

A Statistical Profile of Artists and Cultural Workers in Canada

Based on the 2011 National Household Survey and the Labour Force Survey

Media highlights

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A Statistical Profile of Artists and Cultural Workers in Canada, the 42nd report in the *Statistical Insights on the Arts* series from Hill Strategies Research, provides an in-depth examination of artists in Canada, based on the 2011 National Household Survey (NHS) and historical data from the Labour Force Survey (LFS). Some of the key findings of the report include:

- There are more artists (136,600) than auto workers (133,000) in Canada.
- Nearly 700,000 cultural workers: over two-and-a-half times larger than the labour force in real estate.
- Multiple jobs and high self-employment rates are common among artists.
- Between 1989 and 2013, there was higher growth in artists than the overall labour force.
- The average income of artists is 32% lower than other workers.

More details are provided in the Executive Summary of the report, which can be found below. The Executive Summary and the full report can also be found at www.hillstrategies.com.

Media contact

For media interviews, please contact Mr. Kelly Hill, President of Hill Strategies Research, Hamilton, Ontario, at kelly@hillstrategies.com or 1-877-445-5494, ext. 1. Hill Strategies Research is a Canadian company that specializes in applying social science research methods to the arts sector. Hill Strategies has extensive experience conducting, interpreting, and communicating quantitative and qualitative analysis in the arts.

Executive Summary

There are 136,600 artists in Canada who spent more time at their art than at any other occupation in May of 2011 (which is when the National Household Survey data were collected). The number of artists represents 0.78% of the overall Canadian labour force. One in every 129 Canadian workers is an artist.

The number of artists (136,600) is slightly higher than the labour force in automotive manufacturing (133,000) and slightly lower than the labour force in the utilities sector (149,900) and telecommunications (158,300).

Musicians and singers are the largest of nine occupations included as artists (33,800 musicians and singers, or 25% of all 136,600 artists), followed by authors and writers (25,600, or 19%), producers, directors, choreographers, and related occupations (23,000, or 17%), visual artists (15,900, or 12%), artisans and craftspersons (13,100, or 10%), actors and comedians (9,400, or 7%), dancers (8,100, or 6%), other performers (4,400, or 3% – category includes circus performers, magicians, models, puppeteers, and other performers not elsewhere classified), and conductors, composers, and arrangers (3,400, or 2%).

These are just some of the key findings of *A Statistical Profile of Artists and Cultural Workers in Canada*, the 42nd report in the *Statistical Insights on the Arts* series from Hill Strategies Research. The study provides an in-depth examination of artists in Canada, based on the 2011 National Household Survey (NHS) and historical data from the Labour Force Survey (LFS). The report examines the number of artists, selected demographic characteristics of artists, artists' incomes, and trends in the number of artists. The report also provides comparable information for cultural workers and the overall labour force.

Because of major methodological changes between the 2006 census and the 2011 National Household Survey, data in this report are not comparable to data in

previous reports in the *Statistical Insights on the Arts* series. Subsequent reports in the *Statistical Insights on the Arts* series will examine artists in the provinces and local areas.

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Nearly 700,000 cultural workers

There are 671,100 people in cultural occupations, comprising 3.82% of the overall labour force. In other words, one in every 26 Canadian workers has a cultural occupation. Cultural workers include Canadians who were classified into 50 occupation codes, including heritage occupations (such as librarians, curators, and archivists), cultural occupations (such as graphic designers, print operators, editors, translators, and architects), and the nine arts occupations.

The number of cultural workers (671,100) is over two-and-a-half times larger than the labour force in real estate (254,200), about double the labour force on farms (339,400), and slightly lower than the labour force in the wholesale trade industry (733,500).

Readers should be aware that the estimate of cultural workers in this report differs conceptually from recent estimates provided by the Culture Satellite Account (CSA). The estimate in this report is based on occupations, while the estimates in the CSA report are based on culture industries and culture products. In addition to using a different methodology, the CSA estimates have a different base year and use a different data source.

