



www.hillstrategies.com

STATISTICAL INSIGHTS ON THE ARTS

Artists in Canadian Municipalities in 2016

SIA report 52

March 2020

Author and lead analyst: Kelly Hill

Executive summary

© Her Majesty in right of Canada, 2019

ISBN 978-1-926674-53-7

Statistical Insights on the Arts series ISSN 1713-3556

Report funded by



Canadian
Heritage

Patrimoine
canadien



Canada Council
for the Arts

Conseil des arts
du Canada



ONTARIO ARTS COUNCIL
CONSEIL DES ARTS DE L'ONTARIO
an Ontario government agency
un organisme du gouvernement de l'Ontario

Based on custom data from Statistics Canada's 2016 long-form census, this report provides an analysis of artists in Canadian municipalities, with a primary focus on groups of municipalities by population. Summary information about select municipalities is also provided in the report, and a data supplement with information for all municipalities with at least 40 artists is available for download at HillStrategies.com.

[Previous reports in the *Statistical Insights on the Arts series*](#) have examined the situation of artists in Canada, the provinces, and territories. In Canada, there are 158,100 artists, representing 0.87% of the overall labour force, a proportion that is also called the concentration of artists.

One-half of Canada's artists reside in the 12 largest cities

Figure ES1 provides the number and percentage of artists in four groups of municipalities, based on the boundaries of census subdivisions, not metropolitan areas.

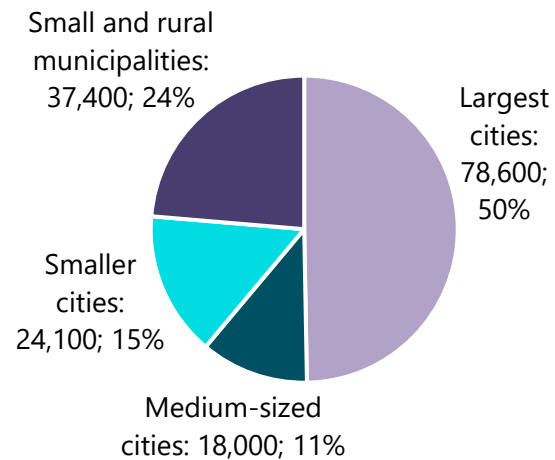
Exactly 50% of Canada's 158,100 artists (78,600) reside in the 12 cities with a population over 500,000. The largest cities' 50% share of all artists is much higher than these cities' share of the overall Canadian population (34%).

The 16 medium-sized cities (population between 175,000 and 425,000) are home to 18,000 artists, or 11% of all artists, roughly equal to these cities' share of the overall population (12%).¹

There are 24,100 artists residing in the 72 smaller cities (population between 50,000 and 165,000), representing 15% of all artists in Canada (compared with 19% of the country's population).

Small and rural municipalities (fewer than 50,000 residents) are home to 37,400 artists, about one-quarter of all artists in Canada (24%). This municipal group accounts for the second largest number of artists (37,400), behind only the largest cities in the country (78,600). The 24% share of all artists is much lower than the small and rural municipalities' 35% share of the overall population.

Figure ES1: Artists in Canada by municipal group



Source: 2016 census custom data request.

¹ There are gaps between the population groups when there are no municipalities with a population between the groups.

For example, there are no cities with a population between 425,000 and 500,000.

Figure ES2 depicts the concentration of artists in each municipal group.

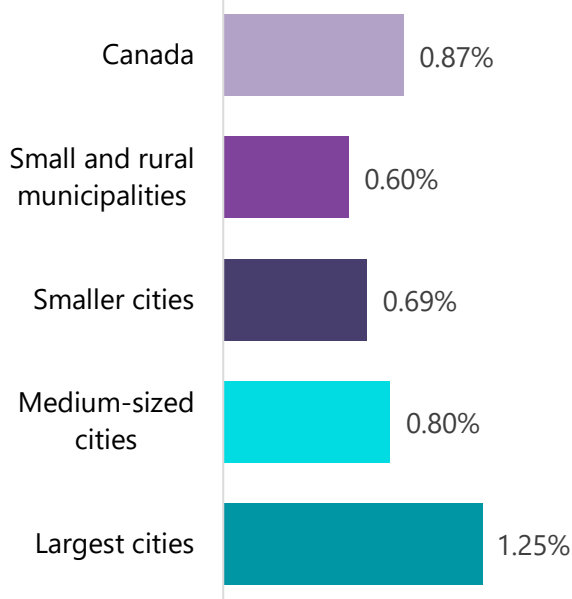
Artists represent 0.60% of the labour force in small and rural municipalities, well below the national average (0.87%).

