



CANADIAN SOCIETY OF ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVES

SOCIÉTÉ CANADIENNE DES DIRECTEURS D'ASSOCIATION

CSAE Canadian Association Census

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The *CSAE Canadian Association Census* is an in-depth study designed to serve as the Canadian association community's ultimate benchmarking resource on association workforce demographics, staff and revenue size, professional development expenditure, and Board structure and practices. This report, jointly produced by CSAE and The Portage Group, provides a reliable source of information for Canada's associations and not-for-profits to determine how their workforce demographics and governance behaviour compare with similar organizations across the national landscape.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

ORGANIZATION PROFILE

- Trade/industry associations (31%) and professional associations (30%) are the largest groups represented in the CSAE Canadian Association Census, with registered charities ranking third (13%).
- Provincial (38%) and national (38%) associations account for three quarters of survey participants.
- Participating organizations have an average annual revenue (or budget) of \$3 million while the median is \$1,2 million. The average number of constituents is 1,723 and the median is 450.

GOVERNANCE BENCHMARKS

- Among participants, Boards are comprised of an average of 12.7 directors with just over half having between 10 and 15 directors. Among the 73% of organizations that have an Executive Committee, roughly one in three of their directors serve on the Executive Committee.
- Boards meet on average 7.2 times per year with the majority of these taking place face-to-face. Video conferencing for Board meetings is less common with only 7% indicating they have used one in the past 12 months.
- The cost of governance includes expenses incurred for items such as Board meetings, committee meetings and Board training. While the actual cost of governance ranges greatly depending on the size of the organization, non-profits spend an average of 2.4% of revenues on governance. The median is 1.2% of revenues.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS BENCHMARKS

- Outreach through existing Board members, nominations committees and members are the most common approaches to Board recruitment.

- Two in five organizations use a formal skills or knowledge matrix to evaluate Board candidates. Sector knowledge or related organizational experience, leadership skills and experience and ensuring diversity on the Board are the most common evaluation criteria.
- Succession plans are in place for one in five Chief Staff Officers and only one in ten mission critical staff. They are more common for the Chair of the Board (44%) and Executive Committee members (36%).
- The vast majority of organizations provide at least some governance training to the Board (including the Chair) and Executive Committee. Board manuals and Board orientation/primer sessions are the most common types of training for all directors.
- A significant majority of organizations conduct Board evaluations on an annual basis. Half of organizations have formal Board evaluation mechanisms.

COMMITTEE BENCHMARKS

- Participants have an average of five standing committees. The most common of which are nominations/awards, governance, advocacy/government relations and membership.

ASSOCIATION STAFF BENCHMARKS

- Almost three-quarters of all staff in the non-profit sector are female.
- The sector workforce is split into three roughly equal groups, under 35, 35 to 49 and 50 and older. Sector-wide, the age distribution is similar to the Canadian workforce as reported by Statistics Canada.
- On average, participating organizations spend 0.7% of their budget on staff professional development.