

Charity Insights Canada Project (CICP)



# *Sector* **Snapshot**

CICP Research & Publications

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**Jul - Sep**  
**2024**

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# Sector Snapshot

**July to September 2024**

Charity Insights Canada Project (CICP)

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## Executive Summary

The charitable sector in Canada plays a critical role in societal well-being, yet its challenges and dynamics are often underreported. Through a series of weekly surveys conducted by the Charity Insights Canada Project (CICP), we provide valuable insights into key themes shaping the sector, ranging from financial health and long-term sustainability to staff turnover and policy participation. This report synthesizes findings from the third quarter of the CICP's second year of study (July–September 2024) and is designed to inform policymakers, practitioners, researchers, and the public about the current landscape of Canada's charitable sector.

## Introduction

Funding, human resources, and sector-wide challenges were central themes in the surveys conducted during the CICP's third quarter of 2024 (July – September). Focus on foundational aspects of the charitable sector, such as staff turnover, access to unrestricted funding, and concerns about long-term sustainability, reflects the pressures many charities are experiencing at their core. These issues, as highlighted in earlier surveys, point to precarious conditions that threaten the sector's stability.

In addition to exploring these linchpin issues, we also examined charities' participation in policy and advocacy-related activities, which may offer pathways for systemic change, and the implementation of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) initiatives, an important aspect of organizational culture and operations.

This report organizes the thirteen surveys conducted during this quarter by theme, presenting a snapshot of the findings from each. The surveys represent a piece of the broader picture of the sector's current state, and together, they provide insight into the factors shaping the sector's future trajectory.

By presenting these findings in a concise summary, we aim to make complex data more accessible while encouraging deeper engagement with the full survey results and our data dashboards. As we continue our exploration, we invite readers to delve into the findings and join us in advancing efforts to strengthen Canada's charitable sector.





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## Research Overview

The research conducted for this report aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the charitable sector in Canada, encompassing a wide array of themes, sub-topics, and research objectives. Through a series of surveys distributed over several weeks, we endeavored to capture the perspectives and experiences of charitable organizations across the country.

**Survey Methodology:** Each week, we send a ~3-minute survey to a panel of more than a thousand registered charities nationwide. Panel participants have been randomly selected from the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) registry and recruited via phone and email. Surveys are distributed electronically to our diverse panel of organizations, ensuring representation from various regions, sizes, and areas of focus within the sector. Each survey is designed to address specific research objectives and gather data on key topics relevant to the charitable sector. Participants are invited to provide their insights through these structured surveys, allowing for both quantitative analysis of survey responses and qualitative exploration of nuanced issues.

**Data Collection and Analysis:** Survey responses are collected and analyzed using rigorous methodologies to ensure accuracy, reliability, and validity of the findings. Quantitative data for this report were subjected to statistical analysis, enabling us to identify trends, patterns, and correlations within the dataset. Qualitative responses were coded and thematically analyzed to extract key themes and insights, providing rich contextual understanding of the issues at hand.

**Key Themes and Findings:** The research from this quarter yielded a wealth of insights across various themes and sub-topics within the charitable sector. From financial health and fundraising and access to education and training, to the role of consultants in the sector and the capacity of charities to respond to demand, each section of the report presents a snapshot of the findings derived from the survey data.

**Implications and Recommendations:** The findings of our research have important implications for policymakers, practitioners, and stakeholders within the charitable sector. By highlighting key challenges, opportunities, and emerging trends, our report aims to inform decision-making, guide resource allocation, and inspire collaborative action towards strengthening the sector's capacity to fulfill its mission and mandate.

**Limitations:** While every effort was made to ensure the quality and comprehensiveness of our research, it is important to acknowledge certain limitations. These include potential biases in survey responses, limitations inherent in self-reported data, and constraints related to sample representativeness and survey methodology. Nevertheless, the findings presented in this report provide valuable insights and serve as a foundation for further research and exploration within the charitable sector.

By capturing the voices and experiences of stakeholders, our report aims to contribute to ongoing efforts to enhance the sector's resilience, sustainability, and impact in serving communities across the country.



## A Few Key Findings from this Term

### Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion

- **72%** of charities report fully or partially integrating Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) into their practices.

### Funding

- **10%** of charities rate their funding as "very predictable," and just 12% describe their financial situation as "very stable."
- Over half (**55%**) of charities find unrestricted funding difficult to access, despite 68% saying it would significantly benefit their operations.
- Nearly one in four charities (**24%**) report being unaware of any long-term funding opportunities lasting two years or more.

### Governance & Management

- Employee turnover has worsened across all organizational sizes and geographies, with high turnover rates (21–100%) rising from **26%** to **38%** between 2023 and 2024.

### Policy

- **50%** of charities engage in advocacy, a modest increase from 42% last year, but **only 11%** are involved in lobbying, highlighting a significant gap in policy engagement.

### Sector-Wide Challenges

- **53%** of charities are concerned about their long-term sustainability.
- **43%** of charities report not having sufficient time to focus on top priorities.
- **48%** of charities report being unprepared for leadership succession crises.

### Collaboration

- **17%** of charities have considered or pursued a merger in the past five years.





## SECTION 1: EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

### Advancing Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) in Canada's Charitable Sector

Exploring survey results from CICP survey no. 2.08.29

The integration of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) into the charitable sector is progressing at varying levels across Canada. Our recent survey (CICP survey no. 2.08.29) reveals a varied landscape, with organizations embracing EDI to differing degrees in their operations and practices.

#### Progress and Current State

Building on findings from early 2023, where 80% of organizations reported pursuing EDI initiatives, our more recent survey attempted to examine the depth of commitment. Results reveal:

- **37%** have fully integrate EDI into their organizational practices.
- **35%** have partially integrated EDI.
- **14%** acknowledge EDI in their values but lack actionable steps.
- **6%** describe efforts as limited or informal.
- **Only 5%** are not pursuing EDI at all, reflecting widespread sector engagement.

Key areas of focus for EDI initiatives in recent years have included programming, policies, hiring, HR decisions, and training for staff and volunteers (see CICP survey no. 1.01.05 for more details).



#### Barriers to Implementation

Despite widespread commitment to EDI among charities, significant challenges persist. The most common barriers include:

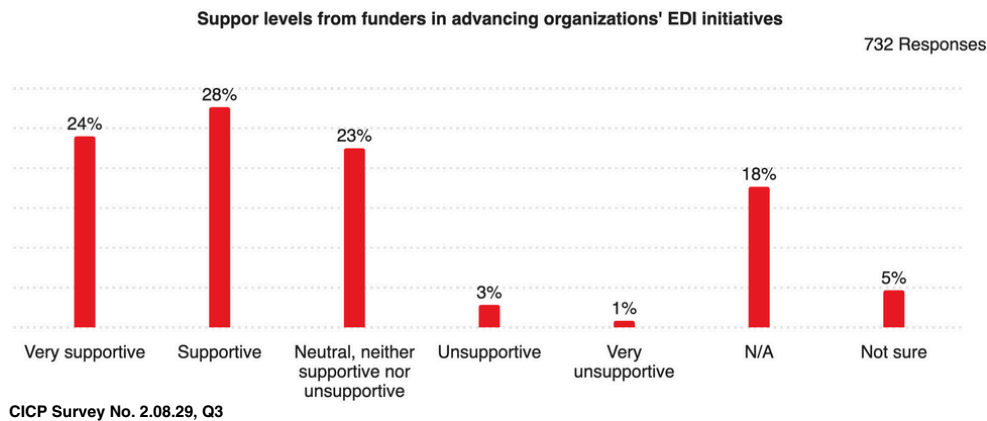
- **Resource Constraints:** Over half (54%) of respondents cite limited financial, human, or time resources as a key hurdle.
- **Lack of Measurement:** A substantial 29% of organizations do not evaluate their EDI efforts, missing opportunities to assess and refine their approaches.
- **Training Gaps:** Inadequate training and awareness impede progress in embedding EDI effectively.
- **Resistance to Change:** Encouragingly, only 9% report resistance to change within their organizations.

The low prevalence of charities using formal measurement and review practices, such as equity audits, is particularly concerning. Without these tools, organizations may struggle to understand their current situation, track their progress and implement evidence-based improvements.

### Donor Perspectives: Supportive but Non-Critical

Donor attitudes toward EDI initiatives are encouragingly, generally positive:

- **52%** of charities report donors are “very supportive” or “supportive” of these efforts.
- **23%** describe donor attitudes as neutral.
- Only **4%** report donor opposition to EDI efforts.



Interestingly, 18% of charities indicate that donor support is not essential for driving their EDI initiatives, suggesting a notable degree of independence in advancing these efforts.

**Conclusion:** The charitable sector’s broad commitment to EDI reflects an encouraging trend, but meaningful progress hinges on addressing key challenges. With limited resources, insufficient training, and a lack of impact measurement tools, many organizations face hurdles in translating values into action. However, the general openness to change and donor support provide a strong foundation for the sector to build upon. Overcoming these barriers will be critical to achieving sustained and impactful advancements in equity, diversity, and inclusion.





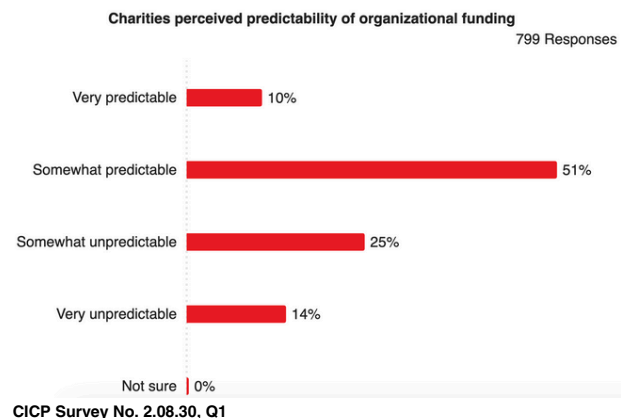
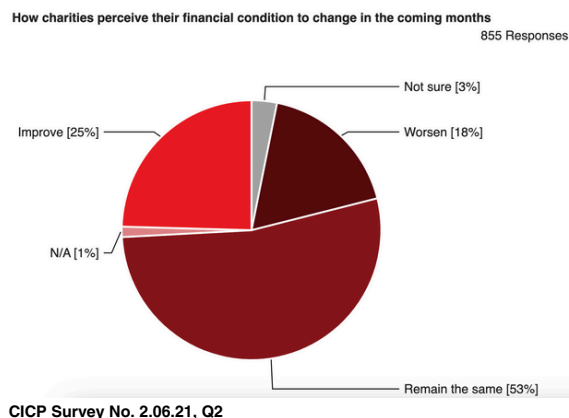
## SECTION 2: FUNDING

### Financial Security, Stability and Reserves

*Exploring survey results from CICP survey no. 2.08.30*

Predictable funding and financial reserves are critical for charities to manage their operations efficiently, plan ahead, and respond to unexpected challenges. Our previous CICP findings from 2024 have highlighted a sector experiencing concerning fluctuations in funding/giving patterns (see CICP survey no. 2.06.21 for more details), and growing concerns from organizations around the securement of sufficient core operational capital (see CICP survey no. 2.04.14 for more information).

Canadian charities are navigating an increasingly complex financial environment, as reflected in some of our latest findings. While some organizations report gains in specific funding streams, overall trends highlight growing instability and uncertainty across the sector.



