



THE Vermont Community Foundation

Vermonters' Perceptions of the Vermont Non-Profit Sector

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Survey Methodology:

In the spring of 2010 the Center for Rural Studies contracted with the Vermont Community Foundation to develop and administer two studies on the non-profit sector in Vermont. This first study aimed to develop a statistically valid understanding of Vermonters' perceptions of the non-profit sector.

Beginning on June 28th and continuing through July 9th 2010, the Center for Rural Studies (CRS) administered a telephone survey to randomly-selected Vermont landline phone numbers. Calling took place on non-holiday weekdays between the hours of 10am and 9pm. Specially-trained survey personnel utilized a secure web-based tool to collect data for this study. CRS staff utilized the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) analysis software to analyze and report the following findings.

The total number of valid responses to this survey was 810. The US Census estimate for Vermont's total population in July, 2009 (the most recent estimate available) was 621,760. Given this population total, a response rate of 810 for the survey provides a confidence level of 95% with a margin of error (confidence interval) of +/- 3.4. In lay terms, this means that if asked these questions, 95% of the time the entire population of Vermont would respond within +/- 3.4% of the percentage responses found in this report.

Can you give me a couple words that describe what “non-profit organization” means to you?*	Frequency
No profit (margin), don't make a profit, no financial benefit	212
Helping: other(s), people, disadvantaged, those in need & specified groups	170
For: Community, Common Good, Public, Society, etc.	133
Important, vital, visionary, timely, dedicated, grassroots, backbone, responsive, spirited, positive, caring, great, socially conscious, hard working, valuable, generous, honest, supporting, equal opportunity, needed, thoughtful, essential, creative, disciplined, focused, activist, committed, good, fair business.	51
Charitable, Charity	49
Not about (only) profit, bottom line	49
Provide Services	40
Doing good, philanthropic, altruistic, good people	38
Volunteers, volunteerism	31
Not a corporation, no owners, shareholders	27
Help(ful), (ing)	23
Rely on grants & donations	22
Profits, revenues, money is redistributed, reinvested	21
Provide free Services	19
Raise funds, solicitation, fundraising	18
Not making Money	14

Tax exempt, tax breaks	14
501c3, 401c, 501c7	8
Fills a gap/need not met	8
No personal (monetary) gain	8
Non-government-funded	7
Underfunded	7
Appropriately low income	6
Cause, goal, mission-oriented	5
Poor pay/no benefits	4
Disorganized, inefficient, naïve	7
Hide money, big wages, avoid taxes	9
Scam people and try to get money out of people	3
Phony, not real	4
Often liberal, progressive stated	1
Leeches on society	1
*This analysis utilized a keyword categorization. Multiple aspects of any given answer were coded within multiple categories. Red text contains overtly negative comments.	

When you think about Vermont-based non-profits, can you please name the first three that come to mind?						
	NP 1 Frequency	NP 1 Percent	NP 2 Frequency	NP 2 Percent	NP 3 Frequency	NP 3 Percent
Animal/Animal Rights	11	1.73%	17	3.21%	14	3.91%
Arts and Culture	60	9.42%	38	7.18%	16	4.47%
Education	39	6.12%	42	7.94%	28	7.82%
Foundations/Giving Programs	52	8.16%	47	8.88%	29	8.10%
Religious/Spiritual	31	4.87%	22	4.16%	15	4.19%
Health and Human Services	246	38.62%	194	36.67%	139	38.83%
Environment	41	6.44%	26	4.91%	16	4.47%
Civil Rights/Social Justice	10	1.57%	22	4.16%	7	1.96%
Civic Engagement	48	7.54%	28	5.29%	19	5.31%
Affordable Housing/Homelessness	35	5.49%	20	3.78%	13	3.63%
Community/Economic Development	18	2.83%	23	4.35%	23	6.42%
Agriculture	4	0.63%	9	1.70%	3	0.84%

Transportation	0	0.00%	2	0.38%	2	0.56%
Hunger/Food Security	42	6.59%	39	7.37%	34	9.50%
Totals	637	100.00%	529	100.00%	358	100.00%

A rigorous method was applied to categorize the responses for this calculation. Research was conducted to insure that only actual non-profit entities were counted. Incorrectly named organizations were pulled from the sample so only actual non-profits were calculated. Vague or unclear responses were also pulled from the sample. Many religious-based organizations were coded for another category. Mission statements were carefully scrutinized to establish primary functions and programs. If the primary function was to promote religion, then it went into the Religious/Spiritual category. However, if the primary function was to serve (as most were) as a charitable giving organization, it was categorized as a Foundation/Giving Program.

