

# Diversity and Arts Attendance by Canadians in 2010

## Executive Summary

# Statistical Insights on the Arts

Vol. 12 No. 1

March 5, 2014

Report funded by the Department of Canadian Heritage, the Canada Council for the Arts, and the Ontario Arts Council

Based on data from the 2010 General Social Survey, this report examines diversity and arts attendance in Canada, including attendance by:

- Visible minority Canadians.<sup>1</sup>
- First-generation immigrants.
- Aboriginal people.
- Canadians with disabilities.
- Youth (15 to 24 years of age).
- Seniors (65 and older).
- Members of official language minority communities.

Six key statistics on arts attendance are analyzed:

- Attendance at art galleries.
- Attendance at theatre performances.
- Attendance at popular music performances.
- Attendance at classical music performances.
- Attendance at cultural festivals.
- Attendance at one or more of the above arts activities.

A key finding of the report is that the range of arts offerings in Canada – from art galleries, classical concerts, and theatre performances to pop concerts and cultural festivals – manages to attract most Canadians to at least one type of activity. Overall, 71% of Canadians attended at least one of the five key arts activities in 2010.

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<sup>1</sup> Definitions of “visible minority” (the term that is used in the General Social Survey) and all other demographic groups are provided in the body of this report (available at [www.hillstrategies.com](http://www.hillstrategies.com)).

As shown in Figure ES1, there are relatively few statistically significant differences between diverse groups and other Canadians regarding this broad indicator of arts attendance.<sup>2</sup> Four of the eight diverse groups examined in the report have similar attendance rates to other Canadians:

- First-generation immigrants.
- Aboriginal people.
- Anglophones in Quebec (official language minority community).
- Francophones outside Quebec (official language minority community).

Youth 15 to 24 years of age have significantly **higher** arts attendance rates than Canadians 25 or older. This high overall attendance rate is due to the higher attendance rates of youth at three of the five key arts activities: theatres, popular music performances, and cultural festivals.

However, there are three demographic groups that have a lower arts attendance rate that is statistically significant compared with other Canadians: Canadians with a disability, seniors, and visible minority Canadians (although the difference in this case is relatively small).

A demographic comparison of arts attendees with non-attendees for the six diverse groups where demographic analysis was feasible<sup>3</sup> shows that:

- Higher education and above-average household incomes are factors for all six diverse groups.
- Women are more likely than men to attend arts events in four cases: Aboriginal people, Canadians with a disability, youth, and seniors.
- Canadians under the age of 55 who are also from a visible minority group, Aboriginal, or disabled are more likely to attend than older Canadians from these same groups.

#### **Data source**

The data in this report are drawn from Statistics Canada's General Social Survey of 2010, an in-depth telephone survey of about 7,500 Canadians 15 years of age or older. The report summarizes data on Canadians who attended at least one of five different arts activities during the 12 months prior to the survey.

