

Canadian business counts, December 2020

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The COVID-19 pandemic continues to alter the business landscape. Some businesses have closed permanently, some have grown and others have been temporarily closing or reopening.

In December, there were 1,302,392 employer businesses in Canada and 2,860,194 non-employer businesses with annual revenues greater than \$30,000.

Because of the manner in which they are compiled, the business counts released today cannot be used to measure the impact of the pandemic. The figures could include many of the businesses that have closed temporarily or permanently as a result of the pandemic. Permanently closed businesses will eventually be excluded once the businesses wind down and closeout procedures are completed and confirmed, a process that can take many months.

Statistics Canada is releasing [experimental monthly estimates of business openings and closures](#) during the pandemic. These releases provide insightful data and analysis on the effects of the pandemic on businesses.

The Canadian business counts are available for each province and territory, as well as for every census metropolitan area and the census subdivisions within them.

Note to readers

The Canadian business counts are produced semi-annually for each June and December, and the data are released in August and February. They can be used to compare numbers of businesses across industries, provinces and territories, census metropolitan areas and the census subdivisions within them, as well as employment-size categories.

The counts include businesses identified as "active" on the Business Register, Statistics Canada's internal listing of Canadian businesses. Compiled primarily from Canada Revenue Agency tax records, the Business Register changes the status of a business to "inactive" only once tax accounts are formally closed or become dormant over an extended period.

Businesses are usually counted on the basis of the statistical concept of "location." Each operating location is counted separately, including cases where one business comprises multiple locations.

Also, as is the normal practice, Statistics Canada advises cautious interpretation of period-to-period changes in the counts because these can be affected by administrative or methodological changes in the underlying Business Register data.

Available tables: [33-10-0304-01](#) to [33-10-0306-01](#) .

Definitions, data sources and methods: [survey number 1105](#).

Custom data products for other geographic levels can be ordered on a cost-recovery basis. Data prior to December 2011 are also available upon request on a cost-recovery basis.

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).

