

# Volunteer Work in Quebec's Blood Drives

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Blood Products

Stem Cells

Human Tissues

# Background

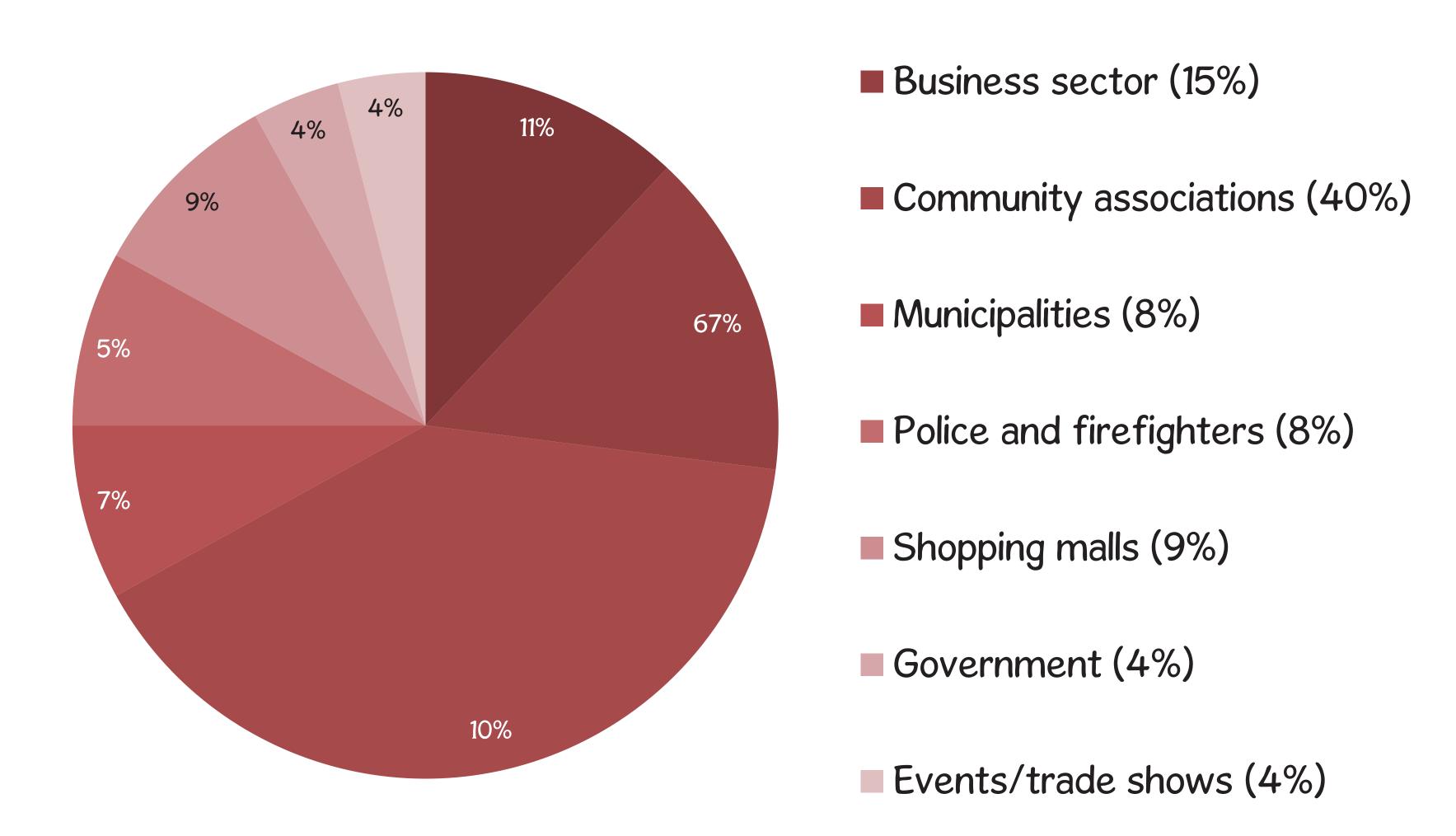
Héma-Québec, a non-profit organization, is responsible for managing the blood supply in Quebec (Canada).

