



# HAMILTON'S **VitalSigns**<sup>®</sup>

# 2010

## About Vital Signs

Vital Signs is a report issued by community foundations in many cities across Canada. Introduced by the Toronto Community Foundation in 2001 as a straightforward, plain-speaking measure of how the city was doing, the Vital Signs program has grown to include local reports from across Canada.

## About Hamilton Community Foundation

Hamilton Community Foundation's mission is to strengthen Hamilton's quality of life as an inclusive and sustainable community through philanthropy. We help people make the difference they want to make by:

- Working with donors to build funds that meet their philanthropic and financial objectives.
- Granting to the widest possible range of charitable organizations and initiatives.
- Fostering community leadership by bringing people, knowledge and resources together around the community's needs and opportunities.

Since it was founded in 1954, Hamilton Community Foundation has made grants to our community totalling more than \$59 million, including approximately \$4.0 million last year.

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# Methodology

Vital Signs presents research gathered by many local and national organizations deeply involved in each of the 10 issue areas. The indicators presented were prioritized by the Vital Signs Advisory Committee and Community Foundations of Canada.

## Vital Signs Advisory Committee

Indicator selection and presentation for this project was overseen by the Vital Signs Advisory Committee. Many members of this committee are also members of the Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction's Evaluation and Learning Working Group, which has spent several years developing a comprehensive set of indicators to measure Hamilton's progress on a wide range of socio-economic issues, the core of which are covered in this report. In order to cover all the Vital Signs issue areas and provide a broader quality of life picture, the group was supplemented with additional experts from the environment, economy, and arts and culture sectors to form the Vital Signs Advisory committee.

## Indicator Selection

As part of the national Vital Signs initiative, all community foundations across Canada who are publishing Vital Signs reports agree to report on five common topics (e.g. "environment") and one common indicator within each issue area presented. These common indicators as well as the indicators previously developed by the Evaluation and Learning Working Group were prioritized for this report by the Vital Signs Advisory Committee at a consultation session in June 2010.

Progress was examined in three ways:

- the indicator's change over time
- its comparison to provincial and national averages
- the disparity present within the indicator – e.g. between different neighbourhoods or between different groups of Hamiltonians.

## Research

Information in this report was gathered in co-operation with research experts from a variety of organizations, both local and national. Data sources and contributors are outlined in the Acknowledgements section. The information and key findings were reviewed by Advisory Committee members and other external experts. It is important to note this report is based on secondary data, that is, data that already exists. This includes the most recent Canadian Census data, as well as the results of local researchers and organizations. Consequently, Vital Signs should not be viewed as a formal academic research report. The reader should consider it to be a snapshot of the city at a point in time using common and accessible measurement data.

## Statistical Notes

Every effort was made to use information pertaining to the city of Hamilton where possible. In the case of some Statistics Canada information, data was only available for the Census Metropolitan Area (CMA) which includes Burlington and Grimsby. This is indicated in the report where applicable.

# Definitions

- **Before-Tax Low Income Cut-Off (LICO):** An income threshold below which a family will likely devote a larger share of its income on the necessities of food, shelter and clothing than the average family. While not considered an official “poverty line” by Statistics Canada, it is the most commonly used threshold for measuring low-income in Canada.
- **Census Metropolitan Area (CMA):** An area consisting of one or more neighbouring municipalities situated around a major urban core. A CMA must have a total population of at least 100,000 of which 50,000 or more live in the urban core. The Hamilton CMA consists of Hamilton, Burlington, and Grimsby.
- **Greenhouse Gas Emissions:** emitted gases in the atmosphere that reduce the loss of heat into space and therefore contribute to increasing global temperatures through the greenhouse effect.
- **Ground-level ozone:** component of smog; severe lung irritant; generated when combustion emissions such as nitrogen oxides and volatile organic compounds react in the presence of sunlight, via a complex set of chemical reactions.
- **Living Wage:** The wage level required for a person or family employed full-time and year-round, to meet a basic standard of living that allows for good health, education, and entertainment opportunities, and full participation in modern life.
- **Neighbourhood:** This report uses Statistics Canada’s *census tracts* to capture neighbourhood statistics. Census tracts usually have a population of 2,500 to 8,000. They are located in large urban centres that must have an urban core population of 50,000 or more. Hamilton has 132 census tracts.
- **Recent Immigrant:** Immigrants who have arrived in Canada within the last five years. The 2006 census defines recent immigrants as those immigrants who arrived between 2001 and 2006.

# Arts and Culture

Hamilton has a slightly lower proportion of artists and workers in cultural industries than provincial average, but this proportion is increasing. Library use is growing rapidly, and exceeds the provincial average in many categories.

Culture and creativity help young people thrive and create opportunities for prosperity.

## Employment in Arts and Culture

As of 2006, Hamilton had 7,290 workers in cultural industries and occupations, which is 2.6% of the labour force. The provincial average was 3.4%, and the national average was 3.3%. There were 1,680 artists in Hamilton in 2006, making up 0.6% of the labour force, similar to the national average of 0.8%. The number of artists has increased 22% in the last 15 years, growing faster than the overall labour force.<sup>[1]</sup>

“Artists” include nine occupations:<sup>[2]</sup>

- actors and comedians,
- artisans and craftpersons,
- authors and writers,
- conductors, composers, and arrangers,
- dancers,
- musicians and singers,
- other performers,
- painters, sculptors, and other visual artists, and
- producers, directors, choreographers and related occupations.

“Cultural workers” include creative, production, technical and management occupations in the areas of broadcasting, film and video, sound recording, performing arts, publishing, printing, libraries, archives, heritage, architecture and design.<sup>[3]</sup>

## Library Use

Library use has been growing rapidly in Hamilton. There were just over 6 million items checked out in 2009 which is a 28% increase from 4.7 million in 2007. Circulation per capita is slightly higher than provincial averages at 11.6 items per person. Fifty-six percent of Hamilton residents owned a library card in 2009, compared to the provincial average of 43%. An overall measure of customer satisfaction is how many times residents used library resources in a year. The measure of total library uses per capita was consistently 3.3% to 13.0% higher than the average for large municipal libraries in Ontario between 2006 and 2008.<sup>[4]</sup>

## Number of Cultural Organizations and Festivals

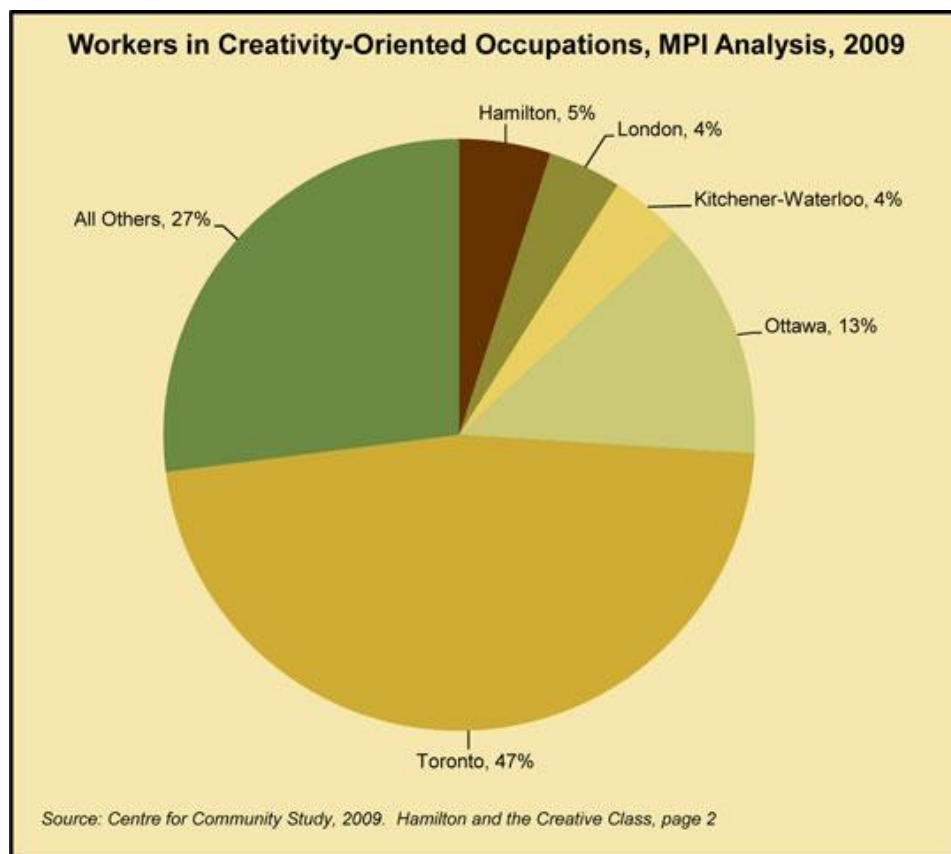
The City of Hamilton has recently completed an inventory of cultural resources in Hamilton as the first phase of the Our Community Culture Project. There were a total of 2,254 cultural resources identified including: 870 creative cultural industries (e.g. publishing, art dealers, libraries), 180 community cultural organizations (e.g. multi-cultural organizations, Aboriginal organizations), 260 spaces and facilities (e.g. museums, galleries, or studios), 824 cultural heritage (e.g. heritage or historic sites, buildings), 28 natural heritage (e.g. conservation authorities, scenic destinations), and 92 festivals and events (e.g. film festival, public art tours, county fairs).<sup>[5]</sup>

Phase 2 of the OCC will continue to collect data and augment this first step in mapping Hamilton’s cultural resources. For a progress update, visit the City’s website: [Our Community Culture Project](#).