### Funding Predictability: A Rare Commodity

When asked about the predictability of their funding, few charities expressed confidence in their financial outlook:

- **10%** rated their funding as “very predictable.”
- **51%** described it as “somewhat predictable.”
- **39%** face significant funding uncertainties.

This widespread unpredictability hampers organizations’ ability to plan strategically or allocate resources efficiently, further straining their operations.

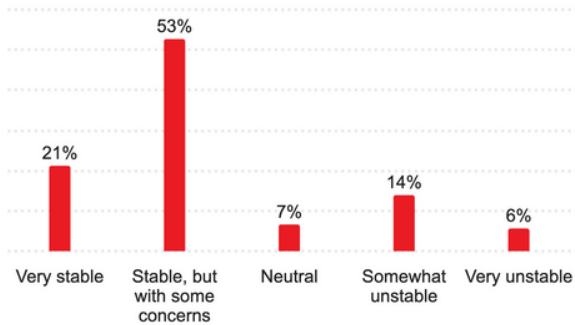
### Financial Stability on Shaky Ground

The picture of financial stability across the sector is similarly concerning:

- Only **12%** of charities describe their financial situation as being “very stable” – a notable decrease from **21%** in 2023 (see CICP survey no. 1.10.40 for more details).
- The majority (**55%**) report being “stable, but with some concerns.”
- **25%** characterize their finances as “somewhat unstable” or “very unstable.”

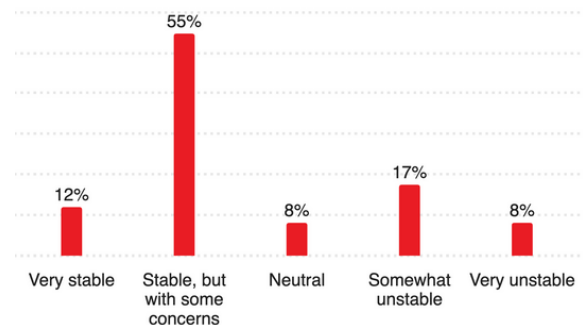
These figures reflect a potentially growing erosion of financial security within the charitable sector, with more organizations finding themselves in precarious positions.

Charities perceived financial stability (Oct. 2023)  
578 Responses



CICP Survey No.1.10.40, Q1

Charities perceived financial stability (Aug. 2024)  
800 Responses



CICP Survey No. 2.08.30, Q2

### Shrinking Financial Reserves

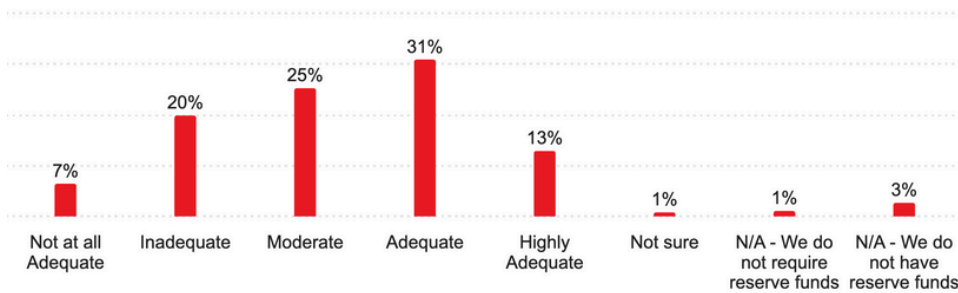
Charities also report a worrying decline in the adequacy of their financial reserves:

- **31%** rate their reserves as “inadequate” or “not at all adequate.”
- **35%** believe their reserves are “adequate,” down from **44%** last year.

This reduction in financial cushioning leaves organizations ill-prepared to manage unexpected challenges, economic downturns, or other crises.

How organizations rate the adequacy of their reserve funds (Oct. 2023)

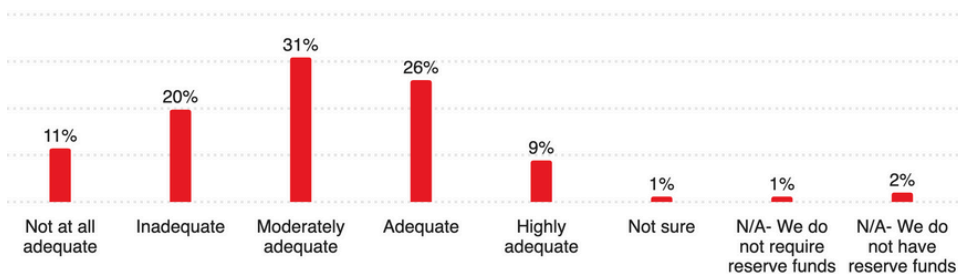
578 Responses



CICP Survey No.1.10.40, Q2

How organizations rate the adequacy of their reserve funds (Aug. 2024)

800 Responses



CICP Survey No. 2.08.30, Q3

### Risk Management: A Missed Opportunity

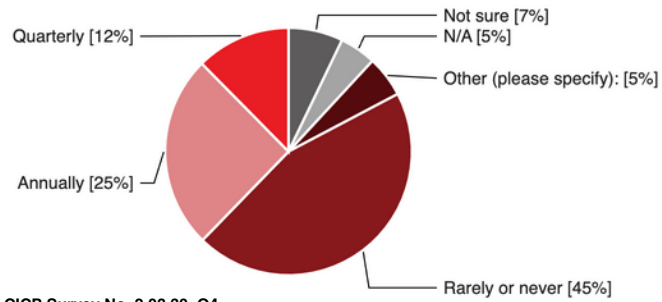
Despite the evident financial instability, many charities lack robust risk management practices:

- **45%** of organizations rarely or never conduct financial stress tests or risk assessments, an increase from **38%** in 2023.
- This gap in risk management further weakens organizational resilience at a time when adaptability and foresight are crucial.



Frequency which organizations conduct financial stress tests to evaluate financial stability and adequacy of reserves

798 Responses



CICP Survey No. 2.08.30, Q4

**Conclusion:** The findings from our survey(s) highlight a critical need for improved financial stability and risk management within Canada’s charitable sector. The combination of unpredictable funding, inadequate reserves, and limited risk assessments leaves many organizations vulnerable to financial shocks. By addressing these challenges, charities can strengthen their resilience and continue delivering essential services to communities across the country.

### Funding Landscape: The Ongoing Struggle for Flexibility

Exploring survey results from CICP survey no. 2.09.33

The funding landscape plays a pivotal role in shaping how charities operate and grow. The diversity of funding sources, as well as the restrictions attached to them can either empower organizations to thrive or limit their ability to meet their missions. In one of our September surveys, we examined the balance between unrestricted and restricted funding and the accessibility of various funding types. Our findings highlight the sector’s critical need for greater flexibility in funding to meet operational and strategic goals.

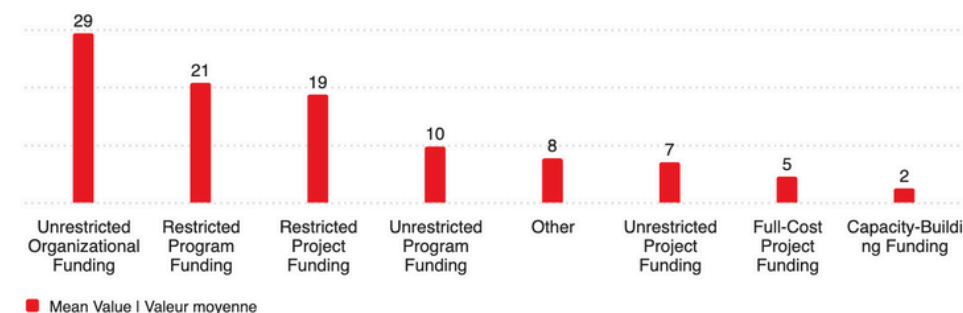
### The Funding Mix: A Heavy Reliance on Restricted Resources

Charities in Canada rely on a range of funding types. On average, our data shows that:

- **29%** of funding comes from unrestricted organizational funding, offering charities the flexibility to allocate resources as needed.
- **21%** is attributed to restricted program funding, designated for ongoing initiatives.
- **19%** comes from restricted project funding, tied to specific, time-limited activities.
- Capacity-building funding, which is critical for long-term growth and resilience, represents only **2%** of total funding on average.

% of organizations' total funding that comes from each of the following sources:

696 Responses



■ Mean Value | Valeur moyenne

CICP Survey 2.9.33, Q1

Limited investment in capacity building is particularly concerning, as it suggests that charities may struggle to adapt to emerging challenges or scale their operations effectively.

### The Need for Unrestricted and Capacity-Building Funds

When asked about unmet funding needs, charities overwhelmingly prioritize unrestricted organizational funding:

- **68%** of respondents identified unrestricted funding as the most beneficial type of support given their current circumstances and needs.
- However, **55%** reported that accessing unrestricted funding is particularly challenging, underscoring the disconnect between need and availability.

Types of Funding Most Beneficial to Organizations Based on Current Needs		Types of Funding Most Difficult for Organizations to Access	
	693 Responses		689 Responses
Unrestricted Organizational Funding	68%	Unrestricted Organizational Funding	55%
Capacity-Building Funding	35%	Capacity-Building Funding	32%
Unrestricted Program Funding	35%	Full-Cost Project Funding	31%
Full-Cost Project Funding	27%	Unrestricted Program Funding	30%
Unrestricted Project Funding	26%	Unrestricted Project Funding	26%
Restricted Program Funding	4%	Restricted Project Funding	7%
Not sure	3%	Not sure	7%
Restricted Project Funding	3%	Restricted Program Funding	5%
Our organization is not currently interested in any of the types of funding listed here.	2%	N/A- Our organization has not tried to access any of these types of funding	3%
		None of these types of funding are difficult to access	2%

CICP Survey 2.9.33, Q2 CICP Survey 2.9.33, Q3

In addition to unrestricted funding, charities also highlighted gaps in other critical funding types:

- **Over 30%** identified capacity-building funds as a pressing but hard-to-access need.
- **31%** pointed to full-cost project funding as another type of funding that is difficult to access, reflecting the challenge of covering indirect costs associated with projects.

These findings paint a picture of a sector grappling with funding that is often too rigid or limited to address the realities of organizational and community needs.

*'I have found it very difficult to find funders in the first place...Unrestricted funds, funding for employee benefits, and funding for administration are next to impossible to find.'* - CICP Panellist

**Conclusion:** Canada’s charitable sector is in urgent need of more flexible, unrestricted funding to support operational stability and long-term resilience. While demand for unrestricted funding is high, accessibility remains a significant barrier for many organizations. Capacity-building and full-cost funding also represent crucial gaps that, if addressed, could enable charities to operate more effectively and sustainably.

Funders have an opportunity to enhance the sector’s impact by loosening funding restrictions and increasing investments in capacity-building initiatives. Addressing these gaps would not only support the immediate needs of charities but also strengthen their ability to serve communities over the long term.

## Length and Security of Funding Contracts: Navigating Uncertainty

Exploring survey results from CICP survey no. 2.09.36

The stability of funding contracts is a cornerstone of financial security for charities. In an era of increasing financial uncertainty, the length and renewal terms of funding agreements have taken on heightened importance. Our survey explored how Canadian charities are managing the challenges of short-term versus long-term funding arrangements and their efforts to secure more stable, predictable funding.

### The Prevalence of Short-Term, Uncertain Contracts

Short-term funding contracts remain a dominant feature of the charitable sector, with many organizations operating under arrangements that lack guarantees of renewal. This uncertainty can significantly impact their ability to engage in strategic planning and pursue long-term goals.

