



UNDERSTANDING THE DYNAMICS OF RURAL IMMIGRATION

A Case Study of Perth County

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Overview

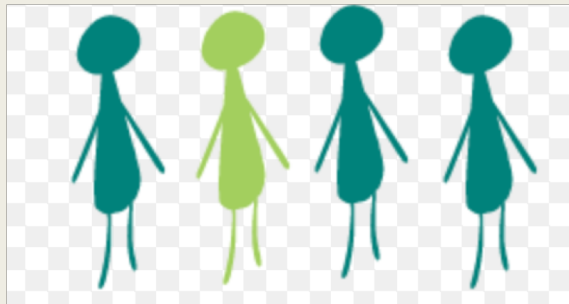
- Context - Why is this important to rural?
- Perth County
- Newcomer attraction and retention
- My research
- Preliminary findings

Why is immigration of concern to rural?

Rural Depopulation

- Many rural communities are struggling to maintain their population and employment base

Youth out-migration



Declining birthrate



Ageing population



- **Youth Out migration:** Education: migrating to urban centres to pursue higher education and job opportunities. The migration of youth between the ages of 20 and 30 is the single largest factor responsible for declining rural populations in Ontario.
- **Declining Birthrate:** 1.6 in 2016 which has been dropping steadily from 3.81 in 1960. The natural population balance is expected to be negative by 2030 in rural Canada, and little to no future growth is expected without international migration.
- **Ageing Population:** 68% of people currently living in communities of less than 10,000 people are over the age of 65.

Population Decline

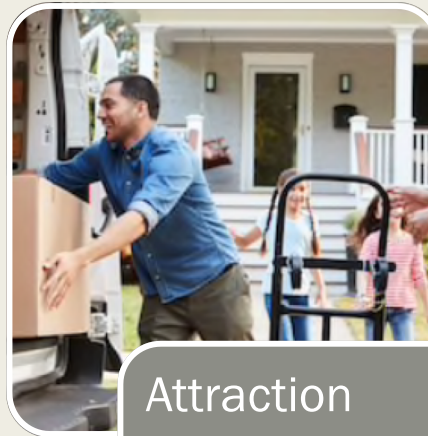
- Tax Base Decline: school cuts, postal services, public transportation, recreation, infrastructure, etc.
- Labour Market Shortages





Rural Depopulation

- Loss of tax base
- Labour market shortages
- Unsustainable



Attraction

- Newcomer attraction as a mitigation strategy
- Opportunity for newcomers
- Primary and secondary



Retention

- Stay in the rural community
- Raise their children
- Become Integrated
- Encourage other newcomers to come

Perth County

Population (2016): 76,796
Immigrant population: 6,675

Since 2011 has risen 2.2%
from 75,112 people, it is
more than 50% lower than
the provincial average of
4.6%.

2nd lowest growth rate in the
area.

Mostly European immigrants.



Perth County

'Super-commuting': Need workers? Can't find any? Fly them in

NORMAN DE BONO ([HTTPS://LFPRESS.COM/AUTHOR/NDEBONOPOSTMEDIA](https://lfpres.com/author/ndebonoPostmedia)) Updated: January 30, 2019



Stratford Mayor Dan Mathieson stands in front of Vicwest, a Stratford building supply business, that is part of a "super commuting" program, where workers are flown from high unemployment areas of the country to Stratford as well as some other rural communities, to work in industry. GALEN SIMMONS/Beacon Herald

The sign planted in the front lawn of the Sebringville manufacturing plant summed up the

Jobs are abundant, but housing and social services can not keep up.

"Stratford, like many communities, is suffering through a labour shortage, unable to find workers. But Perron has found a solution that may serve more regional employees.

Super-commuting has come to small-town Southwestern Ontario. A Hamilton-based firm is hiring workers from high unemployment regions of Canada, such as Newfoundland, flying them here and housing them in order to fill demand for workers."

Stratford has an unemployment rate of less than 3%.

Newcomer Settlement Huron Perth 2018-2020 Strategic Plan

VISION: Collaborate locally to co-create with newcomers a welcoming community with access to settlement services are seamlessly provided, a diverse community where newcomers are supported and welcomed, and a community where opportunities for financial stability and growth are readily available.

MISSION: Identify needs, raise awareness, and collaborate on inclusive solutions to ease the newcomer's journey to valued community member.


GOALS: 1. Attract – contribute to efforts

2. Retain – retain as long-term residents and participants in local workforce

3. Network – create and maintain a comprehensive referral network for newcomer settlement and integration services

4. Awareness – contribute to and promote events which promote acceptance in broader community

Opportunity Lives Here



**OPPORTUNITY
LIVES HERE**
PERTH COUNTY • STRATFORD • ST. MARYS

LIVE
Build your life here

WORK
Job & Career Opportunities

GROW
Training & Career Services

Before you Arrive

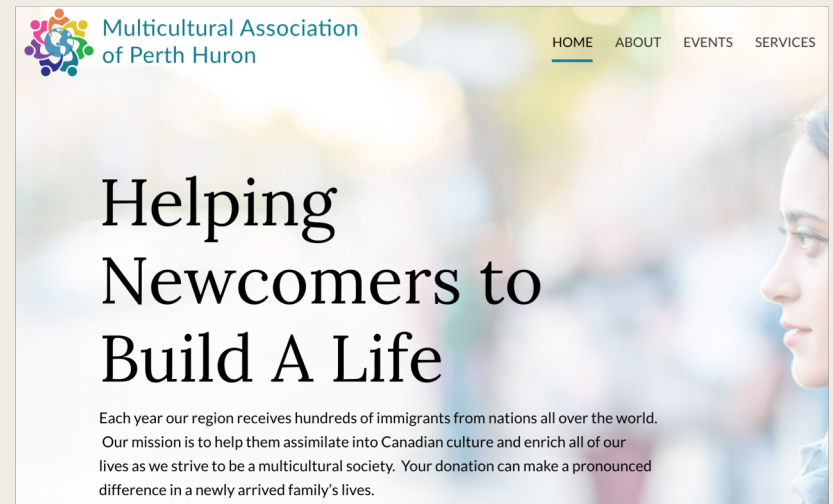
Everything you need to know to make your move to Perth County, Stratford or St. Marys. The following checklist will help newcomers prepare for immigration to Canada, Perth County, Stratford or St. Marys. The Government of Canada also has a newcomer checklist.

www.cic.gc.ca/english/newcomers/after-checklist.asp

Multicultural Association Perth Huron

“Immigrants to Canada, newcomers from other provinces, and isolated foreign and Canadian migrants will all find a warm welcome, information, and support at the Multicultural Association office in Stratford, Ontario. Founded in 2011 Sep 20 by Dr. Gezahgn Wordofa, the Multicultural Association of Perth-Huron (MAPH) assists newcomers in Perth and Huron Counties to adjust to life in their new communities by providing services throughout the two counties.”

- Settlement & Support
- Job search
- Orientation
- Immigration application process assistance
- Language assessment
- Connections



My Research

Goal: Explore the relationship between newcomer experience and current immigration practices in Perth County. Identify the attraction and retention opportunities and barriers. Recommend next steps.

Methods: Conduct a series of semi-structured in-person interviews to gain knowledge about newcomer experience.

Draws to Perth

Job opportunity

Raise a family here

Proximity to urban centres

Welcoming community

Affordable housing



Challenges to Perth

Low access to healthcare

Housing shortage

Lack of transportation

Lack of accessible services

Social Isolation in rural



Based on these preliminary findings...

Goal:

To provide recommendations to local organizations and local government on how to improve the experience of newcomers, and improve retention.

Thank-you



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