## Hamilton and the “Creative Class”

The creative industries and cultural workers are increasingly seen as an important driver of the new economy. Richard Florida, the well-known author and urban planner, has coined the term “Creative Class” for these people. Across Ontario, 60% of workers in “creativity-oriented” occupations reside in Toronto (47%) or Ottawa (13%). Hamilton was third in the province at 5%.<sup>[6]</sup>



A city’s ability to attract the “Creative Class” is often measured by index that focuses in four areas: Bohemians (number of artists), Talent (number of those with a university degree or higher), Mosaic (number of foreign-born people), and Tech-Pole (amount of high-tech industry). In a comparison of Canada’s 25 Census Metropolitan Areas, the Martin Prosperity Institute found the following:

Hamilton’s Ranking: 1996 and 2001 (most recent available)				
	Talent Index	Bohemian Index	Mosaic Index	Tech-Pole Index
1996	17	15	3	13
2001	18	15	3	13

Source: Centre for Community Study, 2009

The researchers concluded their provincial comparison by dividing Ontario cities into three categories: Cities well-positioned for the Creative Age, Cities in Transition to the Creative Age, and Cities/Regions Disconnected from the Creative Age. Hamilton was judged to be in the second category: in transition to the creative age.<sup>[7]</sup>

# Belonging and Leadership

Hamiltonians are more likely than average to give to charity and two-thirds feel connected to the community, but voter turnout is low, especially in some neighbourhoods.

Informed, engaged and active citizens are critical to achieving any city's potential.

## Charitable Donations

In Hamilton in 2008, 26.7% of tax filers made charitable donations. This was higher than provincial (25.7%) and federal averages (24.1%). These results are lower than in 1997 when 30.5% of Hamilton taxfilers declared donations. The median charitable donation has increased from \$210 to \$290 over the same time.<sup>[8]</sup>

This measure only captures those who claim charitable giving on tax returns and under-represents overall donations. A more detailed survey in 2007<sup>[9]</sup> found that 84% of Canadians made charitable donations in the 12 months prior to the survey, and Hamilton was slightly above the national average. Other key findings of this report included that:

- Canadians donated a total of \$10 billion in 2007, up from \$8.9 billion in 2004.
- The median annual donation was \$120.
- Most charitable donations came from a small segment of the population: the top 10% of donors accounted for 62% of the total value of donations, the top 25% of donors gave 82% of the total value of donations, while the bottom half of donors contributed 5% of the total value of donations.

## Sense of Community Belonging

65.1% Hamiltonians 12 and over reported having a strong or positive sense of community belonging in 2007/8, similar to the provincial average of 64.5%. This percentage increased from 2001 when Hamilton's percentage was 59.0%. This survey shows that there remain almost one-third of Hamiltonians who report not having even a "somewhat strong" sense of community.<sup>[10]</sup>

## Voter Turnout in Elections

In 2003 and 2006 municipal elections, only 37% and 38% respectively, of eligible Hamiltonians voted, three percentage points lower than the provincial average. Turnout increased to meet the provincial average for the last provincial elections when 57% and 54% of eligible Hamiltonians voted. Hamilton's federal election turnout has been slightly higher – 58% in 2004, 63% in 2006, and 56% in 2008, but all were two to three percentage points below national average. Voter turnout varies dramatically by neighbourhood – as an example, there were several polling stations in the federal 2008 election with turnout below 25%, and many above 75%.<sup>[11]</sup>

## Women in Municipal Politics

Women make up 13% of Hamilton City Council's elected positions (2 out of 16) which is lower than the provincial average of 24%. The current percentage is lower than the previous term of City Council, when there were three women councilors (20%), still lower than the provincial average. In the last municipal election, ten out of the 57 registered candidates were women (18%). According to the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, across Ontario, 15% of Mayors and 39% of Chief Administrative Officials of Municipalities (a non-elected position) were women.<sup>[12]</sup>

## Racial Diversity in Hamilton

Hamilton's visible minority<sup>[71]</sup> population grew by 25% between 2001 and 2006, to 13.6% of Hamilton's population from 10.9%. This is substantially lower than the provincial average of 22.8% and the national average of 16.2%, but the gap is closing. Hamilton's largest visible minority groups are South Asian, Black, and Chinese.<sup>[72]</sup>

Visible Minority Groups, Hamilton and Ontario, 2006				
	Hamilton		Ontario	
	#	%	#	%
South Asian	14,765	21.8	794,170	28.9
Black	13,900	20.5	473,760	17.3
Chinese	9,300	13.7	576,980	21.0
Southeast Asian	5,995	8.8	110,045	4.0
Latin American	5,585	8.2	147,135	5.4
Arab	5,390	7.9	111,405	4.1
Filipino	4,040	6.0	203,220	7.4
West Asian	3,450	5.1	96,620	3.5
Multiple	1,840	2.7	77,405	2.8
Korean	1,540	2.3	69,540	2.5
Other	1,045	1.5	56,845	2.1
Japanese	980	1.4	28,080	1.0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>67,830</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>2,745,205</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Hamilton Community Foundation, Hamilton Diversity Scan, p. 52

## Aboriginal People

According to Statistics Canada, Hamilton's Aboriginal population<sup>[73]</sup> grew 21.7% to a total of 7,625 people between 2001 and 2006, compared with the City of Hamilton's 2.7% population increase.<sup>[74]</sup> The Aboriginal populations in Hamilton and across the country have a higher proportion of youth and lower proportion of seniors when compared with the general population, due to a much higher birth rate. Economically, Aboriginal people do not fare as well as non-Aboriginal people: unemployment rates are two to three times higher than non-Aboriginal people, Aboriginal median earnings are just over two-thirds of the median for non-Aboriginal people, and Aboriginal people have a poverty rate of 39.1% compared with 18.1% for the overall population rate.



# Economy and Work

Hamilton's unemployment rate is lower than the Ontario average, but proportionally fewer people are in the labour force. The local economy has had shifts toward smaller employers and knowledge-based institutions.

Quality of life is greatly affected by the ability to access stable, well-paid work.

## Unemployment Rate

The unemployment rate in June 2010 for the Hamilton CMA, which includes Burlington and Grimsby, was 7.7%. This rate was slightly lower than the provincial average of 8.3%, and similar to the national average of 7.9%.<sup>[13]</sup> In 16 of the last 18 months, the Hamilton CMA has had unemployment rates below the provincial average.

## Labour Force Participation Rate

The participation rate (the percentage of people who are either employed or looking for work) in June 2010 for the Hamilton CMA was 65.8%: lower than the provincial rate of 67.5%, and the national rate of 67.3%, meaning that Hamilton has a larger proportion of people who are out of the labour force entirely.<sup>[14]</sup>

Gender has an effect on participation rates in Hamilton. Information from the 2006 Census shows that the participation rate for men was 70.0%, while for women it was 59.5%.<sup>[15]</sup> Unemployment rates for men and women were similar. This shows that there are more women than men who are not participating in the labour force.

## Living Wage

The Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction has estimated that a living wage is between \$13 and \$14 per hour for full-time, full-year work, or an annual salary of \$27,000. In 2008 in the Hamilton CMA, 17% of full time, full year workers (35,140) earned less than \$25,000 per year.<sup>[16]</sup>

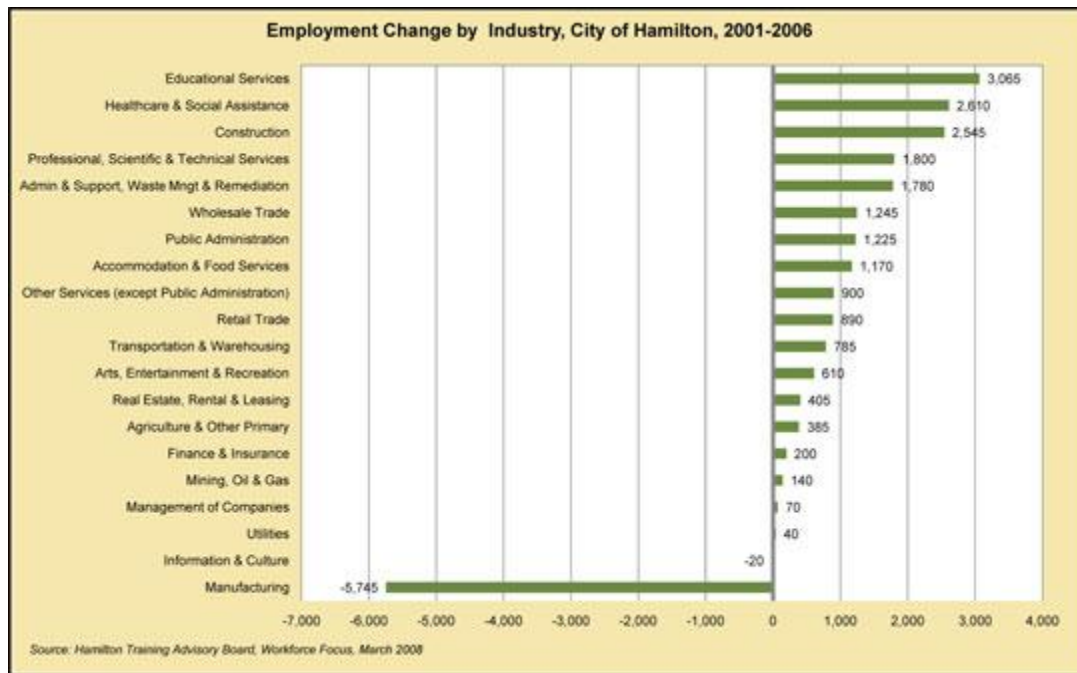
Women were more likely to not be earning a living wage, with 22% of female, full-time full-year workers earning less than \$25,000 compared with 14% of males. The overall provincial average was 19%.

