

Digital supply and use tables, 2017 to 2020

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The contribution of the digital economy to total gross domestic product (GDP) trended up from 5.2% (\$104 billion) in 2017 to 5.9% (\$123 billion) during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. The share of the sector in overall jobs followed a similar trend, increasing from 4.0% of total jobs in 2017 to 5.0% in 2020. While the total number of jobs in the digital economy increased from 757,000 in 2017 to 879,000 in 2019, there was a slight decrease to 872,000 in 2020. The economic output of the sector remained stable as the rest of the economy declined in 2020 and employment declined by 0.8%, compared with a drop of 10.4% in the non-digital industries.

Measuring the digital economy: the Canadian digital supply and use tables, 2017 to 2020

Figures on the role of the digital economy are now available from updated Canadian digital supply and use tables (SUTs) for 2017 to 2019, and the newly published 2020 tables. These tables provide an important tool for understanding the impacts of digitization on economic activity. The Canadian digital SUTs present enhanced details on digitally enabling infrastructure and the supply and uses of digital products and digitally ordered and digitally delivered goods and services. The figures are based on the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development framework for measuring the digital economy.

The [information and communication technology](#) (ICT) sector dominated production in the digital industries, contributing to 5.3% of total GDP in 2020. Retailers and wholesalers operating only online (0.27% of total GDP), digital-only firms providing financial and insurance services (0.14%), and digital intermediary platforms (for example, firms that provide restaurant delivery services) (0.12%) ranked next in contributions.

The software and telecommunications industries made the largest contributions to the digital economy. In 2020, software accounted for 2.6% of GDP and 2.4% (422,000) of jobs. Telecommunications contributed to 1.9% of GDP and 0.7% (121,000) of jobs.

Among the digital industries, the contribution to jobs differed noticeably from the contribution to GDP. The ICT sector contributed 89.4% of the GDP of the digital sector, but a noticeably lower 77.4% of jobs in 2020. This was driven mainly by the telecommunications industry, which made a lower contribution to jobs than to GDP, and conversely by the digital intermediaries and data- and advertising-driven digital platforms, which made a larger contribution to jobs than to GDP. The differing contributions can be seen through the large differences in the GDP-to-jobs ratio of these industries, which ranged from \$319,000 of value added per job in telecommunications, to \$63,000 for data- and advertising-driven digital platforms, and \$33,000 among digital intermediaries.



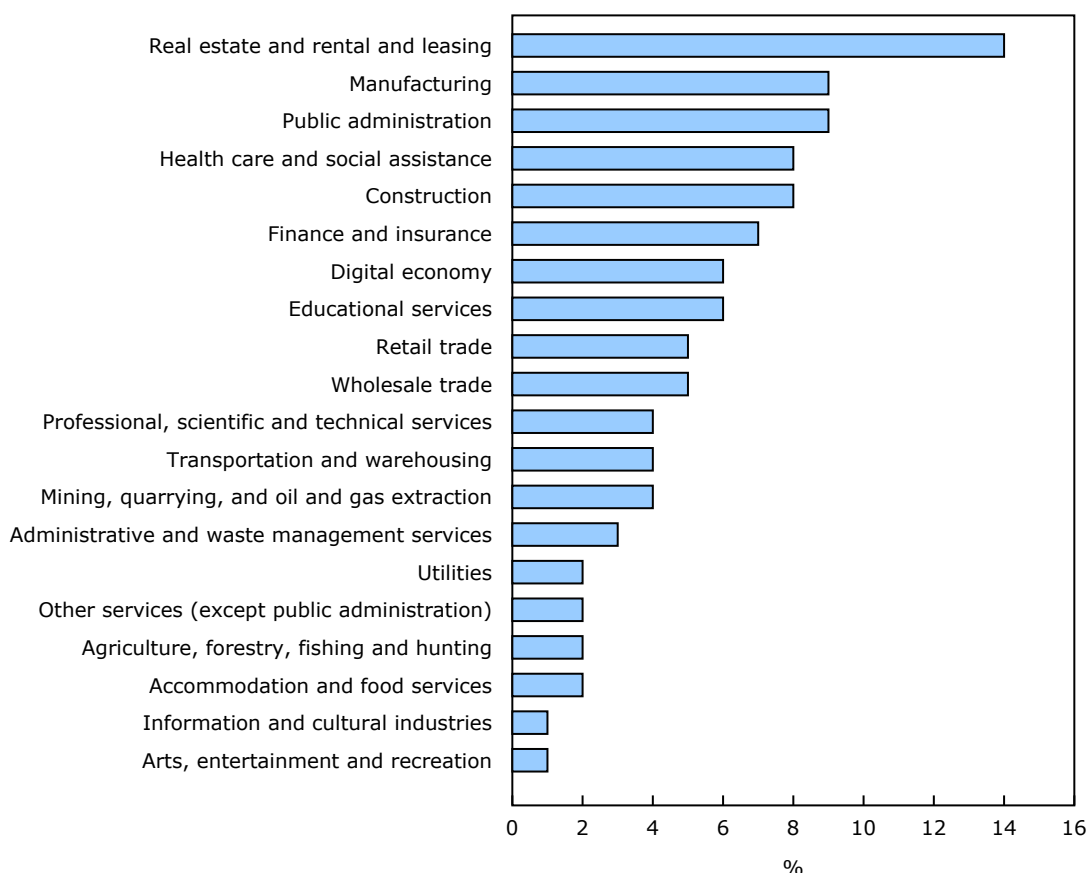
Table 1
Digital industries gross domestic product and jobs