- **6%** of charities have contracts shorter than one year with a guarantee of renewal.
- **20%** have one-year contracts with a guarantee of renewal.
- **23%** have multi-year contracts with a guarantee of renewal.

Types of Funding Contracts Held by Organizations

Field	703 Responses		
	Yes	No	Not sure
Less than one-year contract with no guarantee of renewal	36%	63%	2%
Less than one-year contract with a guarantee of renewal	6%	91%	3%
One-year contract with no guarantee of renewal	52%	46%	2%
One-year contract with a guarantee of renewal	20%	79%	2%
Multi-year contract with no guarantee of renewal	46%	53%	1%
Multi-year contract with a guarantee of renewal	23%	74%	2%
Individuals committed to consistent monthly or yearly donations	58%	39%	2%
Other	23%	61%	16%

CICP Survey No. 2.9.36, Q1



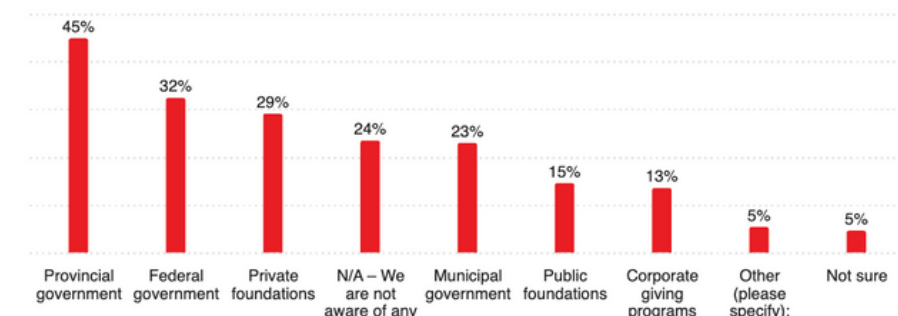
While multi-year contracts with guaranteed renewal offer the greatest financial stability, only **23%** of charities report benefiting from such arrangements. In contrast:

- **36%** of charities rely on contracts that are less than one year.
- **52%** operate with one-year contracts, without guarantees of renewal.

The widespread reliance on short-term contracts without a guarantee of renewal creates a climate of financial unpredictability, limiting charities' ability to invest in long-term initiatives or expand their services.

Donors and Funding Sources Offering Long-Term Opportunities (2+ Years)

697 Responses



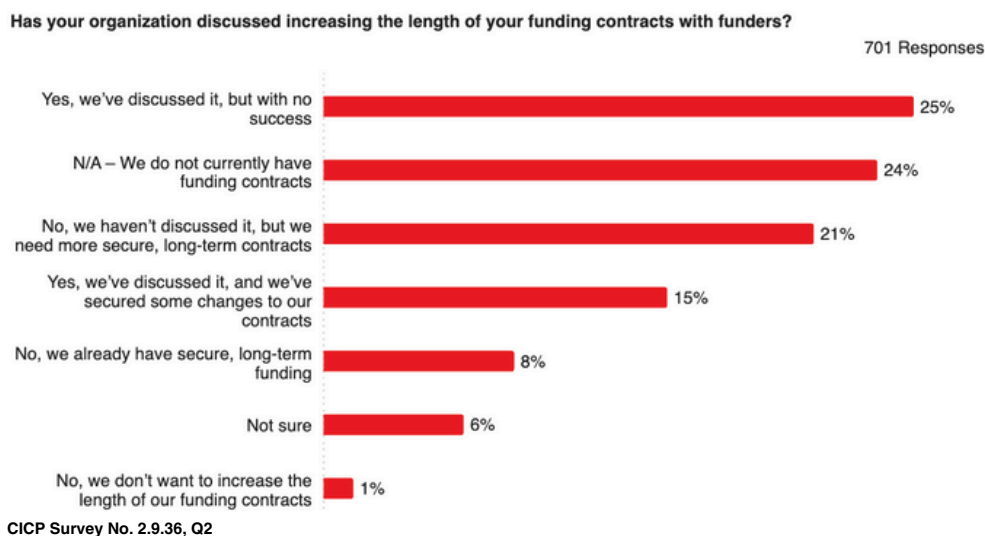
CICP Survey No. 2.9.36, Q3

### Reliable Funding Sources: Individual Donations and Government Support

Despite the prevalence of short-term contracts within the sector, some funding sources provide more consistent support. Individual donations are the most commonly cited source of reliable funding, with **58%** of charities reporting steady monthly or yearly contributions. When it comes to long-term funding, government support plays a key role:

- **45%** of charities can look to provincial government funding for long-term support.
- **32%** to federal government funding.
- **29%** report that private foundations offer viable long-term funding opportunities.

Interestingly, **24%** of charities report being unaware of any long-term funding opportunities applicable to them, highlighting a significant gap in awareness or accessibility to sustainable funding options.



### The Demand for More Secure Contracts

A large portion of charities are actively seeking longer and more secure funding agreements from their donors:

- **25%** have attempted to extend their contracts but were unsuccessful.
- **15%** managed to negotiate changes, securing more favorable terms.
- **Only 8%** of respondents say they already have secure, long-term funding and only **1%** say they don't want to increase the length of their funding contracts.

Additionally, our analysis indicates a clear relationship between an organization's size and its likelihood of having funding contracts. Larger charities, with higher annual expenditures, are more likely to secure funding agreements of all types, highlighting a disparity that may place smaller organizations at a disadvantage.

**Conclusion:** The current reliance on short-term, non-renewable contracts poses a significant challenge for charities aiming to achieve long-term sustainability. While individual donations and provincial government support provide essential stability, the overall funding landscape leaves many organizations in a precarious position.

Expanding access to longer-term funding agreements with guarantees of renewal is essential for building the resilience of Canada's charitable sector. Addressing these challenges will enable charities to plan more effectively, invest in growth, and continue meeting the needs of the communities they serve.







## SECTION 3: GOVERNANCE & MANAGEMENT

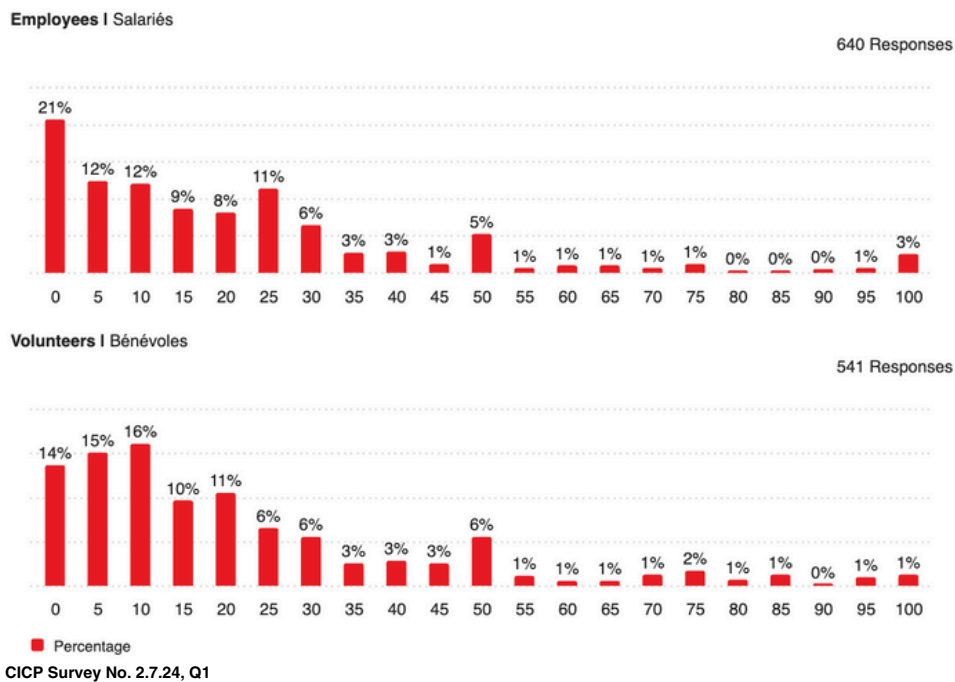
### Staff Turnover and Retention

*Exploring survey results from CICP survey no. 2.07.24*

Talent recruitment and retention continue to be among the most pressing challenges for charities, as identified in both our [2024](#) and [2023](#) survey results on current issues in the sector. In January 2024, half of the charities we surveyed (50%) highlighted these HR concerns as a top priority ([CICP survey no. 2.1.1](#)). This mirrors broader sector trends, with [Statistics Canada \(2021\)](#) reporting that roughly 38% of nonprofit organizations struggled to recruit skilled employees, while nearly 33% faced challenges retaining staff (Statistics Canada, 2021). A [2022 Ontario Nonprofit Network report](#) further emphasized these difficulties, particularly among Indigenous-led and Black-led organizations, where 65% of respondents identified significant HR challenges (Ontario Nonprofit Network, 2022).

The pandemic further exacerbated these issues, especially in volunteerism. In May 2024, 61% of charities reported a drop in volunteer engagement during the first two years of the pandemic, with 65% stating that volunteer participation had not yet rebounded to pre-pandemic levels ([CICP survey no. 2.5.15](#)).

Estimated Personnel Turnover Rates Over the Past Year (%)



### Trends in Turnover

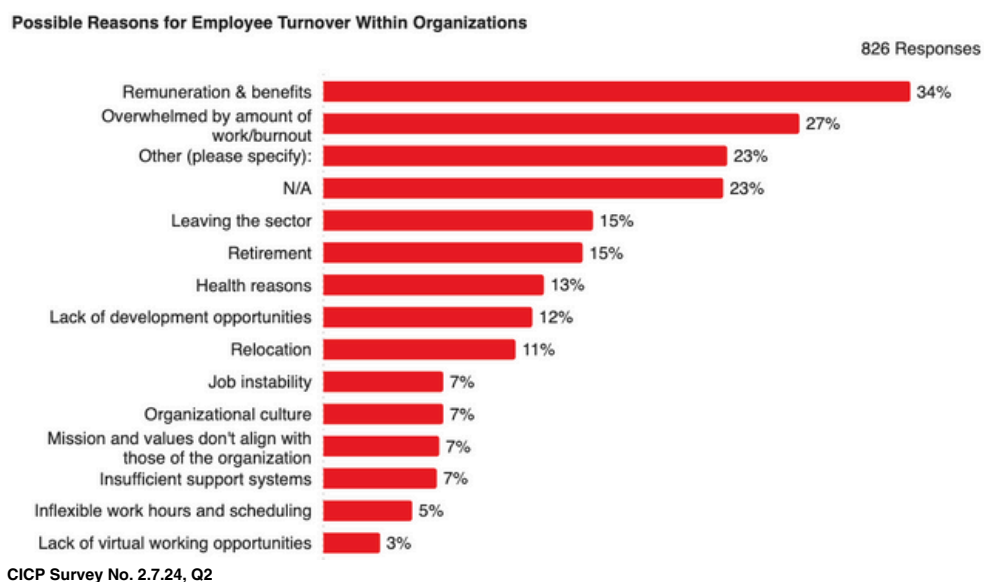
Insecure funding remains a significant driver of HR instability, contributing to lower wages, precarious employment, and high turnover rates. Some of our recent survey data underscores how these challenges are evolving.