Proxy for respondent awareness of the non-profit sector*	Frequency	Percent
3 IDENTIFICATIONS = High Awareness	344	45.2%
2 IDENTIFICATIONS = Moderate Awareness	151	19.9%
1 IDENTIFICATION = Low Awareness	109	14.3%
0 IDENTIFICATIONS = No Awareness	157	20.6%
Total	761	100.0%

*Respondents were asked: "When you think about Vermont-based non-profits, can you please name the first three that come to mind?" Responses were recorded separately and cleaned. Responses that were not non-profits were counted as non-identifications. Non Vermont-based non-profits were counted as identifications for this purpose. Generic responses such as: "church", "fire department", and "school" were counted as identifications. Responses such as: "that conservation one" or "the one where they ring the bell" were not counted.

In general, would you say that you have a great deal, a fair amount, not much, or no confidence that Vermont's _____ non-profits provide quality services on the public's behalf?*	Great Deal	Fair Amount	Not Much	No Confidence	Don't Know
PERCENT COMPARISONS					
Vermont Non-Profits	46.2	39.5	5.9	3.0	5.4
Animal/Animal Rights	26.5	43.0	10.9	5.2	14.4
Arts & Culture	36.9	37.0	10.8	4.1	11.2
Education	27.0	42.0	14.3	4.3	12.4
Religious/Spiritual	22.2	33.5	15.7	3.8	24.8
Health & Human Services	36.3	41.9	10.2	4.6	7.0
Environment	37.4	36.8	10.2	6.5	9.1
Civil Rights/Social Justice	27.7	38.4	13.9	6.6	13.3
Civic Engagement	17.8	40.1	15.2	3.0	24.0
Affordable Housing/Homelessness	22.6	40.2	20.7	7.0	9.5
Community/Economic Development	17.0	45.4	16.7	6.8	14.2
Transportation	17.2	40.1	19.3	6.3	17.2
Hunger/Food Security	41.1	42.5	7.1	2.3	7.0

*This question set was randomized per respondent to eliminate respondent fatigue bias. The complete response set for each individual category represented in this chart follows.

We define a non-profit as an organization without a profit objective, which exists for the public good. In general, would you say that you have a great deal, a fair amount, not much, or no confidence that Vermont non-profits provide quality services on the public's behalf?	Frequency	Percent
Great Deal	369	46.2
Fair Amount	316	39.5
Not Much	47	5.9
No Confidence	24	3.0
Don't Know	43	5.4
Total	799	100.0

In general, would you say that you have a great deal, a fair amount, not much, or no confidence that Vermont's <u>Animal/Animal Rights</u> non-profits provide quality services on the public's behalf?	Frequency	Percent
Great Deal	208	26.5
Fair Amount	338	43.0
Not Much	86	10.9
No Confidence	41	5.2
Don't Know	113	14.4
Total	786	100.0

In general, would you say that you have a great deal, a fair amount, not much, or no confidence that Vermont's <u>Arts and Culture</u> non-profits provide quality services on the public's behalf?	Frequency	Percent
Great Deal	290	36.9
Fair Amount	291	37.0
Not Much	85	10.8
No Confidence	32	4.1
Don't Know	88	11.2
Total	786	100.0

In general, would you say that you have a great deal, a fair amount, not much, or no confidence that Vermont's <u>Education</u> non-profits provide quality services on the public's behalf?	Frequency	Percent
Great Deal	212	27.0
Fair Amount	330	42.0
Not Much	112	14.3
No Confidence	34	4.3
Don't Know	97	12.4
Total	785	100.0

In general, would you say that you have a great deal, a fair amount, not much, or no confidence that Vermont's <u>Religious/Spiritual</u> non-profits provide quality services on the public's behalf?	Frequency	Percent
Great Deal	170	22.2
Fair Amount	256	33.5
Not Much	120	15.7
No Confidence	29	3.8
Don't Know	190	24.8
Total	765	100.0