	2017	2018	2019	2020
	millions of dollars			
Total, all industries	1,991,534	2,083,379	2,161,924	2,076,634
Total digital industries	104,356	110,633	122,018	122,628
Information and communications technology				
Hardware	6,536	6,913	7,454	6,575
Software	41,891	46,067	52,840	54,565
Telecommunications	36,166	36,399	38,133	38,526
Other services	9,912	9,981	10,151	9,966
Digital intermediary platforms	1,762	2,446	3,025	2,504
Data- and advertising-driven digital platforms	1,024	1,106	1,326	434
Online retailers and wholesalers	3,793	4,017	4,611	5,699
Digital-only firms providing finance and insurance services	2,204	2,476	2,947	2,944
Other producers only operating digitally	1,069	1,229	1,530	1,415
	2017	2018	2019	2020
	thousands of jobs			
Total, all industries	18,757	19,098	19,506	17,559
Total digital industries	757	817	879	872
Information and communications technology				
Hardware	54	57	56	51
Software	344	373	409	422
Telecommunications	125	128	128	121
Other services	81	81	84	81
Digital intermediary platforms	69	86	93	75
Data- and advertising-driven digital platforms	17	17	20	7
Online retailers and wholesalers	51	54	61	68
Digital-only firms providing finance and insurance services	18	19	22	22
Other producers only operating digitally	13	16	18	16

Source(s): Digital supply and use tables, 2017 to 2020, table [36-10-0480-01](#), and special tabulations.

At 5.9% (\$123 billion) of Canadian GDP in 2020, the digital economy ranked below finance and insurance (\$147 billion) in relative size. It was slightly above educational services (\$117 billion).

Chart 1
Industry shares of gross domestic product, 2020



Source(s): Digital supply and use tables, 2020, special tabulations.

The digital industries accounted for 5.4% (\$211 billion) of total gross output in 2020. Digitally-ordered products represented 7.6% (\$361 billion) of total supply, while digitally delivered services represented 2.7% (\$127 billion) of total supply.

Most digitally ordered products (69.6%) were sourced directly from the supplier, whereas 29.2% were purchased through domestic retailers and wholesalers. Digital intermediary platforms were responsible for the remaining 1.2%, with non-resident platforms having double the activity relative to domestic platforms.

Overall, 8.9% of imports (\$62 billion) were digitally ordered, which slightly exceeded the share of digitally ordered goods and services from domestic producers, at 7.5% (\$291 billion).

The digital industries provided 78.2% of the domestic supply of digitally delivered products. The share of digitally delivered products in domestic production (2.6%) was lower than its share in imports (2.9%).

Table 2
Digital supply table, product totals, 2020

	Output, all digital industries	Output, all digital industries, digitally delivered	Total output	Total output, industries, digitally delivered	Total imports	Imports, digitally delivered	Taxes on products	Total supply at purchaser's prices	Total supply at purchaser's prices, digitally delivered
millions of dollars									
Total	210,554	79,786	3,881,838	102,081	688,546	19,993	156,741	4,727,125	127,401
Digitally ordered	53,139	24,831	290,956	42,178	61,565	12,909	8,827	361,349	55,366
Direct from a counterparty	38,811	24,081	224,513	41,429	25,713	12,266	1,379	251,605	53,861
Via a resident digital intermediary	1,413	749	1,413	749	0	0	0	1,413	749
Via a non-resident digital intermediary	2,077	0	2,077	0	793	643	48	2,919	674
Via a resident retailer or wholesaler	10,838	0	62,953	0	35,059	0	7,400	105,413	82
Not digitally ordered	157,415	54,955	3,590,881	59,903	626,981	7,084	147,914	4,365,776	72,035

Source(s): Digital supply and use tables, 2020, and special tabulations.

