

6. REGIONAL PROFILES

6.1 ALBERTA

Seven per cent of the 8,124 survey respondents reside in Alberta (n=577). Compared with the pattern of overall response to the survey, in Alberta the proportion of response from dance professionals, as well as dance participants in contemporary and modern forms specifically, and also from younger respondents was higher, suggesting that communications and enthusiasm related to the survey was likely higher among these segments of the dance population in Alberta.

a) Demographic Snapshot

One in five survey respondents in the Alberta sample is male. The average age of respondents in Alberta is 39, compared to 43 years in the Canada-wide sample. This includes a proportionately higher number of respondents in the 18 to 24 range, and fewer who are 65 years and older.

Table 6.1.1: Age and Gender of Respondents – National and Alberta

	National (n=8,124)	Alberta (n=577)
Gender		
Men	21%	21%
Women	77%	78%
Age		
16-17 years	3%	4%
18-24 years	15%	21%
25-34 years	20%	24%
35-54 years	23%	19%
55-64 years	16%	13%
65 years or older	15%	10%
Mean Age	43.0	39.0

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

Table 6.1.2: Respondents' Highest Level of Education Completed – National and Alberta

Employment	National (n=8,124)	Alberta (n=577)
Some high school	4%	4%
High school	15%	17%
College, trade/apprenticeship	20%	17%
University (Undergraduate)	32%	36%
University (Graduate)	27%	24%
Prefer not to say	2%	2%

The employment profile is also fairly similar in Alberta relative to the national sample. Nearly two in five respondents in Alberta (39 per cent) are employed 30 hours or more per week annually, compared to 34 per cent nationally. The household income is higher in Alberta; nearly three in ten (28 per cent) have household incomes greater than \$80,000, compared to 22 per cent in the national sample.

Table 6.1.3: Employment Status and Income of Respondents – National and Alberta

	National (n=8,124)	Alberta (n=577)
Employment		
Employed 30 hours or more per week year round	34%	39%
Employed less than 30 hours per week year round	8%	9%
Seasonally employed	2%	4%
Self-employed	15%	14%
Unemployed and looking for work	2%	2%
Full-time student	15%	17%
Retired	18%	9%
Other	4%	3%
Prefer not to say	2%	2%
Gross Household Income for 2012		
Under \$19,999	12%	10%
\$20,000 to \$39,999	15%	10%
\$40,000 to \$59,999	13%	11%
\$60,000 to \$79,999	12%	11%
\$80,000 to \$99,999	8%	9%
\$100,000 or more	14%	19%
Don't know / Prefer not to say	27%	29%

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.¹⁶ Albertans who participated in the survey reported involvement in a wide variety of dances, primarily contemporary and modern (42 per cent), ballroom and social (29 per cent), ballet (28 per cent), and European traditional and folk categories of dance (22 per cent). Compared with the national survey findings, the concentration of involvement in ballet and contemporary and modern dance forms is higher among respondents in Alberta.

Table 6.1.4: Top Dance Types in Alberta, Compared to National

	National (n=8,124)	Alberta (n=577)
Contemporary and modern	34%	42%
Ballroom and social	26%	29%
European traditional and folk	21%	22%
Ballet	19%	28%

c) Intensity of Involvement in Dance

Among Alberta respondents in the survey intensity of involvement in dance is similar to that found nationally. Just under half of respondents in Alberta (45 per cent) participate in four or more dance forms. They are involved in dance for 10.5 hours per week, on average, which is somewhat higher than the national average. This is due in large part to the higher incidence of dance professionals in Alberta relative to the proportion in the national sample. Respondents in Alberta have been dancing an average of 18.3 years, similar to the national average (18.8 years).

¹⁶ 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 6.1.5: Intensity of Dance Involvement – National and Alberta

	National (n=8,124)	Alberta (n=577)
Number of Dance Forms		
One	20%	16%
Two	15%	14%
Three	25%	25%
Four or more	40%	45%
Average hours danced per week	9.5	10.5
Average number of years in dance	18.8	18.3

d) Type of Involvement in Dance

Alberta has a greater proportion of survey respondents who described themselves as dance professionals, or reported dance income in the form of professional fees or salaries (33 per cent, compared to 27 per cent nationally). Leisure dance participants who earn no income from dance make up 59 per cent of respondents from Alberta, compared to 67 per cent nationally. 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.

Table 6.1.6: Dance Professionals and Leisure Dance Participants – National and Alberta

Status	National (n=8,124)	Alberta (n=577)
Dance professional	27%	33%
Not professional, but receive some income from dance	6%	8%
Not professional and receive no dance income	67%	59%

As found nationally, dance professionals in Alberta are more likely than leisure dance participants to pursue contemporary and modern dance forms and ballet. Among leisure dance participants in Alberta, ballroom and social forms of dance sit at the top of the list and are considerably more popular than they are among dance professionals. European traditional and folk dance forms are also somewhat more common among leisure dance participants in Alberta than they are with dance professionals.