A comparison of turnover rates between March 2023 and July 2024 reveals a decline in stability across all categories of personnel:

- **No turnover:**
  - Employees: 23% (2023) → 21% (2024)
  - Volunteers: 21% (2023) → 14% (2024)
  - Board members: 27% (2023) → 17% (2024)
- **Low turnover (1-20%):**
  - Employees: 50% (2023) → 41% (2024)
  - Volunteers: 54% (2023) → 52% (2024)
  - Board members: 58% (2023) → 56% (2024)
- **High turnover (21-100%):**
  - Employees: 26% (2023) → 38% (2024)
  - Volunteers: 26% (2023) → 37% (2024)
  - Board members: 15% (2023) → 26% (2024)

This upward trend in employee turnover was evident across charities of all sizes in 2024. While larger charities (with expenditures over ~\$61,500) reported higher turnover rates in 2023, by 2024, the issue had become more pervasive, affecting organizations regardless of size. Younger charities (1–15 years old) experienced a sharper increase in employee turnover compared to older organizations.

Geographic differences in turnover rates, previously notable, have also diminished. In 2023, rural charities—measured by the RST (Rural and Small Town) metric—reported lower employee turnover rates (20%) compared to urban charities (28%) (Statistics Canada, 2001). However, by 2024, this gap had closed, with both urban and rural organizations reporting turnover rates around 38%.



### Drivers of Turnover and Retention

The primary reasons for employee turnover appears to remain consistent, though the weight of these factors has shifted:

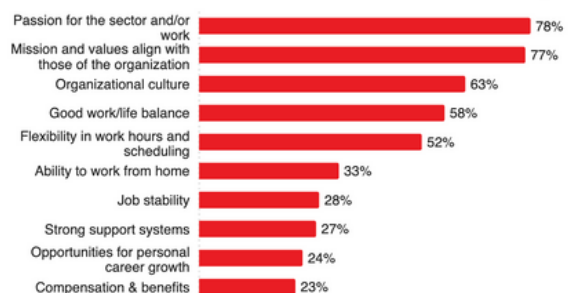
- **Remuneration and benefits:** Persistently identified as the leading factor, with 34% of respondents citing it in 2024 (down from 44% in 2023).
- **Workload/burnout:** Selected by 27% of respondents in both 2023 and 2024.



Conversely, factors contributing to retention remain relatively stable:

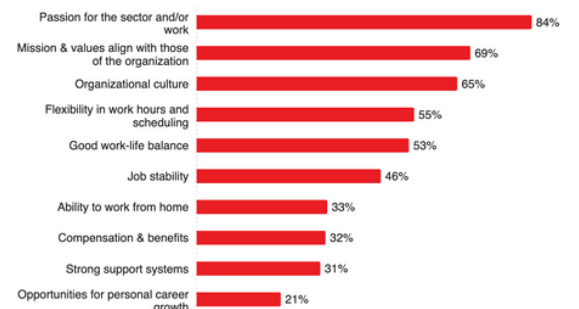
- **Passion for the sector/work:** 78% in 2024 (down from 84% in 2023)
- **Alignment with mission and values:** 77% in 2024 (up from 69% in 2023)
- **Organizational culture:** 63% in 2024 (down slightly from 65% in 2023)
- **Good work-life balance:** 58% in 2024 (up from 53% in 2023)
- **Flexibility in work hours:** 52% in 2024 (down from 55% in 2023)

Reasons Why Employees Stay With Organizations (2024) 830 Responses



CICP Survey No. 2.7.24, Q3

Possible Reasons for Employee Turnover Within Organizations (2023) 620 Responses



CICP Survey No. 1.3.11, Q3

Interestingly, factors such as job stability, compensation, and career advancement remain lower on the list of retention drivers, underscoring the sector’s ongoing struggle to compete with the broader job market.

**Conclusion:** The worsening of turnover rates since 2023 likely reflects systemic challenges in the charitable sector, including insecure funding, insufficient remuneration, and increasing workloads. Addressing these issues is critical to sustaining the sector’s workforce. Without urgent action to tackle these long-standing concerns, recruitment and retention will remain persistent threats to the long-term viability of charities.

## HR & Staffing

*Exploring survey results from CICP survey no. 2.08.32*

Our HR & Staffing survey conducted in August aimed to better understand the types of positions that charities are recruiting for and the skills/qualities they prioritize in their candidates. Our results reveal that recruitment is a pressing issue for many charities, though not all organizations are actively hiring. While 37% of survey respondents reported no current recruitment activities, the remaining 63% are navigating the complexities of filling diverse roles.

### Positions in Demand:

Charities currently hiring are focused on a mix of administrative, operational, and sector-specific roles. Among the most common positions charities are seeking to fill are:

- **Administration/Support Staff** (20%)
- **Fundraising/Development** (18%)
- **Program/Project Management** (15%)
- **Executive/Leadership** (14%)
- **Communications/Marketing** (13%)
- **Volunteer Coordination** (11%)

- **Finance/Accounting (7%)**

Additionally, 25% of respondents indicated unique, sector-specific needs, from frontline workers to specialized board member roles.

**Skills and Qualities Valued by Charities:**

The top five most sought-after skills and qualities indicated by our panellists include:

- **Collaboration and Teamwork (78%)**
- **Problem-Solving Ability (70%)**
- **Practical, Job-Specific Skills (65%)**
- **Capacity for Mental Wellness and Self-Care (63%)**
- **Self-Confidence (62%)**

**Skills and Qualities Prioritized in Candidates**

669 Responses

Field	Very Important	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	N/A
Job-specific theoretical knowledge	18%	33%	22%	5%	21%
Job-specific practical skills	30%	35%	12%	3%	20%
Digital skills (including data literacy)	15%	31%	23%	8%	21%
Self-confidence	21%	41%	15%	3%	20%
Accurate self-assessment	17%	38%	18%	4%	22%
Problem-solving ability	40%	30%	8%	1%	20%
Mental wellness/self-care capacity	26%	37%	12%	2%	21%
Working with others	58%	20%	2%	0%	20%
Facilitation and group decision-making	22%	29%	22%	6%	21%
Conflict resolution	25%	30%	19%	5%	20%
Leadership qualities	18%	31%	24%	6%	20%
Innovation/creativity	21%	33%	20%	4%	21%
Project management	16%	26%	19%	14%	24%

CICP Survey No. 2.8.32, Q2

Punctuality, flexibility, and a commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) were also emphasized as critical by many organizations.

**Recruitment Challenges:**

Charities highlighted a wide range of barriers to successful recruitment, from funding constraints to finding candidates with the right qualifications, especially in rural areas. Some of the common themes shared by respondents include:

- **Funding Issues:** *"Funding grants do not pay market rates for the positions."*
- **Volunteer Reliance:** *"Most positions are volunteer but need specific skills and abilities; the problem is that the volunteer pool is smaller."*
- **Specialized Skills:** *"It's been very difficult to hire for IT skillsets where we need a little of everything in one person."*
- **Candidate Shortages in Rural Areas:** *"We live in a rural area and struggle finding and keeping qualified employees. We sometimes end up hiring and training for the position."*

These challenges underscore the ongoing need for creative and flexible recruitment strategies to address the unique realities of the charitable sector.

**Conclusion:** Our survey results highlight both the diversity of roles and the specific skills in

demand across the charitable sector. While fundraising and administrative positions remain top priorities for many organizations, charities also value candidates with strong interpersonal skills like collaboration and problem-solving. These findings emphasize the sector’s ongoing focus on recruiting talent that can support core operations while fostering the relationships and adaptability needed to navigate today’s challenges.

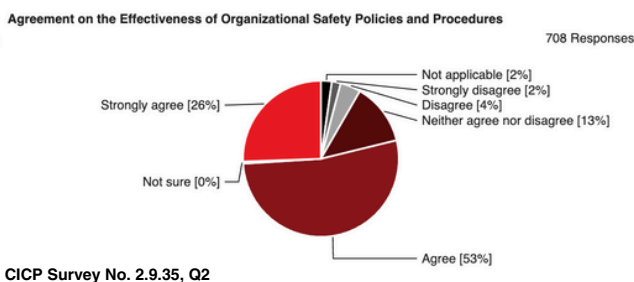
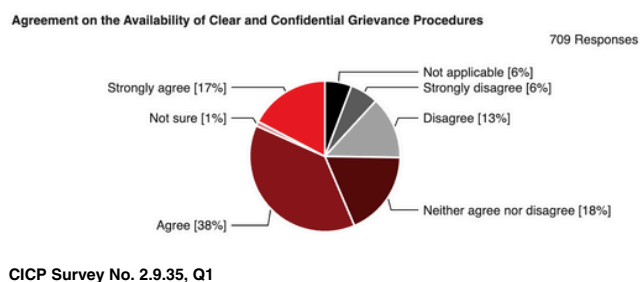
### Conflict Resolution and Workplace Safety

Exploring survey results from CICP survey no. 2.09.35

Ensuring safe work environments and effective conflict resolution practices is critical for fostering decent work conditions in the charitable sector. Inspired by the Ontario Nonprofit Network’s Decent Work Checklist, our survey on workplace safety and conflict resolution explored the extent to which charities have robust policies and procedures in place to support staff and volunteers (Ontario Nonprofit Network, 2018).

#### Survey Highlights:

- **Grievance Procedures:** About half of our respondents (55%) agreed that their organization has clear, accessible, and confidential grievance procedures in place to address conflicts between staff and volunteers. However, 19% expressed neutrality, and 19% disagreed or strongly disagreed, revealing room for improvement in these areas.
- **Safety Policies:** A majority (79%) of our survey respondents agreed that their organization has effective safety policies in place, with only 6% disagreeing with this statement.
- **Policy Awareness:** While 55% of respondents agreed that staff and volunteers are adequately informed about grievance and safety policies, nearly a quarter (23%) expressed neutrality, and 16% disagreed, suggesting gaps in communication or training.



#### Key Themes from Respondents’ Comments:

Our respondents highlighted both strengths and challenges in implementing workplace safety and conflict resolution policies within charities:

- **Policy Implementation and Communication:** While many organizations reported having written policies, several noted challenges in ensuring they are consistently communicated, understood, and applied. High staff turnover and reliance on volunteers were among the mentioned barriers, making it difficult to embed these policies into everyday operations.
  - *“Having written policies is one thing. Embedding them in the organization’s practices and operations and providing the training and information they require is another. This is especially challenging during times of high staff turnover.”*

- **Resource Limitations:** Smaller organizations, in particular, reported struggling to allocate time and resources to developing or updating policies. Competing priorities often push this critical work to the backburner, even when its importance is acknowledged.
  - *“Unfortunately, whilst necessary, we have been unable to keep on top of policy writing, amending, and distribution, as we are so busy with so many competing priorities.”*
- **Leadership Burden:** In smaller workplaces, conflict resolution can fall to executive directors or senior leaders, adding to their workload and making staff hesitant to escalate issues. Some respondents suggested that external mediators or advisors could help alleviate this burden and improve resolution outcomes.
  - *“It is a small workplace, so the Ex Dir handles conflicts. Sometimes it is hard for staff to bother her knowing how busy she is. An outside person would be helpful.”*

Respondents underscored the need for a holistic approach to workplace safety and conflict resolution, emphasizing not just the creation of policies but also ensuring they are actionable, well-communicated, and supported by adequate resources and training.

