

Rural Statistics in Canada

Rural Canada Trade Profiles Metadata and User Guide, 2024

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Introduction

The Rural Canada Trade Profiles (RCTP) is a database that provides the number of goods-exporting and goods-importing establishments and trade values. The data are derived from the Statistics Canada Trade by Exporter Characteristics (TEC) - Goods and Trade by Importer Characteristics (TIC) - Goods programs.

The RCTP database comprises data tables reporting on export and import activities and characteristics organized by location indicator (rural and small town area and functional urban area). Geographic levels include Canada, province and territories (grouped).

For more information regarding this statistical program see : [Rural Canada Trade Profiles \(RCTP\)](#).

1 Database structure and contents

The Rural Canada Trade Profiles (RCTP) database provides information on trade by goods exporter and importer characteristics in rural and small town areas¹ or functional urban areas of Canada. The following tables are available:

- [Table 12-10-0180-01](#): Rural Canada Trade Profiles, export of goods, number of exporting establishments and trade value, by industry and location indicator
- [Table 12-10-0181-01](#): Rural Canada Trade Profiles, import of goods, number of importing establishments and trade value, by industry and location indicator

Table 1 presents an overview of the RCTP database structure and contents. See Section 4 for additional details on geographic concepts and Section 8 for a list and description of variables.

Table 1
Structure and content of RCTP database

Table	Geographic and other classification categories	Variables
Table 12-10-0180-01: Rural Canada Trade Profiles, export of goods, number of exporting establishments and trade value, by industry and location indicator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canada • Province or territories (grouped) • Rural and small town area or functional urban area • North American Industry Classification System 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of exporting establishments of goods • Value of goods exports
Table 12-10-0181-01: Rural Canada Trade Profiles, import of goods, number of importing establishments and trade value, by industry and location indicator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canada • Province or territories (grouped) • Rural and small town area or functional urban area • North American Industry Classification System 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of importing establishments of goods • Value of goods imports

2 Reference periods

A reference period in the RCTP database begins on January 1 and ends on December 31 of the same calendar year. The RCTP database includes data starting from 2012. Expansion of the database will be pursued as feasible.

3 Data sources

The tables of the RCTP database are based on data sourced from the Statistics Canada International Accounts and Trade Division and Statistics Canada's Business Register.

1. Areas outside of census metropolitan area (CMAs) and census agglomerations (CAs) are classified as part of "rural and small town areas", while those inside CMAs or CAs are classified as part of "functional urban areas".

3.1 Trade by Exporter Characteristics (TEC) - Goods

The Trade by Exporter Characteristics (TEC) - Goods program² provides aggregate statistical information on characteristics of Canadian businesses who export goods to countries outside of Canada. It includes characteristics such as value of exports and number of exporters by employment size, number of partner countries, country of destination, concentration of exports, size of exports, related parties, and industry according to the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). The data is available at the establishment level. Data from the TEC program are the main source for export activity aggregates calculated for the RCTP database.

3.2 Trade by Importer Characteristics (TIC) - Goods

The Trade by Importer Characteristics (TIC) - Goods program³ provides aggregate statistical information on characteristics of Canadian businesses who import goods from foreign countries. It includes characteristics such as value of imports and number of importers by employment size, number of partner countries, country of origin, concentration of imports, size of imports, related parties, and industry according to the NAICS. The data is available at the establishment level. Data from the TIC program are the main source for import activity aggregates calculated for the RCTP database.

3.3 Statistics Canada's Business Register

Statistics Canada's Business Register is a comprehensive and up-to-date list of businesses in Canada. It contains business information such as location, business number, operating entity number and Canada Revenue Agency tax return data such as revenues and expenses.

4 Concepts and classifications

4.1 Geographical concepts and classifications

4.1.1 Standard Geographical Classification

The geographical classification and concepts used in the RCTP are based on Statistics Canada's Standard Geographic Classification (SGC). The SGC contains the standard names and codes for all the geographical regions of Canada, provinces and territories, census divisions (counties, regional county municipalities) and census subdivisions (municipalities).

Multiple versions of the SGC are used in the RCTP database. The 2011 SGC⁴ is used for reference years from 2012 to 2016, the 2016 SGC⁵ is used for reference years from 2017 to 2021 and the 2021 SGC⁶ is used for reference years from 2022 onward.

4.1.2 Census Subdivision (municipality)

A Census Subdivision (CSD)⁷ is an administrative region defined along municipal and reserve boundaries by the province or territory to which the municipality belongs. CSDs are roughly analogous to communities in most cases as they are generally constructed in such a way as to contain centres of population within well-defined boundaries, although the conditions under which they are constructed vary depending on the province or territory.

4.1.3 Census metropolitan area and Census agglomeration

A census metropolitan area (CMA) or a census agglomeration (CA) is established by one or more adjoining municipalities concentrated on a population centre (known as the core).⁸

2. [Surveys and statistical programs - Trade by Exporter Characteristics - Goods \(TEC\).](#)

3. [Surveys and statistical programs - Trade by Importer Characteristics - Goods \(TIC\).](#)

4. [Standard Geographical Classification \(SGC\) 2011 - Volume I, The Classification.](#)

5. [Standard Geographical Classification \(SGC\) 2016 - Volume I, The Classification.](#)

6. [Standard Geographical Classification \(SGC\) 2021 - Volume I, The Classification.](#)

7. [Dictionary, Census of Population, 2021 - Census subdivision \(CSD\).](#)

8. [Dictionary, Census of Population, 2021 - Census metropolitan area \(CMA\) and census agglomeration \(CA\).](#)

A CMA should have a total population of at least 100,000, based on data from the current Census of Population Program, of which 50% (50,000) or more must live in the core based on adjusted data from the previous Census of Population Program. If an area grows into a CMA, it is retained as a CMA even if its total population drops below 100,000 or the population of its core goes down below 50,000.

