

Huron, Perth, Middlesex Counties – Fact Sheet

September 2009

Community Overview

Huron

- Population 59,325 and land area of 3,399 square kilometres¹
- Consists of 9 municipalities including:²
 - Ashfield-Colborne-Wawanosh (Population 5,409)
 - Bluewater (Population 7,120)
 - Central Huron (Population 7,641)
 - Goderich (Population 7,563)
 - Howick (Population 3,882)
 - Huron East (Population 9,130)
 - Morris-Turnberry (3,403)
 - North Huron (5,015)
 - South Huron (9,982)
- Population density of 17.7 residents per km², and approximately 55% of County residents live in non-urban areas, making it one of the most “rural” counties in Ontario³
- 35% of community members in the workforce do not have a secondary diploma which exceeds the provincial figure by 10 percentage points⁴
- Huron County’s population is proportionately older than the Ontario average and has the third “oldest” population in Canada⁵

Perth

- Population 74,344 and land area 2,218 square kilometres⁶
- Consists of 6 municipalities which include:
 - Perth East (12,041)
 - Perth South (4,132)
 - West Perth (8,839)
 - North Perth (12,254)
 - Stratford (30,461)
 - St Marys (6,671)
- In July 2008, the unemployment rate was at a 30 year low (4.8%) – one of the lowest in Ontario⁷

¹ “Huron County,” Wikipedia, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Huron_County,_Ontario (Accessed Sept. 10, 2009)

² Statistics Canada. 2007. *Huron County, Ontario* (table). 2006 Community Profiles. 2006 Census. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 92-591-XWE. Ottawa. Released March 13, 2007. Statistics Canada. 2007. *Perth County, Ontario* (table). 2006 Community Profiles. 2006 Census. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 92-591-XWE. Ottawa. Released March 13, 2007. Statistics Canada. 2007. *Middlesex County, Ontario* (table). 2006 Community Profiles. 2006 Census. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 92-591-XWE. Ottawa. Released March 13, 2007.

³ *The State of the Huron County Economy, January 2005 Edition* (Goderich: Huron Business Development Corporation, 2005).

<http://www.huroncounty.ca/econdev/downloads/StateofHuronCountyEconomy05.pdf>

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Statistics Canada, *Huron County*. Statistics Canada, *Perth County*. Statistics Canada, *Middlesex County*.

⁷ *Perth County Community Profile* (Stratford: The Corporation of the County of Perth, 2008).

<http://www.perthcounty.ca/pdf/cop-profile2008.pdf>

- Between 2001 and 2006 the population only grew by 1.9% compared to 6.6% in Ontario⁸
- University of Waterloo is scheduled to open a satellite campus in 2010 in Stratford⁹

Middlesex

- Population approximately 70,000 people and land area 2,824 square kilometres¹⁰
- Contains 8 municipalities which include:¹¹
 - Township of Adelaide-Metcalf (3,117)
 - Municipality of Lucan Biddulph (4,187)
 - Municipality of Middlesex Centre (15,589)
 - Municipality of North Middlesex (6,980)
 - Municipality of Southwest Middlesex (5,890)
 - Municipality of Strathroy Caradoc (19,977)
 - Municipality of Thames Centre (13,085)
 - Village of Newbury (439)
- The household median income was higher than the Ontario average (\$63,773 vs. \$56,727)¹²
- For 2006 and 2007, outperformed Ontario with respect to participation rates, employment rates, and unemployment rates¹³
- Has a greater percentage of residents with high school diploma, trades certificate/diploma, or a college certificate/diploma as the highest level of education compared to the Ontario average¹⁴
- In 2007, the percentage of the population aged between 5 and 24 years and between 45 and 64 years was greater than the Ontario average¹⁵

Economic Development and Industries

Huron

- Suffering the effects of the downturn in the global manufacturing economy – In 2008:¹⁶
 - Huron Park was hit by the closure of Dunline Rubber Products - 36 laid off
 - Exeter was hit by the closure of CanGro (formerly Nabisco) - 130 laid off
 - Goderich faced the closure of Signal-Star Publishing - 23 laid off
 - Volvo Road Machinery - 500 laid off
 - Wingham was hit with the downsizing of Westcast Industries – 230 laid off
- Total jobs lost (1,050) account for 30% of the number employed in the region's manufacturing sector
- Farming continues to drive the local economy, despite ongoing restructuring and consolidation in the agricultural sector¹⁷
- Agricultural industry comprises 36% of all businesses, followed by services at 24% and trade at 14%¹⁸

⁸ Perth CFDC Strategic Plan (Milverton: Perth Community Futures, 2007).