**Conclusion:** Our survey results highlight that workplace safety policies and procedures are more widely established and effective compared to grievance procedures. However, panellist comments reveal significant challenges in implementing and maintaining these policies, particularly in smaller organizations with limited resources. While each organization’s approach is shaped by its unique needs and workplace environment, our findings suggest a need for greater focus on conflict resolution practices and on ensuring policies are not only developed but effectively communicated and embedded into daily operations. Strengthening these areas will be critical for fostering safe and supportive work environments across the sector.





## SECTION 4: POLICY

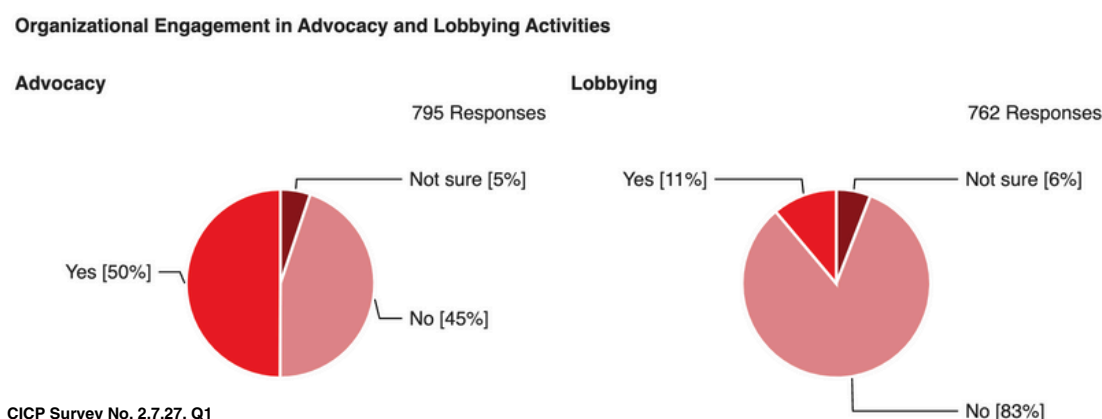
### Policy Participation

*Exploring survey results from CICP survey no. 2.07.27*

Though charities are heavily affected by government decision-making, it can often be unclear to what extent organizations are actively engaging with policymakers or policy-spaces to inform decisions affecting their operations, and the communities they serve. In an effort to better understand this engagement, we asked charities about their involvement in advocacy and lobbying activities, their participation in policy-related activities, and the importance they place on increasing their engagement in public policy dialogue and development. Our results reveal varying levels of involvement and a complex landscape of challenges and priorities.

#### Advocacy and Lobbying: A Disparity in Engagement

Half of responding charities reported engaging in advocacy, a modest increase from 42% in our previous survey from last year (CICP survey no. 1.2.9). However, only 11% of respondents indicated involvement in lobbying activities, reflecting a significant gap between these two related but distinct forms of policy engagement.



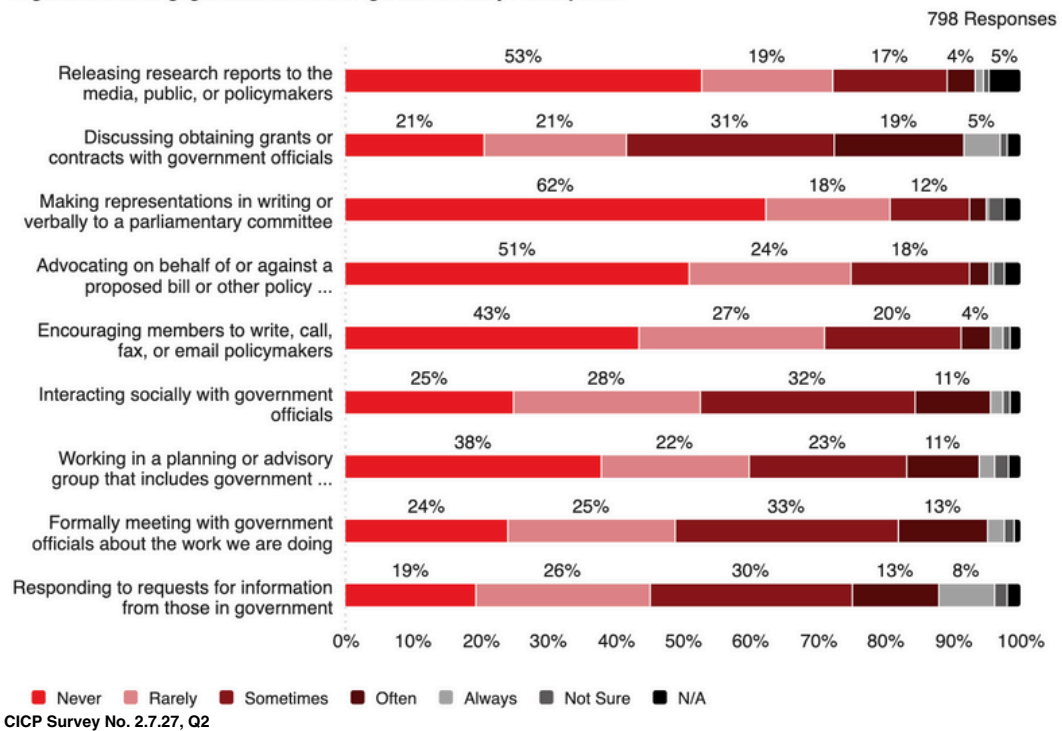
#### Patterns of Policy Activity Participation

Charities appear to be more likely to engage in policy activities that directly support their organization’s stability, such as funding-related discussions:

- **Discussing grants or contracts with government officials:** 31% reported engaging sometimes, 19% often, and 5% always.
- **Responding to government requests for information:** 30% sometimes, 13% often, and 8% always.
- **Formally meeting with government officials about the work we are doing:** 33% sometimes, 13% said often, and 2% said always.

The prevalence of charities involved in discussing grants with government may speak to the importance of government funding in the sector, but it also reflects a focus on engagement that helps to maintain organizational health and survival on an individual basis. It is also worth noting that the policy activity with the second highest level of participation, responding to requests for information, leans more towards passive engagement versus a more proactive style of engagement that involves mobilizing others or co-creating.

**Organizational Engagement Across Categories of Policy Participation**



In contrast, proactive or public-facing advocacy activities, such as advocating for or against proposed policies or encouraging stakeholders to contact policymakers, are far less common:

- **Advocating on policy proposals:** 75% rarely or never engage.
- **Releasing research reports:** 72% rarely or never engage.
- **Encouraging members to contact policymakers:** 70% rarely or never engage.

These findings suggest that charities may prioritize operationally essential activities over systemic policy engagement, potentially due to resource constraints or capacity limitations.

**Barriers to Policy Engagement**

Several challenges emerged as significant barriers to broader policy engagement:

- **Resource limitations:** 51% of respondents cited limited capacity as a major barrier.
- **Difficulty engaging policymakers:** 33% reported challenges in building effective relationships with government officials.
- **Lack of sector-specific insights:** 20% noted the need for updated information to guide their efforts ([CICP survey no. 2.2.4](#)).

Open-ended responses illustrate a tension between the desire for greater advocacy work and the realities of limited resources:

- *“We would like to do more advocacy work but are restricted by low staff capacity and increasing needs of our community.”*
- *“These activities are important, but our clients come first, and we do not have time or energy left to commit to this work.”*

Some organizations have turned to collaborative approaches to navigate these challenges:

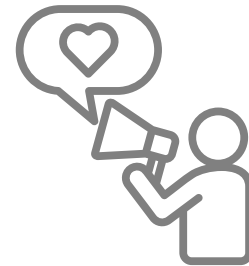
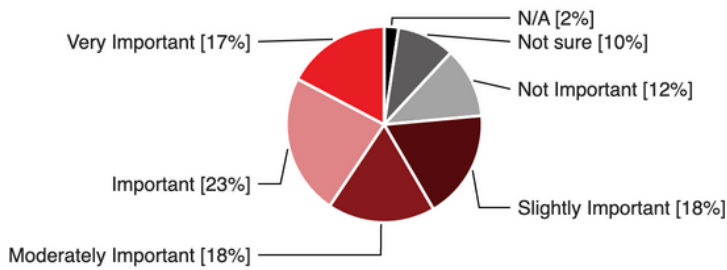
- *“Our organization typically provides input to a lobbying/advocacy group that represents member charities in BC.”*

### Alignment with Sector Priorities

While 12% of charities indicated that increasing policy engagement is not important for them and 10% were unsure, the majority of respondents expressed that it is important, to varying degrees, for their organization to increase their participation in public policy dialogue and development activities. Larger organizations generally rated this as more important than smaller organizations, though the latter also showed interest in expanding their participation.

Importance of Increasing Organizational Participation in Public Policy Dialogue

798 Responses



CICP Survey No. 2.7.27, Q3

**Conclusion:** Our survey findings indicate a complex picture of policy participation within the charitable sector. While many organizations engage in advocacy, fewer participate in lobbying or broader policy-related activities. Resource constraints and challenges in engaging policymakers are key barriers, compounded by competing priorities and limited capacity. Nonetheless, a majority of respondents recognize the importance of increasing their involvement in public policy dialogue and development activities, signaling a desire for greater influence and impact in the policy sphere.





## SECTION 5: SECTOR-WIDE CHALLENGES

### Rural-Urban Distribution

Exploring survey results from CICP survey no. 2.07.25

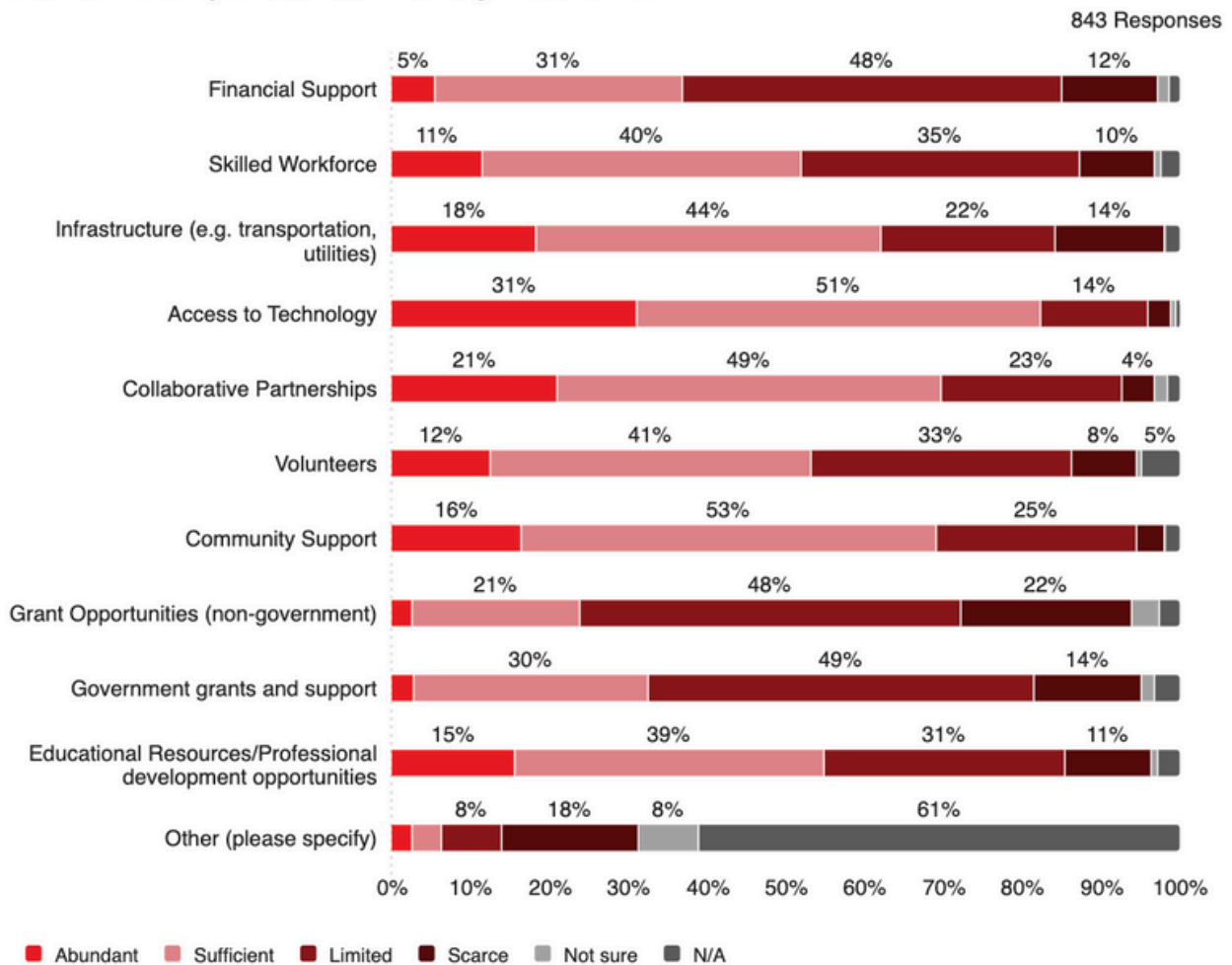
We asked charities about how geographic location impacts their access to various resources using Statistics Canada’s definitions of different geographic areas (Statistics Canada, 2022). To begin, we inquired about where charities provide their services, and the results were as follows:

