

Measuring private short-term accommodation in Canada, 2015 to 2018

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New technologies and innovative platforms are rapidly changing the way we interact with one another, how we buy products and how these goods and services are delivered to us. Digitization has been accompanied by the emergence of transformative business models, such as intermediary platforms, which connect buyers and sellers in an increasing number of markets. While peer-to-peer transactions have always existed, the scale and pace of their expansion are facilitated by the emergence of digital intermediary platforms.

Statistics Canada continuously works to ensure economic measures reflect our reality, including new and emerging activities such as private short-term accommodation. This ensures that Canadians have access to the high quality and relevant information they need to make informed decisions. The paper released today provides provisional estimates for private short-term accommodation in Canada, the provinces and territories from 2015 to 2018.

Most of the digital platforms that facilitate private short-term accommodation rentals are foreign establishments and Statistics Canada does not have the authority to collect data from non-resident entities. At the same time, there does not exist a list of individuals in Canada who offer private short-term accommodation services from which a sample can be drawn and a survey designed. As a result, Statistics Canada's traditional methods for collecting data, such as household and business surveys, were not suitable for measuring this activity.

To develop these estimates, Statistics Canada used non-traditional data sources, in this case web-scraped data, to model economic information. Consequently, it is difficult to produce accurate statistical measures of the quality of the estimates. Nevertheless, these estimates provide insight into the size and growth of private accommodation over the last few years. Statistics Canada is continuing to pursue the use of non-traditional data, beyond web-scraped information, to improve the completeness, detail and timeliness of these estimates.

Revenue of private short-term accommodation in Canada

In 2018, private short-term accommodation in Canada generated an estimated \$2.8 billion in revenue. This included both the revenue earned by hosts (those listing dwellings for rent) as well as revenues earned by digital intermediary platforms (companies that operate the digital platforms upon which dwellings are listed and rented). Of the total revenue, \$2.6 billion or 93% went to hosts, while \$196.6 million went to intermediary platforms in the form of host and guest fees.

From 2015 to 2018, the total estimated revenue generated by private short-term accommodation increased nearly tenfold (+940.8%). Despite the significant increase over the time period, growth in this market has slowed year after year.

The domestic supply of accommodation measured by the National Tourism Indicators (NTI) totalled \$16.4 billion in 2017. The NTI capture some but not all private short-term accommodation.

The prevalence of private short-term accommodation varies across the provinces and territories

The largest private short-term accommodation markets were in Ontario, British Columbia and Quebec, accounting for nearly 90% of total revenues in 2018. Of all the provinces and territories, Nunavut posted the fastest growth in private short-term accommodation, as revenues increased from \$10,000 in 2015 to nearly \$715,000 in 2018. Following Nunavut, the Atlantic provinces and the Northwest Territories recorded the largest growth rates in revenue from private short-term accommodation from 2015 to 2018.

Analyzing the number of private short-term accommodation units available for rent relative to the total number of private dwellings in a province or territory showed that British Columbia, followed by Prince Edward Island and Yukon, had the largest supply densities for this market.



Note to readers

To derive estimates of the private short-term accommodation market, Statistics Canada acquired data from a third-party market research and data analytics firm. The data acquired include public information, such as the listing type and rental price, that the firm collects, via web-scraping, from various short-term rental platforms. The firm also provided additional market information, such as estimated occupancy rates and earned revenue, that they derived using their own proprietary methods.

Full coverage of all listings in Canada is only available starting in 2016.

A **private short-term accommodation** is the short-term rental of a privately-owned dwelling via a digital intermediary platform.

Hosts are the providers of short-term accommodation services. They can be individuals or businesses, who offer short-term rentals of properties.

Guests are the consumers of short-term accommodation services. They use digital platforms to search, reserve and pay for accommodation rental. In addition to the price of the accommodation rental, guests may be charged other fees for services such as cleaning or accommodating extra people by the hosts. After all of these charges are totalled, digital platforms typically charge a guest fee for the use of their services.

Digital intermediary platforms operate as an online matching and/or payment processing unit for transactions between hosts and guests. They maintain the websites and digital applications that facilitate searching, listing and reserving the service. In some cases, the platform verifies personal information through security checks and transaction protection, and processes the payments by collecting the fees from the guests and providing the owed revenue to the hosts. For all of these services, they charge fees to both hosts and guests.

Web scraping is a process through which information is gathered and copied from the Web for later retrieval and analysis. It can be conducted manually or through the use of an automated software.

Table 1
Total revenue of private short-term accommodation in Canada, by province and territory, 2015 to 2018

	2015	2016	2017	2018
	thousands of dollars			
Canada	265,190	814,164	1,930,292	2,760,023
Newfoundland and Labrador	435	3,430	18,239	29,406
Prince Edward Island	451	6,928	19,264	29,768
Nova Scotia	1,115	18,599	44,778	70,870
New Brunswick	421	4,127	12,287	20,510
Quebec	65,192	215,569	467,938	634,588
Ontario	93,967	257,200	628,405	909,421
Manitoba	1,538	4,376	9,784	16,052
Saskatchewan	836	2,508	6,465	11,208
Alberta	8,818	30,916	96,974	151,929
British Columbia	92,020	268,692	620,590	876,080
Yukon	308	1,071	2,777	4,678
Northwest Territories	77	699	2,556	4,797
Nunavut	10	48	234	715

Note(s): Numbers may not add up to totals because of rounding.

Source(s): National Economic Accounts Division, special tabulations.

Table 2
Total fees paid to digital intermediary platforms, by province and territory, 2015 to 2018

	2015	2016	2017	2018
	thousands of dollars			
Canada	20,829	62,752	160,329	196,601
Newfoundland and Labrador	33	259	1,515	1,625
Prince Edward Island	34	534	1,600	1,807
Nova Scotia	80	1,434	3,719	4,863
New Brunswick	33	318	1,021	1,143
Quebec	5,117	16,638	38,866	42,589
Ontario	7,384	19,806	52,192	63,613
Manitoba	123	338	813	1,061
Saskatchewan	68	194	537	584
Alberta	685	2,367	8,054	10,534
British Columbia	7,236	20,718	51,545	67,855
Yukon	27	85	232	466
Northwest Territories	8	55	213	404
Nunavut	4	6	22	56

Note(s): Numbers may not add up to totals because of rounding.

Source(s): National Economic Accounts Division, special tabulations.

The document, "[Measuring private short-term accommodation in Canada](#)," which is part of *Latest Developments in the Canadian Economic Accounts (13-605-X)*, is now available.

The data visualization product "[Provincial and Territorial Tourism Satellite Account](#)," which is part of *Statistics Canada – Data Visualization products (71-607-X)*, is available.

The *User Guide: Canadian System of Macroeconomic Accounts (13-606-G)* is also available.

The *Methodological Guide: Canadian System of Macroeconomic Accounts (13-607-X)* is also available.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact us (toll-free 1-800-263-1136; 514-283-8300; STATCAN.infostats-infostats.STATCAN@canada.ca) or Media Relations (613-951-4636; STATCAN.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.STATCAN@canada.ca).