

Many Canadian artists are female, highly educated, and/or self-employed

[*A Statistical Profile of Artists in Canada in 2016 \(With Summary Information about Cultural Workers\)*](#), the newly-revised 49th 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 2016 census.

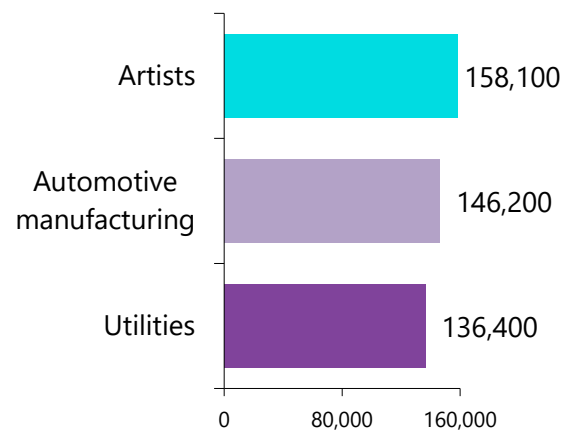
There are 158,100 artists in Canada, representing almost 1% of the overall Canadian labour force (0.87%). In other words, 1 in every 116 Canadian workers is an artist.

The number of artists (158,100) is greater than the labour force in automotive manufacturing (146,200) and the utilities sector (136,400).

Nine detailed occupation codes are included in the count of artists. From largest to smallest, they 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%)
- Conductors, composers, and arrangers: 4,200 (3%)

Artists compared with workers in other economic sectors



Source: 2016 census custom data request

Many artists are female / highly educated / self-employed

The report contains other key findings related to the working lives of artists:

- Women comprise 52% of artists, higher than the proportion of all workers (48%).
- A much larger percentage of artists than all workers have a bachelor's degree or higher (47% vs. 28%).
- 52% of artists are self-employed, compared with only 12% of all Canadian workers.

- The age distribution of artists is fairly similar to all workers: nearly one-half of artists (46%) are 45 years of age or older, similar to the 44% of all workers. However, more artists than all workers are 65 years of age or older (9% vs. 4%).
- Racialized Canadians are under-represented among artists (15%) compared with all workers (21%).
- Indigenous and immigrant workers are slightly under-represented among artists: Indigenous People (3.1% of artists and 3.9% of all workers) and immigrants (21% of artists and 24% of all workers).

Median income of artists is 44% lower than all Canadian workers

The median individual income of Canada's artists is \$24,300, or 44% less than all Canadian workers (\$43,500).

A typical artist has employment income of \$17,300, a figure that is 56% lower than the median of all workers (\$39,000).

For the first time in 2016, household income statistics were requested from the census. The findings from this analysis are somewhat less dire than the individual income statistics. A typical artist has a household income of \$56,400, 34% lower than all workers (\$84,900).

The full report highlights the differences in median incomes of artists in different occupations and industry sectors.

Over 720,000 cultural workers

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. In other words, one in every 25 Canadian workers has a cultural occupation.

The number of cultural workers (726,600) is over two-and-a-half times larger than the labour force in real estate (280,100), about double the labour force on farms (342,800), and slightly higher than the labour force in the wholesale trade industry (665,700).

Cultural workers have median individual incomes of \$41,000, or 6% less than all workers.

For more information

[The full report contains many more details](#) about the working lives of artists in Canada, including statistics on:

- The overall number of artists
- Artists by occupation
- Demographic information such as gender, education, age, Indigenous people, members of racialized groups, and more
- Self-employment rates
- Total incomes, employment incomes, and household incomes
- The industries where artists work, with a focus on the three most common sectors for artists: 1) arts, entertainment, and recreation; 2) educational services; and 3) information and cultural industries

The report is available free of charge on the website of Hill Strategies Research (hillstrategies.com) and the websites of [the Canada Council for the Arts](#) and [the Ontario Arts Council](#), which funded the report along with the Department of Canadian Heritage. The report is based on Statistics Canada's 2016 long-form census, which captures individuals who spent more time at their art than at any other occupation in May of 2016.

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[Hill Strategies Research](#) specializes in rigorous and reliable research on the arts and culture in Canada, combined with clear and effective communications.