- **58%** of respondents provide services in large urban population centres (population of 100,000+).
- **31%** provide services in medium population centres (population between 30,000–99,999).
- **38%** provide services in small population centres (population between 1,000–29,999).
- **22%** provide services in rural areas (population under 1,000).

We also asked charities where they are located:

- **55%** of panellists are located in large urban centres.
- **15%** in medium population centres.
- **23%** in small population centres.
- **6%** in rural areas.

Perceived Availability of Resources in Your Organization's Area



CICP Survey No. 2.7.25, Q3



### Financial Support

A clear disparity exists between rural charities and those in large urban population centres in terms of access to financial support. A much higher percentage of rural charities report that financial support is limited or scarce compared to their counterparts in large urban centres. Conversely, charities in large urban centres report the highest levels of "abundant" or "sufficient" financial support across all geographic categories.

Further examination of access to grants reveals that government grants are more accessible to charities in all areas compared with non-government grants. Charities in large urban centres report better access to both non-government and government grants than those in smaller geographic areas.

### Skilled workforce

Most charities based in rural areas indicate that their ability to access a skilled workforce is either "limited" or "scarce". This breakdown reverses as the size of a charity's location increases, with a majority of respondents based in large urban population centres reporting that their access to a skilled workforce is either "abundant" or "sufficient".

### Volunteers

Access to volunteers is most limited and scarce for charities in rural areas and most abundant and sufficient for charities in large urban population centres, with the level of access improving as you go up by size.

### Community support

Access to community support is the one resource that stands out for being rated "abundant" and "sufficient" at similarly high levels across all geographic areas.

### Infrastructure

Charities in rural areas overwhelmingly report limited or scarce access to infrastructure. This trend decreases as the geographic area increases, with large urban centres reporting the highest levels of "abundant" or "sufficient" infrastructure.

### Technology & Professional Development

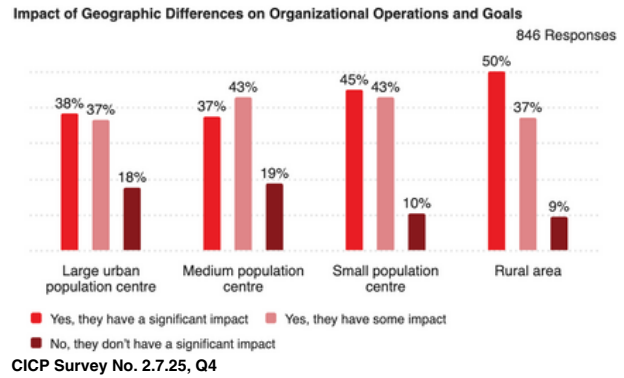
There are stark contrasts in access to technology and educational resources/professional development across geographic areas. For example:

- **Technology access:** 92% of charities in large urban areas report having "abundant" or "sufficient" access to technology, compared to only 53% in rural areas.
- **Professional development:** 71% of charities in large urban areas report access to "abundant" or "sufficient" educational resources, while only 23% in rural areas report the same level of access.

### Geographic Impact on Operations

Geographic location is a significant factor in the challenges charities face. The percentage of charities in rural and small population centres reporting that geographic differences significantly impact their operations and goals is considerably higher than the percentage of charities in large urban centres:

- 50% of rural charities report a significant impact.
- 45% of small population charities report a significant impact.
- 37% of medium population charities report a significant impact.
- 38% of large urban charities report a significant impact.



**Conclusion:** Our survey results highlight significant disparities in resource access based on geographic location. Rural charities face more challenges accessing financial support, a skilled workforce, volunteers, infrastructure, technology, and professional development opportunities compared to their large urban centre-based counterparts. These geographic differences have a notable impact on the operations and goals of charities, especially those in rural and small population centres.

For the second consecutive year, our data reinforces that charities in rural and smaller population centres are at a disadvantage compared to those in larger urban centres in terms of access to critical resources. Geographic location is a crucial lens through which to understand the constraints and opportunities that charities experience (see also [CICP survey no. 1.10.43](#)).

### Long-term Sustainability

*Exploring survey results from CICP survey no. 2.07.26*

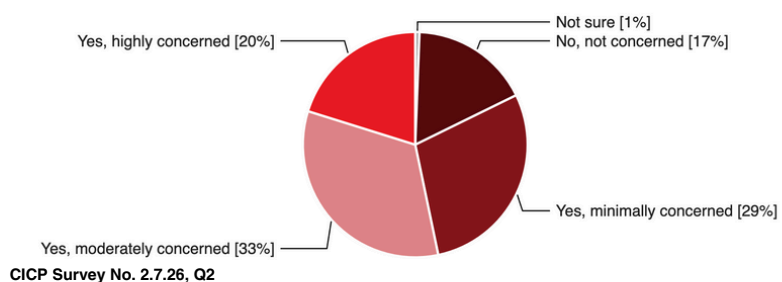
As charities continue to recover from the impact of COVID-19 and navigate an uncertain financial environment amidst changing (and often increasing) societal needs, questions around sustainability arise. Our survey on time availability revealed that many charities are unable to dedicate sufficient time to their top priorities due to rising costs, demand exceeding capacity, inadequate funding, and human resource limitations. These issues often take precedence over tasks that might contribute to greater stability and long-term planning ([CICP survey no. 2.8.31](#)).

Our survey found that 53% of responding organizations have medium to high concern about their long-term sustainability. The main factors driving these concerns are financial pressures, including rising operational costs (68%), dependence on government funding (60%), and fluctuating donor levels (59%). Human resource challenges, particularly recruitment and retention of staff (41%) and volunteers (37%), are also key concerns.

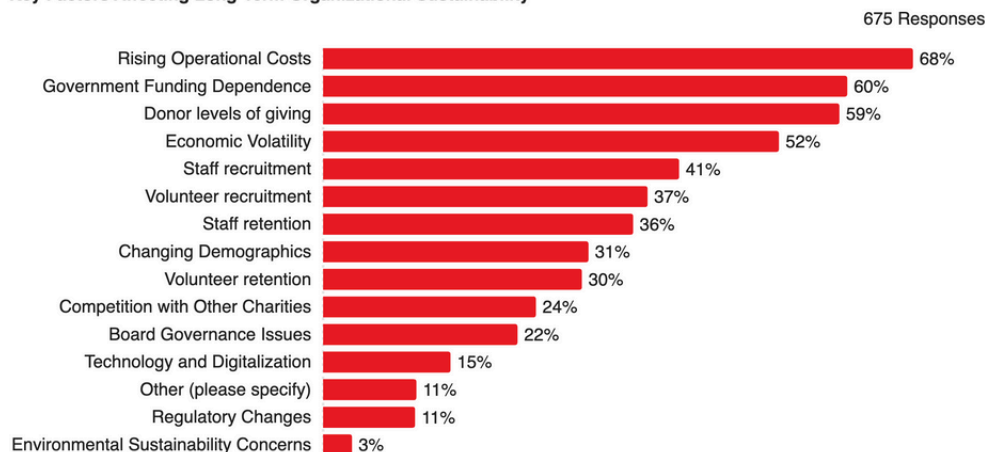


Level of Concern About Long-Term Organizational Sustainability

826 Responses



**Key Factors Affecting Long-Term Organizational Sustainability**



CICP Survey No. 2.7.26, Q3

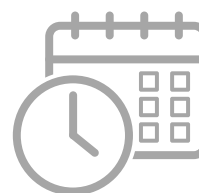
Financial stability and sufficient human resources are key indicators of the health and long-term viability of an organization, so the percentage of charities who are indicating that they are dealing with challenges that undermine both conditions is worrying.

Despite these challenges, the state of succession planning has shown little improvement since our 2023 survey on the topic (CICP survey no. 1.9.38). In 2024, 44% of charities still lack a formal succession plan, and only 10% have a well-defined one in place, indicating a continued gap in leadership planning. Concerns about sustainability are consistent with our findings from 2023, where factors such as economic volatility, donor fatigue, and rising operational costs were identified as high risks to the sector’s long-term stability. Charities also expressed similar concerns in open-ended responses, focusing on financial stability, staff retention, and volunteer engagement. Some charities, however, remain optimistic – citing strong financial health, diversified funding, and community support as reasons for confidence in their future. Larger organizations, in particular tend to report fewer concerns, though there are no clear patterns based on charity age or location.

**Organizational Approaches to Succession Planning for Executive Leadership**

Approach	Percentage
We do not have a formal succession plan.	44%
We are currently working on a succession plan.	22%
We address succession planning on a case-by-case basis.	21%
We have a well-defined succession plan in place.	10%
N/A	2%
Not sure.	1%

828 Responses



CICP Survey No. 2.7.26, Q1

**Conclusion:** Our findings highlight persistent and significant challenges to the long-term sustainability of many charitable organizations, particularly in the areas of financial stability and human resources. While some organizations are not currently very concerned about their sustainability, one in five charities being highly concerned and over one in three being moderately concerned is an unsettling finding, particularly given that polling data from 2023 suggests that 20% of Canadians are using charitable services to meet their essential needs, many for the first time (69% report using these services for the first time in 2023) (Ipsos, 2023).

## Time Availability

Exploring survey results from CICP survey no. 2.08.31

Time is an essential yet often constrained resource for charities. Our August 2024 survey on the topic explored how organizations manage time in the face of competing demands and limited resources, shedding light on the factors that hinder their ability to address priority issues and the impacts of these constraints.

