
Subject: Niagara Region Highlights from the 2021 Census of Population

Report to: Planning and Economic Development Committee

Report date: Wednesday, May 10, 2023

Recommendations

1. That this Report **BE RECEIVED** for information; and
2. That this Report **BE CIRCULATED** to Local Area Municipalities, Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority, Niagara Home Builders Association, Niagara Industrial Association, local Chambers of Commerce and School Boards.

Key Facts

- The 2021 Census of Population (2021 Census) was undertaken by Statistics Canada in May of 2021 and results were released incrementally throughout 2022.
- PDS 9-2022 provided an overview of population and dwelling counts collected through the 2021 Census.
- This report, PDS 14-2023 provides highlights on the following Census indicators for the Niagara Region:
 - Age, Sex at Birth and Gender;
 - Families, Households and Martial Status;
 - Income and Education; and
 - Indigenous Peoples, Immigration and Place of Birth.
- Data related to Labour from the 2021 Census is excluded from this report, as report ED 5-2023 provides an update on current labour trends in Niagara Region, summarizing how labour in Niagara has rebounded since the COVID-19 pandemic and highlights employment growth since the Census was conducted.

Financial Considerations

There are no financial implications associated with this report. Census data is used throughout the organization to inform various business units on social, economic and demographic trends throughout the region and area municipalities.

Analysis

2021 Census of Population

The Census of Population is conducted by Statistics Canada every five years. The survey is sent out in May of the Census year to households across Canada for completion. The last survey was conducted in May 2021. Statistics Canada released the results from the 2021 Census throughout 2022 with the final release on November 30, 2022.

This report highlights key statistics for Niagara Region and Area Municipalities. Results from the Census are summarized by Census theme as follows:

- Age, Sex at Birth and Gender;
- Families, Households and Martial Status;
- Income and Education; and
- Indigenous Peoples, Immigration and Place of Birth.

Age, Sex at Birth and Gender

Niagara Region had a median age of 46 years old in 2021, slightly older than the 2016 median age of 45.7. The pace of aging in Niagara has slowed since 2011, dropping from 5% every five years to less than 0.5% per year between 2016 and 2021.

Niagara remains one of the oldest Census Divisions in the Greater Golden Horseshoe, ranking 12th out of 16, in median age.

The median age across Niagara municipalities fluctuates by 20 years from 57.2 in Niagara-on-the-Lake and 37.2 in Thorold. Four municipalities in Niagara have a median age over 50, including Pelham (50.4), Port Colborne (50.4), Fort Erie (51.6) and Niagara-on-the-Lake (57.2).

The change in median age over the last five years is also unique by municipality, with Niagara-on-the-Lake having aged the most (+2.2 years) and Thorold decreasing the most (-3.9 years).

Appendix 1 provides an overview of key census results regarding Age, Sex at Birth and Gender.

Families, Households and Martial Status

Despite the increased cost to purchase a household in Niagara, there was a decline in proportion of adults, aged 20 to 34, and living with at least one parent in 2021. 41.3% of adults were living with at least one parent in 2021 compared to 42.0% in 2016.

Regarding housing mix, Niagara Region maintains a significantly higher share of single- and semi-detached units (72%) compared to both Ontario (59%) and Canada (58%). Between 2016 and 2021, 59% of newly occupied units were single or semi-detached, followed by 20% townhouse and 21% apartment.

Appendix 2 provides an overview of key census results regarding Families, Households and Martial Status.

Income and Education

Niagara had the second lowest Median Household Income (\$79,000) and the lowest five-year increase (\$13,900) compared to the other upper or single-tier municipalities in the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

Median Household Income varies by municipality in the Region. Pelham, West Lincoln, Grimsby and Lincoln all had a median household income over \$100,000. Port Colborne, Welland, St. Catharines, Niagara Falls and Fort Erie all had a median household income under \$80,000. However, those same five municipalities (and Thorold) had the greatest increase in income compared to the last census in 2016.

Regarding education, 25% of people aged 25 to 64 in Niagara had a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 37% in Ontario and 33% in Canada. Niagara has a greater proportion of adult population with a college certificate or diploma (38%) compared to Canada (34%) and Ontario (31%).

Appendix 3 provides an overview of key census results regarding Income and Education.

Indigenous Peoples, Immigration and Place of Birth

In 2021, 13,960 persons identified as Indigenous people in Niagara Region, representing 3% of the Region's population. In 2016, 12,250 persons identified as Indigenous peoples, representing an increase of 1,710 people. The 14% increase in

Indigenous population is greater than both increases in Canada (8%) and Ontario (8.6%).

In regards to immigration by year, Niagara has a larger share (40%) of pre-1980 immigrants compared to both Ontario (21%) and Canada (18%).

Appendix 4 provides an overview of key census results regarding Indigenous Peoples, Immigration and Place of Birth.

Labour Statistics from the 2021 Census of Population

Statistics related to Labour from the 2021 Census are excluded from this report. As the 2021 Census was collected in May 2021, it identified a significant decline in employment compared to 2016. This decline was related to the COVID-19 pandemic. The staff report prepared by Niagara Region Economic Development (ED 5-2023) provides an update on current labour trends in Niagara Region, summarizing how labour in Niagara has rebounded since the pandemic and highlights employment growth since the Census was conducted.

Conclusion

Niagara has experienced significant shifts in demographic, economic and societal trends over the past five years. These trends are highlighted by the results from the 2021 Census, a key primary resource of statistical information and used across all Regional departments.

Alternatives Reviewed

This report is for information purposes only and provides Planning and Economic Development Committee with a high level overview of the 2021 Census. No alternatives were considered.

Relationship to Council Strategic Priorities

The information in this report relates to the following Council Strategic Priorities:

- Priority 3: Responsible Growth and Infrastructure Planning

The Census is the authoritative source for population data that is used by departments across the Region. This information is critical for monitoring the Official Plan and insuring to the Region plans growth and infrastructure responsibly.

- Priority 4: Sustainable and Engaging Government

This report provides information from the 2021 Census so Council is engaged and aware of trends in Niagara.

Other Pertinent Reports

ED 5-2023 Niagara Economic Update

PDS 9-2022 2021 Census Release: Population and Dwelling Counts

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Age, Sex at Birth and Gender

Appendix 2: Families, Households and Martial Status

Appendix 3: Income and Education

Appendix 4: Indigenous Peoples, Immigration and Place of Birth