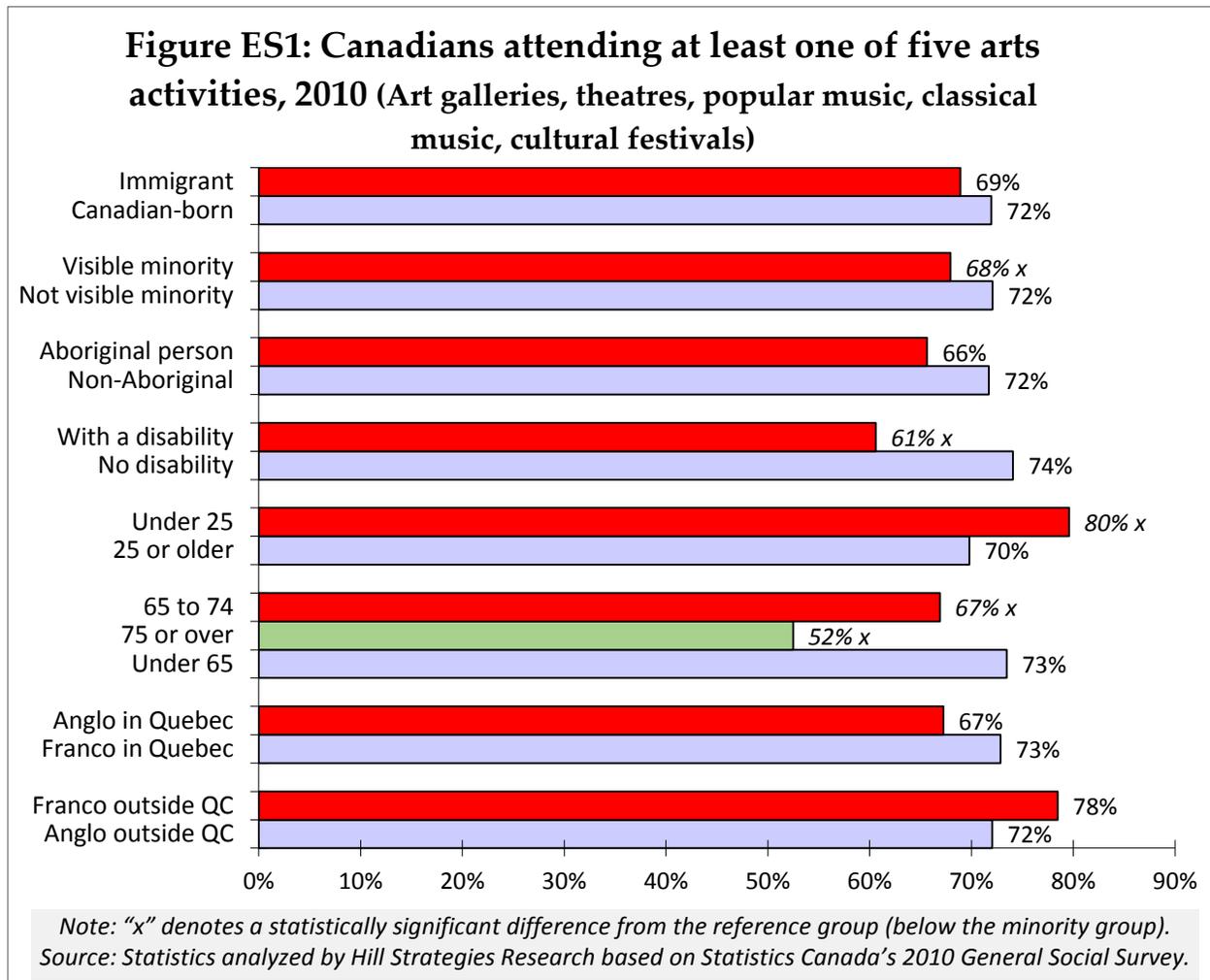
Individuals are counted as an "attendee" at a particular activity if they went at least once in 2010. However, respondents are counted only once in each activity regardless of how many times they attended during the year. It is also important to note that the data include attendance of Canadian residents while travelling out of the country and exclude attendance by residents of other countries while travelling in Canada.

The General Social Survey's target population was "all non-institutionalized persons 15 years of age or older, living in the ten provinces of Canada". As such, there are no data on the three territories.

<sup>2</sup> "Statistically significant" means that a difference in attendance rates between diverse groups and other Canadians is likely to be a "true" difference, taking into account the margin of error of the estimates. Nineteen times out of 20, differences marked as "statistically significant" will be different (i.e., if 20 similar surveys were conducted).

<sup>3</sup> For smaller population groups, such as official language minority communities, demographic analysis of the 2010 General Social Survey data was not reliable.

- Urban residents are more likely than rural residents to attend in three cases: Aboriginal people, Canadians with a disability, and seniors.



There was a range of results for the five arts activities:

- **Art galleries:** significantly lower attendance by Canadians with a disability and Aboriginal people. The other differences are not statistically significant.
- **Theatre performances:** significantly lower attendance by visible minority and immigrant Canadians, Aboriginal people, and Canadians with a disability; significantly higher attendance by youth 15 to 24 years of age. The other differences are not statistically significant.
- **Popular music performances:** significantly lower attendance by visible minority and immigrant Canadians, Canadians with a disability, and those between 65 and 74 years of age; significantly higher attendance by youth 15 to 24 years of age. The other differences are not statistically significant.

- **Classical music performances:** significantly lower attendance by youth 15 to 24 years of age; significantly higher attendance by immigrant Canadians and those between 65 and 74 years of age. The other differences are not statistically significant.
- **Cultural festivals:** significantly lower attendance by Canadians with a disability as well as those between 65 and 74 years of age; significantly higher attendance by youth 15 to 24 years of age and visible minority Canadians. The other differences are not statistically significant.

Previous studies have shown that a person's childhood arts education is an important factor in adult arts participation. Other studies have examined motivations, values, and beliefs related to arts attendance. However, the General Social Survey did not ask respondents about these other potential factors, and, as such, they are not analyzed in this report.

**Full report also available ...**  
on the websites of Hill Strategies Research ([www.hillstrategies.com](http://www.hillstrategies.com)),  
the Canada Council for the Arts ([www.canadacouncil.ca](http://www.canadacouncil.ca)), and the  
Ontario Arts Council ([www.arts.on.ca](http://www.arts.on.ca)).