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STATISTICAL INSIGHTS ON THE ARTS

Artists in Canada's Provinces and Territories in 2016

With Summary Information about Cultural Workers

SIA report 50

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Executive summary

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Based on the 2016 census, this report examines the number and incomes of artists in each of Canada's provinces and territories. The report also provides a brief summary of the situation of cultural workers in each province and territory.

[A previous report in the *Statistical Insights on the Arts series*](#) found that there are 158,100 artists in Canada, representing almost 1% of the overall Canadian labour force (0.87%). In this report, this percentage is referred to as the "concentration of artists".

Nine detailed occupation codes are included in the count of artists. From largest to smallest in Canada as a whole, the arts occupations are:

- Musicians and singers: 35,000 (22% of all artists)
- Authors and writers: 27,700 (18%)
- Producers, directors, choreographers, and related occupations: 27,600 (17%)
- Visual artists: 21,100 (13%)
- Artisans and craftspeople: 14,700 (9%)
- Actors and comedians: 11,400 (7%)
- Dancers: 10,100 (6%)
- Other performers: 6,300 (4%)¹
- Conductors, composers, and arrangers: 4,200 (3%)

There are 726,600 cultural workers in Canada, including heritage occupations (such as librarians, museum workers, and archivists), cultural occupations (such as designers, editors, and architects), and the nine arts occupations. Cultural workers account for 4% of the overall labour force (also called the "concentration of cultural workers").

¹ The other performers category includes circus performers, magicians, puppeteers, models, and other performers not elsewhere classified.

Artists and cultural workers in the provinces and territories

In order to better understand the working lives of artists and cultural workers in each province and territory, the following factors are examined in the report:

- The overall number of artists and cultural workers
- Artists by occupation
- Demographic information on artists, such as gender, education, age, as well as whether artists are Indigenous or members of racialized groups²
- Self-employment rates of artists
- Total incomes, employment incomes, and household incomes of artists and cultural workers
- The industry sectors in which artists work

Some key findings of the analysis include:

- With 66,000 artists who spent more time at their art than at any other occupation in May of 2016, Ontario accounts for 42% of Canada's artists, almost twice as many as any other province.
- Musicians and singers represent the largest arts occupation in nine provinces. In Quebec, the largest arts occupation is producers, directors, and choreographers.
- British Columbia has the highest concentration of artists (1.18%) and the second-highest concentration of cultural workers (4.7%) in the country.

² Statistics Canada identified certain people as being from a "visible minority" based on a question about their background. This report refers to these people as "racialized".

- Nunavut has the second-highest concentration of artists in the country (1.17%). Ninety-one percent are Indigenous (by far the largest proportion in the country), and 71% are artisans and craftspeople.
- Yukon has the third-highest concentration of artists (1.14%) and the highest concentration of cultural workers (5.3%) in the country.
- Women represent 52% of Canadian artists and a majority of artists in all provinces and territories except Quebec (48%) and Nunavut (26%). The highest proportions of female artists are in Saskatchewan (62%) and Alberta (60%).
- The proportion of artists with at least a bachelor's degree is highest in Nova Scotia and Yukon (each 51%), followed by Ontario (50%) and Newfoundland and Labrador (49%).
- The percentage of artists who are 45 years of age or older is highest in Yukon (63%), followed by the Northwest Territories, Nunavut, and Nova Scotia (each 54%).
- Members of racialized groups represent a higher proportion of artists in British Columbia (20%) and Ontario (18%) than in any other province.
- Self-employment rates are highest among artists in the three territories: Yukon (69%), Nunavut (66%), and the Northwest Territories (58%). Among the provinces, self-employment rates are highest in British Columbia and Nova Scotia (each 56%).
- Among the provinces, Quebec has the smallest difference between the median income of artists and all workers (-35%) as well as the smallest difference between cultural workers and all workers (-1%).

- Artists in Nunavut have the lowest median incomes (\$10,700) of any jurisdiction in Canada.

About this report

After an introduction, the second section of the full report compares the number and median incomes of artists and cultural workers between the provinces and territories, while the third section provides profile information about artists and cultural workers in each province and territory. Additional data are provided in an appendix, and further details are provided in supplemental tables available at hillstrategies.com.

The report is based on a custom data request from the 2016 long-form census, which classifies people in the occupation in which they worked the most hours during the census reference week (May 1 to 7, 2016).

It is also important to note that, due to major changes in methods between the 2011 National Household Survey and the 2016 census, data in this report are not comparable to previous reports in the *Statistical Insights on the Arts* series. Reports based on the 2001 and 2006 long-form census are also not comparable, given a change in the base population used in the calculations of artists and cultural workers.³

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³ Reports from 2001 and 2006 excluded respondents with no income, while this report places no restriction on incomes.

Some aspects of the census have particular relevance in capturing the working lives of artists:

- Artists who spent more time at another occupation than at their artwork during the reference week would be classified in the other occupation. The census does not capture information about secondary occupations.
- Each occupation includes individuals who are employed or self-employed.
- Artists who teach in post-secondary, secondary, or elementary schools are classified as professors or teachers, not in artistic occupations. Instructors and teachers in some settings (such as private arts schools, academies, and conservatories) are *included* as "artists".

Full methodological notes can be found in Appendix 2 of the full report.

Subsequent reports will examine demographic differences in the situations of artists as well as artists in Canadian municipalities.

The *Statistical Insights on the Arts* series, created by Hill Strategies Research in 2002, is co-funded by the Canada Council for the Arts, the Department of Canadian Heritage, and the Ontario Arts Council as part of their shared commitment to making arts research available to inform the work of Canada's arts community and inform the general public about Canada's arts sector.