

New report shows that over 100,000 artists live in large Canadian cities

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Artists in Large Canadian Cities Based on the 2006 Census, the 28th report in the *Statistical Insights on the Arts* series from Hill Strategies Research, provides an analysis of artists residing in 93 large Canadian cities, including statistics concerning the number of artists, artists' earnings, and trends between 1991 and 2006.

Overall, 103,500 artists reside in the 93 large cities included in the study (cities with a population of 50,000 or more). This represents three-quarters (74%) of the 140,000 artists in Canada. The City of Toronto has the largest absolute number of artists (22,265), followed by Montreal (13,425) and Vancouver (8,155).

In Canada, artists represent 0.77% of the overall labour force. In the 93 cities, artists comprise 0.90% of the combined local labour forces, higher than the Canadian average.

Some of the major findings of the report include:

- Vancouver, Victoria and North Vancouver have the highest concentrations of artists.
- Artists' earnings are relatively low in almost all large cities.
- Suburban cities saw substantial growth in artists between 1991 and 2006.
- Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver all saw an increase in the number of artists between 1991 and 2006, but the rates of change varied between the three cities.
- The arts are a growth sector in most Canadian cities.
- However, 11 cities, many in northern or less populous areas, saw a decrease in artists between 1991 and 2006.
- Cities with a particularly high concentration or number of artists did not see larger growth in the number of artists (or the overall labour force) over time.

Vancouver, Victoria and North Vancouver have the highest concentrations of artists

The three cities with the highest concentrations of artists are in British Columbia: Vancouver, Victoria and North Vancouver District Municipality:

- Vancouver has the highest concentration of artists among large Canadian cities (2.35%), a level that is three times the Canadian average (0.77%).
- Victoria has the second-highest concentration of artists (1.87%).
- North Vancouver (District Municipality) has an artistic concentration of 1.61%.
- Toronto's concentration of artists is 1.60%, ranking fourth among large Canadian cities.
- Montreal ranks fifth among large cities with an artistic concentration of 1.53%.
- Six large cities have a concentration of artists that is about 1%: Saanich (BC), Halifax (NS), St. John's (NL), Fredericton (NB), New Westminster (BC) and Oakville (ON).

Artists' earnings are relatively low in almost all large cities

Given the relatively high cost of living in large cities, artists' average earnings levels are quite low. In 27 of the 63 cities with reliable earnings data, artists' average earnings are below the Statistics Canada's low-income cutoff for a single person. In 47 of the 63 cities with reliable earnings data, artists' average earnings are below the Statistics Canada's low-income cutoff for a family of two.

Across Canada, the average earnings of artists are 37% less than other Canadian workers. Artists fare worse than the Canadian average in most large cities. The earnings gap is above the Canadian average (i.e., 38% or more) in 52 of the 63 cities with reliable earnings data.

While still showing a gap between the average earnings of artists and other local workers, the earnings gap is lowest (25% or less) in four cities in Quebec:

- The earnings gap is 7% in Longueuil, where the city's 1,005 artists earn an average of \$29,900.
- The average earnings of Montreal's 13,425 artists (\$25,000) are 21% less than the average of other local workers.
- The earnings gap is 22% in Laval, where the city's 930 artists earn an average of \$26,900.
- The average earnings of Gatineau's 720 artists (\$28,200) are 25% less than the average of other local workers.

In Toronto and Vancouver, the earnings gap between artists and other local workers is about 30%. The average earnings of Toronto's 22,265 artists (\$30,700) are 30% less than the average of other local workers. The earnings gap is 29% in Vancouver, where the 8,155 artists earn an average of \$27,100.

Suburban cities saw substantial growth in artists between 1991 and 2006

The number of artists increased substantially in many suburban areas. Of the ten large cities where the number of artists doubled (or more) between 1991 and 2006, many are suburbs of Toronto (Whitby, Vaughan and Richmond Hill) or Vancouver (Coquitlam and Langley). Four other cities with very large increases are also in the broader Vancouver and Toronto regions, including Chilliwack (BC), Barrie (ON), Guelph (ON) and Niagara Falls (ON). Fredericton (NB) is the tenth city where the number of artists doubled.

Canada's three largest cities all saw an increase in the number of artists between 1991 and 2006. However, the rates of change varied between the three cities.

- In Vancouver, the number of artists increased from 4,630 in 1991 to 8,155 in 2006, a 76% growth rate.
- In Toronto, the number of artists grew by 42%, increasing from 15,630 in 1991 to 22,265 in 2006.
- In Montreal, the number of artists increased from 10,115 in 1991 to 13,425 in 2006, a 33% growth rate.

The arts are a growth sector in most Canadian cities. In 55 of 92 large cities, the growth rate in the number of artists exceeded the growth in the overall local labour force between 1991 and 2006. More recently, however, the growth in the number of artists exceeded growth in the overall labour force in only 41 of 92 large cities between 2001 and 2006.

Among large cities, Vancouver had the largest increase in the concentration of artists between 1991 and 2006, followed by Victoria and Fredericton.

Eleven cities saw a decrease in artists between 1991 and 2006

Only 11 large cities saw a decrease in the number of artists between 1991 and 2006. These cities tend to be in northern or less populous areas of the country. Some northern cities with a decrease in the number of artists are Saguenay (QC), North Bay (ON), Greater Sudbury (ON) and Prince George (BC). Less populous cities with a decrease are Shawinigan (QC), Cape Breton (NS), Saint-Hyacinthe (QC), Norfolk County (ON) and Strathcona County (AB).

Do artists attract other artists or other workers?

Some artists or other labour force workers might choose a municipality in which to work based on its reputation as an "arts-friendly" city. It is possible, therefore, that those cities with a particularly high concentration or number of artists might see larger growth in the number of artists or larger labour force growth than other cities. The report shows that there does not appear to be a connection between the concentration of artists and growth in the number of artists. Nor does there appear to be a connection between the absolute number of artists and

growth in the number of artists between 1991 and 2006. Finally, there does not appear to be a simple connection between either the concentration or the number of artists and overall labour force growth.

For more information

The full report, funded by the Canada Council for the Arts, the Department of Canadian Heritage and the Ontario Arts Council, is available free of charge on the Hill Strategies Research website (<http://www.hillstrategies.com>) and the websites of the funding organizations.

The full report contains more details about artists in each large Canadian city.