

FACTUM

Two in Five Canadians Report Using Charitable or Non-Profit Services

Many Canadians Are Unaware Hospitals and Universities are Part of the Non-Profit Sector

Toronto, Canada, October 14, 2026 — Nearly two in five Canadians (39%) report that they or an immediate family member have accessed services or supports provided by a charity or non-profit in the past year, according to a recent Ipsos survey conducted on behalf of RBC. However, 40% were unaware that many publicly funded institutions, including hospitals, colleges and universities, are considered part of Canada's charitable and non-profit sector.

Use of Charitable and Non-Profit Services Varies in Frequency and Purpose

Healthcare is the most accessed type of support among respondents who use charitable and non-profit services (68%). Other areas of support include food (26%), education (15%), housing (12%), social programming (12%), employment (9%), professional or skill development (6%), cultural or recreational programming (6%), childcare (4%) and community integration programming (2%), while 9% report accessing another type of service.

Among those who report using charitable or non-profit services, most describe their engagement as occasional (79%), including 44% who say they use services sometimes and 35% who say they use them rarely. By comparison, about one in five (21%) report regular use, including 18% who say they use services often and 4% who say they always use them.

Charitable Service Use Highest Among Gen Z and Families With Children

Gen Z respondents report the highest level of use, with 44% indicating that they or an immediate family member have used charitable or non-profit services in the past year. Reported use is also higher among Millennials (42%) and Gen X (40%), compared with 33% among Boomers.

Nearly half of Canadians with children (49%) report using charitable or non-profit services in the past 12 months, compared with 36% of those without children, suggesting many families with children rely on the charitable service sector.

Different Generations, Different Needs: Support Priorities Shift Across Age Groups



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The types of services used also differ across generations. Younger generations report higher usage of education and employment-related supports. Education-related supports are reported by Gen Z (26%), Millennials (14%) and Gen X (17%), compared with Boomers (7%), while employment-related supports are reported by Gen Z (23%), Millennials (7%) and Gen X (12%), compared with just 1% of Boomers. By contrast, Boomers report the highest usage of healthcare-related supports (80%).

About the Study

These are the findings of an Ipsos survey conducted on behalf of RBC that was fielded between May 27-29, 2026. A total of n=1001 Canadians aged 18 and older participated in the survey which was fielded via the Ipsos I-Say panel. The results are considered accurate to within ± 3.8 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, of what the results would be had all Canadians over 18 been polled.

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