In the 72 smaller cities, artists represent 0.69% of the labour force.

In the 16 medium-sized cities, the concentration of artists is 0.80%, close to the national average.

The concentration of artists in the 12 largest cities is 1.25%, much higher than in any other municipal group and well above the national average.

**Figure ES2:
Concentration of
artists by municipal
group**



Source: 2016 census custom data request.

Different demographic profiles in different sizes of municipalities

The report provides select demographic and employment information, including gender, members of racialized groups, immigration status, Indigeneity, age, education, and self-employment rates, for artists in each municipal group. Because data related to disability, deafness, and sexual orientation are not available from the census, they could not be analyzed in this report.

Small and rural municipalities (under 50,000 population) have the:

- Highest proportion of women (57%)
- Highest proportion of Indigenous artists (6.0%)
- Lowest percentage of artists under 35 (24%) and the highest percentage 55 or over (37%)
- Lowest proportion of artists from racialized groups (4%)
- Lowest percentage of immigrants (14%)
- Highest percentage of self-employed artists (60%)
- Lowest proportion of artists having a bachelors' degree or higher (36%)

In contrast, the 12 largest cities (over 500,000 population) have the:

- Lowest proportion of women (49%)
- Highest percentage of artists under 35 (37%) and the lowest percentage 55 or over (21%)
- Highest proportion with a bachelors' degree or higher (53%)
- Lowest percentage of self-employed artists (49%)

The medium-sized cities (175,000 to 425,000 population) have the:

- Highest proportions of racialized artists (23%), immigrant artists (28%), and artists who speak languages other than English and French most often at home (18%)
- Same high proportion of artists under 35 (37%) as in the 12 largest cities

Similarities and differences in arts occupations by municipal size

Compared with the national average, the largest cities in Canada have a higher proportion of producers, directors, and choreographers (23% of all artists vs. national average of 17%). Producers, directors, and choreographers are less prevalent in each of the other municipal groups: 14% of artists in medium-sized cities; 13% in smaller cities; and 11% in small and rural municipalities.

On the other hand, it is the small and rural municipalities that have a higher-than-average proportion of artisans and craftspeople (17%, vs. the national average of 9%). The proportion of artists who are artisans and craftspeople decreases as municipal size increases: 10% in smaller cities; 8% in medium-sized cities; and 5% in the largest cities.

Small and rural municipalities also have an above-average proportion of visual artists (17%, vs. the national average of 13%). The proportion of visual artists is quite consistent in other municipal groups: 13% in smaller cities and 12% in both medium-sized cities and the largest cities.

Smaller and medium-sized cities have above-average proportions of musicians (25% and 26%, respectively, compared with the national average of 22%). The proportion of musicians and singers equals the national average in small and rural municipalities (22%) but is slightly lower in the largest cities (20%).

Artists' median incomes vary by municipal size

The median personal income of Canadian artists, from all sources, is \$24,300. The nationwide difference in income between artists and other workers (the "income gap") is -44%.