In general, would you say that you have a great deal, a fair amount, not much, or no confidence that Vermont's <u>Health and Human Services</u> non-profits provide quality services on the public's behalf?	Frequency	Percent
Great Deal	285	36.3
Fair Amount	329	41.9
Not Much	80	10.2
No Confidence	36	4.6
Don't Know	55	7.0
Total	785	100.0

In general, would you say that you have a great deal, a fair amount, not much, or no confidence that Vermont's <u>Environment</u> non-profits provide quality services on the public's behalf?	Frequency	Percent
Great Deal	295	37.4
Fair Amount	290	36.8

Not Much	80	10.2
No Confidence	51	6.5
Don't Know	72	9.1
Total	788	100.0

In general, would you say that you have a great deal, a fair amount, not much, or no confidence that Vermont's <u>Civil Rights/Social Justice</u> non-profits provide quality services on the public's behalf?	Frequency	Percent
Great Deal	217	27.7
Fair Amount	300	38.4
Not Much	109	13.9
No Confidence	52	6.6
Don't Know	104	13.3
Total	782	100.0

In general, would you say that you have a great deal, a fair amount, not much, or no confidence that Vermont's <u>Civic Engagement</u> non-profits provide quality services on the public's behalf?	Frequency	Percent
Great Deal	137	17.8
Fair Amount	309	40.1
Not Much	117	15.2
No Confidence	23	3.0
Don't Know	185	24.0
Total	771	100.0

In general, would you say that you have a great deal, a fair amount, not much, or no confidence that Vermont's <u>Affordable Housing/Homelessness</u> non-profits provide quality services on the public's behalf?	Frequency	Percent
Great Deal	177	22.6
Fair Amount	315	40.2
Not Much	162	20.7
No Confidence	55	7.0
Don't Know	74	9.5

Total	783	100.0
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In general, would you say that you have a great deal, a fair amount, not much, or no confidence that Vermont's <u>Community/Economic Development</u> non-profits provide quality services on the public's behalf?	Frequency	Percent
Great Deal	133	17.0
Fair Amount	356	45.4
Not Much	131	16.7
No Confidence	53	6.8
Don't Know	111	14.2
Total	784	100.0

In general, would you say that you have a great deal, a fair amount, not much, or no confidence that Vermont's <u>Transportation</u> non-profits provide quality services on the public's behalf?	Frequency	Percent
Great Deal	134	17.2
Fair Amount	313	40.1
Not Much	151	19.3
No Confidence	49	6.3
Don't Know	134	17.2
Total	781	100.0

In general, would you say that you have a great deal, a fair amount, not much, or no confidence that Vermont's <u>Hunger/Food Security</u> non-profits provide quality services on the public's behalf?	Frequency	Percent
Great Deal	324	41.1
Fair Amount	335	42.5
Not Much	56	7.1
No Confidence	18	2.3
Don't Know	55	7.0
Total	788	100.0

Generally-speaking, would you say you have a great deal, a fair amount, not much, or no confidence that Vermont's non-profits spend money wisely?	Frequency	Percent
Great Deal	183	23.3
Fair Amount	411	52.2
Not Much	111	14.1
No Confidence	37	4.7
Don't Know	45	5.7
Total	787	100.0

Would you say that Vermont's non-profit executives receive: too much, the correct amount, or too little financial compensation (pay) for their positions?	Frequency	Percent
Too Much	208	26.9
The Correct Amount	194	25.1
Too Little	96	12.4
Don't Know	276	35.7
Total	774	100.0

Compared to national-level non-profits, do you think Vermont's non-profits do better, worse, or about the same in providing quality services on the public's behalf?	Frequency	Percent
Better	384	49.0
Worse	31	4.0
About the Same	274	35.0
Don't Know	94	12.0
Total	783	100.0

With respect to the non-profit, the for-profit business and the government sectors, which sector do you believe does the best job <u>providing services</u>?	Frequency	Percent
non-profit sector	332	44.3
for-profit sector	180	24.0
government sector	124	16.5
Don't Know	114	15.2

Total	750	100.0
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With respect to the non-profit, the for-profit business and the government sectors, which sector do you believe does the best job <u>representing the public interest</u>?	Frequency	Percent
Non-profit sector	416	54.6
For-profit sector	112	14.7
Government sector	131	17.2
Don't Know	103	13.5
Total	762	100.0

