asked:

*"The next set of questions are about the kinds of things that some people do to give up their time, without pay, to help people or for the benefit of their neighbourhood or a wider area, and either through organisations or acting as individuals.*

*Thinking back over the last 12 months, have you given up any time to help any clubs, charities, campaigns or organisations. I mean in an unpaid capacity"*

Scottish Household Survey Questionnaire

## Second Stage

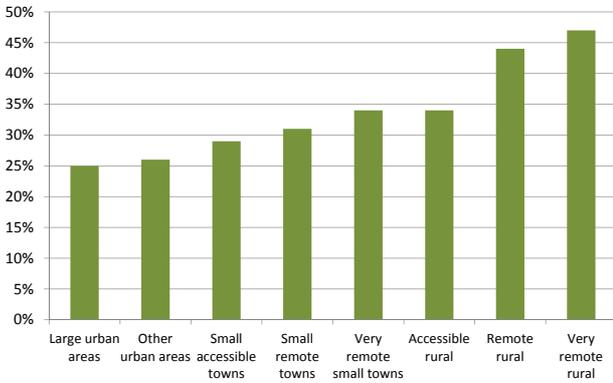
Respondents who answer 'no' are then presented with a list of types of organisation or group, and are asked:

*"We often find that people forget about some of the things they have done because they only do them occasionally or wouldn't normally think of it as helping people or their community. Have you undertaken any work or activities on a voluntary basis for any of these types of groups or organisations at any time in the past 12 months?"*

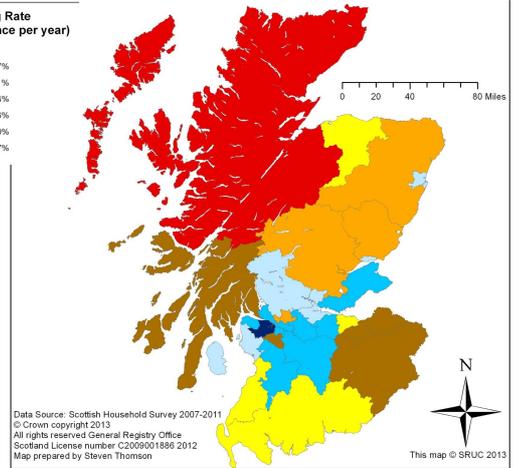
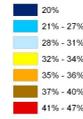
*Code all that apply. Probe fully. Any others? Any others?"*

Scottish Household Survey Questionnaire

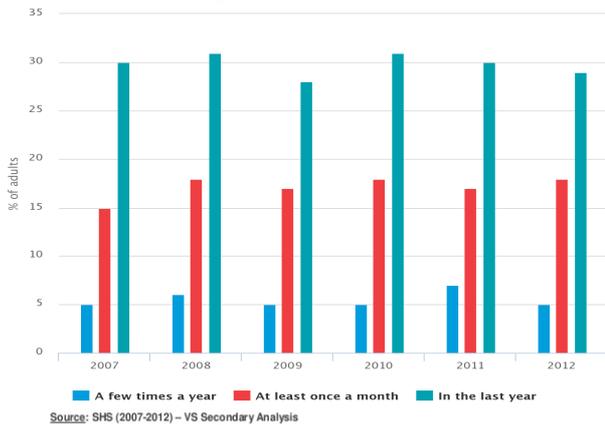
## Participation By Rurality



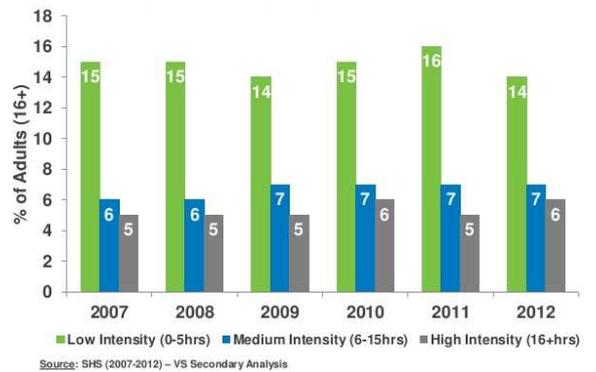
Average Volunteering Rate (2007-2011 at least once per year)



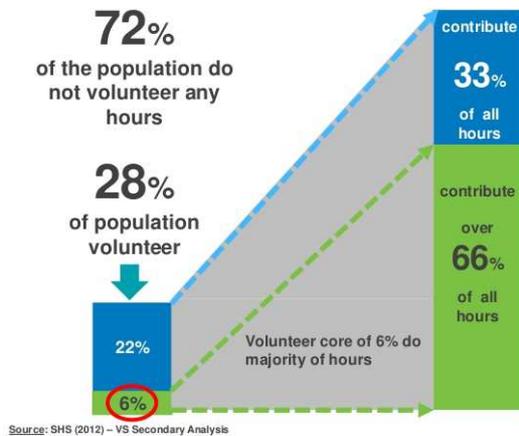
## Volunteering Intensity



## Volunteering Hours



## Volunteer Core



## Challenges in Measuring Volunteering

|                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| Terminology          | Use the word 'volunteer'?                                       |
| What to measure      | Organisation, area of work, activity?                           |
| Time period          | Past 12 months, previous month, typical month                   |
| Type of volunteering | Formal/informal; regular/one-off                                |
| Organisations        | Availability/consistency of records?                            |
| Available Datasets   | BHPS / UKHLS (Understanding Society); Scottish Household Survey |