While the digital SUTs are only compiled at the Canada level, it is nonetheless possible to use industry level information to derive impacts on production and jobs by province and territory. In 2020, the digital economy made the largest contributions to the economies of Ontario (7.2%), Quebec (6.0%) and British Columbia (5.5%). Its lowest presence was in Nunavut (2.5%) and Saskatchewan (3.2%).

In 2020, following the beginning of the pandemic, the share of the digital economy in provincial GDP progressed in most provinces and territories except for Prince Edward Island, where it remained stable, and Yukon and Nunavut, where it regressed slightly.

Table 3
Digital economy gross domestic product shares by province and territory

	2017	2018	2019	2020
	%			
Canada	5.2	5.3	5.6	5.9
Newfoundland and Labrador	2.9	3.0	3.3	3.7
Prince Edward Island	4.1	3.8	3.8	3.8
Nova Scotia	4.8	4.9	5.2	5.3
New Brunswick	4.1	4.2	4.5	4.6
Quebec	5.6	5.6	5.8	6.0
Ontario	6.4	6.5	7.0	7.2
Manitoba	3.4	3.5	3.8	3.9
Saskatchewan	2.8	2.8	2.9	3.2
Alberta	3.7	3.8	3.9	4.4
British Columbia	4.9	5.0	5.3	5.5
Yukon	4.1	3.6	3.7	3.4
Northwest Territories	3.1	3.2	3.2	3.4
Nunavut	2.7	2.8	2.7	2.5

Source(s): Digital supply and use tables, 2017 to 2020, table 36-10-0402-01, and special tabulations.

In 2020, 83.2% (717,000) of digital economy jobs were concentrated in Ontario, Quebec and British Columbia. These were also the provinces that had the highest proportions of digital economy jobs: Ontario (5.9%), Quebec (5.0%), and British Columbia (4.8%). The lowest proportions were in Nunavut (0.9%), the Northwest Territories (1.8%), Newfoundland and Labrador (2.4%), and Prince Edward Island (2.4%). Software production in Ontario and Quebec alone accounted for 313,000 jobs.

Table 4
Digital economy jobs by province and territory, 2020

	Canada	Newfoundland and Labrador	Prince Edward Island	Nova Scotia	New Brunswick	Quebec	Ontario
thousands of jobs							
Total, all industries	17,559.2	200.9	73.8	437.1	345.8	3,910.7	6,772.3
Total digital industries	862.0	4.8	1.8	15.9	11.5	197.3	401.6
Information and communications technology							
Hardware	51.4	0.2	0.1	1.0	0.3	14.8	25.0
Software	421.8	1.4	0.8	6.2	4.3	103.9	209.4
Telecommunications	120.8	1.3	0.2	3.1	3.1	27.9	48.2
Other services	81.0	0.6	0.1	1.4	1.4	15.7	33.9
Digital intermediary platforms	70.9	0.6	0.2	1.6	0.9	13.2	31.2
Data- and advertising-driven digital platforms	10.9	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	1.9	6.5
Online retailers and wholesalers	67.6	0.5	0.2	1.8	0.9	12.7	29.3
Digital-only firms providing finance and insurance services	21.5	0.1	0.0	0.3	0.3	3.5	11.6
Other producers only operating digitally	16.0	0.1	0.1	0.3	0.2	3.8	6.5
	Manitoba	Saskatchewan	Alberta	British Columbia	Yukon	Northwest Territories	Nunavut
thousands of jobs							
Total, all industries	643.3	544.4	2,104.2	2,450.9	25.2	25.5	20.4
Total digital industries	20.0	16.7	72.6	118.6	0.7	0.5	0.2
Information and communications technology							
Hardware	0.5	0.7	2.7	6.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
Software	5.8	3.4	27.6	58.9	0.1	0.0	0.0
Telecommunications	4.6	5.1	10.2	16.4	0.4	0.2	0.0
Other services	2.5	3.2	13.1	8.8	0.0	0.1	0.0
Digital intermediary platforms	3.0	1.6	8.1	10.4	0.1	0.1	0.1
Data- and advertising-driven digital platforms	0.2	0.1	0.7	1.4	0.0	0.0	0.0
Online retailers and wholesalers	2.4	1.8	6.6	11.4	0.0	0.1	0.0
Digital-only firms providing finance and insurance services	0.5	0.5	2.1	2.5	0.0	0.0	0.0
Other producers only operating digitally	0.5	0.3	1.4	2.7	0.0	0.0	0.0

Source(s): Digital supply and use tables, 2017 to 2020 and table [36-10-0480-01](#), special tabulations.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 1401.

The digital supply and use tables for 2017 to 2020 are available on request.

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; infostats@statcan.gc.ca) or Media Relations (statcan.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.statcan@statcan.gc.ca).