- **Time Allocation Challenges:** 43% of our respondents indicated they do not have sufficient time to focus on their top priorities underscoring that while some do have sufficient time for these priorities (40%) time constraints are a widespread issue in the sector.
- **Key Contributors to Time Shortages:** Among those struggling with time allocation, financial constraints (78%) were the most frequently cited cause, followed by rising operational costs (65%) and increased service demands (59%). Additional factors included staff burnout (45%) and challenges recruiting volunteers, staff, or board members (33% -38%).
- **Impacts of Time Constraints:** The inability to dedicate adequate time to priority areas has significant consequences. Respondents highlighted missed strategic opportunities (70%), increased pressure on staff (64%), delayed projects (63%), and diminished fundraising ability (58%) as the most common outcomes.

### Factors Limiting Organizations' Ability to Focus on Top Priorities

Factor	Percentage
Inadequate funding or financial constraints	78%
Rising operational costs	65%
Demand for services/programs/activities exceeding our capacity	59%
Staff burnout and mental health challenges	45%
Difficulty recruiting the board members we need	38%
Difficulty recruiting and retaining volunteers	35%
Competing organizational priorities	35%
Difficulty recruiting and retaining staff	33%
Complexity and volume of reporting/compliance requirements	32%
Technological limitations or challenges	19%
External economic or environmental factors	18%
Leadership or management challenges	17%
Volunteer burnout and mental health challenges	17%
Limited access to professional development or training	13%
Other (please specify):	9%

CICP Survey No. 2.8.31 , Q2.1

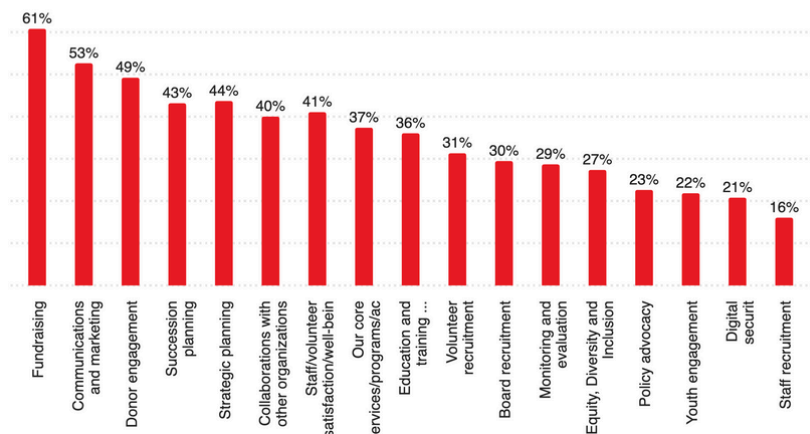
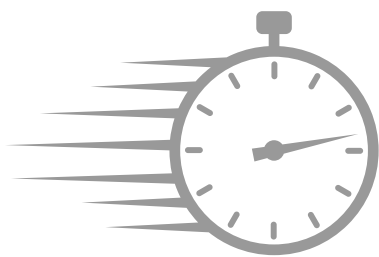
### Consequences of Limited Time for Organizational Priorities

Consequence	Percentage
Missed strategic opportunities	70%
Pressure on staff/volunteers to do more with less	64%
Delayed or incomplete projects	63%
Reduced ability to fundraise	58%
Increase in staff burnout	56%
Decreased innovation or program development	54%
Reduced ability to meet community/client needs	53%
Increased organizational risk or instability	36%
Reduced quality of services/programs/activities	35%
Increased staff dissatisfaction or disengagement	31%
Higher staff turnover	24%
Increase in volunteer burnout	17%
Decreased donor satisfaction or engagement	16%
Increased volunteer dissatisfaction or disengagement	12%
Higher volunteer turnover	11%
Other (please specify):	5%

CICP Survey No. 2.8.31 , Q2.2

### Areas Organizations Wish They Had More Time to Focus On

786 Responses



CICP Survey No. 2.8.31 , Q3

Our survey results also highlight areas that charities would like to focus more time on:

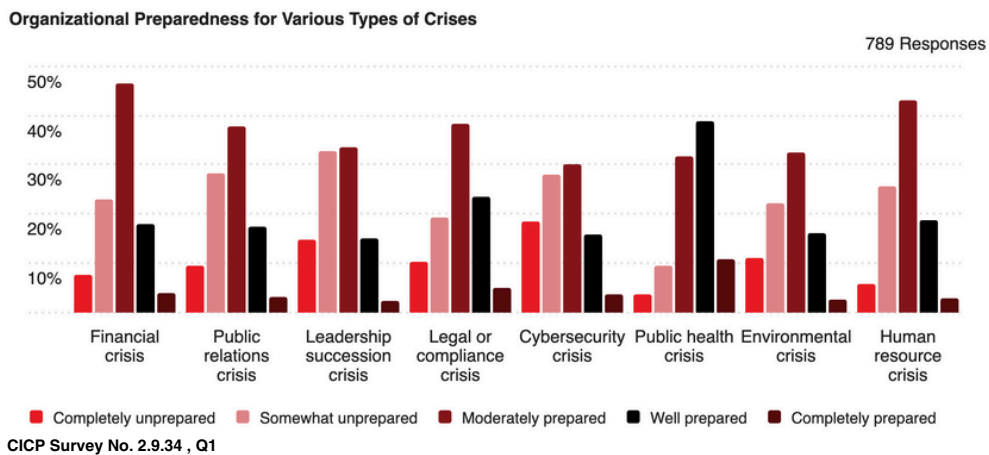
- **Desired Focus Areas:** Fundraising (61%), communications and marketing (53%), and donor engagement (49%) emerged as the top areas where charities seek additional time. Other priorities include strategic planning (44%), succession planning (43%), and improving staff and volunteer satisfaction (41%).

**Conclusion:** Charities across Canada face significant challenges in allocating time to their highest priorities, with financial pressures and rising operational costs being key contributors. The resulting cycle of constrained capacity leads to missed opportunities and added stress on staff, further compounding these challenges. Unlocking additional resources, particularly unrestricted funding, could empower charities to invest more time in strategic areas like fundraising, planning, and staff well-being—ultimately enabling them to achieve both immediate and long-term objectives.

### Crisis Preparedness

*Exploring survey results from CICP survey no. 2.09.34*

Crisis preparedness is an essential component of resilience and sustainability for charities. As the COVID-19 pandemic unfortunately showcased, the experience of a crisis and the scope of its impact can vary significantly from organization to organization. Given how underprepared many organizations were to manage the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on their operations, our study wanted to gauge to what extent organizations are proactively thinking about and integrating crisis preparedness into their planning currently, as well as pinpoint which types of crises they are prioritizing.



### Preparedness Levels by Crisis Type

- **Most Prepared:** 50% of respondents indicated that they are well or completely prepared to handle a public health crisis. This preparedness likely reflects adaptations made during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **Least Prepared:** Significant vulnerabilities were revealed in terms of how prepared charities are to handle potential leadership succession crises and cybersecurity crises:
  - 48% feel somewhat or completely unprepared for a leadership succession crisis.
  - 46% feel somewhat or completely unprepared for a cybersecurity crisis.

### Shifts Since 2023

Comparing 2023 and 2024 survey results shows slight declines in levels of preparedness across all crisis categories. For example:

- **Public health crises:** 23% of charities reported being completely prepared in 2023 versus 11% in 2024.
- **Cybersecurity crises:** 10% of charities reported being completely unprepared for a cybersecurity crisis in 2023, rising to 18% in 2024.

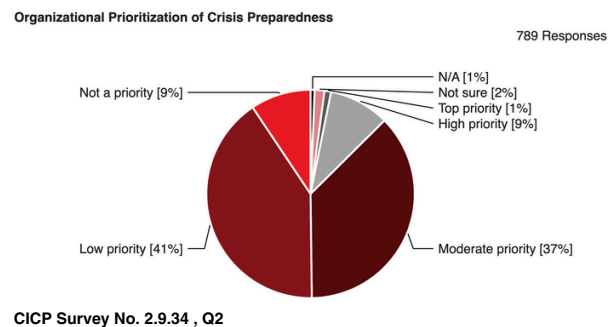
These trends suggest a stagnation or decline in readiness over the past year.

### Barriers to Preparedness

Half of respondents ranked crisis preparedness as a low or non-priority for their organization:

- **Low priority:** 41%
- **Not a priority:** 9%

Only 9% of respondents view crisis preparedness as a high priority and only 1% consider it to be a top priority for their organization.



The five most frequently identified types of support that charities believe would improve their crisis readiness include:

- **Access to emergency funding or financial reserves:** 72%
- **Leadership development or succession planning:** 55%
- **Crisis management training:** 51%
- **Cybersecurity enhancements:** 48%
- **Public relations expertise:** 37%

### Structural Challenges

Open-ended feedback reveals the operational realities many charities face:

- **Limited capacity:** *“We are so busy with day-to-day work that we have little to no time to plan for the future.”*
- **Resource constraints:** *“It takes a lot of time and resources to build these plans. Most funders don't support this work.”*
- **Small-scale operations:** *“As a small charity, we focus on one key investment at a time, like cybersecurity.”*

**Conclusion:** Charities exhibit varying levels of crisis preparedness, with notable strengths in public health responses but vulnerabilities in leadership succession and cybersecurity. Despite these vulnerabilities, crisis preparedness often ranks as a low to moderate priority for many charities. Addressing gaps will require material support, capacity-building opportunities, and a shift in funder priorities to include proactive planning measures.



## SECTION 6: COLLABORATION

### Mergers

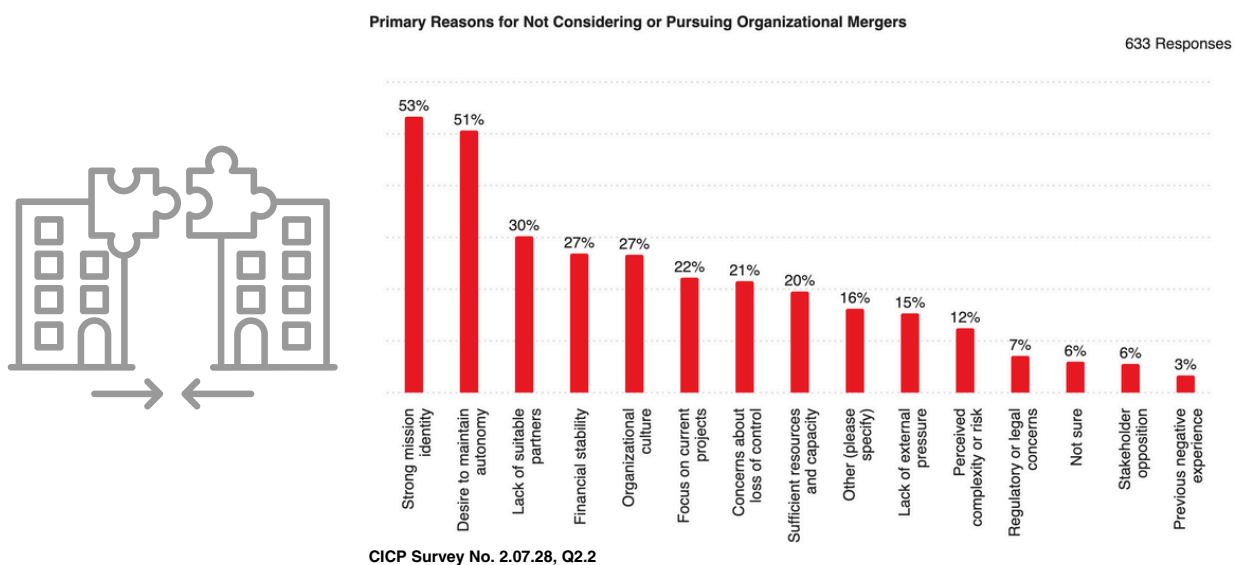
*Exploring survey results from CICP survey no. 2.07.28*

Mergers have been a strategic option across sectors, including the nonprofit and charitable sectors, to address challenges such as service demand, financial constraints, and resource limitations. Recent pressures from the COVID-19 pandemic and the affordability crisis have underscored the need for resilience, but mergers remain uncommon within the charitable sector.