Table 6.1.7: Dance Professionals and Leisure Dance Participants in Alberta Across Most Common Types of Dance

Dance Category	Leisure Dance Participants	Dance Professionals
Contemporary and modern	30%	68%
Ballroom and social	38%	10%
Ballet	21%	41%
European traditional and folk	25%	16%

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). Six in ten respondents from Alberta (63 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 (80 per cent), at performing arts facilities (72 per cent), and at community events (71 per cent). Schools and competitions are cited as avenues for performing by three in ten, followed by televised performances (25 per cent). Respondents in Alberta are more likely to perform or compete than found in the national sample, and particularly more apt to do so in performing halls or facilities, although they are less likely to do so in schools. This may be driven by the higher proportion of dance professionals in the Alberta sample compared with the national proportion of the survey.

Table 6.1.8: Proportion who Perform/Compete and Where they Perform – National and Alberta

	National (n=8,124)	Alberta (n=577)
% who perform/compete	58%	63%
Opportunities for Performing/Competing (of those who perform)		
Festivals or special events	79%	80%
Community events	71%	71%
Performing arts hall or facility	66%	72%
Schools	36%	31%
Competitions	32%	33%
Performances recorded for television	21%	25%
Restaurants, theme parks, cruise ships, etc	17%	15%

In addition to performing or competing, seven in ten respondents in Alberta (72 per cent) say they dance with a group (lower than the national average of 78 per cent). Half choreograph, create, or devise dance (marginally higher than the 46 per cent nationally) and half teach dance (compared to 44 per cent nationally).

Table 6.1.9: Non-performance Ways Respondents are Involved in Dance – National and Alberta

	National (n=8,124)	Alberta (n=577)
Dance with a group	78%	72%
Choreograph, create, or devise dance	46%	50%
Teach dance	44%	50%

The next table isolates Alberta respondents involved in the most common dance forms, indicating for each the proportion 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, 64 per cent say they teach dance, 69 per cent say they dance with a group and 71 per cent say they are involved in choreography. More than half of Albertans who participate in some form of ballet are involved in these three ways (i.e., 57 per cent teach dance, 65 per cent dance with a group and 63 per cent choreograph dance).

Table 6.1.10: Non-performance Ways Respondents are Involved in Dance in Alberta Across Most Common Types of Dance

Dance Category	Teach	Dance with a Group	Choreograph, Create, Devise
Contemporary and modern	64%	69%	71%
Ballroom and social	35%	66%	26%
Ballet	57%	65%	63%
European traditional and folk	50%	87%	41%

Survey respondents were asked to indicate whether they participate with a performing company, troupe or crew¹⁷, 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 Alberta participate in dance through a community group, dance club, or association (65 per cent). The same proportion participates through a school or studio (63 per cent). One-third (36 per cent) participates with a performing troupe, crew

¹⁷ Crew is a term used for a group of street dance or hip hop dancers who usually compete ('battle') and perform together.

or company. Dance participants in Alberta are slightly more likely to participate in their dance form with a dance school or studio relative to the national average.

Table 6.1.11: How Respondents Participate – National and Alberta

	National (n=8,124)	Alberta (n=577)
Community group, dance club or association	65%	65%
Dance school or studio	57%	63%
Performing company, troupe or crew	33%	36%

The next table isolates segments of the Alberta 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 Alberta 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 half of participants in these dance forms are involved with a performing company, troupe, or crew. Alberta respondents involved in ballroom and social and/or European traditional and folk categories of dance are more likely to participate with a community group, dance club, or association.

Table 6.1.12: How Respondents in Alberta 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	53%	80%	47%
Ballroom and social	17%	53%	88%
Ballet	48%	88%	40%
European traditional and folk	37%	48%	82%

Four in ten Alberta respondents in the survey (41 per cent) receive money for their participation in dance, compared to 33 per cent nationally. The majority of these Albertans receive professional fees or salaries (72 per cent). Half say they receive occasional honoraria or fees (55 per cent). To a lesser extent, some receive money through grants (21 per cent) and cash prizes or awards (15 per cent). Fees and salaries are a more prominent form of money among Alberta respondents, relative to the national average. The average amount received is marginally higher in Alberta (although this is based on results from only 47 leisure dance participants).

Table 6.1.13: Proportion who Receive Money from Dance and Type of Income – National and Alberta

	National (n=8,124)	Alberta (n=577)
% receive money for dance	33%	41%
Type of income		
Professional fees or salaries	67%	72%
Occasional honoraria or fees	60%	55%
Grants to individuals	21%	21%
Cash prizes and awards	16%	15%
Average amount earned (Leisure dance participants only)	\$730	\$880

e) Background and Reasons for Dance

Two in three respondents in Alberta (66 per cent) have learned one or more of their dance forms through a dance school, studio, or academy, which is higher than the national survey average (60 per cent). Almost as many (59 per cent) learned with a recreational or community dance group/club. Three in ten learn through post-secondary education (31 per cent) (considerably higher than the 23 per cent nationally who learn this way) and through one-on-one instruction (32 per cent) (also greater than the national average). One in three (32 per cent) was self-taught.