- 1,000 donations of blood per day are needed to meet the demand from Quebec's hospitals.
- 2089 blood drives are held annually, of these:
  - $\Delta$  86% are held on mobile blood drives;
  - $\Delta$  13% in permanent blood donor centers and;
  - $\Delta$  1% on a mobile unit (bus)
- Over 16,000 people volunteer in these blood drives every year.

Is it possible to maintain the sustainability of volunteer resources over the medium and long terms?



# 86% are held on mobile blood drives



#### Methods

The research team has conducted 64 2-hour long semi-structured interviews with 19 Héma-Québec's member staff and 45 volunteers. Various selection criterias were used in choosing the informants (volunteers), including: age, sex, geographical area, duration and type of involvement.

## Objectives

- Defining volunteers' profile and history of implication
- Understanding volunteers' motivations
- Examining their role in the organization of blood drives
- According to different volunteer profiles, identifying potential problems for recruitment and retention.

What motivates volunteer implication in the blood donation cause?

#### Family background

- Parents as models with respect to blood donation
- In relation to family/local solidarity practices
- Religious practices

# Giving/ Giving back

- Knowing someone that has been transfused
- Grateful for the chances they've had in life
- Pleasure of giving

#### Sense of usefulness

- Staying active
- Being able to put one's skills to use
- To acquire new skills

#### For oneself

- Self-esteem
- Psychological well-being
- Identity reinforcement

# Sense of belonging

- Family and social networks
- Community participation
- Humanitarian values

#### Promoting the cause

- Knowing someone that has been transfused
- Awareness of the need for blood in society

# What are the triggering factors for volunteers' involvement?

# Personal Initiative (30%)

Chooses to become a volunteer after:

- \* Having given or received blood
- \* Seeing an advertisement (poster ad, TV, internet, etc.)
- \* Being introduced through her own volunteer organization

#### **External Influences (70%)**

- \* Direct request by a member of their personal network (family member, friend or neighbour)
- \* Organized activity by an association whose main purpose isn't the organization of blood drives.
- \* Obligation stemming from their environment (work, school. etc)

# What types of volunteers are there?

## "Permanent Héma-Québec volunteers" (10%)

- 11 + blood drives/yr
- Mostly in drives held in businesses, schools, permanent blood centers and mobile unit (bus)
- Administrative and telerecruitment work
- Urban areas

#### "Traditional Volunteers" (88%)

- 10 or less blood drives/yr
- Mostly on drives held with community associations, municipal services and the public sector
- Provide support in organizing blood drives and welcome donors.
- Suburban and rural areas

#### "Institutional Volunteers" (1%)

- 1-2 blood drives/yr
- In the work place or as part of the school curriculum
- Urban and suburban areas

# "Interns and Community-based Rehabilitation / Volunteers" (1%)

- Compulsory volunteering
- Many consecutive months at a time
- Telerecruitment work
- Urban areas

# Who are the volunteers? Are the different types of volunteers increasing or decreasing?

## Housewives $\sqrt{\phantom{a}}$

Women 55 years old + Duration of implication: 5 or more years

# Retirees 1

Men and women 55 years old + Duration of implication: 5 or more years

# / Workers ①

Men and women 25 years old + Duration of implication linked to the length of employment

### Students 1

Boys and girls 25 years old or less

Occasional implication as part of a school project or internship

# Community service $\sqrt[4]{}$

Men and women 18 years old + Duration of implication linked to time of rehabilitation

#### Conclusions

- 1- Most volunteers are involved for a long period of time. Their long-term motivations tend to remain the same.
- 2- The involvement in blood drives is occasional; it is often included within other activities such as volunteering, studies or work.
- 3- The average age of traditional volunteer is rising and young adults are not joining community organizations in sufficient number to replace them, leading to dwindling membership.
  - This problem affects mostly the suburban blood drives as well as those in the periphery.
- 4- New volunteers are mainly recruited from within existing members' personal social networks, limiting the scope of recruiting new potential groups (younger people, less traditional organizations, and people from other ethnic backgrounds).
- 5- "Housewife" volunteers are rapidly decreasing due to the increasing number of women in the workplace.
- 6- However, an increasing number of retirees are taking an active part in the blood donation cause.
- 7- Though an increase of volunteers can be found among workers and students, their involvement is linked to a precise moment in their life. Their implication may not prolong itself in the long run.
  - The need arises to retain these volunteers.