We asked charities about their experiences with mergers over the past five years, including whether they had considered or pursued a merger, the factors influencing their decisions, and their perceptions of the broader impact of mergers on the sector. The findings revealed that mergers are not a widespread practice. The vast majority of respondents (82%) reported no involvement in discussions or actions related to merging. Among the minority who had explored the option, 7% considered it but decided against it, another 7% had discussions but took no action. Only 2% of respondents had completed a merger and 1% were in the process of merging. These results align with 2022 data from Statistics Canada, which found that only 1% of nonprofits planned to merge in the following year (Statistics Canada, 2022).

For those who had engaged with mergers, their motivations were largely tied to improving operations and service delivery:

- **Top Reasons for Considering Mergers:** Among the 17% of organizations involved in merger discussions:
  - 46% sought to increase efficiency or improve service delivery.
  - 42% aimed to save on costs.
  - 40% saw mergers as an opportunity to offer better and broader services.
  - 34% wanted to avoid duplication of programs/services.



However, many organizations remain hesitant to explore mergers. The most commonly cited reason for avoiding them was a strong commitment to preserving their mission and identity:

- **Top Reasons for Avoiding Mergers:**

- **53%** prioritized preserving their mission and identity.
- **51%** valued maintaining autonomy.
- **30%** cited a lack of suitable partners.
- Financial stability and organizational culture (**both 27%**) were also factors.

Our survey also shed light on how mergers are perceived within the sector. Almost half of respondents felt they lacked sufficient information to assess the overall impact of mergers on the charitable landscape:

- **Mixed Perceptions:**

- **46%** of respondents feel they lack sufficient information to assess the sector-wide impact of mergers.
- **29%** believe the impact is mixed, depending on the specific circumstances.
- **Only 11%** view mergers positively, while 5% see them negatively.

Qualitative feedback from respondents provided additional insights into the complexities of mergers. Some saw them as a way to strengthen service delivery, such as one charity who merged with a smaller, unregulated food bank to expand support in rural areas. Others expressed concerns about the risks involved, including the potential loss of organizational identity or reduced services. The fear of losing funding was another significant issue that was raised, particularly when merging with organizations supported by the same donors. One respondent suggested that shared services, such as HR or IT, might be a more effective way to achieve economies of scale without compromising identity or autonomy.

- *"Mergers can improve efficiency, but some lead to reduced services and loss of identity."*
- *"Finding compatible partners is a challenge."*
- *"Shared services may be more effective than full mergers, allowing organizations to maintain their identity while reducing costs."*
- *"Fear of losing funding is a real concern when merging with organizations sharing the same donors."*

--CICP Panellists

**Conclusion:** While mergers can offer certain advantages, such as improved efficiency or service delivery, they remain an uncommon and often controversial strategy in the charitable sector. Many organizations are deterred by concerns over mission preservation, autonomy, and finding compatible partners. Additionally, the lack of a clear consensus on the overall impact of mergers—coupled with limited information about their outcomes—further complicates the narrative. These findings highlight the need for a more nuanced, broad-based understanding of mergers as one of many potential strategies for addressing the sector's evolving challenges.





## Conclusion

The findings presented in this report offer valuable insights into the current state of Canada's charitable sector. One prominent theme that emerges is the significant strain on essential resources—namely, people and funding—that many charities are facing. The instability and insufficiency in these critical areas are limiting organizations' capacity to address other priorities vital to their long-term resilience and sustainability.

High turnover rates, limited access to flexible, long-term funding, demand outpacing capacity, and insufficient time for priority work such as fundraising and donor engagement are creating a cycle in which urgent needs consistently overshadow strategic initiatives. This includes policy and advocacy efforts, crisis preparedness, and other activities that are crucial for the sector's future health and viability. The implications of these findings extend beyond individual organizations to communities of all sizes across Canada. Without meaningful improvements, the risks and losses could be profound.

Charities are more than service providers; they are lifelines for communities. They represent the food banks, firefighting services, libraries, children's camps, community theatres, cemeteries, and daycare centres that underpin the fabric of our society. Despite the challenges of recent years, charitable organizations have demonstrated remarkable resilience. However, this resilience must be nurtured through sustained support and should not be taken for granted.

We hope the research findings in this report provide policymakers, funders, and stakeholders across the charitable sector with actionable insights to guide decision-making, resource allocation, and collaborative efforts. We also aim for this data to empower charities in their advocacy work and strengthen their ability to articulate their needs to communities, donors, and policymakers.

As we conclude our second year of research, we extend our deepest gratitude to the charitable organizations that have participated in our surveys and generously shared their insights and experiences. We also acknowledge the invaluable contributions of our stakeholders, partners, and Advisory Committee members, whose collaboration and support have been instrumental throughout this process.





## Looking Ahead

Year 2 (2024) of the CICP study is officially complete and our team have already nearly finished recruiting panellists for 2025! We would like to thank all of our dedicated panellists for their time, commitment, and inputs over the past year – a particular word of thanks to the many panellists who decided to re-join us for another study year in 2025. We are very happy to report that over the course of the 45 weeks of this year's study, the survey panel has maintained an average response rate of roughly 78%, thanks to our dedicated panel of organizations!

As the project continues to grow, we will be updating our website frequently to include more detailed analyses of the data we collect, finalize the white papers related to the study's methodology, and upload working drafts of research papers our team is working on as well as the study's data.

If there are questions you would like us to ask, please email them to us at [CICP.Research@carleton.ca](mailto:CICP.Research@carleton.ca). We cannot guarantee their inclusion, but they will be given our full attention. Contact us at the following email address and follow us on our socials for more information:

**Email:** [CICP.Research@carleton.ca](mailto:CICP.Research@carleton.ca)

**Website:** <https://carleton.ca/cicp-pcpob/>

**Newsletter sign up:** <https://confirmsubscription.com/h/t/3D0A2E268835E2F4>

**Follow us on LinkedIn:** <https://www.linkedin.com/company/cicp-pcpob/>





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## APPENDIX: Methodology

The participants in this study were recruited using randomized lists created with publicly available T3010 data (2021), administered by the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) <https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency.html>. T3010 data was downloaded and sorted into sample lists. No data was altered from its original state. Our lists were produced as copies of an official work published by the Government of Canada and were not endorsed by, or produced in affiliation with, the Government of Canada.

This year, we partnered with the Survey Research Centre at the University of Waterloo to create our initial sample lists. As a team, we felt it was good practice to have a third party draw our randomized samples. From the initial population of roughly 85,000 Canadian registered charities in 2021, we decided to exclude some organizations from the study. As we continue to study the whole population of registered charities, we hope that subsequent years will include more organizations.

The principal exclusions we discussed as a team from the T3010 dataset included: religious organizations associated with a specific denomination or place of worship (with some exceptions), hospitals, and schools. While the entire panel includes roughly 1,000 registered charities across the country, we also were mindful of creating seven subsamples to help us study specific groups with our final population of organizations. We opted for this strategy after our pilot study in June and July 2022 revealed important challenges in recruiting some strata of the population of registered charities after our initial exclusions. The full methodological details will be discussed in the white paper for this study (currently in preparation). In addition to excluding religious organizations, hospitals, and schools, we decided to constitute our panel as follows:

The final sampling frame for this year's study included the whole population of registered charities that –

- Were designated as charities (type C in the T3010 form, thus excluding public and private foundations (type A and B).
- Had at least 1 full time employee (FTE) based on their T3010 form data.
- Had expenditures greater than \$1 on their 2021 T3010 to make sure we focus on active charities.

Based on these criteria, the sampling frame was roughly 32,000. We drew a randomized list of all the organizations left and recruited a panel of roughly 1,100 participants. We refer to that first sample as the “main sample.” However, given our interest in specific subgroups of Canadian registered charities and in consultation with the sampling experts at UWaterloo, we created a series of sub-samples that would allow us to study some groups that proved problematic to recruit in our pilot phase.

The following sub-sample categories were created to include some of these hard-to-reach populations. In future years of the project, we will investigate further some of these subgroups and develop strategies to improve our recruitment efforts. These subsamples (SS) are as follows:

1. **Subsample 1 (SS1):** Includes only charities with the designation A and B (public and private foundations) that had expenditures of at least \$1 in 2021. (N=947)
2. **Subsample 2 (SS2):** Includes only charities with the designation C (charities) that have no full-time employee (FTE) or that left the field blank and that had expenditures of at least \$1 in 2021. These are what we think of as volunteer run organizations. (N=3,053)
3. **Subsample 3 (SS3):** Includes all charities designated as C (charities) with at least one full time employee in the province of British Columbia and that had expenditures of at least \$1 in 2021. (N=1,940)
4. **Subsample 4 (SS4):** Includes designation C charities with at least 1 FTE, \$1 in expenditures in 2021 ensuring representation from all geographical regions of the country. (N=14,333)
5. **Subsample 5 (SS5):** Includes designation C charities with at least 1 FTE, \$1 in expenditures in 2021 ensuring representation from the province of Québec. (N=4,515)
6. **Subsample 6 (SS6):** Includes designation C charities with at least 1 FTE, \$1 in expenditures in 2021 that have spent at least \$1 internationally. (N=795)
7. **Subsample 7 (SS7):** Includes designation C charities with at least 1 FTE, \$1 in expenditures in 2021 and that is committed to the advancement of religion (category codes 0030, 0040, 0050, 0060, 0070, 0080, 0090). (N=13,935)

Each of the above lists was assigned a separate randomized number using the `ranuni()` function and then sorted by that number to scramble them.

As of August 20th, we had a panel of 1,045 subscribed panellists. Participant recruitment was conducted via e-mail, and phone calling. All panellists have filled in a panellist information form. The data collected through these forms is then collated with existing CRA T3010 data to provide a more robust overall picture of panellist/organizational information. In addition to confirming their contact information, we ask them to give us greater details on their organization's human resources.

Questions are currently being developed by the CICP core team (Raggio and Mathieson). We are in the process of establishing an advisory board to help us respond to the needs of the communities and make sure the project captures emerging trends. Advisory board members will be recruited from various organizations representing the charitable sector in Canada.

Project surveys are distributed weekly on Wednesday mornings (6am Eastern Time). Panellists are given an initial response period of 24 hours. Reminder emails are sent 24 hours after the initial survey has been distributed (Thursday morning), providing panellists with an additional 24 hours to respond. Weekly reports are published on the CICP website every Friday morning, providing initial graphs and descriptive findings for the week's questions. The monthly reports and research papers will provide more details on the trends observed and deeper analyses of the data collected.

More technical information will soon be available on our website, including the full downloadable data tables for December 2022 – now. We will share programing codes used to create our samples, analyses (when available), and research papers as we continue to develop the project. We are committed to collaborative, transparent, and accessible research. We welcome researchers interested in collaborating with our team.