## Number and Type of Employers Over Time

From 2003 to 2009 the city of Hamilton had a net gain of 553 employers. Most of these gains were found in the "Small Business" category, and there was a decrease of registered "Medium to Large" businesses over the past five years. The sectors with the largest increases were transport and warehousing (445), and finance and insurance (293). The sectors with the largest decreases were construction (-237), accommodation and food services (-204), and manufacturing (-201).<sup>[17]</sup>

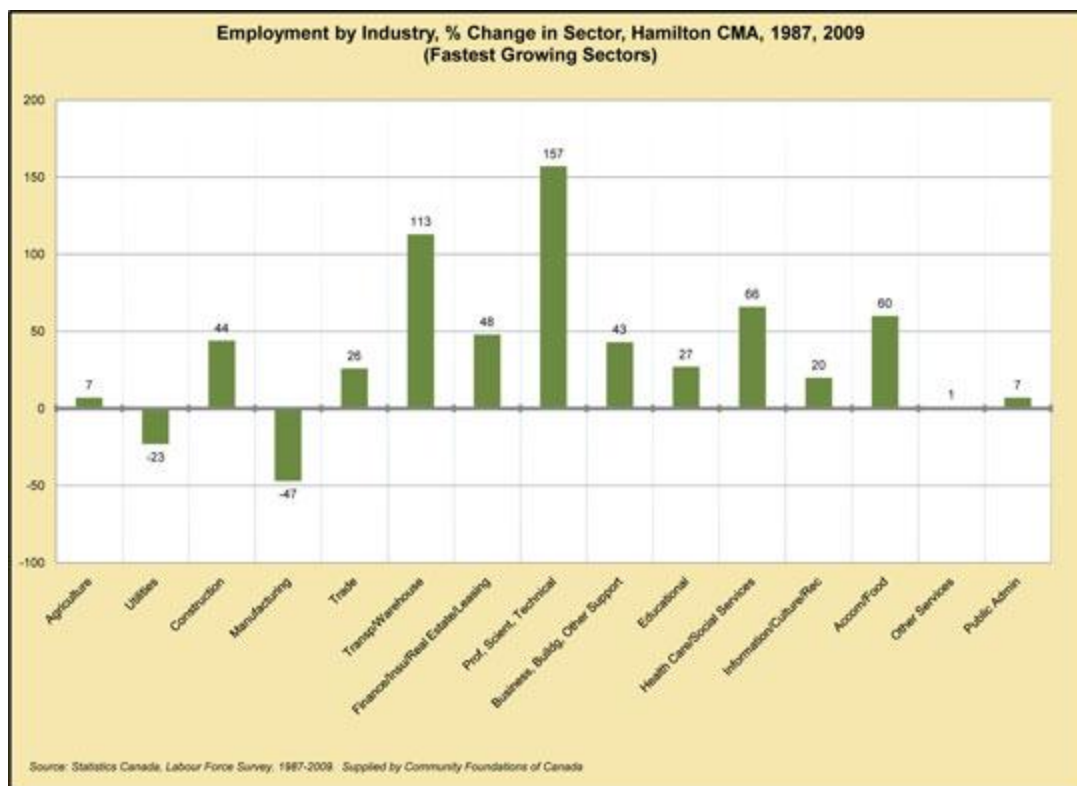
## Number and Type of Jobs Over Time

The shift in Hamilton's economy away from manufacturing and toward knowledge-based institutions has been well documented. The Hamilton Training Advisory Board produced the following chart that described the trends clearly.<sup>[18]</sup>



This chart shows the growth in jobs in all sectors except manufacturing where there was a major loss. This information is based on the 2001 and 2006 census, the most recent information that is available. Because of the time frame, it does not take into account any impact from the recession on the manufacturing and construction sectors, which may exacerbate these findings.

Over the longer term (going back to 1987), the changes are more dramatic. The fastest growing sectors over the last 25 years are illustrated below.<sup>[19]</sup>



## **Change in Revenue for the City of Hamilton: Residential and Non-Residential Taxes**

Revenue for the City of Hamilton comes principally from residential property taxes, non-residential taxes, user fees and transfers from other levels of government. The balance between residential and non-residential property taxes can be used to measure the strength of the commercial and industrial sectors (or non-residential). In the City of Hamilton, the non-residential sector's share of the municipal property tax load has declined to 23% in 2009 from 39% in 1994 which was pre-CVA.<sup>[75]</sup> Over the longer term, the difference is starker: in 1974 for the former City of Hamilton, non-residential taxes accounted for 49% of the municipal revenue. By 2009, that had fallen to 26%.<sup>[76]</sup>

### **For Further Information**

- City of Hamilton, Economic Development, [Invest in Hamilton](#)
- City of Hamilton, [Community Wellness Indicators](#).
- [Hamilton Training Advisory Board](#)
- [Statistics Canada, Employment and Unemployment](#)
- [Social Planning and Research Council, Women and Poverty](#)

# Environment

Hamilton's water consumption and waste diversion have improved substantially and beaches are open more frequently. Reductions in local air pollution have been offset by increasing ground level ozone and greenhouse gas emissions, including those from private vehicles.

Government and citizens working together have shown they can make a difference – but we all still have work to do.

## Water Consumption

Between 1993 and 2009 industrial, commercial and residential water consumption dropped by more than 50% to 453 cubic metres from 1,042 per metered account, exceeding the City's 521 cubic metre target. Residences, which are the heaviest users of water, mirrored the decrease in overall water use, dropping almost 40% from 2001 to 2006.<sup>[20]</sup> Decreases are due to a universal water metering program, rate increases, and a greater recognition that water is a valuable commodity.<sup>[21]</sup>

## Waste Production and Diversion

Hamiltonians cut waste produced by 4% from 2000 to 2009. They increased waste composted to 24% from 2%, and recycling rates rose to 22% from 14%. As a result, waste diverted from landfill rose to 47% in 2009 from 17% in 2000, meeting the provincial average. The City's diversion target is 65%.<sup>[22]</sup>

## Air Quality and Pollution

Local air pollutants (including particulate matter) have decreased by almost 40% over the past decade. The overall percentage decreases include a 38% reduction for Inhalable Particulate Matter (PM<sub>10</sub>), 37% for Respirable Particulate Matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>), and 36% for Nitrogen Dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>). Local sources of these pollutants include vehicles and industry.<sup>[23]</sup>

These gains, however, have been offset both by higher levels ground level ozone and greenhouse gas emissions. Ground level ozone is a pollutant formed when nitrogen dioxide and other airborne chemicals mix with sunlight to form smog. Most ground level ozone comes from U.S. midwestern coal-fired power plants and vehicle emissions on both sides of the border. Most southwestern Ontario cities have seen increases of between 10-30% over the past 20 years. In Hamilton, "hourly exceeds of 50 parts per billion" increased 45% to 500 in 2008 from 345 in 1993 (with significant variation year to year).

Greenhouse gas emissions measure the release of carbon dioxide, methane, and other gases. They increased to 13.1 million metric tonnes in 2008 from 12.7 million in 2006. The largest sources of greenhouse gas emissions are steel and heavy industry (76%), commercial (9%), transportation (8%) and residential (6%).

A major source of residential greenhouse gas emissions comes from private vehicle operation, which have been rising since the early 1990s. Across Canada, GHG emissions from private vehicle operation reached 70,774 kilotonnes in 2007, up 35% compared to the 1990 level of 52,256. In the Hamilton CMA, an average of 1,757 kilotonnes of greenhouse gases were emitted for every person. This was similar to the provincial per capita average of 1,750 kilotonnes.<sup>[24]</sup>

As a part of the Partners for Climate Protection Program, the City of Hamilton set specific targets for reductions of 20% of greenhouse gases from the 2005 level by 2020. The City's municipal operations are on track to make this target. The community as a whole will not meet this target unless significant changes occur.

