



Rate of growth of non-metro population

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Highlights

- Non-metro Ontario recorded virtually no year-over-year population growth from 2006 to 2012.
- In the 16-year period from 1996 to 2012, four non-metro census divisions recorded a population loss in each year.
- In another five non-metro census divisions, population grew in less than half the years during the 1996 to 2012 period.

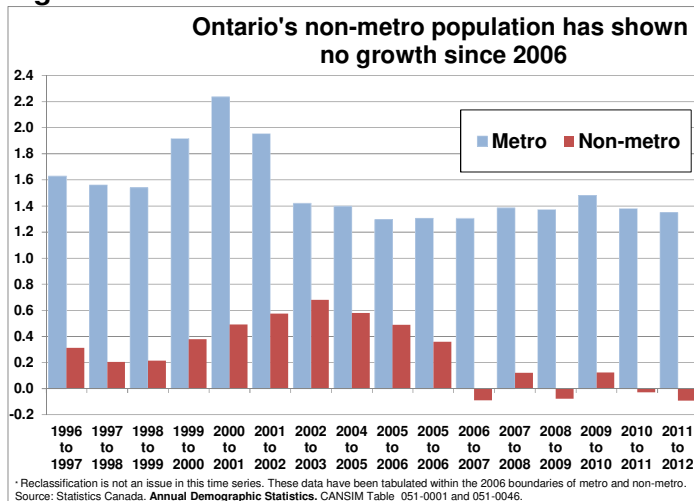
Why look at population growth?

Population change is a benchmark indicator. Population growth indicates that jobs are being created and/or this area is a desirable place to live. Population growth is typically preferred over population decline.

Findings

The population in Ontario's non-metro areas grew for 10 consecutive years from 1996 to 2006 but has recorded virtually no change since then (Figure 1). Meanwhile, the metro population grew more than 1.2% per year in each year during the 1996 to 2012 period.

Figure 1



The annual data for each non-metro census division, shows that two grew in each of the 16 years (Northumberland and Muskoka) while four declined in each of the 16 years (Sudbury, Cochrane, Algoma and Rainy River) (Table 1).

Table 1

2006 Census Division ID	Name of Census Division, ranked by number of periods with an increase in population, 1996 to 2012	Number of periods with an increase in population 1996 to 2012	Percent change in total population, 2011 to 2012
Metro census divisions			
3506	Ottawa	16	1.30
3519	York	16	2.05
3521	Peel	16	1.92
3524	Halton	16	1.95
3529	Brant	16	0.55
3525	Hamilton	15	0.78
3520	Toronto	14	1.38
3553	Greater Sudbury	6	-0.09
Partially-non-metro census divisions			
3539	Middlesex	16	0.80
3518	Durham	16	1.27
3530	Waterloo	16	1.25
3515	Peterborough	16	0.09
3523	Wellington	16	0.99
3534	Elgin	16	0.28
3522	Dufferin	16	0.85
3543	Simcoe	16	1.11
3502	Prescott and Russell	16	0.79
3526	Niagara	15	0.23
3510	Frontenac	15	0.81
3537	Essex	13	0.13
3511	Lennox and Addington	11	-0.32
3558	Thunder Bay	2	0.00
Non-metro census divisions			
3514	Northumberland	16	0.40
3544	Muskoka	16	0.01
3532	Oxford	15	0.52
3507	Leeds and Grenville	14	0.02
3516	Kawartha Lakes	14	0.09
3542	Grey	14	-0.12
3509	Lanark	12	0.02
3513	Prince Edward	12	0.19
3546	Haliburton	12	1.01
3547	Renfrew	12	0.21
3551	Manitoulin	12	-0.49
3512	Hastings	11	-0.43
3528	Haldimand-Norfolk	11	-0.31
3548	Nipissing	10	0.10
3549	Parry Sound	10	-0.31
3531	Perth	9	-0.10
3560	Kenora	9	0.03
3541	Bruce	8	0.08
3536	Chatham-Kent	5	-0.52
3538	Lambton	5	-0.38
3501	Stormont, Dundas & Glengarry	4	-0.14
3540	Huron	3	-0.20
3554	Timiskaming	1	-0.35
3552	Sudbury	0	-1.88
3556	Cochrane	0	-0.55
3557	Algoma	0	-0.73
3559	Rainy River	0	-0.26

Source: Statistics Canada. Annual Demographic Statistics, CANSIM Table 051-0053.

In the most recent period (2011 to 2012), over one-half of the non-metro census divisions (15 out of 27) recorded a decline in their population (Table 1). The largest loss in 2012 was Sudbury (-1.88%) and the largest non-metro gain was Haliburton (1.01%).

Among the partially-non-metro census divisions, most (nine of 14) recorded 16 consecutive years of population growth during the 1996 to 2011 period. In 2012, only one recorded a population loss (Lennox and Addington, -0.32%).