Other key facts: Multiple jobs and high self-employment rates among artists

Other key facts about artists and cultural workers include:

- Artists are much more likely than other workers to hold multiple jobs. In 2011, 11% of artists reported having at least two jobs, compared with 7% of cultural workers and only 5% of the overall labour force.
- The rate of self-employment among artists is many times higher than the self-employment rate among the overall labour force. The NHS and LFS provide quite different estimates of self-employment rates among artists: 51% in the NHS and 70% in the LFS. Both of these statistics are many times higher than the estimates for the overall labour force: 11% in the NHS and 15% in the LFS.
- Artists, on average, work fewer weeks per year than other workers. In 2010, 70% of artists worked most of the year (40 to 52 weeks), compared with 77% of cultural workers and 78% of the overall labour force. In addition, twice as many artists as workers in the overall labour force indicated that they worked part-time in 2010 (40% vs. 19%).
- Women represent 51% of artists and 50% of cultural workers but only 48% of the overall labour force.
- Artists tend to be older than the overall labour force: there are fewer artists than the overall labour force under 25 years of age (12% vs. 14%) but many more artists 55 and over (25% vs. 19%).
- Cultural workers have a fairly similar age distribution to the overall labour force, although there are more cultural workers between 25 and 34 years of age and fewer under 25 years of age.
- Canada's artists and cultural workers have much higher levels of formal education than the overall labour force. The percentage of artists with a bachelor's degree or higher (44%) is nearly double the rate among the overall labour force (25%), while 38% of cultural workers have a bachelor's degree or higher.
- The 104,700 artists who speak English most often at home comprise about three-quarters of all artists in Canada (77%), somewhat higher than the equivalent percentage among cultural workers (71%) and the overall labour force (69%). Those who speak French or non-official languages most often at home are somewhat under-represented among artists compared with other workers.

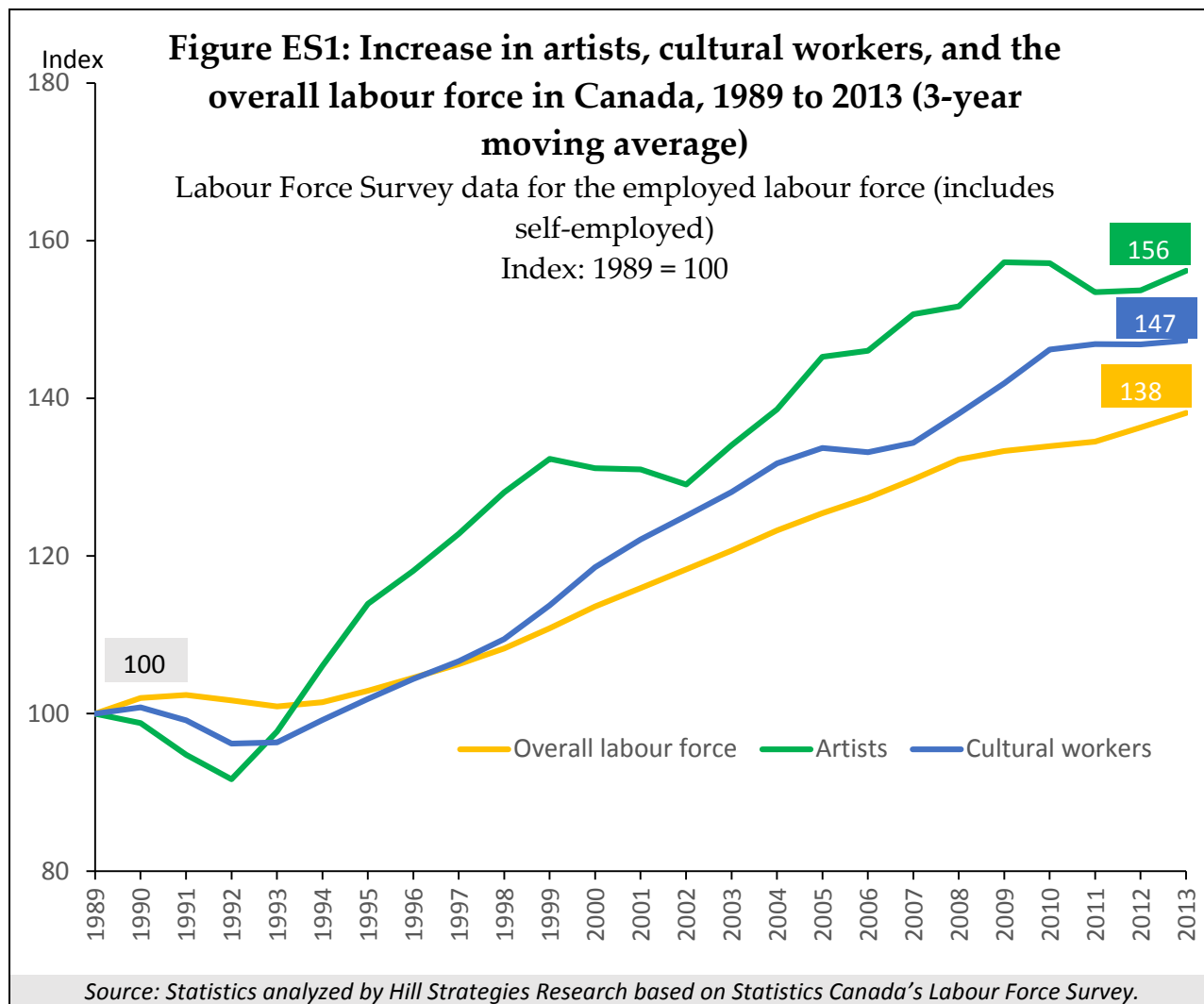
- The 3,700 Aboriginal artists represent 2.7% of all artists, which is similar to the percentage of Aboriginal people in cultural occupations (2.4%) but slightly lower than the percentage in the overall labour force (3.3%).
- The 17,400 visible minority artists represent 13% of all artists, which is lower than the percentage of visible minority Canadians in cultural occupations (15%) and the overall labour force (18%).
- The 28,000 immigrant artists account for about one-fifth of all artists (21%), exactly the same percentage as in cultural occupations and essentially the same as in the overall labour force (22%). Five percent of artists (6,900 people) immigrated between 2001 and 2011, compared with 6% of cultural workers and 7% of the overall labour force.
- 4.6% of the overall labour force indicated that they are often limited in the activities that they can do by a physical condition, mental condition, or health problem. Essentially the same percentage of artists (4.9%, or 6,800 artists) and cultural workers (4.0%, or 27,100 people) indicated that they are often limited in the activities that they can do.