## Greenspace and Agricultural Land

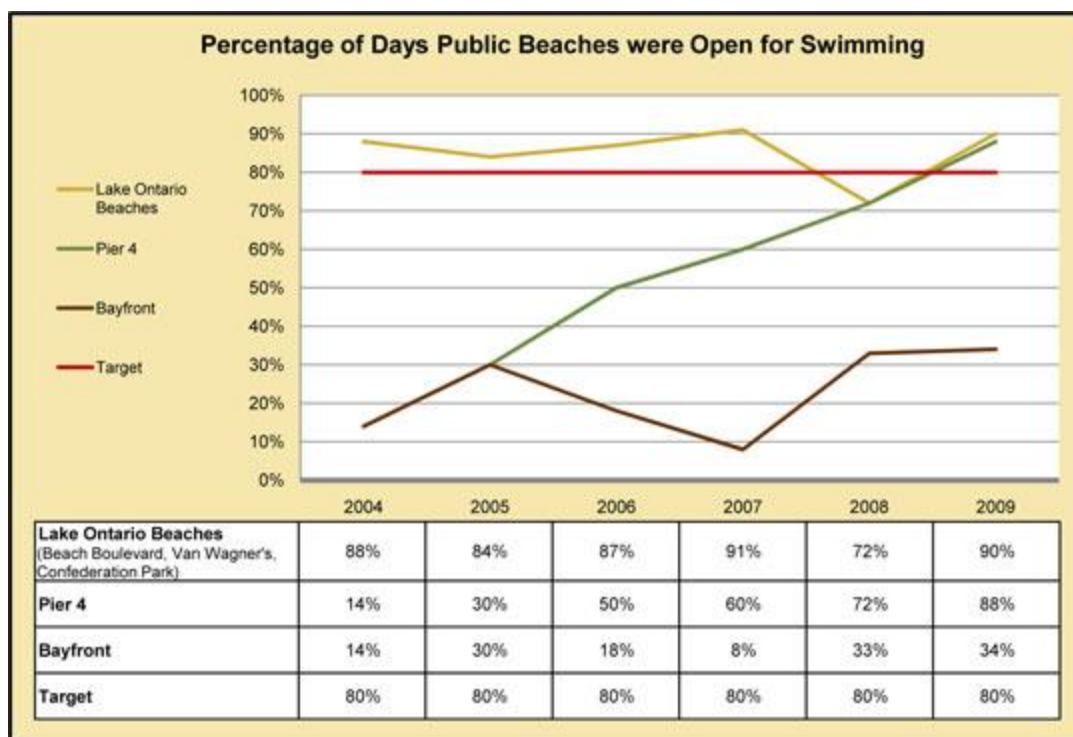
In 2008, Hamilton had 409 hectares of parkland per 100,000 residents – equivalent to the provincial average. The total land area of the city dedicated to parkland was 1.9%, just over half of which was maintained parkland (1.1%), and the other half natural parkland (0.9%).<sup>[25]</sup>

In terms of natural spaces, Hamilton currently has 23,000 hectares of environmentally significant areas (ESAs) that are targeted to be protected through private land stewardships or agreements with conservation areas. From 1993 to 2006, the number of protected hectares increased to 6,826 from 738.<sup>[26]</sup>

When agricultural land is re-zoned through Official Plan Amendments, it represents a permanent loss in the community's ability to produce food locally and sustainably. Vision 2020 reports that from 1993 to 2006, 1,130 hectares of agricultural land were re-zoned. The number of hectares being converted has slowed since the Greenbelt Protection legislation was enacted in 2006-7.<sup>[27]</sup>

## Percentage of Days Beaches are Open to the Public for Swimming

The Hamilton Harbour Remedial Action Plan has set a target of 80% for public beaches to be open for swimming. The three Lake Ontario beaches (Beach Boulevard, Van Wagner's, and Confederation Park) have consistently exceeded this target, averaging between 84% and 91%. Pier 4 has shown drastic improvement since 2005 since bird exclusion measures were adopted, rising from 14% days open in 2004 to 88% in 2009. Bayfront Park has not fared as well; in 2009 it was open for swimming 34% of days.<sup>[28]</sup>





# Gap Between Rich and Poor

Hamilton's poverty rates are well above provincial and national averages. There are extreme differences between the city's neighbourhoods in incomes and poverty rates.

Poverty anywhere is unacceptable. North American experience shows that concentrated poverty inevitably spreads, undermining economic growth, property values, health and educational outcomes across entire regions.

## Overall Poverty Rate: Low Income Cut-Off

While Hamilton's overall poverty rate, based on Statistics Canada Before tax Low Income Cutoff, declined from 19.8% in 2001 to 18.1% in 2006 (the most recent year available), we remained well above the provincial and national averages (14.7% and 15.3%, respectively).<sup>[29]</sup>

## Overall Poverty Rate: Low Income Measure

A second way to measure poverty is by the Low Income Measure, which measures the number of people and families whose income is 50% or less than Hamilton's overall median income. Using this measure, the poverty rate in the City of Hamilton rose between 2001 and 2007, from 17.7% to 18.3%.<sup>[30]</sup>

## Child Poverty Rate

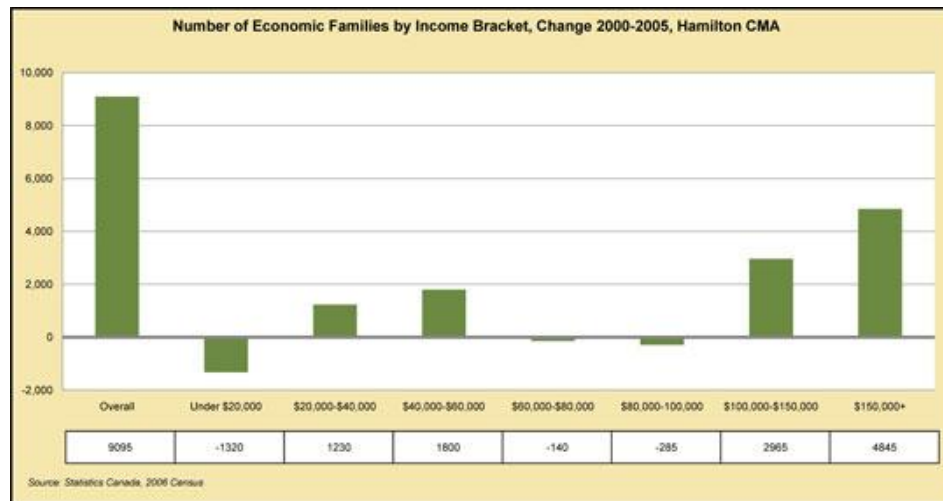
Nearly 1 in 4 children under 18 lived below the poverty line (23.6%), a small increase since 2001 (23.4%) and higher than the provincial and national average (18.0% and 17.7%). As The Hamilton Spectator's Code Red series reported, child poverty is concentrated: some neighbourhoods had child poverty rates of over 55%, while there were seven neighbourhoods that had no child poverty. Child poverty rates also varied by sub-population: for example, 50% of children in recent immigrant families live below the poverty line.

## Income Gap between Neighbourhoods

Families in Hamilton's five highest income neighbourhoods in Hamilton had median incomes 3.3 times higher than those in the five lowest income in 2006. The average of the family median incomes for the five highest income neighbourhoods was \$110,796. The five lowest income neighbourhoods had a median family income of \$33,345. The income gap between these two is \$77,345.<sup>[31]</sup> In all neighbourhoods across Hamilton, poverty rates varied with some having poverty rates of less than 3% and some over 40%.

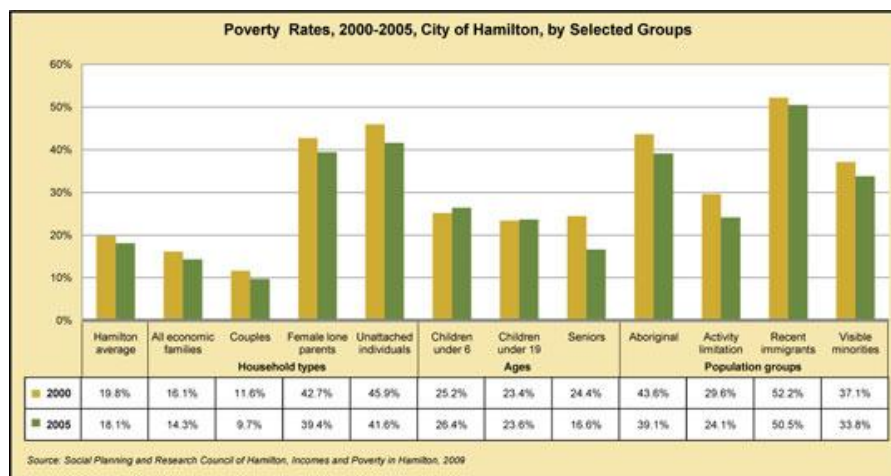
## Income Gap between Families

Income inequality can also be measured by the change in annual income of families in Hamilton. The chart below shows the number of families in different income ranges in the Hamilton Census Metropolitan Area, which includes Burlington and Grimsby. From 2000-2005, there was a reduction of 1,320 families with under \$20,000 in income (to a total of 11,260 families). The middle income groups (annual incomes between \$30,000 and \$60,000) increased by over 4,000 families to just under 50,000 families. The largest increase was those earning over \$100,000 with an increase of 7,810 families to a total of 61,485 families.<sup>[32]</sup>



## Poverty Rate by Group

Recent immigrants (50.5%), single people (41.6%), Aboriginal people (39.1%), and female lone parents (39.4%) were more than twice as likely to experience poverty. Seniors had the most improved rate from 2001 to 2006, dropping from 24.4% to 16.6% over that time.<sup>[33]</sup>



## Food Bank Use

The number of households who used Hamilton food banks has risen by 50% since 2001. In March 2009, 7,685 households, representing over 19,000 people, used a food bank, a record high and an increase from 5,300 households in March 2001. Children represent 42% of all people accessing the city's food banks. Approximately 50% of households that use food banks are supported by Ontario Works, and another 25% are on the Ontario Disability Support Program.<sup>[34]</sup>

## For Further Information

- Social Planning and Research Council. *Incomes and Poverty in Hamilton 2009*.
- Social Planning and Research Council. *Women and Poverty in Hamilton 2010*.
- Hamilton Spectator, 2010. *Code Red*.
- Greater Hamilton FoodShare. *Hunger Count 2009*.
- City of Hamilton. *Community Wellness Indicators*.
- Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction Action Plan.