With respect to the non-profit, the for-profit business and the government sectors, which sector do you believe does the best job <u>spending money wisely</u>?	Frequency	Percent
Non-profit sector	436	57.7
For-profit sector	198	26.2
Government sector	33	4.3
Don't Know	89	11.8
Total	756	100.0

When seeking <u>education services</u> for yourself or your family, would you prefer those services be provided by: a government agency, a for-profit business, a nonprofit organization, or do you have no preference?	Frequency	Percent
Government agency	147	19.0
For-profit business	102	13.2
Non-profit organization	193	25.0
No preference	308	39.8
Don't Know	23	3.0
Total	773	100.0

When seeking <u>health care services</u> for yourself or your family, would you prefer those services be provided by: a government agency, a for-profit business, a nonprofit organization, or do you have no preference?	Frequency	Percent
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Government agency	185	24.0
For-profit business	188	24.4
Non-profit organization	226	29.3
No preference	146	18.9
Don't Know	26	3.4
Total	771	100.0

Have you volunteered with a Vermont non-profit in the past year?	Frequency	Percent
Yes	335	42.9
No	440	56.3
Don't Know	6	0.8
Total	781	100.0

About how many Vermont non-profits have you volunteered with in the past year?	Frequency	Percent
1	125	37.3
2	87	26.0
3	74	22.1
4	26	7.8
5	14	4.2
6	6	1.8
8 (1), 10 (2).	3	0.9
Total	335	100.0

Have you donated money to a Vermont non-profit in the past year?	Frequency	Percent
Yes	590	75.4
No	179	22.9
Don't Know	13	1.7
Total	782	100.0

About how many Vermont non-profits have you donated money to in the past year?	Frequency	Percent
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1	110	18.8
2	131	22.4
3	122	20.8
4	72	12.3
5	73	12.5
6	36	6.1
7	4	.7
8	6	1.0
10	17	2.9
12	7	1.2
15 (3), 20 (4), 30 (1).	8	1.4
Total	586	100.0

Have you used the services of a Vermont non-profit in the past year?	Frequency	Percent
Yes	253	32.4
No	504	64.6
Don't Know	23	2.9
Total	780	100.0

About how many non-profits have you used services from in the past year?	Frequency	Percent
1	116	47.0
2	60	24.3
3	32	13.0
4	13	5.3
5	12	4.9
6	5	2.0
7	5	2.0
8 (1), 10 (3).	4	1.6
Total	247	100.0

Have you or has anyone in your immediate family ever been employed by any non-profit organization?	Frequency	Percent
Yes	302	38.9
No	461	59.4
Don't Know	13	1.7
Total	776	100.0

From the following list, what is the highest level of education you have achieved?	Frequency	Percent	Vermont%*
Less than 9th grade	7	0.9	9.7
9th-12th grade without a diploma	15	1.9	
High school graduate (includes GED)	154	19.9	32.6
Some college without a degree	128	16.6	27.6
Associates/Technical 2-year degree	75	9.7	
Bachelor/4-year degree	193	25.0	30.1
Post-graduate/professional degree	201	26.0	
Total	773	100.0	100.0

*2006-2008 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates (Includes a Margin of Error)

What is the name of the Vermont County in which you currently reside?	Frequency	Percent	County pop as % of Total VT Pop*
Addison	52	6.7%	5.9%
Bennington	48	6.2%	5.9%
Caledonia	59	7.6%	4.9%
Chittenden	178	23.0%	24.6%
Essex	6	0.8%	1.0%
Franklin	51	6.6%	7.7%
Grand Isle	16	2.1%	1.2%
Lamoille	36	4.7%	4.0%
Orange	39	5.0%	4.7%
Orleans	27	3.5%	4.4%
Rutland	53	6.9%	10.2%

Washington	78	10.1%	9.5%
Windham	49	6.3%	6.9%
Windsor	81	10.5%	9.1%
Total	773	100.0%	100.0%
*2006-2008 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates (Includes a Margin of Error)			

Please stop me when I read your household's 2009 income range from the following list.	Frequency	Percent	Vermont%*
Less than \$25,000	107	15.8	22.2
Between \$25,000 and \$50,000	185	27.3	26.1
Between \$50,000 and \$75,000	179	26.4	20.7
Between \$75,000 and \$100,000	91	13.4	13.5
More than \$100,000	116	17.1	17.5
Total	678	100.0	100.0
*2006-2008 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates (Includes a Margin of Error)			