

6.2 ATLANTIC CANADA

Eleven per cent of the 8,124 survey respondents (n=910) reside in Atlantic Canada (Newfoundland and Labrador, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick). The responses from Atlantic Canada closely mirror national results in many areas, with the exception of a slightly higher proportion of participants of country dance and Canadian dance forms.

a) Demographic Snapshot

One in five survey respondents in the Atlantic Canada sample is male. The average age of respondents in Atlantic Canada is 43.5, close to the average age in the Canada-wide sample.

Table 6.5.1: Age and Gender of Respondents – National and Atlantic

	National (n=8,124)	Atlantic (n=910)
Gender		
Men	21%	19%
Women	77%	80%
Age		
16-17 years	3%	3%
18-24 years	15%	16%
25-34 years	20%	19%
35-54 years	23%	21%
55-64 years	16%	17%
65 years or older	15%	16%
Mean Age	43.0	43.5

The educational profile in Atlantic Canada is similar to the national average, reflecting a highly educated respondent base.

Table 6.5.2: Respondents' Highest Level of Education Completed – National and Atlantic

Employment	National (n=8,124)	Atlantic (n=910)
Some high school	4%	5%
High school	15%	17%
College, trade/apprenticeship	20%	16%
University (Undergraduate)	32%	32%
University (Graduate)	27%	27%
Prefer not to say	2%	3%

The employment profile and household incomes are also fairly similar in Atlantic Canada relative to the national sample. Fewer are self-employed (11 per cent compared to 15 per cent nationally).

Table 6.5.3: Employment Status and Income of Respondents – National and Atlantic

	National (n=8,124)	Atlantic (n=889)
Employment		
Employed 30 hours or more per week year round	34%	35%
Employed less than 30 hours per week year round	8%	8%
Seasonally employed	2%	3%
Self-employed	15%	11%
Unemployed and looking for work	2%	1%
Full-time student	15%	16%
Retired	18%	20%
Other	4%	4%
Prefer not to say	2%	2%
Gross Household Income for 2012		
Under \$19,999	12%	10%
\$20,000 to \$39,999	15%	13%
\$40,000 to \$59,999	13%	13%
\$60,000 to \$79,999	12%	14%
\$80,000 to \$99,999	8%	8%
\$100,000 or more	14%	13%
Don't know / Prefer not to say	27%	28%

b) Dance Forms

Survey respondents were asked to name up to six forms of dance they participate in, listing the most important ones first. Respondents were provided with a drop down list of 190 dance genres and also given the opportunity to type in their response, if preferred. The 190 dance forms in which respondents told us they participate were subsequently grouped with similar dance forms into 16 categories of dance for ease of discussion.¹⁹ People in Atlantic Canada who participated in the survey reported involvement in a wide variety of dances, primarily contemporary and modern (34 per cent), ballroom and social (23 per cent), European traditional and folk categories of dance (22 per cent), country dance and Canadian (22 per cent), and ballet (21 per cent).

Table 6.5.4: Top Dance Types in Atlantic, Compared to National

	National (n=8,124)	Atlantic (n=910)
Contemporary and modern	34%	34%
Ballroom and social	26%	23%
European traditional and folk	21%	22%
Country dance and Canadian	16%	22%
Ballet	19%	21%

c) Intensity of Involvement in Dance

Among Atlantic Canadian respondents in the survey, intensity of involvement in dance mirrors that found nationally. Two in five respondents in Atlantic Canada (40 per cent) participate in four or more dance forms. They are involved in dance for 8.2 hours per week, on average. Respondents in Atlantic Canada have been dancing an average of 18.0 years, similar to the national average (18.8 years).

¹⁹ Categories and the list of known dance forms were developed by the study management team. Throughout the survey collection, previously unlisted dance forms were added and categorized.

Table 6.5.5: Intensity of Dance Involvement – National and Atlantic

	National (n=8,124)	Atlantic (n=910)
Number of Dance Forms		
One	20%	20%
Two	15%	15%
Three	25%	25%
Four or more	40%	40%
Average hours danced per week	9.5	8.2
Average number of years in dance	18.8	18.0

d) Type of Involvement in Dance

One-quarter of respondents in Atlantic Canada described themselves as dance professionals. Leisure dance participants who earn no income from dance make up 69 per cent of respondents from Atlantic Canada. There is a small portion of the sample that, while not defined as dance professionals, do report that they receive some money for their involvement in dance, often from cash prizes or awards (five per cent).