# Getting Started in our Community

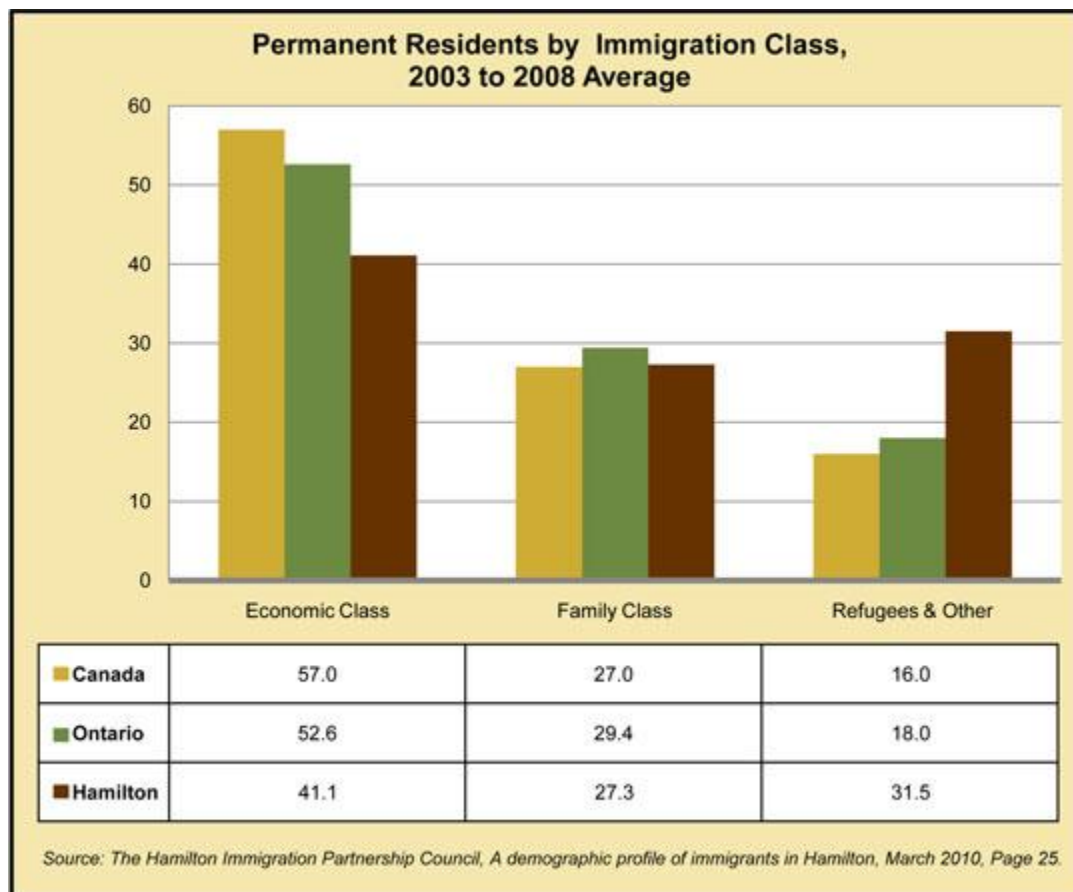
Both recent immigrants and youth in Hamilton have unemployment rates that are much higher than the rate for the overall population, but these rates are all similar to provincial averages. Hamilton gained over 4,600 people from other parts of Canada, and those that have moved here, tend to be under the age of 45.

Setting out on the right foot is important to the future of our newcomers, our youth and ultimately, our city.

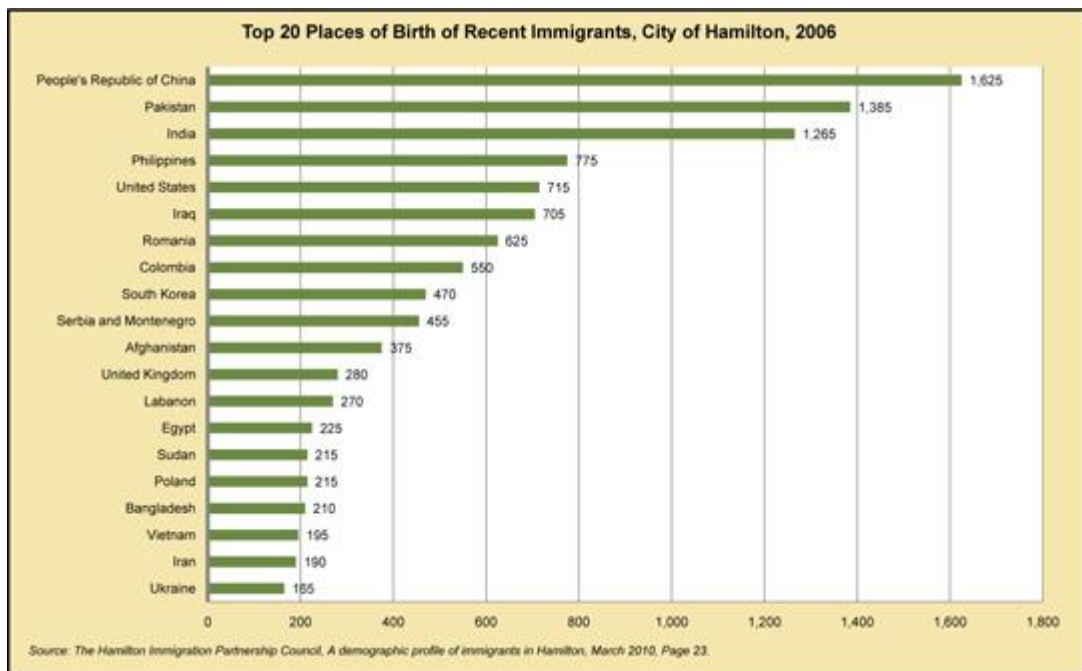
## Recent Immigrants and Employment

About one-quarter of Hamiltonians are immigrants. As the Jobs Prosperity Collaborative has noted, of these immigrants, two-thirds arrived in Hamilton before 1991, and only 14% are “recent immigrants” – arriving since 2001.<sup>[35]</sup> In the city of Hamilton, the unemployment rate for recent immigrants is twice as high as non-immigrants (11.7% vs. 6.0% in 2006) although this difference decreases the longer time in Canada.<sup>[36]</sup> Almost half of recent immigrant families has an income below \$40,000, and recent immigrants have the highest poverty rate of any sub-population in Hamilton at 50.5%.<sup>[37]</sup>

Of the more than 3,000 arrivals in Hamilton each year, 41% are “Economic Class Immigrants” (skilled workers, business immigrants, live-in caregivers, all assessed on a point system), 27% are “Family Class” (sponsored by a family member), and 32% are “Refugees and all other Classes”.<sup>[38]</sup> As the following graph shows, Hamilton has a lower rate of economic class immigrants, and higher proportion of refugees than national averages.

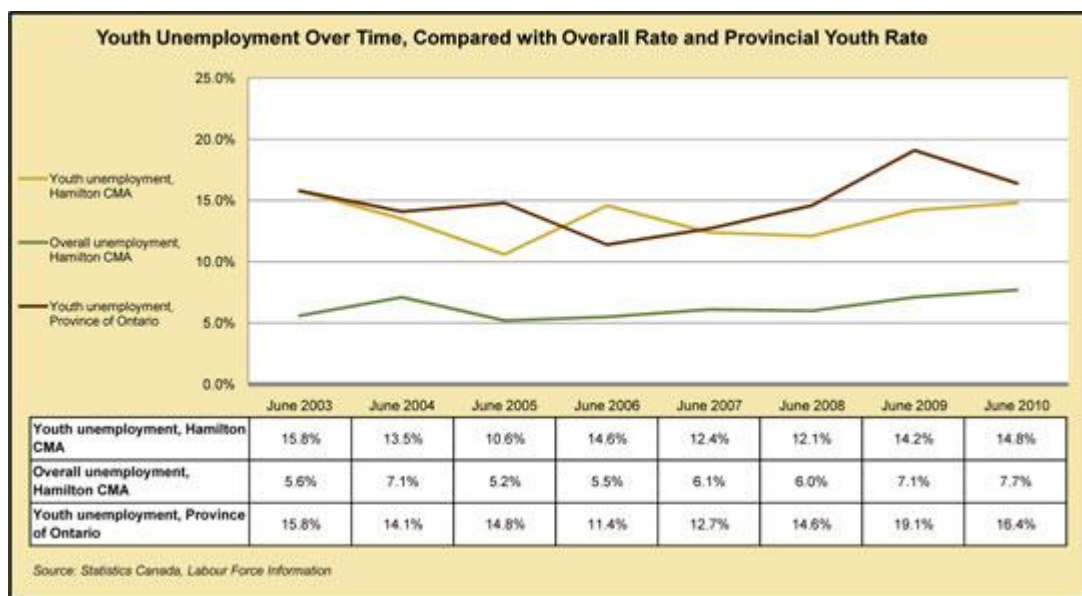


Recent immigrants from Asia and the Middle East made up over half of all recent immigrants from 2001 -2006, with China, Pakistan, and India being the largest source countries.<sup>[39]</sup>