Higher growth in artists than the overall labour force

The Labour Force Survey provides historical estimates of the number of artists and cultural workers. Because of the relatively small sample size of the LFS when dealing with smaller population groups (such as artists and cultural workers), there is substantial unexplained year-to-year volatility in estimates based on the LFS. In order to smooth out these irregular fluctuations, this report provides historical estimates using three-year moving averages. LFS historical data are available from 1987 to 2013, and three-year moving averages are provided for 1989 to 2013.

In order to compare growth in the number of artists, cultural workers, and the overall labour force, an index was derived. The index was set at 100 in 1989 for each group of workers.

As shown in Figure ES1, there was a 56% increase in the number of artists in Canada between 1989 and 2013. This is higher than the 38% increase in the overall labour force. The number of cultural workers in Canada increased by 47% between 1989 and 2013.



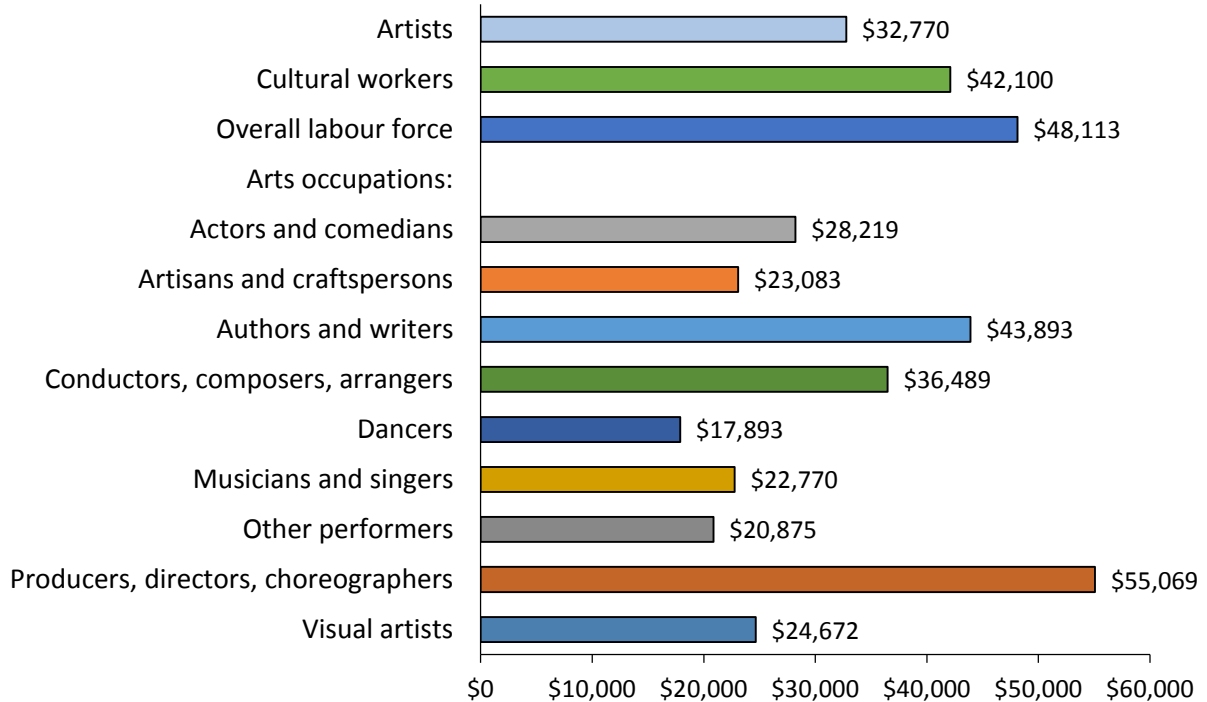
Average income of artists is 32% lower than other workers

