



Montreal is home to the most creative neighbourhoods in Canada

Artists by Neighbourhood in Canada, a new report from Hill Strategies Research available for free at <http://www.hillstrategies.com>, highlights creative neighbourhoods across the country. Using mapping technology, the report examines artists as a percentage of the labour force in various postal regions – “neighbourhoods” – based on 2001 census data. The report demonstrates that there are many significant artistic clusters in urban and rural areas across Canada.

Montreal – Home to 5 of the 10 most creative neighbourhoods in Canada

Montreal is home to five of the 10 urban neighbourhoods in Canada with the highest concentration of artists, including the three highest concentrations:

- H2W, in the heart of the plateau area, has 605 artists out of 7,560 total workers, for an artistic concentration of 8.0%. This is the “most creative neighbourhood” in Canada, with an artistic concentration that is 10 times the national average of 0.8%. This area extends from avenue des Pins to avenue du Mont-Royal, between St-Denis and avenue du Parc.
- H2J, adjacent to H2W on the plateau, has an artistic concentration of 6.1%. H2J is northeast of H2W and extends from Rachel to rue des Carrières, between Papineau and St-Denis.
- H2T, adjacent to both H2W and H2J on the plateau, has 5.6% of the local labour force in the arts. H2T extends from avenue du Mont-Royal to avenue Van Horne (and the railway tracks), between St-Denis and Jeanne-Mance.

Two Montreal postal areas have an artistic concentration of 5.0%, tied for 7th in Canada: H2V (Outremont) and H2L (Montreal Papineau, below Rachel).

Toronto and British Columbia neighbourhoods

Toronto is home to three of the 10 neighbourhoods in Canada with the highest concentration of artists, including:

- M5R, the Annex area, which has 845 artists out of 15,590 total workers, for an artistic concentration of 5.4%. This concentration is almost seven times the national average and ranks the area 4th among Canadian neighbourhoods.
- M6J, West Queen West, which has 5.2% of its labour force in arts occupations, 5th in Canada.
- M6G, surrounding the Little Italy area, adjacent to both M5R and M6J, which has 5.1% of the local labour force in arts occupations, the 6th highest level in Canada.

British Columbia artists are distributed among many postal regions. Two B.C. areas are tied for 7th in Canada, with 5.0% of the local labour force in arts occupations:

- V8K (Saltspring Island); and
- V6A (east Vancouver).

Why is it important to track creative neighbourhoods?

The arts contribute to the quality of life as well as the social and economic vitality of communities. Recent research has also examined how the arts help attract talented people, jobs and investment to communities. On a personal level, the arts can stimulate, inspire and entertain.

A strong artistic community can therefore enhance the whole community's well-being. For these reasons, it is important to identify and track creative neighbourhoods – areas that are attractive to artists for a number of reasons: inexpensive housing, access to employment and self-employment opportunities, access to resources (such as studio space, galleries, rehearsal and performance space, artist-run centres and associations), social networks, physical environment, family reasons and more.

Artists by Neighbourhood in Canada can be used by associations, arts funders, policy-makers and others to ensure that programs and services are tailored appropriately to arts communities across the country. Further research could also examine the correlation between creative neighbourhoods and other local attributes that may help attract and retain artists.

Report and data notes

The full report, funded by the Canada Council for the Arts, the Department of Canadian Heritage (Canadian Cultural Observatory and Arts Policy Branch), and the Ontario Arts Council, is available free of charge on the websites of Hill Strategies Research (<http://www.hillstrategies.com>) and the funding organizations. The Hill Strategies Research website also provides detailed tables showing the number and concentration of artists in postal regions across Canada. The report is the twelfth in a *Statistical Insights on the Arts* series by Hill Strategies Research.

The data is drawn from a custom data request from Statistics Canada's 2001 census, conceived of and commissioned by Hill Strategies Research. The census captures information about the occupation at which a person worked the most hours between May 6 and 12, 2001.

Nine arts occupations are included in the analysis:

- actors;
- artisans and craftspersons;
- conductors, composers and arrangers;
- dancers;
- musicians and singers;
- other performers (such as circus performers and puppeteers);
- painters, sculptors and other visual artists;
- producers, directors, choreographers and related occupations; and
- writers.

The occupational categories are not a perfect fit for all artists but do provide a reasonable approximation of arts employment and self-employment. No census data is released for areas below a population size of 40. Postal areas with fewer than 40 artists are noted as “not reliable”. Please see the full report for census data limitations.

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Hill Strategies Research is a Canadian company that aims to provide top-quality, highly-relevant and insightful research for the arts. For additional information, please contact Hill Strategies Research, info@hillstrategies.com, 905-528-8891, <http://www.hillstrategies.com>.