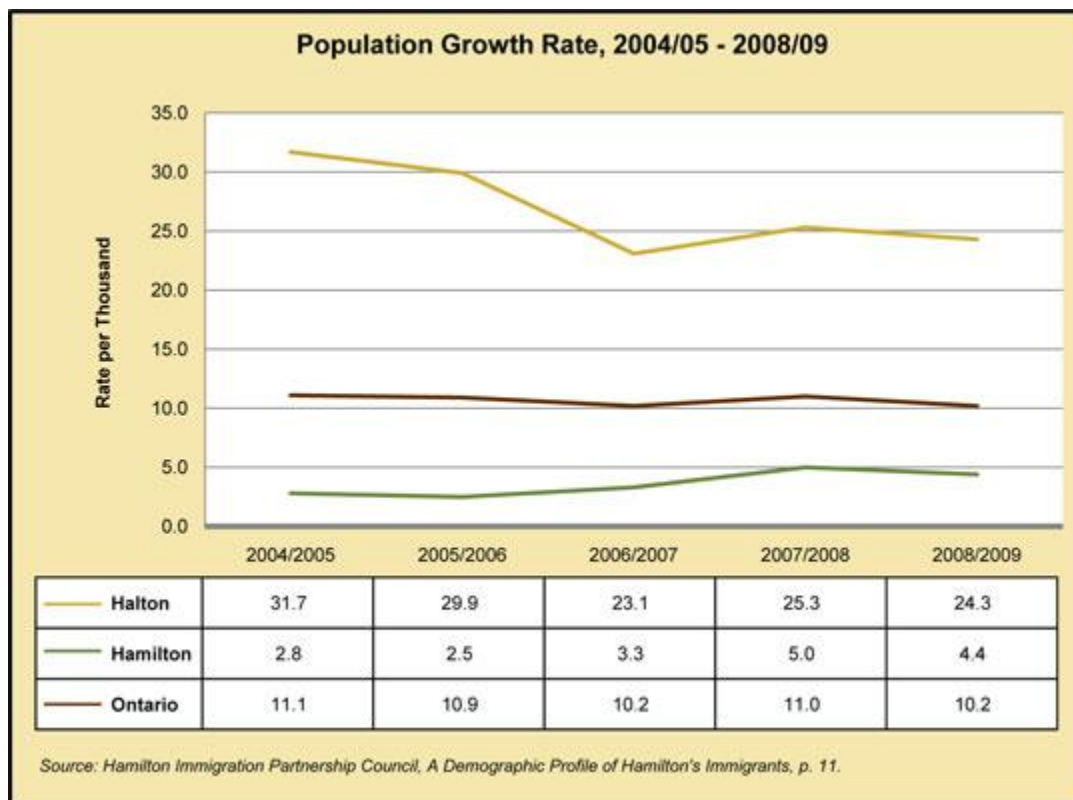
## Youth Unemployment

The youth unemployment rate for the Hamilton CMA has fluctuated between 12% and 15% over the last from years. This is significantly more than the rate of the overall population (between 6.0 and 7.5%). The youth unemployment rate peaked in April 2010 at 19.2%, but stabilized to 14.8% in June 2010. This rate is consistently 2 to 3 percentage points better than the provincial average.



## Domestic Migration

From 2002 to 2007 (the most recent figures available), 93,368 people moved to Hamilton from other parts of Canada. During the same time period, 88,742 people moved away, resulting in a net gain of 4,626 people or 771 people per year. These trends in moves within Canada have led to population growth in Hamilton that is less than half the provincial average.<sup>[40]</sup>



People moving to Hamilton tended to be younger – 81% of the people who moved to Hamilton were under age 45; 6% were over 65.<sup>[41]</sup>

**Migration Characteristics by Age, 2002-2007**

	0-17	18-24	25-44	45-64	65+
In-Migrants	20,764	14,990	39,146	13,210	5,258
Out-Migrants	18,866	13,168	37,392	13,457	5,859
Net Migrants	1,898	1,822	1,754	-247	-601

Source: Hamilton Training Advisory Board, special request



# Health and Well-Being

Hamilton is on par with Ontario on measures like low birth weight and physical activity, but is worse on obesity. There is variation between neighbourhoods, and overall trends that show people with lower incomes have more health problems. We have more physicians than average, but almost 7% of people say they don't have a family doctor.

Income equalities affect almost every measure of health.

## Low Birth Weight

Low birth weight describes babies born weighing greater than 500 grams but less than 2,500 grams (5 lbs, 8 oz), who may be at higher risk of health and other developmental problems. Hamilton's 6.1% rate of low birth weight babies in 2008 was similar to the 6.3% provincial average.<sup>[42]</sup> The rate ranged from a low of 4.8% in some areas of the city to a high of 9.0% of births in other areas between 2004 and 2008.<sup>[43]</sup>

The city-wide low birth weight rate has remained relatively stable between 2001 and 2008, ranging from a low of 4.8% in 2001 to a high of 6.8% in 2004 and 2005. Hamilton's overall rate has been similar to provincial averages since 2001.

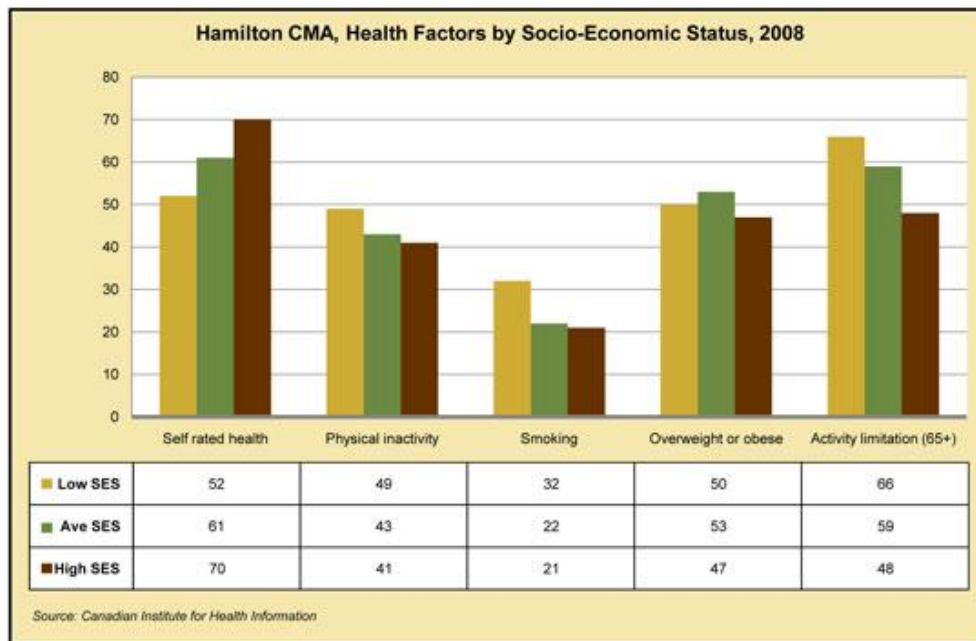
## Rate of Physical Activity and Obesity

In 2007-8, almost half of Hamiltonians over 12 reported being active (enough to improve cardiovascular health), or somewhat active (enough to have some health benefit) – similar to the provincial average of 48%. People with low incomes were more likely to report being inactive.<sup>[44]</sup>

The percentage of Hamilton adults who are overweight or obese increased to 59.8% from 50.4% between 2001 and 2007-8; and is significantly higher than the provincial average of 50.0%. Being overweight or obese can significantly affect one's health and well-being. Excess weight is associated with an increased risk of developing chronic diseases, such as diabetes, heart disease, and some cancers, and can also affect overall quality of life and mental health.

## Poverty and Health

Poverty has a major impact on many dimensions of health. The following chart looks at five different indicators of health: self-rated health, physical inactivity, smoking rates, overweight or obese, and activity limitation for those 65 years and older. It divides the Hamilton CMA into three different groups based on income: low, medium or high socio-economic status. It shows that for every variable, people in the low income group are at higher health risk than the high income group.<sup>[45]</sup>



## Physicians per 100,000 persons

In 2008, Hamilton had 1,394 physicians including 456 family doctors and 938 specialists. Adjusted for population size, Hamilton was equal to the provincial average on family doctors, and had nearly double the number of specialists. Currently, 6.9% of Hamiltonians 12 years old and over reported not having a family doctor – which is better than the provincial average of 8.5% and the 15.1% national average.<sup>[46]</sup>

Hamilton's number of family doctors includes those who may be focusing on research and administration, or working in other areas of medicine (e.g. counseling or emergency departments) as well as those who see patients full-time.