Table 6.1.14: Methods of Learning Dance – National and Alberta

	National (n=8,124)	Alberta (n=577)
Dance school, studio, or academy	60%	66%
Recreational or community dance group or dance club	58%	59%
Self-taught	30%	32%
One-on-one instruction	28%	32%
Post-secondary college or university	23%	31%
Elementary and/or secondary school curriculum	11%	11%

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 Alberta say they are involved in dance are enjoyment (87 per cent), exercise or fitness (71 per cent), artistic expression (59 per cent), and social connection (58 per cent). They are also more likely to say they participate in dance to share their dance with an audience (40 per cent). Alberta dance participants are

more likely to cite artistic expression compared to the national average of 52 per cent, and to share one's dance with an audience as reasons for participation compared to the national average of 33 per cent. This may be driven by proportionately higher number of dance professionals in the Alberta sample relative to the national survey who are more likely than leisure dance participants to cite these as reasons for dancing. Leisure dance participants in Alberta are more inclined to say they are involved in dance for enjoyment, exercise, and social connection.

Table 6.1.15: Top Five Reasons for Dance Involvement – National and Alberta

	National (n=8,124)	Alberta (n=577)
Enjoyment	88%	87%
Exercise or fitness	74%	71%
Artistic expression	52%	59%
Social connection	61%	58%
Share my dance with an audience/perform	33%	40%

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 Alberta are similar to the national survey average in their attendance at live dance performances. Alberta respondents say they attend 7.1 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.

“Not only does dance keep me active, it allows me to express myself in a very open and artistic way and helps me to meet new people with the same interests as me. Dance also develops my mind, from picking up choreography quickly to being able to watch someone's movements and copy them, and have good spatial/visual learning and teamwork skills.”

–19 year old female leisure dance participant (modern and jazz)

“The important moments for me are those times when a child's face lights up with the joy of movement. As an instructor, my main goal is to foster a love for dance and movement while helping to develop the child as a whole person (socially, physically, emotionally, etc) not just a dancer.”

–26 year old female dance professional (creative movement, modern, jazz)

f) Dance Professionals

As already described, 33 per cent of the sample 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 the amount of formal dance training.

Dance professionals in the survey are involved in dance forms cutting across all categories or forms of dance. The most popular styles of dance represented include contemporary and modern (68 per cent) and ballet (41 per cent). These are pursued at a rate that is more than double the figure for leisure dance participants in Alberta. Dance professionals 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 Alberta, 83 per cent of those in the survey say that they have received training through a dance school or program prior to earning income, although 13 per cent do not (and the rest did not respond). The average number of years of training is 10.7 years. Sixty per cent say that they have received individualized training as an apprentice or with a mentor, elder or guru, reporting an average of 6.7 years of training, each of which is slightly higher than the national average for individual training. Since receiving that training the average number of years of earning dance income is 12.8 years.

Table 6.1.16: History of Dance Training and Income among Dance Professionals – National and Alberta

	National (n=2,197)	Alberta (n=279)
Percentage receiving training through dance school or program prior to earning dance income	79%	83%
Average number of years of training with a dance school/program	9.5	10.7
Percentage receiving individualized training (e.g., apprenticeship, with mentor, elder, guru) prior to earning dance income	53%	60%
Average number of years of individualized training	5.7	6.7
Average number of years earning income from dance	11.7	12.8

The majority of dance professionals responding from Alberta describe their primary role as a teacher (60 per cent), which is considerably higher than the concentration found in the overall sample, suggesting a particularly enthusiastic response from teachers in the Alberta sample. Another 21 per cent are primarily dancers and 13 per cent are primarily choreographers.

Table 6.1.17: Primary Roles among Dance Professionals – National and Alberta

	National (n=2,197)	Alberta (n=279)
Teacher	47%	60%
Dancer	32%	21%
Choreographer	16%	13%

Among dance professionals responding from Alberta the average income earned is \$8,032 for their primary dance role. Another \$5,803 is earned in other dance-related activities. The average of earnings from the primary dance role is significantly less in the Alberta sample than found nationally. Income from activities outside of dance is \$21,951, which is a much higher proportion of overall income than found in the national sample of dance professionals.

Table 6.1.18: Average Income for Dance Professionals – National and Alberta

	National (n=2,197)	Alberta (n=279)
Average income in primary dance role	\$11,207	\$8,032
Average income in other dance activities	\$6,254	\$5,803
Average income in non-dance activities	\$15,695	\$21,951

Dance professionals in the survey who are from Alberta report spending an average of 13.5 paid hours per week of activity in their primary dance role, and 19.8 of combined paid and unpaid hours. The average number of unpaid hours spent in the primary dance role is higher among Alberta dance professionals than the national average. In other dance activity this is 7.3 paid hours (13.8 when combined with unpaid hours). Average hours from activity outside of dance are 21.2.

Table 6.1.19: Average Hours among Dance Professionals – National and Alberta

	National (n=2,197)		Alberta (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	13.5	19.8
Average hours per week in other dance activities	8.0	11.8	7.3	13.8
Average hours per week in non-dance activities	21.2	21.2 ¹⁸	21.2	21.2
Total hours per week	40.6	48.5	42	54.8
Percentage spent in dance	48%	56%	50%	61%

¹⁸ Respondents were not asked about unpaid hours in non-dance employment activities.