<http://www.perthcfdc.ca/documents/perth%20strategic%20review%202007%20FINAL.pdf>

⁹ Perth County Community Profile

¹⁰ Middlesex County, <http://www.county.middlesex.on.ca>. (Accessed Sept. 10, 2009).

¹¹ Statistics Canada, *Huron County*. Statistics Canada, *Perth County*. Statistics Canada, *Middlesex County*.

¹² Eric McSweeney, *Middlesex County: Economic Development Strategy* (Ottawa: McSweeney & Associates, 2008).

<http://www.county.middlesex.on.ca/EconomicDevelopment/Middlesex%20Final%20E%20D%20Strategy.pdf>

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Eric McSweeney, *Economic Development Strategy Situation Analysis Report* (Ottawa: McSweeney & Associates, 2008).

<http://www.county.middlesex.on.ca/EconomicDevelopment/Middlesex%20Cty%20Situation%20Analysis%20-%20March.pdf>

¹⁶ *The State of the Huron County Economy, January 2009* (Goderich: Huron Business Development Corporation, 2009).

http://www.smallbusinesshuron.ca/whatsnew/final_sothce_2009.pdf

¹⁷ *The State of the Huron County Economy, January 2005 Edition*

¹⁸ *Huron Economic Development Matters Initiative, Strategic Plan 2007-2009*. (Goderich: Huron Business Development Corporation, 2007). http://www.smallbusinesshuron.ca/publications/HEDMI_Strategic_Plan.pdf

- Canada's largest in-land grain handling facilities are located in the village of Hensall with three major grain handling/processing companies¹⁹
- Nearly 20% of the workforce are self-employed compared to 11% provincially²⁰
- Strategies to renew the economy include:²¹
 - Diversifying the farm economy
 - Developing new processing capacity for local beef products (Brussels Beef Plant)
 - Encouraging new commercial food-related enterprises (Farm to Table Incubator)
 - Creating a new Ontario wine region (Commercial Grapes Feasibility Study)
 - Expand the region's cultural sector:
 - Creating new performance venues (Goderich Performing Arts Centre)
 - Training a new cultural sector workforce (Blyth Training Centre for the Arts)

Perth

- 89% of businesses are considered small businesses, employing less than 10 people (over 14,000 people work for small businesses)²²
- Agriculture is one the largest economic sectors, home to 2,438 census farms and nearly 500,000 acres of farmland²³
- 28% of the labour force is employed in the manufacturing sector (13% in Ontario) – it employs nearly 12,000 people in this sector²⁴
 - 2,500 employed in the fabricated metals sector
 - 2,700 employed in the construction sector
 - Other key sectors include food processing, plastics, and textiles
- The Stratford Festival has a huge economic impact on the region (\$125,000,000 spending attributable to the festival)²⁵
- Approximately 1,200 jobs are attributable to the tourism sector
- In August 2008 OMAFRA announced an investment of over \$1 million to revitalize the local economy²⁶
 - This amount will be matched by eight project partners over the next three years
 - The funds will be aimed at
 - Community revitalization and beautification
 - Community business support
 - Investment readiness
 - Youth retention and labour force development

Middlesex

- Main Street Middlesex is the CFDC's largest project running from 2004 to present and is Canada's first county-wide program for downtown revitalization²⁷
- Employment in various industry sectors:²⁸
 - 7,380 manufacturing (20%)
 - 6,210 construction (17%)
 - 4,372 agriculture (12%)

¹⁹ Huron County. <http://www.huroncounty.ca> (Accessed, Sept. 10, 2009).

²⁰ *Huron Economic Development Matters Initiative*

²¹ *The State of the Huron County Economy, January 2009*

²² Statistics Canada, *Perth County*.

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ *Perth CFDC Strategic Plan*.

²⁶ *Perth County Rural Economic Development Project Summary* (Milverton: Perth County, 2008).

<http://www.perthcounty.ca/pdffiles/cop-eco-redproj.pdf>

²⁷ *CFDC of Middlesex County 2007-2008 Annual Report* (Komoka: CFDC of Middlesex County, 2008).