## Self Rated General Health

Self-rated health is one measure that describes the overall health of the community. It is predictive of the development of illnesses, chronic diseases, health care utilization and longevity. According to the Canadian Institute for Health Information, people who have low socio-economic status (i.e. are “poor”) are significantly more likely to report fair or poor health compared to average or high income groups.

In 2007-8, just over 85% of Hamiltonians rated their general health as good, very good, or excellent. These residents are less likely than their counterparts (who rated their health as fair or poor) to become ill, develop a chronic disease, end up in hospital and are more likely to live longer. This is similar to the provincial average, and similar to the rate in 2001.<sup>[47]</sup>

## For Further Information

Code Red, The Hamilton Spectator, [www.thespec.com](http://www.thespec.com)

# Housing

On average, housing is more affordable in Hamilton than elsewhere in Canada, but the gap is closing. Emergency shelter usage by men has fallen in the last three years, but not for women and their families. Both the waiting list for social housing and the amount of help given to people in utility arrears have risen sharply in the last two years.

Shelter is a basic human right and accommodation for all needs to be available and affordable.

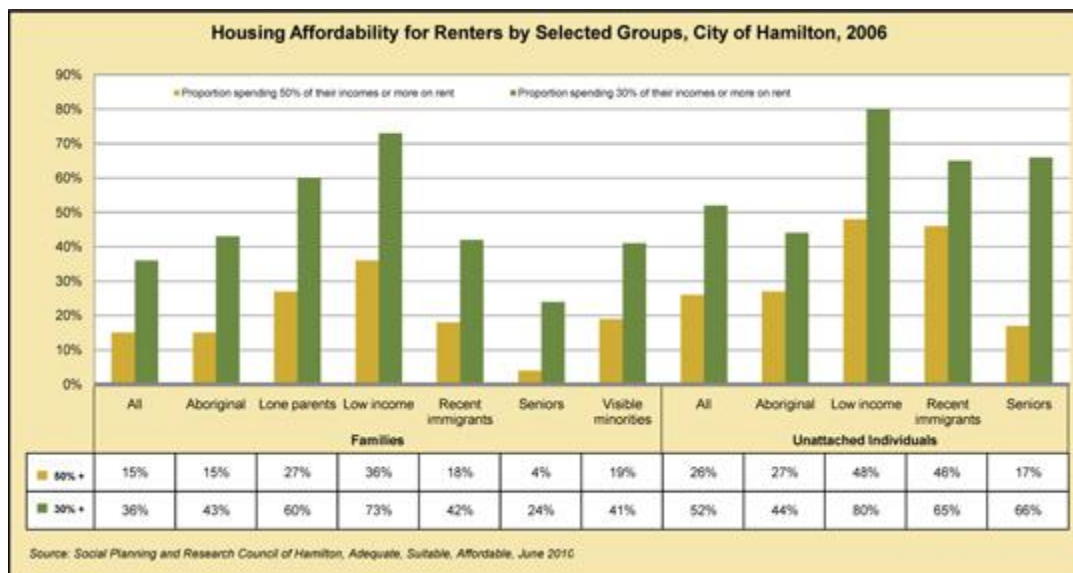
## Homeowner Affordability

In 2008, the ratio of the average house price to the median family income was 3.44, meaning families spent about three and a half times their annual income to buy a house. This number was lower than the provincial average of 3.95 and the national average of 4.12. Hamilton's housing is getting less affordable over time though – in 2001, the ratio was just less than 2 and a half times the annual income of a family.<sup>[48]</sup>

## Renter Affordability

Hamilton continues to have rents below provincial average. The average rent for a 2 bedroom apartment in 2009 was \$767, compared to a provincial average of \$955.<sup>[49]</sup> Just over 1 in 5 tenant households in Hamilton are paying more than half their income on rent – making their housing very precarious.

Some groups of people in Hamilton face more difficulty affording their housing. As the following chart illustrates, lone parent families, recent immigrants, seniors, and low income single people are among those who are more likely to be in unaffordable rental housing.<sup>[50]</sup>



## Emergency Shelter Use

The number of people using emergency homeless shelters dropped from 3,950 in 2007 to 3,617 in 2009 (a drop of 7%). The number of people who stayed in shelters a majority of the year, also dropped from 70 to 40. This decrease has been most noticeable in the men's emergency shelters, where there has been a 17% decrease in occupancy rate since 2007.



Emergency shelters for women leaving abusive situations experienced a climb in occupancy rate from 86% to over 95% over the same time frame. The number of women and children staying in Violence against Women shelter on a given night in Hamilton climbed from 80 in 2001 to 105 in 2008.<sup>[51]</sup>

## Core Housing Need

Core housing need measures the percentage of households that fall below one of three thresholds: affordability (spends more than 30% of income on housing costs), suitability (measures overcrowding), and/or adequacy (units requiring major repairs). In Hamilton in 2006, over 30% of renters were in core housing need, compared with 6% of homeowners. This was slightly over the provincial average, and was primarily due to the affordability threshold. However, the number of households falling below the suitability (overcrowding) threshold has risen by 24% between 1991 and 2006.

Core housing need also varies greatly by sub-population. For example, 46% of recent immigrants who arrived between 2001 and 2006 who are tenants, are in core housing need. Of lone mother families who rent, 53% are in core housing need.<sup>[52]</sup>

## Social Housing Waiting List

The number of people on the waiting list for social housing is at its highest point since 2002. In 2010, there were 5,171 households waiting, an increase of 18% over 2009.<sup>[53]</sup> The lowest point in the last ten years was 2007 when 3,663 people were waiting. The average wait varies by area of the city and type of housing requested. For single family homes and one-bedroom apartments, the wait can be over five years. For bachelor units downtown, the wait can be much shorter.<sup>[54]</sup>

## Utility Arrears

In 2005, the City of Hamilton established a program to help people who were in arrears for utilities. The number of people helped through this program has increased by almost 50% since that time. In 2005 the program helped 1,751 households with a total of \$667,675. In 2009, that number had risen to 2,591 households and a total of \$1,179,049.<sup>[55]</sup>

## For More Information

- City of Hamilton. [Community Wellness Indicators](#).
- City of Hamilton. [On Any Given Night: Homelessness Indicators Report 2010](#).



# Learning

Fewer Hamiltonians complete post-secondary education than the provincial average, and more do not complete high school. School readiness is slightly below provincial average and standardized student test scores show wide variation between schools.

An educated population contributes to individual and collective prosperity, but disparities leave some far behind.

## Completed Post-Secondary Education

As of the 2006 census, 58% of Hamiltonians aged 25-64 had completed either a post-secondary certificate, trades program, diploma or degree compared to the provincial average of 61%.<sup>[56]</sup> One-quarter of Hamilton residents had completed a university degree compared with 31% for the province. University degree completion among Hamilton's recent immigrants is higher at 38%.<sup>[57]</sup>

The proportion of Hamiltonians who have completed post-secondary education is increasing. When looking at people aged 20-64 (a slightly different age category than above), 23% had a university degree in 2006, a substantial increase from 2001 when the rate was 18%.<sup>[58]</sup>

## High School Non-Completion

In Hamilton, 16% of people aged 25-64 have not completed high school. This is higher than the provincial average (14%), and the national average. There is also variation by sub population: e.g. 27% of Aboriginal people aged 25-64 have not completed high school.<sup>[59]</sup> High school drop out rates vary by neighbourhood as reported by The Hamilton Spectator's Code Red series: in some neighbourhoods the drop out rate is 25%; in others its less than 3%.<sup>[60]</sup>

Hamilton's neighbourhoods also show extremes when looking at the concentration of people without high school completion: The proportion of 20-24 year olds who do not have a diploma and are not in school varies from 0% in 23 neighbourhoods to over 65% in four neighbourhoods.<sup>[61]</sup>