A CA is required to have a core population of at least 10,000, also based on data from the previous Census of Population Program. If the population of the core of a CA falls below 10,000, the CA is withdrawn from the next census.

4.1.4 Classification of Census Subdivisions: Rural and small town area or Functional urban area

The source data used to derive the RCTP are classified at the CSD level. In the RCTP, a CSD is categorized as either part of a rural and small town (RST) area or functional urban area based on its relationship to a CMA or a CA. CSDs within CMAs or CAs are classified as functional urban areas, while those outside CMAs or CAs are classified as RST areas. To calculate the RST or functional urban areas for each province or territory, the CSDs within each area type were summed. These provincial and territorial totals were then combined to obtain the national RST area or functional urban area.

4.2 Classification by industry

Businesses are classified by their primary industry as identified in Statistics Canada's Business Register. The 2012 North American Industry Classification System (NAICS)⁹ is used for reference years from 2012 to 2016, the 2017 NAICS¹⁰ is used for the reference periods from 2017 to 2021, while the 2022 NAICS¹¹ applies from the reference period 2022 onward.

The NAICS follows a hierarchical structure, with codes ranging from two to six digits, depending on the classification level (Table 2).

Table 2
NAICS hierarchical classification structure

Code	Hierarchical level
11	Sector
111	Subsector
1111	Industry group
11111	Industry
111111	Canadian industry

5 Compilation methodology

5.1 Business coverage

The RCTP database compiles business information at the establishment level, consolidating data across multiple operational locations. This database represents a subset of the full list of exporters and importers of goods operating in Canada, as identified by the TEC - Goods and TIC - Goods programs. The RCTP database captures 99% of all exporters and importers of goods and accounts for over 98% of the total value of goods exported and imported.

Due to the application of rounding to establishment counts (± 5), figures reported in the RCTP database may not match the reference data sources of the TEC - Goods and TIC - Goods programs. Rounding may also result in minor discrepancies between aggregated totals and the sum of their components.

For more details, see Section 6: Disclosure control and confidentiality protection.

9. [North American Industry Classification System \(NAICS\) Canada 2012.](#)

10. [North American Industry Classification System \(NAICS\) Canada 2017 Version 3.0.](#)

11. [North American Industry Classification System \(NAICS\) Canada 2022 Version 1.0.](#)

5.2 Data processing

Building the RCTP database begins with filtering and consolidating records from the TEC – Goods and TIC – Goods programs. Data are processed based on geographic location and key classification criteria to align with the Statistics Canada Business Register for each reference year. Only the establishments designated as an exporter or importer are retained.

5.3 Classification of business location: Rural and small town area or Functional urban area

For the RCTP database, the statistical unit considered is the establishment. The Statistics Canada Business Register assigns each statistical unit in the business structure to a CSD based on its operating address or legal address postal code. Businesses located outside of CMAs or CAs are classified as part of “rural and small town areas”, while those inside CMAs or CAs are classified as part of “functional urban areas”.

5.4 North American Industry Classification System

Data from the TEC - Goods and TIC - Goods programs include 6-digit NAICS code for each establishment. This information was used to derive the value of exports and imports at the aggregated 2-digit NAICS level. The manufacturing sector is disaggregated to the 3-digit NAICS level only for Canada, Ontario, and Quebec.

6 Disclosure control and confidentiality protection

Statistics Canada is prohibited by law from releasing any data which would divulge information obtained under the *Statistics Act*¹² that relates to any identifiable person, business or organization without the prior knowledge or the consent in writing of that person, business or organization. Various confidentiality rules are applied to all data that are released or published to prevent the publication or disclosure of any information deemed confidential. If necessary, data are suppressed to prevent direct or residual disclosure of identifiable data.

Data suppression was performed using a hierarchy-aware suppression program developed internally at Statistics Canada called G-Confid.¹³ The following data suppression method is implemented for the RCTP database:

- **Random rounding:** Adjusts count values by randomly rounding either up or down to the nearest multiple of 5. A zero count (“0”) indicates a rounded value between 1 and 5 (inclusive) that has been rounded down. This type of data suppression may introduce discrepancies of ± 5 when comparing the RCTP database with the reference data source of the TEC - Goods and TIC - Goods programs. Due to the random nature of rounding, the sum of individual values may not equal aggregate totals.

7 Database updates and revision strategy

The RCTP database is subject to updates or revisions as needed.

8 List of variables

Table 3

Table identification theme	Variable name	Description
Table 12-10-0180-01: Rural Canada Trade Profiles, export of goods, number of exporting establishments and trade value, by industry and location indicator	Number of exporting establishments of goods	Count of establishments retained as exporters of goods
	Value ¹ of goods exports	Sum of the export sales of goods by exporters
Table 12-10-0181-01: Rural Canada Trade Profiles, import of goods, number of importing establishments and trade value, by industry and location indicator	Number of importing establishments of goods	Count of establishments retained as importers of goods
	Value ¹ of goods imports	Sum of the import purchases of goods by importers

1. All dollar values in the RCTP database are presented in current dollar values.

12. [Statistics Act](#).

13. [G-Confid \(Disclosure Avoidance - Generalized System\)](#).