Table 6.5.6: Dance Professionals and Leisure Dance Participants – National and Atlantic

Status	National (n=8,124)	Atlantic (n=910)
Dance professional	27%	26%
Not professional, but receive some income from dance	6%	5%
Not professional and receive no dance income	67%	69%

As found nationally, dance professionals in Atlantic Canada are more likely than leisure dance participants to pursue contemporary and modern dance forms and ballet. Among leisure dance participants in Atlantic Canada, ballroom and social forms of dance are considerably more popular than they are among dance professionals. European traditional and folk dance forms and country dance and Canadian dance forms are also more common among leisure dance participants in Atlantic Canada than they are with dance professionals.

Table 6.5.7: Dance Professionals and Leisure Dance Participants in Atlantic Canada Across Most Common Types of Dance

Dance Category	Leisure Dance Participant	Dance Professional
Contemporary and modern	24%	60%
Ballroom and social	28%	10%
European traditional and folk	24%	14%
Country dance and Canadian	26%	11%
Ballet	16%	34%

Survey respondents were asked to provide details about their involvement in their top three dance forms. Each individual may therefore have provided information on how they are involved, and how they were educated in one, two or three dance forms. Survey responses are treated independently (i.e., considering up to three responses per respondent answering the survey) where results are reported by dance form. In all other instances, results are reported per respondent. Whether an individual indicated they are taking classes in one, two or three dance forms the response of “taking classes” is counted only once, unless results are described for specific dance forms.

Survey respondents were first asked to describe how they are involved in their dance form(s). More than half of respondents from Atlantic Canada (55 per cent) indicate that they perform for an audience or compete in one or more of their dance forms. They most frequently perform at festivals and special events (75 per cent), at community events (71 per cent), and at performing arts facilities (65 per cent). Schools (35 per cent) and competitions (28 per cent) are also avenues for performing. One in five perform for television (22 per cent) and almost as many perform at restaurants or similar venues (18 per cent).

Table 6.5.8: Proportion who Perform/Compete and Where they Perform – National and Atlantic

	National (n=8,124)	Atlantic (n=910)
% who perform/compete	58%	55%
Opportunities for Performing/Competing (of those who perform)		
Festivals or special events	79%	75%
Community events	71%	71%
Performing arts hall or facility	66%	65%
Schools	36%	35%
Competitions	32%	28%
Performances recorded for television	21%	22%
Restaurants, theme parks, cruise ships, etc	17%	18%

In addition to performing or competing, three in four respondents in Atlantic Canada (77 per cent) say they dance with a group. Nearly half (45 per cent) choreograph, create, or devise dance and two in five (42 per cent) teach dance.

Table 6.5.9: Non-performance Ways Respondents are Involved in Dance – National and Atlantic

	National (n=8,124)	Atlantic (n=910)
Dance with a group	78%	77%
Choreograph, create, or devise dance	46%	45%
Teach dance	44%	42%

The next table isolates Atlantic Canadian respondents involved in the most common dance forms, indicating for each the proportion of those who teach, dance with a group, and choreograph, devise, or create dance. For example, of those pursuing a dance form under the category of contemporary and modern, 63 per cent say they teach dance, 72 per cent say they dance in a group, and 71 per cent say they are involved in choreography. Those who participate in dance forms categorized as ballroom and social, or European traditional and folk, are more likely to say they dance with a group, and less likely to say they teach or choreograph.

Table 6.5.10: Non-performance Ways Respondents are Involved in Dance in Atlantic Canada Across Most Common Types of Dance

Dance Category	Teach	Dance with a Group	Choreograph, Create, Devise
Contemporary and modern	63%	72%	71%
Ballroom and social	31%	68%	21%
European traditional and folk	35%	84%	36%
Country dance and Canadian	30%	88%	26%
Ballet	63%	66%	66%

Survey respondents were asked to indicate whether they participate with a performing company, troupe or crew²⁰, a dance school or studio, a community group, dance club or association, or some other group, in one of their dance forms. The majority of respondents in Atlantic Canada participate in dance through a community group, dance club, or association (62 per cent). Almost as many participate through a school or studio (57 per cent). Nearly three in ten (29 per cent) participate with a performing troupe, crew or company.

²⁰ Crew is a term used for a group of street dance or hip hop dancers who usually compete ('battle') and perform together.