Among the metro census divisions, most but not all (five of eight) recorded a population gain in 16 consecutive years from 1996 to 2011. In 2012, York recorded the largest single year gain (2.05%). Greater Sudbury was the only metro census division to record a population loss in 2012 (-0.09%).

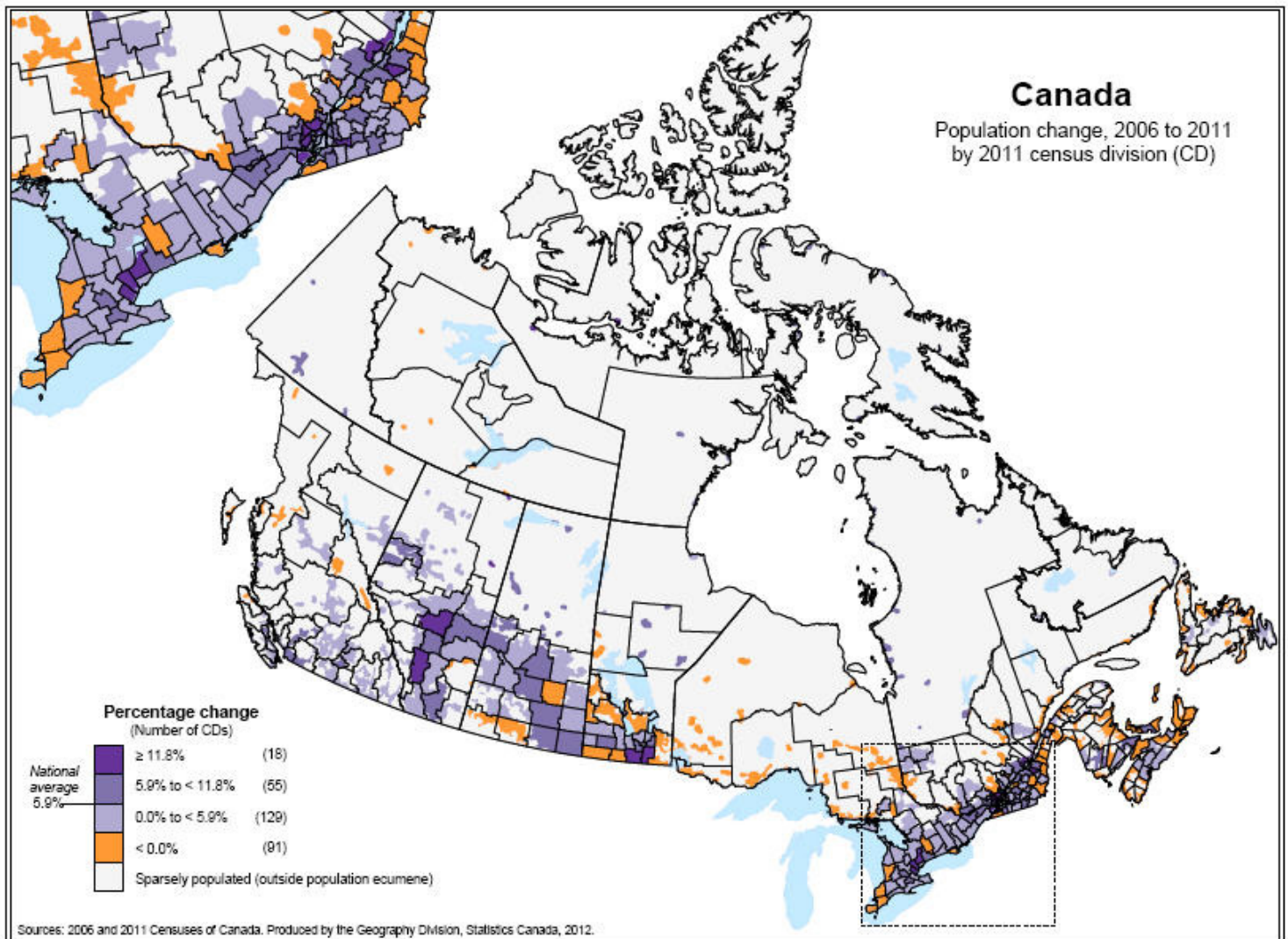
The pattern of population change from 2006 to 2011 shows a decline across the north as well as in the southern census divisions of Essex, Chatham-Kent, Huron, Kawartha Lakes and Prince Edward (Map 1).

Summary

Ontario's non-metro regions reported consistent population growth up to 2006 but there has been virtually no change since that time. Census divisions with more years of decline than growth are located in the north or they are relatively agricultural-dependent census divisions.

Rural Ontario Institute gratefully acknowledges the work of Ray Bollman in preparing this edition of *Focus on Rural Ontario*. Questions on data sources can be directed to RayD.Bollman@sasktel.net. Any comments or discussions can be directed to NRagetlie@RuralOntarioInstitute.ca.

Map 1



Source: Statistics Canada. Census of Population, 2006 and 2011. <http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2011/geo/map-carte/pdf/thematic/2011-98320-001-001-003-01-eng.pdf>