

# Surveying and mapping services, 2022

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## Strong growth in building construction and in oil and gas extraction has a positive impact on surveying and mapping services in 2022

Operating revenue for the surveying and mapping services industries increased 9.8% to \$2.8 billion in 2022. Surveying and mapping services have strong ties to capital investments. Investment in building construction, for all types (industrial, commercial and institutional), strongly increased in 2022. Furthermore, the growth in capital expenditures in oil and gas extraction more than doubled to 43.9% in 2022, bolstering demand for surveying and mapping services at a time when pressures from the residential housing sector were levelling off. Housing starts eased from 271,198 units in 2021 to 261,849 units in 2022.

There are two main categories of surveying and mapping services: geophysical surveying and mapping services and other non-geophysical surveying and mapping services. The first group comprises establishments primarily engaged in collecting, interpreting and mapping geophysical data, including locating and measuring the extent of subsoil resources, such as oil and gas, and it accounted for 20.3% of sales. The second group consists of establishments primarily engaged in providing surveying and mapping services of the earth's surface and the sea floor, and it accounted for 62.2% of sales. The remaining sales were split between non-geophysical surveying and mapping services (9.6%) and other goods and services (7.9%).

Alberta (29.7%) had the largest share of operating revenue in Canada in 2022. However, this share has been declining since 2017, while Quebec's share of revenue has increased during the same period.

Sales to businesses (57.3%) accounted for the largest share of sales for these industries in 2022. The remaining sales were to individuals and households (20.7%); governments, non-profit organizations and public institutions (11.3%); and clients outside Canada (10.7%).

In 2022, the surveying and mapping services industries reported \$2.4 billion in operating expenses, an increase of 9.6% from the previous year. The largest expense item—salaries, wages, commissions and benefits—represented more than half (52.9%) of total operating expenses, at \$1.2 billion in 2022. As a result, the profit margin of the surveying and mapping services industries rose slightly from 14.6% in 2021 to 14.8% in 2022.

## Signals for surveying and mapping services in 2023

Indicators for 2023 so far show that investments in building construction and in oil and gas extraction grew in the first half of 2023, albeit at a more moderate pace than in 2022. In addition, rising mortgage rates continued to dampen investments in new housing construction. Housing starts declined further by close to 10%, averaging 240,354 units in the first eight months of the year. A complete and detailed financial picture of the surveying and mapping services industries for 2023 will be provided after survey data are collected in 2024.



### Note to readers

Data for 2021 and 2020 have been revised.

Information on building construction was obtained from *Investment in Building Construction, monthly*, Table [34-10-0175-01](#).

Information on capital expenditures in the oil and gas extraction industry was obtained from *Oil and gas extraction capital expenditures and expenses (x 1,000,000)*, Table [25-10-0064-01](#), and *Capital expenditures, oil and gas extraction industries, Canada (x 1,000,000), quarterly*, Table [25-10-0054-01](#).

Information on residential investment was obtained from *Gross fixed capital formation, Canada (x 1,000,000), quarterly*, Table [36-10-0108-01](#).

Information on housing starts was obtained from *Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, housing starts, under construction and completions, all areas, annual*, Table [34-10-0126-01](#), and *Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, housing starts, all areas, Canada and provinces, seasonally adjusted at annual rates, monthly (x 1,000)*, Table [34-10-0158-01](#).

These and other data related to business and consumer services can be found at the [Business and consumer services and culture statistics portal](#).

**Available tables:** [21-10-0159-01](#), [21-10-0161-01](#), [21-10-0162-01](#) and [21-10-0211-01](#).

**Definitions, data sources and methods:** survey number [4715](#).

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