

Amusement and recreation industry, 2021

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Uneven recovery for businesses in the amusement and recreation subsector in 2021

Businesses in the amusement and recreation subsector were hit hard by COVID-19-related closures and restrictions in 2020. In 2021, amusement- and recreation-related businesses continued to experience operational challenges during successive waves of the pandemic. While this subsector had a 1.9% increase in operating revenue in 2021, the extent of the recovery varied across industries. Industries whose busiest season is in the summer or that can maintain outdoor operations fared better in 2021 than industries that are busier in the winter or whose operations are primarily indoors.

Operating revenue for fitness centres continues to decline

In 2021, fitness centres, such as gyms, were heavily affected by COVID-19-related public health measures, such as non-essential business closures and capacity limits. With COVID-19 spreading rapidly throughout the community, and large outbreaks reported at gyms, virtual and at-home workouts remained popular. In 2021, Canadians continued to spend on home exercise equipment and other sporting equipment, with sales increasing 5.0% and 15.0%, respectively.

Operating revenue in the fitness and recreational sports centres industry declined 11.4% to \$3.0 billion in 2021, while expenses fell 12.1% to \$3.1 billion. This led to a profit margin of -0.9% in 2021 compared with -1.7% the previous year.

Golf courses and country clubs on a major upswing

The golf courses and country clubs industry in Canada saw notable growth in operating revenue in 2021, owing to the rising popularity of golf among Canadians. Golf was one of the earliest activities to be permitted (benefiting golf course and country club operators) after a series of lockdowns left Canadians looking for physically distanced, outdoor pursuits. Sales of golf equipment jumped 58.4% in 2021 as many new players entered the sport.

The operating revenue of the golf courses and country clubs industry rose 23.4% to \$3.2 billion in 2021. In 2021, operating expenses (+18.2% to \$2.7 billion) increased at a slower rate than operating revenue, resulting in a profit margin of 14.1%. Operating revenue in this industry surpassed pre-pandemic levels across all provinces.

Revenue for the ski industry continues to fall

In 2021, skiing facilities had a drop in operating revenue of 18.8% to \$924.4 million. This decrease was driven mainly by losses in British Columbia (-\$109.3 million) and Quebec (-\$50.6 million). Skiing facilities have been hit hard since the start of the pandemic as operators of these facilities have had to contend with border closures; tight restrictions on indoor activities, such as dining; periodic closures because of COVID-19 outbreaks; and poor weather conditions in some cases.

Operating expenses decreased 16.4% to \$845.4 million, leading to a profit margin of 8.5%.

Operating revenue for amusement parks and arcades grew in 2021 but remains below pre-pandemic levels

After a steep decline in 2020, operating revenue in the amusement parks and arcades industry group rebounded 46.9% to \$499.4 million in 2021. However, operating revenue remained significantly lower than pre-pandemic levels, down 35.5% from 2019. Operating expenses grew more modestly, rising 18.5% to \$497.4 million. The profit margin for 2021 (0.4%) rebounded compared with that observed the previous year (-23.5%).



A look at 2022: the recovery carries on

In 2022, industry operators in the amusement and recreation subsector continued to recover as most restrictions were lifted by mid-year. As in 2021, the extent of that recovery is expected to be heavily dependent on industry-specific operational conditions and challenges. In 2022, businesses that rely on tourism are expected to get a boost from higher activity in Canada, but inflationary price pressures weighing on household purchasing power could temper the extent of the recovery in the amusement and recreation subsector.

Note to readers

Data from 2020 have been revised.

This release covers all industries classified to the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) industry group 713, amusement, gambling and recreation industries, with the exception of NAICS 7132, gambling industries.

These and other data related to the arts, culture, heritage and sport sectors can be found in 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.

The references to the sales of exercise and sporting equipment were taken from Table [20-10-0016-01](#).

The reference to the sales of golf equipment was taken from Table [20-10-0016-01](#).

The reference to the change in tourism from 2021 to 2022 was taken from Table [24-10-0049-01](#).

The reference to household purchasing power is based on the real household disposable income from Table [36-10-0105-01](#).

Available tables: [21-10-0057-01](#), [21-10-0058-01](#) and [21-10-0104-01](#).

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number [2425](#).

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