

## Percent with Social Assistance by census division

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### Highlights

- In 2015, 4.9% of individuals (15 years of age and over) in Ontario had some social assistance income.
- 17 of 24 non-metro census divisions have a higher proportion than the provincial average of individuals reporting social assistance income.
- Three non-metro census divisions had more than 8% of their population with some social assistance (Algoma, 8.6%; Nipissing, 8.6%; and Chatham-Kent, 8.3%).

### Why look at Social Assistance?

Social assistance is provided to individuals on the basis of need.

*Eligible social assistance recipients may receive assistance to cover the cost of food, shelter, clothing and other daily necessities. Other allowances may also be granted to persons with special needs or circumstances, such as elderly persons, persons with disabilities, single-parent families and persons with barriers to employment<sup>1</sup>.*

In Ontario, this would refer specifically to the Ontario Disability Support Program and the Ontario Works program, as reported on line 145 of the 2015 Income Tax Form. All other forms of government transfer revenue are reported under their specific category.

The spatial pattern of recipients of social assistance is one indicator of lower economic well-being and a need for social support across rural Ontario.

This Fact Sheet topic has both census division (CD) and census subdivision (CSD) Fact Sheets that should be read together. Figure 1 in the CD Fact Sheet includes all the CDs in the province and Table 1 in the CSD Fact Sheet presents results for top and bottom ranked CSDs.

### Findings

Across Ontario in 2015, 4.9% of individuals (15 years of age and over) received some social assistance during the 2015 calendar year (see orange line in Figure 1).

In 2015, 7 of 24 non-metro CDs<sup>2</sup> had a lower percent of individuals (15 years and over) reporting social assistance, compared to the Ontario average:

- Perth (3.7%);
- Bruce (3.9%);
- Oxford (4.4%);
- Huron (4.4%);
- Northumberland (4.5%);
- Haldimand-Norfolk (4.5%); and
- Muskoka (4.8%).

Thus, 17 of 24 non-metro CDs have a higher incidence of social assistance than the Ontario average. Three non-metro CDs had over 8% of individuals (15 years of age and over) with social assistance income:

- Algoma (8.6%);
- Nipissing (8.6%); and
- Chatham-Kent (8.3%).

### Discussion

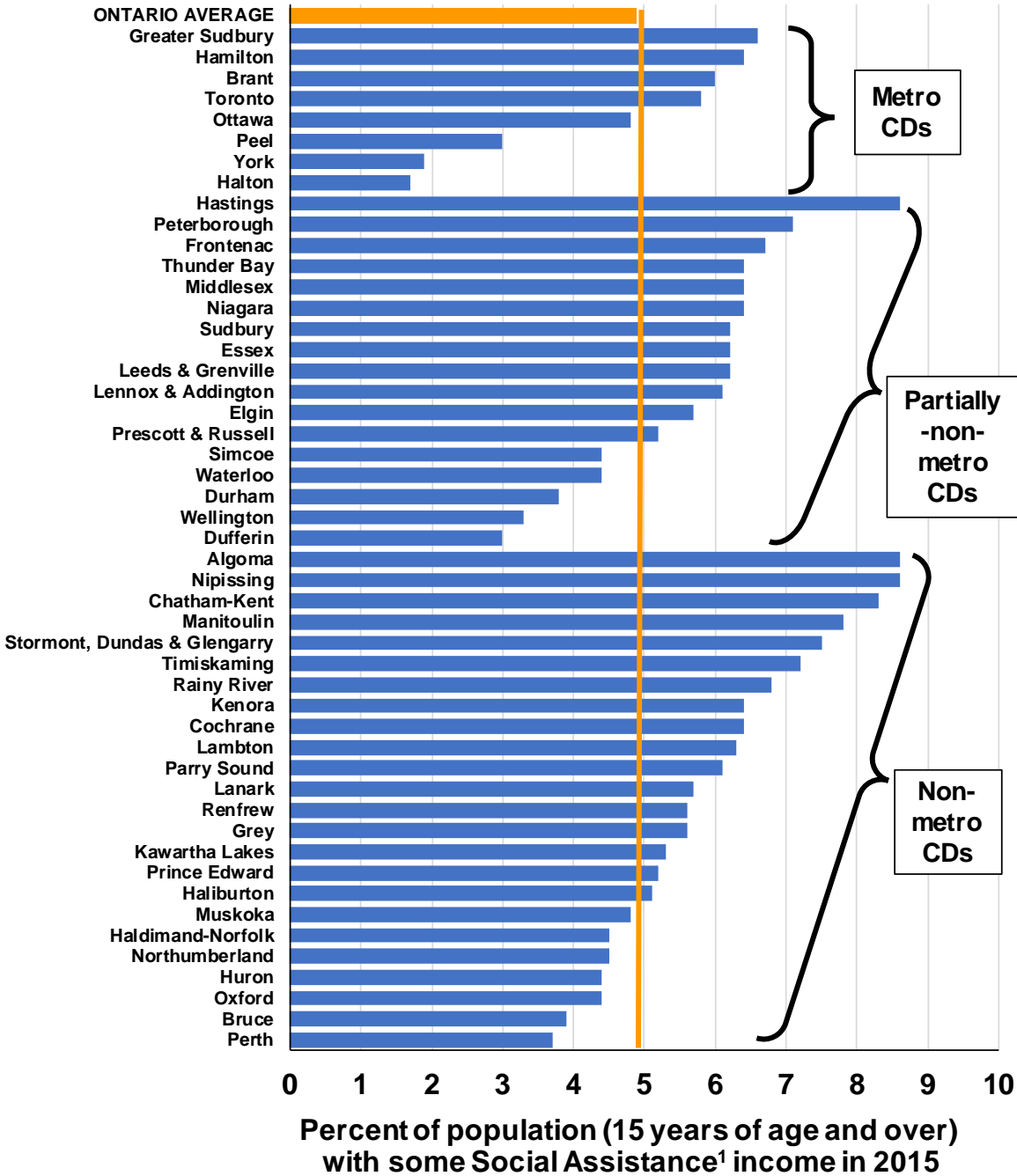
Non-metro CDs, in general, are more likely to have a higher share of individuals with some social assistance benefits.

A companion Fact Sheet shows the much wider range in the percent of individuals with social assistance across the census subdivisions within non-metro census divisions.

<sup>1</sup> Statistics Canada. (2017) **2016 Census Dictionary** (Ottawa: Statistics Canada, Catalogue no. 98-301) (<http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/ref/dict/index-eng.cfm>).

<sup>2</sup> Defined in "[Rural Ontario's Demography: Census Update 2016.](#)" **Focus on Rural Ontario** (Guelph: Rural Ontario Institute, March).

**Figure 1 Ranking of census divisions by percent of population (15 years of age and over) with some Social Assistance<sup>1</sup> income in 2015, Ontario**



1. On the basis of need, eligible social assistance recipients may receive assistance to cover the cost of food, shelter, clothing and other daily necessities. Other allowances may also be granted to persons with special needs or circumstances, such as elderly persons, persons with disabilities, single-parent families and persons with barriers to employment.

Source: Statistics Canada. Census of Population, 2016, Table 98-400-X2016120.

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