

British Columbians spend nearly \$4 billion on cultural goods and services, over 4 times higher than government spending on culture in the province

Consumer Spending on Culture in Canada, the Provinces and 12 Metropolitan Areas in 2008, the 32nd report in the *Statistical Insights on the Arts* series from Hill Strategies Research, shows that BC residents spent \$3.8 billion on cultural goods and services in 2008, or 2.9% of total consumer spending in the province. The \$3.8 billion in consumer spending on culture is more than four times larger than the \$920 million spent on culture in British Columbia by all levels of government in 2007/08.

At \$869 per resident, British Columbia consumers' cultural spending is the fourth highest of all provinces. Cultural spending per capita is highest in Alberta (\$963) and Saskatchewan (\$905). Per capita consumer spending on culture is highest in the five western-most provinces, led by Alberta (\$963), Saskatchewan (\$905) and Ontario (\$880).

Across the country, Canadian consumers spent \$27.4 billion on cultural goods and services in 2008, or \$841 per capita. Consumer spending on culture is three times larger than the \$9.2 billion spent on culture by all levels of government in 2007/08.

The report examines spending on cultural goods and services, including art supplies and musical instruments, art works and events, home entertainment, movie theatre admissions, photographic equipment and services, and reading material. The data is drawn from Statistics Canada's *Survey of Household Spending*, a yearly questionnaire on Canadians' spending habits.

British Columbians spend twice as much on live performing arts as on live sports

British Columbians spent twice as much on live performing arts (\$200 million) than on live sports events (\$100 million) in 2008. In addition, more than twice as many BC households spent at least some money on live performing arts (41% of households) as on live sports events (19%).

British Columbia is also highly ranked in other per capita rankings

The report also provides comparisons of consumer spending on four key arts-related items in 2008: live performing arts; admissions to museums and heritage-related activities; works of art, carvings and other decorative ware; and books. British Columbia is highly ranked on all four of these arts-related items. For per capita spending on admissions to museums and heritage-

related activities, Alberta ranks first (\$21), followed by Ontario (\$17) and British Columbia (\$16). Per capita spending on works of art, carvings and other decorative ware is highest in Alberta (\$43), followed by British Columbia (\$38) and Ontario (\$33). Regarding per capita spending on books, Alberta ranks first (\$52), followed by British Columbia (\$47) and Manitoba (\$42). Per capita spending on live performing arts is second in B.C. (\$47), behind Saskatchewan (\$51) and tied with Manitoba and Ontario (also \$47).

21% growth in cultural spending between 1997 and 2008

After adjusting for inflation, BC residents' spending on cultural goods and services grew by 21% between 1997 and 2008, which is lower than the 35% rise in spending on all goods and services during the same period. The highest increase among the cultural categories was art works and events, which rose by 54% between 1997 and 2008. In the country as a whole, cultural spending increased by 28% between 1997 and 2008 after adjusting for inflation.

Vancouver 11th among 12 metropolitan areas

On a per capita basis, Vancouverites' cultural spending (\$795 per person) ranks 11th among 12 metropolitan areas in Canada. Total cultural spending was \$1.8 billion in Vancouver in 2008, representing 49% of the provincial total.

Full report also available

The full report contains many more details about consumer spending on culture in Canada, the provinces and 12 metropolitan areas. Funded by the Department of Canadian Heritage, the Canada Council for the Arts and the Ontario Arts Council, the report is available free of charge on the Hill Strategies Research website (<http://www.hillstrategies.com>) and the websites of the funding organizations.

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