<http://www.cfdcmiddlesex.on.ca/PDF/AGM%20Report%202007-08.pdf>

²⁸ *Middlesex County: Economic Development Strategy*

- 2,845 transportation (8%)
- The manufacturing sector is under severe financial stress and the highest priority is retaining existing manufacturing plants and jobs²⁹
- A leader in agriculture-based bio-products in Canada because of its symbiotic relationship with the University of Western Ontario, home to world-renowned research facilities in the field of bio-products³⁰
- Could act on diversification opportunities (e.g., bio-products, food processing (dry) and potential for bio-diesel production)³¹

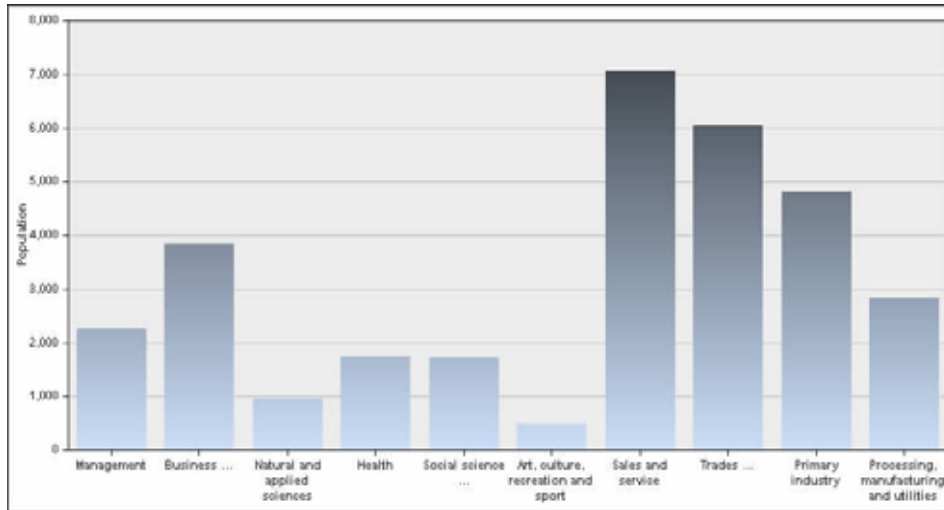
²⁹ *Middlesex County: Economic Development Strategy*

³⁰ George Brooke, *Bioproducts Opportunities in Middlesex County* (Dunrobin: Goodfellow Agricola Consultants Inc., 2007).
http://www.county.middlesex.on.ca/EconomicDevelopment/GACI-Bioproducs_opportunities.pdf

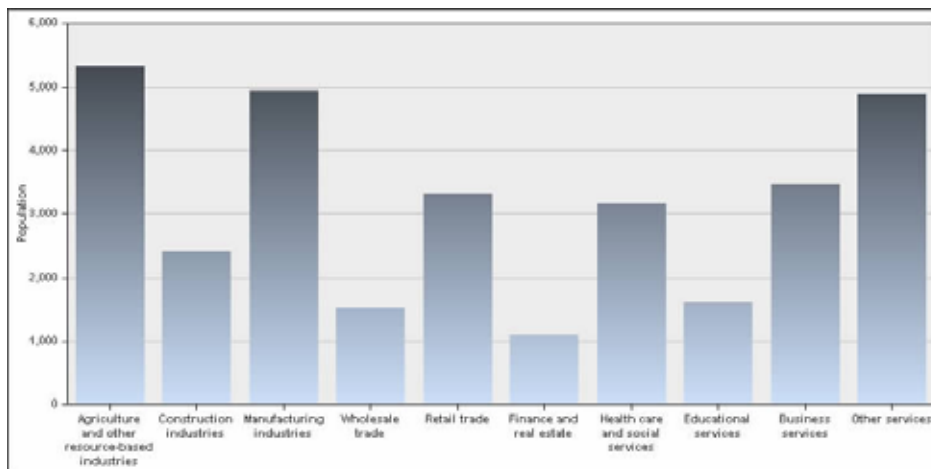
³¹ *Middlesex County Economic Development Strategy* (Ottawa: McSweeney & Associates, 2008).
<http://www.county.middlesex.on.ca/EconomicDevelopment/Middlesex%20draft%20ED%20strategy.pdf>