Table 6.5.11: How Respondents Participate – National and Atlantic

	National (n=8,124)	Atlantic (n=910)
Community group, dance club or association	65%	62%
Dance school or studio	57%	57%
Performing company, troupe or crew	33%	29%

The next table isolates segments of the Atlantic Canada sample involved in the most common dance categories, showing for each one the proportions that perform with performing companies, with dance schools, and/or with community groups. Among Atlantic Canadian respondents involved in contemporary and modern, and/or ballet categories of dance, participation with a school or studio is quite common (eight in ten or more). Around four in ten participants in these two dance forms are involved with a performing company, troupe, or crew. Atlantic Canadian respondents involved in ballroom and social, country dance and Canadian, and/or European traditional and folk categories of dance are more likely to participate with a community group, dance club, or association.

Table 6.5.12: How Respondents in Atlantic Canada Participate Across Most Common Types of Dance

Dance Category	With a performing company, troupe, or crew	With a dance school or studio	With a community group, dance club or association
Contemporary and modern	44%	82%	40%
Ballroom and social	9%	56%	73%
European traditional and folk	26%	42%	82%
Country dance and Canadian	17%	26%	85%
Ballet	40%	88%	37%

Three in ten Atlantic Canadian respondents in the survey (31 per cent) receive money for their participation in dance. The majority of these respondents receive professional fees or salaries (70 per cent). Half say they receive occasional honoraria or fees (53 per cent). To a lesser extent, some receive money through grants (22 per cent) and cash prizes or awards (14 per cent). The average amount of money earned by leisure dance participants in Atlantic Canada is marginally lower than those elsewhere in the country at \$689 a year, compared to \$730 for the national average among leisure dance participants.

Table 6.5.13: Proportion who Receive Money from Dance and Type of Income – National and Atlantic

	National (n=8,124)	Atlantic (n=910)
% receive money for dance	33%	31%
Type of income		
Professional fees or salaries	67%	70%
Occasional honoraria or fees	60%	53%
Grants to individuals	21%	22%
Cash prizes and awards	16%	14%
Average amount earned (Leisure dance participants only)	\$730	\$689

e) Background and Reasons for Dance

Two in three respondents in Atlantic Canada (62 per cent) have learned one or more of their dance forms through a dance school, studio, or academy. Over half (54 per cent) learned with a recreational or community dance group/club. One in four is self-taught (27 per cent) or received one-on-one instruction (24 per cent). Seventeen per cent trained through post-secondary education, less than the proportion nationally (23 per cent).

Table 6.5.14: Methods of Learning Dance – National and Atlantic

	National (n=8,124)	Atlantic (n=910)
Dance school, studio, or academy	60%	62%
Recreational or community dance group or dance club	58%	54%
Self-taught	30%	27%
One-on-one instruction	28%	24%
Post-secondary college or university	23%	17%
Elementary and/or secondary school curriculum	11%	7%

People dance for many reasons, often in combination. Survey respondents were asked to identify the main reasons (up to five) that they are involved in dance. The top reasons respondents in Atlantic Canada say they are involved in dance are enjoyment (90 per cent), exercise or fitness (77 per cent), social connection (63 per cent), and artistic expression (45 per cent). Atlantic dance participants are somewhat less likely to cite artistic expression compared to the national average of 52 per cent. This may be driven by proportionately lower number of dance professionals in the Atlantic sample relative to the national survey who are more likely than leisure dance participants to cite this as a reason for dancing.

Table 6.5.15: Top Five Reasons for Dance Involvement – National and Atlantic

	National (n=8,124)	Atlantic (n=910)
Enjoyment	88%	90%
Exercise or fitness	74%	77%
Social connection	61%	63%
Artistic expression	52%	45%
Share my dance with an audience/perform	33%	33%

As another indication of their involvement in dance, survey respondents were asked about the average number of live dance performances they typically attend in a year. Respondents in Atlantic Canada attend marginally fewer live dance performances relative to the national survey average. Atlantic Canada respondents say they attend 6.5 live dance performances in an average year, compared to 7.9 performances reported nationally.

In an open ended question, survey respondents were invited to describe “why dance is important to you, or how dance has made a difference in your life”. Many survey respondents, leisure dance participants and dance professionals alike, said that dance provides them with the benefit of deeper social connections. Respondents say dance stimulates their mental and physical well-being and is a great source of joy, stress relief, and exercise. Many say that dance is a way to express themselves constructively and creatively. Many also feel that participating in dance has taught them life skills like discipline, cooperation, openness, drive, and perseverance.

“I have always had a fascination for Celtic culture (it is a part of my family heritage) and I now live and work in Cape Breton, where Scottish-derived dancing is a very important identity marker. I have always loved making music and dancing, so I was thrilled to be able to develop a career that allows me to study them.”