Regarding the incomes of artists and cultural workers, the report finds that the total individual income of Canada's 136,600 artists averages \$32,800, a figure that is 32% less than the overall labour force in Canada (\$48,100). Cultural workers have average individual incomes of \$42,100 (12% less than the overall labour force).

Figure ES2 shows that, in two arts occupations, artists have average individual incomes that are below the low-income cutoff for a single person living in a community of 500,000 people or more (\$22,600). This is the case for dancers (\$17,900) and other performers (\$20,900). Two other arts occupations have average incomes that are slightly above the low-income cutoff: musicians and singers (\$22,800) and artisans (\$23,100).

Only the "producers, directors, choreographers, and related occupations" group has a higher average income (\$55,100) than the overall labour force (\$48,100).

**Figure ES2: Average individual incomes in 2010
Artists, cultural workers, non-cultural workers, and artists by
occupation**



Source: Analysis by Hill Strategies Research based on a 2011 National Household Survey data request.
All income figures relate to the 2010 calendar year.

Artists have low average earnings

The average employment income (or “earnings” from wages, salaries, and self-employment income) of artists is \$27,600, compared with an average of \$45,400 for the overall labour force, a difference of 39%. Cultural workers’ average earnings (\$39,100) are 14% lower than the average earnings of the overall labour force (\$45,400).

Female artists earn much less than their male counterparts, but the difference in earnings is equal to the difference among the overall labour force:

- On average, female artists earn \$22,600, 31% less than the average earnings of male artists (\$32,900).
- For cultural workers, women earn an average of \$34,100, 23% less than men (\$44,000).
- In the overall labour force, women earn, on average, 31% less than men (\$36,800 vs. \$53,300).

Compared with the overall labour force, the difference in earnings is highest for the most highly educated artists. Artists with university credentials at or above the bachelor’s level earn an

average of \$30,300, which is 55% less than the average earnings of workers in the overall labour force with the same education (\$66,500).

Methodological notes

- Individuals are classified in the occupation in which they worked the most hours during a specific reference week. If they did not work during the reference week, they are classified based on the job at which they worked the longest since January 1, 2010. Artists who spent more time at another occupation than at their artwork during the reference week would be categorized in the other occupation.
- Unless otherwise noted, the labour force statistics in this report refer to the experienced labour force, which includes all those who worked (for pay or in self-employment) during the NHS reference week as well as unemployed people who had worked since January 1, 2010.
- Individuals who are employed or self-employed are captured in each occupation.
- Artists who teach in post-secondary, secondary, or elementary schools are classified as teachers or professors and are therefore excluded from the count of artists. Instructors and teachers in some settings (such as private arts schools, academies, and conservatories) are included in the arts occupations.
- The 2011 National Household Survey collected earnings information for 2010, the most recent full calendar year.
- Income sources include wages and salaries, net self-employment income, investment income, retirement pensions, other income sources, as well as government transfer payments.
- The employment income statistics (also called “earnings”) include wages and salaries as well as net self-employment income.
- The earnings statistics include amounts received from all employment and self-employment positions in 2010, not just the position at which the respondent worked the most hours during the reference week. In some cases, individuals may have worked in a different occupation in 2010 (the basis for earnings statistics) than the one in which they worked the most hours during the NHS reference week (May 1 to 7, 2011 – the basis for occupational classifications).
- Artists’ project grants would not be included in employment earnings but would be captured in other income sources.
- Canadians 15 or older are captured in the occupational data.

Full report also available ...

on the websites of Hill Strategies Research (www.hillstrategies.com), the Canada Council for the Arts (www.canadacouncil.ca), and the Ontario Arts Council (www.arts.on.ca).