

Spectator sports, event promoters, artists and related industries, 2023

Released at 8:30 a.m. Eastern time in *The Daily*, Friday, February 7, 2025

Spectator sports, event promoters, artists and related industries see record-breaking success in 2023

Operating revenue in the spectator sports, event promoters, artists and related industries subsector rose 12.8% from 2022 to reach a record high of \$12.7 billion in 2023. This growth was due in large part to heightened demand for in-person experiences following the COVID-19 pandemic. Industry revenues reached 120.2% of the 2019 pre-pandemic levels.

Promoters (presenters) of performing arts, sports and similar events recorded an operating revenue of \$4.7 billion in 2023 and accounted for the largest share (37.4%) of total operating revenue. Spectator sports (34.8%) had the second-largest share for the second year in a row, followed by independent artists, writers and performers (22.3%) and agents and managers for artists, athletes, entertainers and other public figures (5.5%).

Fans cheer their teams to new heights

The spectator sports industry group—which consists of sports teams playing before a paying audience, horse race tracks, racing events and independent athletes—generated an operating revenue of \$4.4 billion in 2023, up 16.6% from 2022. Strong operating revenue growth was bolstered by success among Canadian National Hockey League (NHL) teams, as three Canadian teams made it to the Stanley Cup playoffs in 2023.

Despite strong operating revenue growth in the industry group, their operating profit margin remained negative (-3.7%), as operating expenses (+15.3%) rose in tandem with operating revenue to reach \$4.6 billion in 2023. Rising costs were driven by growth in salaries, wages, commissions and benefits, which accounted for 53.9% of growth in total operating expenses, increasing 16.8% to \$2.3 billion in the year.

Admission to live events accounted for half (50.1%) of total sales in the industry group. Sales of food and non-alcoholic beverages, alcoholic beverages and merchandise continued to rise as part of the post-pandemic recovery.

Live events take centre stage in the subsector

In 2023, promoters (presenters) of performing arts, sports and similar events were once again the largest industry group based on operating revenues in the subsector, claiming this title for the second year in a row. A sharp increase in activity due to pent-up demand during the pandemic pushed operating revenues to record highs; they rose 17.9% from 2022 to reach \$4.7 billion in 2023.

Ontario (34.9%) made up the largest share of industry revenues in 2023, edging past Quebec (32.0%) for the first time since comparable data became available. This was due in part to an increased number of high-profile concert events in Toronto and Vancouver, including Beyoncé and Ed Sheeran, which resulted in Ontario (+26.3%) and British Columbia (+20.2%) being among the provinces with the fastest growing operating revenues.

Nationally, operating expenses increased 21.1% to \$4.6 billion in 2023, while salaries, wages, commissions and benefits grew 25.9% to \$1.2 billion. With industry expenditures outpacing revenue growth, the operating profit margin fell to 3.4% in the year.

Looking ahead: women in sports and entertainment steal the show

Despite inflationary pressures, the demand for in-person experiences continued in 2024. With the introduction of the Professional Women's Hockey League, which began play on January 1, 2024, and continued growth in average NHL attendance, fans have continued to go out in droves to support their teams after the pandemic.



The arrival of Taylor Swift in Toronto and Vancouver will have bolstered growth in the live events industry in 2024, demonstrating the power of "Swiftonomics," the singer's effect on the economy.

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Note to readers

Data for 2021 and 2022 have been revised.

These and other data related to the arts, culture, heritage and sports sectors can be found at the [Culture statistics](#) portal.

The [Arts and Culture Data Viewer](#), a new interactive tool that allows users to easily break down economic and social data from Statistics Canada on arts and culture by geographic area and other dimensions, is now available.

Available tables: [21-10-0169-01](#), [21-10-0170-01](#), [21-10-0234-01](#) and [34-10-0164-01](#).

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number [5132](#).

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).