

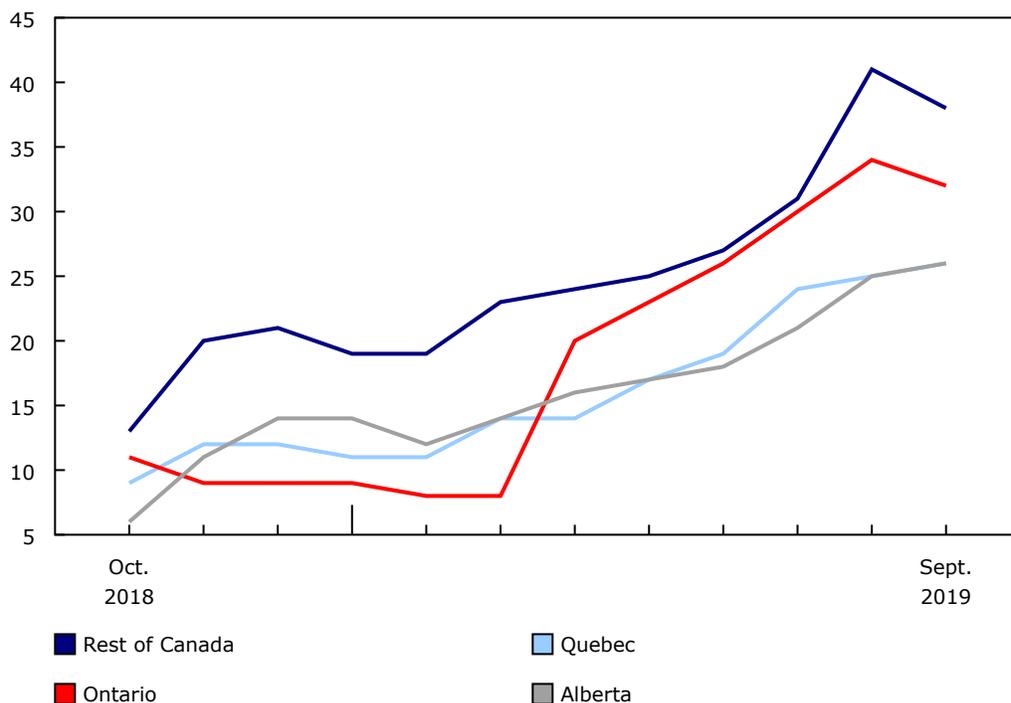
Study: The retail cannabis market in Canada: A portrait of the first year

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In the year following the legalization of non-medical cannabis in Canada, the cannabis retail market has grown considerably, with retailers of legal cannabis establishing more than 400 brick-and-mortar stores and generating \$908 million in online and retail store sales.

Chart 1
Retail trade sales by cannabis stores, October 2018 to September 2019, select geographies¹

millions of dollars



1. Data represent non-medical cannabis sales in the legal market, including online sales.
Source(s): Table 20-10-0008-01.

Since October 2018, the provinces and territories have instituted a variety of regulatory frameworks to manage the distribution and sale of non-medical cannabis in their jurisdictions, resulting in an industry structure composed of public, private, and hybrid systems engaging in retail trade through both brick-and-mortar and online stores.

As the industry establishes itself and the market develops, Canadians' access to cannabis retailers is increasing. The paper "[The Retail Cannabis Market in Canada: A Portrait of the First Year](#)" describes recent trends in the retail cannabis sector, provides an update to Statistics Canada's October 2018 proximity study, and highlights the role that accessibility, online sales and wholesaler retail sales have played in the evolution of the cannabis market to date.

A growing number of cannabis stores

The total number of cannabis retail stores in Canada rose from 217 in March 2019 to 407 in July 2019, an increase of 88%. Alberta has held top rank in terms of the number of cannabis stores since legalization. It was also the province that opened the most stores (101) from March to July 2019 for a total of 176 cannabis stores province-wide. Starting with 16 stores in March, the number of cannabis outlets in British Columbia increased to 57 in July, the second highest number in the country.

The proximity of Canadian households to retail cannabis stores

The average distance between Canadians and the nearest cannabis store was 34 km in July 2019, nearly half the distance observed in March (66 km). As of July 2019, 45% of Canadians live within 10 km of a cannabis store, 30% live within 5 km, and 19% live within 3 km.

In Alberta, 70% of residents lived within 10 km of a cannabis retail outlet in July 2019, up from 61% in March. Meanwhile, 33% of Ontarians lived within 10 km of a cannabis store in July 2019 due to the later roll-out of the province's private retail outlets. Retail sales of cannabis in Canada's most populous province accelerated significantly in April 2019 with the introduction of its first brick-and-mortar stores.

Online and wholesaler retail sales

Online sales were relatively stable over the period observed, however the share of online sales from cannabis stores steadily declined from 43.4% in October 2018 to 5.9% of sales in September 2019 due to the increase in the number of physical cannabis stores and their sales. Online sales represented 13.3% of total sales from cannabis stores since legalization. Direct-to-consumer trade by wholesalers accounted for 1.9% of total cannabis-related retail activity since October 2018.

Note to readers

This analysis focuses on legal retail sales of non-medical cannabis. For more information on Statistics Canada's efforts to track cannabis statistics please visit the [Cannabis Stats Hub](#).

This report provides an update to Statistics Canada's October 2018 proximity study, [Access by Canadians to Regulated Liquor and Cannabis Retail Outlets](#), which described Canadian households' access to liquor and cannabis via proximity to brick-and-mortar outlets.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number [2406](#).

The study "[The Retail Cannabis Market in Canada: A Portrait of the First Year](#)," which is part of *Analysis in Brief* ([11-621-M](#)), is now 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).