

ARTISTS IN LARGE CANADIAN CITIES

Executive Summary

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Artists in Large Canadian Cities, a new report from Hill Strategies Research, provides an analysis of artists residing in 92 municipalities across Canada with at least 50,000 residents in 2001. The 92,000 artists in the 92 large Canadian cities represent 70% of the 130,700 artists in Canada.

Based on the 2001 census, the key statistics for each large city in the full report are: the number of artists (overall and in each of nine arts occupations); artists as a percentage of the overall labour force; artists' average earnings; and the change in the number of artists between 1991 and 2001. In addition to this national-level summary, the full report and regional press releases are available at <http://www.hillstrategies.com>.

There has been much interest recently in how the arts may contribute to cities' quality of life as well as their social and economic vitality. Regarding the economy, the arts are seen to be an important factor in attracting talented people, jobs and investment to communities. On a personal level, the arts can stimulate, inspire and entertain.

A strong artistic community can therefore enhance the whole community's well-being. In this case, the statistics presented in this report may be seen not just as signs of artistic activity in large Canadian cities but also as important factors in the well-being of Canadians and in potential economic growth.

Vancouver is the most artistic large city in Canada, and British Columbia has five of the top nine large municipalities

Artists represent 0.8% of the overall labour force in Canada. Among large Canadian cities, Vancouver has the highest concentration of artists in the local labour force. In fact, three of the four cities with the highest artistic concentrations are in British Columbia – Vancouver, Victoria and North Vancouver District Municipality.

Of the nine large cities with artistic concentrations above 1.0%, five are in British Columbia, two are in Quebec, one is in Ontario, and one is in Newfoundland and Labrador.

- Vancouver ranks first among large cities with an artistic concentration of 2.4%.
- Victoria has the second-highest concentration of artists (2.0%).
- Montreal ranks third among large cities with an artistic concentration of 1.9%.

- North Vancouver (District Municipality) has the fourth-highest artistic concentration among large cities (1.8%).
- Toronto ranks fifth among large cities with an artistic concentration of 1.6%.
- Verdun (QC) and St. John's (NL) are tied for sixth with an artistic concentration of 1.3%.
- Saanich (BC) ranks eighth (1.2%).
- New Westminster (BC) is ninth (1.1%).

Six large cities are tied for the tenth-highest artistic concentration (1.0%): Richmond (BC), Regina (SK), Waterloo (ON), Ottawa (ON), Quebec City (QC) and Halifax (NS).

In terms of the absolute number of artists, the City of Toronto has about twice as many artists (21,000) as the City of Montreal (10,100), with Vancouver (7,300) having the third-highest number of artists. Collectively, these three cities have 38,400 artists – 29% of Canada's 130,700 artists.

In 1991, based on 1991 municipal boundaries, the most artistic large municipalities were: Toronto (2.5%); Vancouver (1.7%); Montreal (1.6%); Victoria (1.4%); Ottawa (1.3%); and North Vancouver (1.3%). The pre-amalgamation City of Toronto had a much higher artistic concentration than the other municipalities amalgamated into the new City of Toronto.

Toronto artists have the highest average earnings

Nationally, artists' average earnings (\$23,500) are 26% less than other workers. Among large Canadian cities, the highest absolute levels of artists' earnings are in:

- Toronto, where artists earn, on average, \$34,100;
- North Vancouver (District Municipality), where artists' average earnings are \$33,700;
- Ajax and Pickering (ON), where artists earn an average of \$31,800 and \$31,000 (respectively);
- Ottawa, where artists' average earnings are \$29,700;
- Vancouver, where artists earn an average of \$29,400.

Montreal artists have the lowest earnings gap compared with the local labour force

In Montreal, artists earn an average of \$26,200, the tenth-highest level of average earnings in Canada. However, Montreal artists have *the lowest earnings gap relative to all local workers* among large Canadian cities.

- In Montreal, artists earn 7% less than the average of all local workers.
- In Toronto, the earnings gap is 11%, the second-lowest level in Canada.
- The earnings gap is 14% in Vancouver and Longueuil (QC), tied for the third-lowest level in Canada.