## Standardized Test Scores

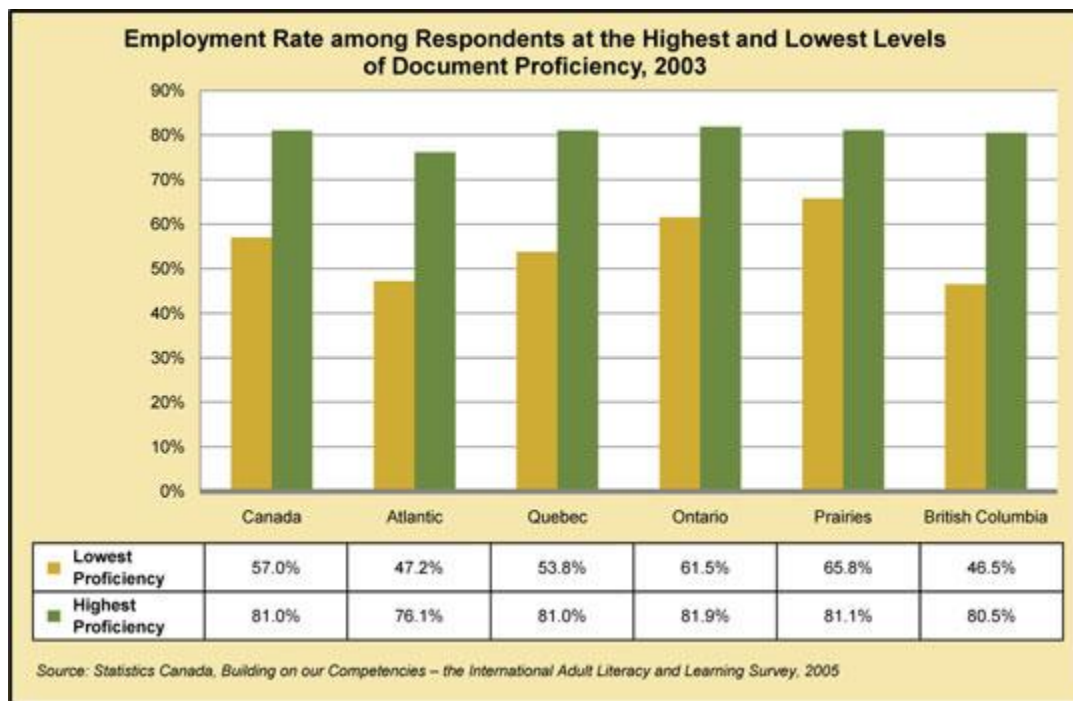
Students in Hamilton schools are tested in Grade 3, Grade 6, and Grade 9 by the "EQAO" tests, which measure student performance against provincial standards. The HWCDSB consistently achieves higher than the provincial averages. Though improving, the HWDSB is usually just under the provincial average. In most areas measured, girls outperform boys and there is a wide variation by school: in both boards there are schools that exceed the provincial average, and schools that are below.

For more information on the EQAO scores for particular schools or boards, visit the website for the: [Education Quality and Assurance Office](#).

**For more information about school board initiatives, visit [Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board](#), and [Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board](#).**

## Literacy Rates

According to the 2003 survey by Statistics Canada, Building on our Competencies – the International Adult Literacy and Learning Survey, 42% of Canadians fall below the desired level of literacy for coping with the demands of the new knowledge-based economy.<sup>[63]</sup> Additionally, 20% of Canadians scored at the lowest level, which is “a limited ability to locate, understand, and use information or to do simple one step numerical operations”.<sup>[64]</sup>



The study found that there was a strong link between literacy rates and employment levels in all regions across the country. For Ontario, the employment rate for people with the highest proficiencies was over 80%, while for the lowest proficiency, the rate was 62%. The study also found that higher literacy proficiency increased earnings for both men and women.

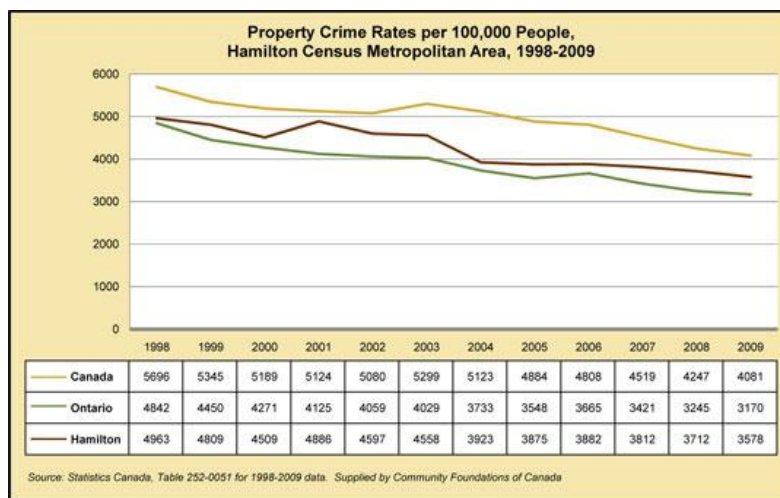
For other Hamilton learning indicators, visit the [Canadian Composite Learning Index](#).

# Safety

Property and violent crime rates have fallen over the last decade. Police-reported hate crime and the number of youth involved in violent crime peaked in 2008 but declined last year. Domestic violence calls to the police, and charges laid have both increased. Feeling safe and secure influences our ability to enjoy a full quality of life.

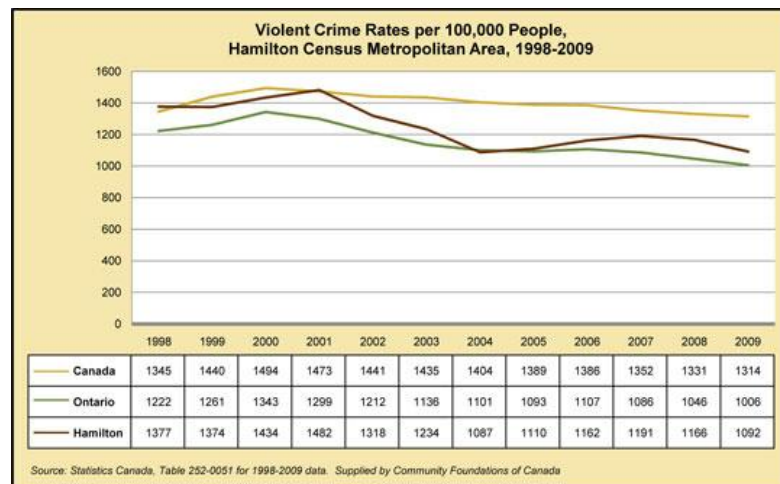
## Property Crime Rates

Property crime rates have dropped steadily since the late 1990s. In the Hamilton CMA, property crimes dropped by 28% from 4,963 crimes per 100,000 persons in 1998 to 3,578 per 100,000 in 2009. Overall, Canada experienced the same decline, and Ontario had an even larger decline of 35%. Hamilton's property crime rate is lower than the national average of 4,081 per 100,000 persons, but higher than the provincial rate of 3,170.<sup>[65]</sup>



## Violent Crime Rates

Violent crime rates have also fallen by 21%, from 1,377 per 100,000 in 1998 to 1,092 per 100,000 in 2009, a decrease greater than the provincial (17%) and national (2%) decline over the same period. The violent crime rate in Hamilton is lower than the national rate of 1,314, but higher than the provincial rate of 1,092.<sup>[66]</sup>



## Domestic Violence

In 2009, Hamilton Police Service received 5,769 calls-for-service relating to domestic violence (7.3% of all calls), representing an increase from the two prior years, when there were 5,178 calls (2007) and 5,604 calls (2008). Of these calls, 711 charges were laid in 2007 and 789 in 2008.<sup>[67]</sup>

## Police Reported Hate/Bias Motivated Crimes

In 2009, there were 23 police reported hate/biased motivated crimes in Hamilton, a decrease of 25% from 2007 and 30% from 2008, when 31 and 33 hate crimes were reported. When adjusted for population, Hamilton had a rate of 4.3 hate crimes per 100,000 persons in 2009. This compares to a rate of 6.3 hate crimes per 100,000 persons in 2008 when Hamilton was tied for the highest rate among 10 largest Canadian CMAs, but lower than many other cities of over 100,000 population including London (8.2), Guelph (8.2), Kingston (7.7), and Brantford (6.9). The average for Ontario was 4.9, and for Canada, 3.5.<sup>[68]</sup>

National statistics indicate that 55% of all hate crimes are based on race or ethnicity – crimes against African Canadians are most common. Hate crimes based on religion account for 26%; anti- Semitic crimes are by far the most common. Hate crimes on the basis of sexual orientation have doubled in the last year, and account for 16% of hate crimes. Sixty percent of those accused of hate crimes are youth and young adults, aged 12-22, with a peak age of 17-18.

## Overall Youth Involvement in Violent Crime

In 2009 there were 846 youth involved in violent crime. Of those cases, 202 youth were charged.<sup>[69]</sup> These are both lower than the previous two years as illustrated in the following chart:

Youth Involved in Violent Crime, City of Hamilton, 2007-2009			
	2007	2008	2009
Youth involved in Violent Crime	909	1037	846
Charged	234	219	202

Source: Hamilton Police Services, 2010, special request

## Pedestrian and Bicycle Injuries

The number of collisions causing injury to pedestrians has dropped steadily over the past 20 years to 246 in 2008 from 403 in 1989. There were a total of 118 pedestrian fatalities from 1989 to 2008. The number of collisions involving cyclists has remained steady over the past 20 years, with an annual average of 155 collisions resulting in injuries. There were a total of 30 cyclist fatalities from 1989-2008.<sup>[70]</sup>

# Thank You to Our Partners

Hamilton Community Foundation would like to thank the many partner organizations and individuals who provided their expertise, guidance, resources and time to make this report possible. In particular we wish to acknowledge the Evaluation and Learning Group of Hamilton's Roundtable for Poverty Reduction for the extraordinary work conducted over the last several years identifying key local indicators relating to many Vital Signs issue areas.

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- Clean Air Hamilton
- Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council
- Hamilton Police Services
- Hamilton Public Library
- Hamilton Training Advisory Board
- McMaster University
- Social Planning and Research Council of Hamilton

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Design & Website:



Our community survey partners at:



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