Huron County Demographics³²

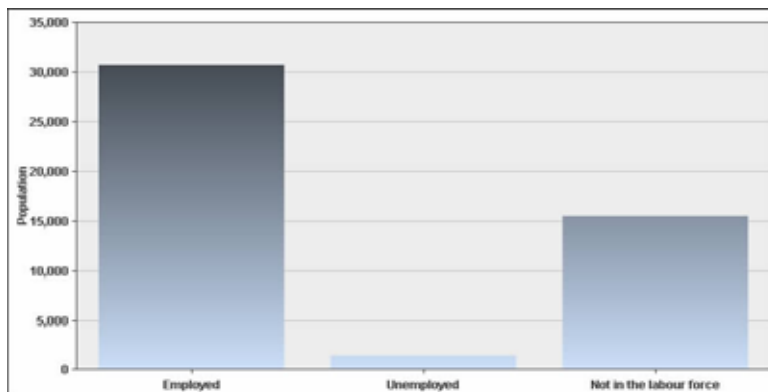
Huron Occupations – Experienced Labour Force 15 Years & Over



Huron Employment by Industry – Experience Labour Force 15 Years & Over



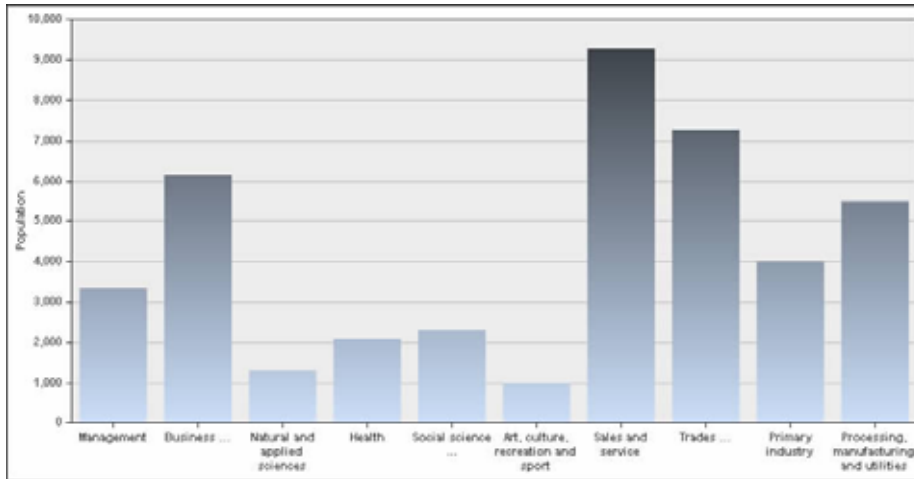
Huron Labour Force Activity – Population 15 Years & Over



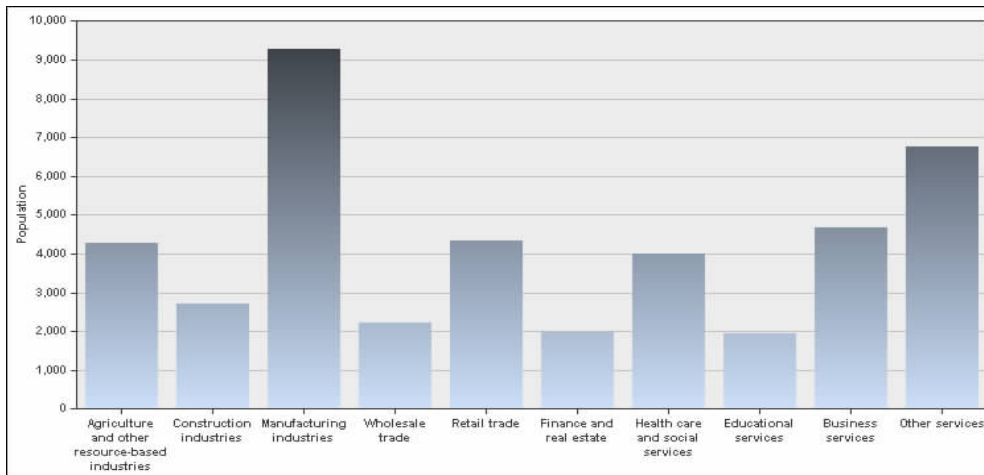
³² Statistics Canada, *Huron County*.