Many artists are very poorly paid

In many cities, artists have average earnings below \$20,000, despite the fact that, in Canada, the percentage of artists with a university degree, certificate or diploma (41%) is double the rate in the overall labour force (22%).

In Vancouver, three of the arts occupation groups have average earnings below \$20,000 (dancers, musicians and painters). In Montreal, five of the arts occupations groups have average earnings below \$20,000 (artisans, dancers, musicians, other performers, and painters). In Toronto, only dancers have average earnings below \$20,000. However, Toronto-based artisans and other performers earn just over \$20,000 on average.

The arts are a growth sector in many large cities

In Canada, the number of artists grew by 29% between 1991 and 2001, close to three times the rate of growth of the overall labour force (10%). In 60 of the 92 large cities, the growth in the arts labour force exceeded that of the overall labour force. This shows that the arts are a growth sector in many Canadian cities.

Of the 92 large cities examined in this report, Barrie (ON) had the largest percentage increase in the number of artists. The number of artists in Barrie more than tripled, increasing from 105 in 1991 to 340 in 2001. The number of artists in six other cities at least doubled between 1991 and 2001, including Coquitlam, Richmond and Port Coquitlam in British Columbia, Whitby and Newmarket in Ontario, as well as Moncton, New Brunswick.

Relative to overall labour force growth, growth in the arts labour force was *at least 10 times* the growth in the overall labour force in eight large cities: St. John's, Regina, Verdun, Toronto, Niagara Falls, North Vancouver District Municipality, Peterborough and Kingston.

In nine other cities, the arts labour force grew substantially while the overall local labour force *decreased* between 1991 and 2001. These nine cities are LaSalle, Brossard and Sainte-Foy (QC), Sarnia, St. Catharines, Thunder Bay, North Bay and Sault Ste. Marie (ON), and Saint John (NB).

Between 1991 and 2001, the arts labour force grew by 57% in Vancouver, 35% in Toronto and 24% in Montreal. In all three cities, the arts labour force grew much more quickly than the overall local labour force.

The combined growth rate in the arts in Vancouver, Montreal and Toronto was only slightly higher than the growth rate in the arts *outside* of these three cities between 1991 and 2001. In 1991, Vancouver, Montreal and Toronto represented 28% of Canada's artists. This percentage changed very little by 2001 – increasing slightly to 29%.

Report and data notes

Artists in Large Canadian Cities is the last of a series of reports on artists in Canada based on a custom data request from Statistics Canada's 2001 census, conceived of and commissioned by Hill Strategies Research.

The full report, funded by the Canada Council for the Arts, the Department of Canadian Heritage (Canadian Cultural Observatory and Arts Policy Branch), and the Ontario Arts Council, is available free of charge on the websites of Hill Strategies Research (<http://www.hillstrategies.com>) and the funding organizations. The report is the fourteenth in a *Statistical Insights on the Arts* series by Hill Strategies Research.

Nine arts occupations are included in the analysis: (1) actors; (2) artisans and craftspersons; (3) conductors, composers and arrangers; (4) dancers; (5) musicians and singers; (6) other performers (such as circus performers and puppeteers); (7) painters, sculptors and other visual artists; (8) producers, directors, choreographers and related occupations; and (9) writers.

The census captures information about the occupation at which a person worked the most hours between May 6 and 12, 2001. Overall, census estimates of artists may be somewhat low because of the frequency of multiple job-holding among artists and the May timing of the census.

The occupational categories are not a perfect fit for all artists but do provide a reasonable approximation of arts employment and self-employment. However, media artists are not well captured in the occupational classifications. In addition, the selected occupational classifications exclude those teaching arts disciplines in post-secondary, secondary or elementary schools. Those teaching artistic disciplines at private or other types of schools (such as dance schools) are included in the figures.

Data is reported for the municipal boundaries that existed in 2001.

Please see the full report for more information regarding the methodology of this report as well as a discussion of Census strengths and limitations.