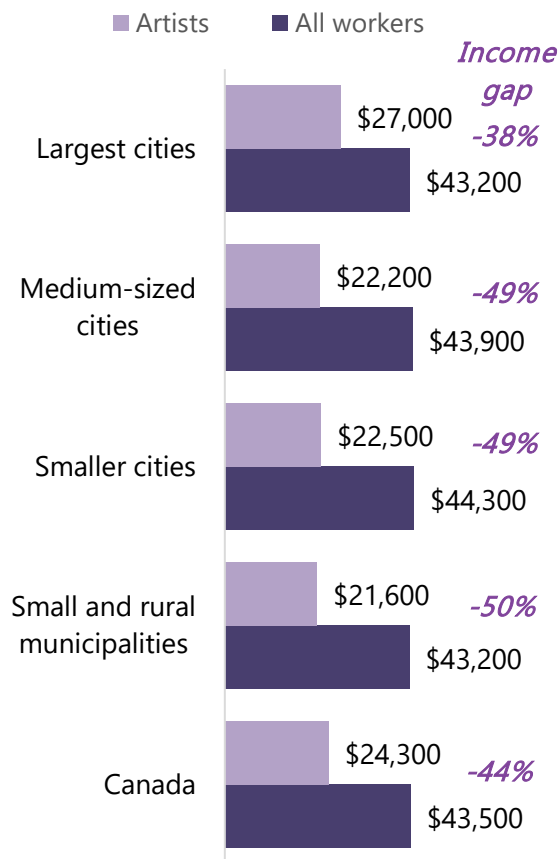
Artists in the largest cities, also the most expensive cities in the country, have a median income of \$27,000, which is 38% lower than the median income of all workers in these cities (\$43,200). The median income of artists in the largest cities is the highest among the four groups of municipalities, and the income gap is lowest in the largest cities, as shown in Figure ES3.

In the other municipal groups, there is relatively little variation in artists' median incomes (close to \$22,000 in each) and in the income gap (-49% and -50% in each):

- Artists in the 16 medium-sized cities have a median personal income of \$22,200, which is 49% lower than the median income of all workers in these cities (\$43,900).
- The median income of artists in the 72 smaller cities is \$22,500, which is 49% lower than the median income of all workers in these cities (\$44,300).

- Artists in small and rural municipalities have a median personal income of \$21,600, which is 50% lower than the median income of all workers in these cities (\$43,200).

Figure ES3: Median incomes of artists and all workers by municipal size



Source: 2016 census custom data request. Income figures relate to the 2015 calendar year.

Municipalities with strong concentrations of artists

Individual municipalities of many different sizes have strong concentrations of artists.

Some small and rural municipalities have the strongest concentrations of artists among all Canadian municipalities, including three British Columbia municipal areas: Saltspring Island (5.57%), Sunshine Coast F regional district electoral area (4.72%), and Southern Gulf Islands (4.59%).

Four small and rural municipalities outside of British Columbia have a particularly strong concentration of artists: Piedmont, Quebec (4.07%); The Blue Mountains, Ontario (3.29%); Montréal-Ouest, Quebec (3.18%); and Westmount, Quebec (3.03%).

Most of the above small and rural municipalities are home to fewer than 125 artists but have very strong concentrations of artists due to their smaller overall labour forces.

Smaller cities with particularly strong concentrations of artists include Victoria (1.97%), the District of North Vancouver (1.83%), and the City of North Vancouver (1.69%). Three smaller cities with strong concentrations of artists are provincial capitals: Victoria (1.97%), St. John's (1.21%), and Fredericton (0.99%).

Burnaby (1.09%), Halifax (1.03%), and Richmond (1.01%) have the strongest concentrations of artists among the 16 medium-sized cities.

In the largest cities, the concentration of artists is highest in Vancouver (2.43%), Toronto (1.88%), and Montreal (1.83%).

Toronto has the largest number of artists (27,000) and is home to about one in every six Canadian artists (17%).

About this report

After an introduction, subsequent sections of the full report provide detailed information about artists in each of the four municipal groups. Detailed data, including statistics on cultural workers, are provided in an appendix. Full methodological notes can be found in the second appendix.

The report is based on a custom data request from the 2016 long-form census, which classifies most people in the occupation in which they worked the most hours during the census reference week (May 1 to 7, 2016). This is an “in between” period for some artistic endeavours. For example, many performing arts organizations have seasons that extend from the fall to the spring. These seasons may be finished before the week of May 1, leaving some artists to find other employment during the late spring and summer. Other organizations may have summer seasons that do not begin in early May.

Other 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”.
- Median incomes include wages and salaries, net self-employment income, investment income, retirement pensions, other income sources (a category that includes artists’ project grants), as well as government transfer payments.

No estimates of fewer than 40 artists are provided in this report because of concerns over data reliability. Municipalities with fewer than 40 artists are included in the aggregate totals by municipal group, but specific information on artists in each of these municipalities is not provided in this report or the accompanying tables.

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.²

² Reports from 2001 and 2006 excluded respondents with no income, while this report places no restriction on incomes.