Perth County Demographics³³

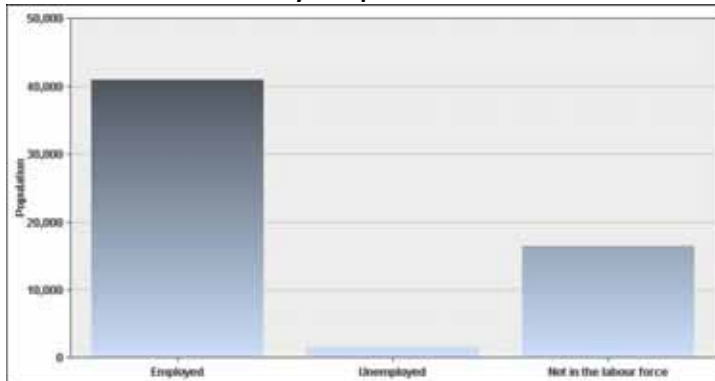
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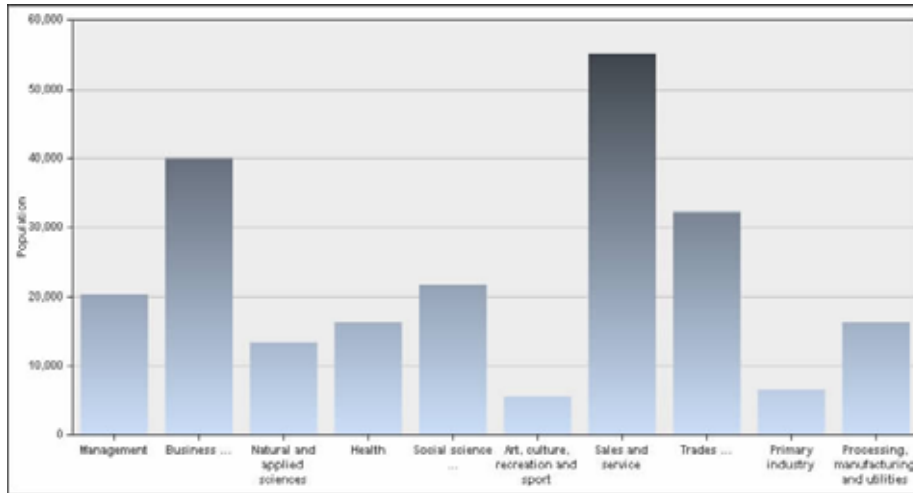
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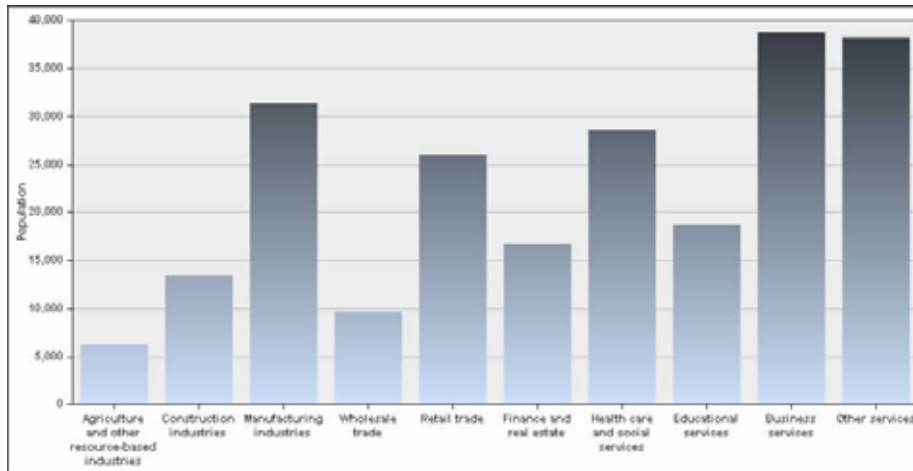
³³ Statistics Canada, *Perth County*.

Middlesex County Demographics³⁴

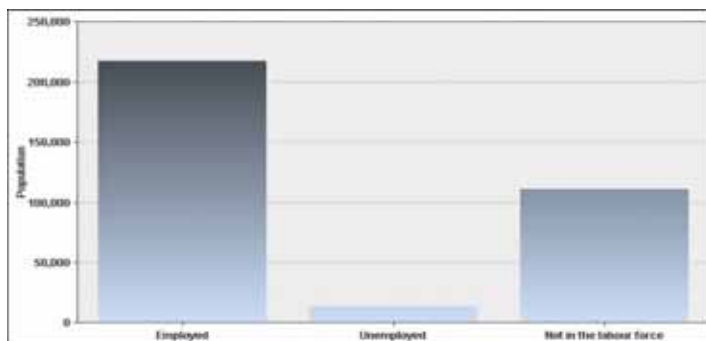
Middlesex Occupations – Experienced Labour Force 15 Years & Over



Middlesex Employment by Industry – Experience Labour Force 15 Years & Over



Middlesex Labour Force Activity – Population 15 Years & Over



³⁴ Statistics Canada, *Middlesex County*.