–41 year old female leisure dance participant (step dance, square, Scottish Cèilidh)

“I play with a community swing band. Swing and Lindy Hop felt like a dying art when I was younger and the resurgence in the dance form has broadened my life and social circle both as a dancer and as a musician. The social connection from being involved with a dance group is fantastic, and I have found it to be a welcoming and challenging environment which has helped me grow as a person.”

–37 year old male leisure dance participant (Lindy Hop, Charleston, blues)

“Without dance, I wouldn’t have made many of the friendships I have, and so wouldn’t have learned the leadership and people skills involved with teaching dance to all ages. Dance gave me a healthy outlet to express myself when things were rough.”

–17 year old female dance professional (hip hop, jazz, step)

f) Dance Professionals

As previously mentioned, 26 per cent of the sample from Atlantic Canada either describe themselves as dance professionals, or reported dance income in the form of professional fees or salaries. Dance professionals in the survey provided information about their income and hours of dance, as well as some background on their years of earning dance income and amount of formal dance training.

Dance professionals in the survey are involved in dance forms cutting across all categories of dance. The most popular forms of dance represented include contemporary and modern (60 per cent) and ballet (34 per cent). Dance professionals in Atlantic Canada pursue ballroom and social, country dance and Canadian, European folk, and period forms of dance at a much lower rate than found among leisure dance participants.

Among dance professionals in Atlantic, 84 per cent of those in the survey say that they have received training through a dance school or program prior to earning income. The average number of years of training is 9.4 years. Half (51 per cent) say that they have received individualized training as an apprentice or with a mentor, elder or guru, reporting an average of 5.3 years of training. Since receiving that training the average number of years of earning dance income is 11.5 years.

Table 6.5.16: History of Dance Training and Income among Dance Professionals – National and Atlantic

	National (n=2,197)	Atlantic (n=235)
Percentage receiving training through dance school or program prior to earning dance income	79%	84%
Average number of years of training with a dance school/program	9.5	9.4
Percentage receiving individualized training (e.g., apprenticeship, with mentor, elder, guru) prior to earning dance income	53%	51%
Average number of years of individualized training	5.7	5.3
Average number of years earning income from dance	11.7	11.5

The majority of dance professionals responding from Atlantic Canada describe their primary role as a teacher (55 per cent), which is considerably more than in the national sample, suggesting greater participation in the survey by teachers in Atlantic Canada. Another 29 per cent are primarily dancers and 13 per cent are primarily choreographers.

Table 6.5.17: Primary Roles among Dance Professionals – National and Atlantic

	National (n=2,197)	Atlantic (n=235)
Teacher	47%	55%
Dancer	32%	29%
Choreographer	16%	13%

Among dance professionals responding from Atlantic Canada the average income earned is \$9,143 for their primary dance role. Another \$3,411 is earned in other dance-related activities. The average of earnings from the primary dance role is significantly less in the Atlantic sample than found nationally. Income from activities outside of dance is \$17,488, which is higher than found in the national sample of dance professionals.

Table 6.5.18: Average Income for Dance Professionals – National and Atlantic

	National (n=2,197)	Atlantic (n=235)
Average income in primary dance role	\$11,207	\$9,143
Average income in other dance activities	\$6,254	\$3,411
Average income in non-dance activities	\$15,695	\$17,488

Dance professionals in the survey who are from Atlantic Canada report spending an average of 10.2 paid hours per week of activity in their primary dance role, and 15.9 of combined paid and unpaid hours. The average number of unpaid hours spent in the primary dance role is close to the national average. In other dance activity this is 5.6 paid hours (11.4 when combined with unpaid hours). The average number of hours from paid activity outside of dance is 24.1. As a proportion of their paid and unpaid hours, Atlantic Canadian respondents spend about half of their time dancing (53 per cent).

Table 6.5.19: Average Hours among Dance Professionals – National and Atlantic

	National (n=2,197)		Atlantic (n=279)	
	Paid Hours	Paid and Unpaid Hours Combined	Paid Hours	Paid and Unpaid Hours Combined
Average hours per week in primary dance role	11.4	15.5	10.2	15.9
Average hours per week in other dance activities	8.0	11.8	5.6	11.4
Average hours per week in non-dance activities	21.2	21.2 ²¹	24.1	24.1
Total hours per week	40.6	48.5	39.9	51.4
Percentage spent in dance	48%	56%	40%	53%

²¹ Respondents were not asked about unpaid hours in non-dance employment activities.