

**CREATIVE CITY:
Hamilton's Culture Labour Force**

The Centre for Community Study (CCS) is a Hamilton-based, non-profit research group specializing in local public-policy issues providing research and services to government, foundations, and the private sector. The CCS offers expertise in a variety of areas including: Urban trends and analysis; Community renewal strategies; Media analysis; Policy design; Organizational and strategic planning.

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Increasingly, the level of cultural activity in a city is being recognized as an indication of a community's vitality, not only socially, but economically as well. Hamilton's Economic Development Strategy identifies the cultural sector as an important part of the city's economic future. The issue of economic success through cultural vitality is, in part, a function of how successful Hamilton is in the competition to attract and retain the Creative Class. In an earlier Bulletin entitled *Hamilton and the Creative Class*, the Centre for Community Study (CCS) examined Hamilton's position in the national Creative Class debate, highlighting this city's standing on some of the popular indices that track a community's success in attracting this segment of the labour force.

Beyond Hamilton's comparative position in the national measures of the Creative Class, it is important for local decision-makers to be aware of the existing creative workforce in Hamilton. Thus, this Bulletin examines specific characteristics of Hamilton's creative workforce. This analysis uses Statistics Canada's definition of the culture labour force, which includes many occupations from architects to musicians. A full list of occupations that make up this classification can be found in the endnotes¹.

The Culture Labour Force

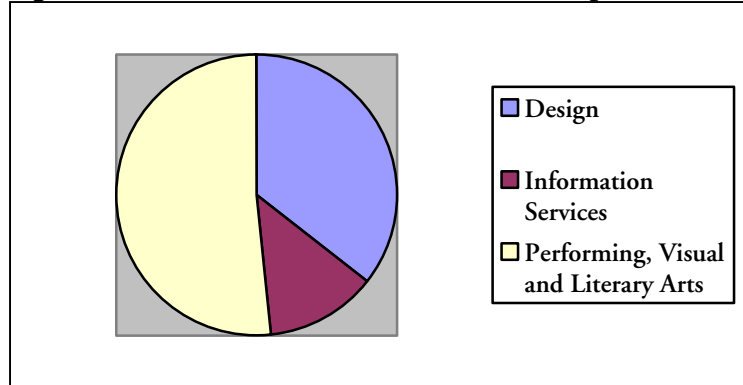
In 2001, Hamilton was ranked 9th nationally in the number of citizens in the culture labour force, above Halifax and Victoria but behind Quebec and Winnipeg (Table 1). However, Hamilton's cultural workers represented only 1.49% of the total labour force, below the national average. These figures indicate that while a significant culture labour force exists in Hamilton (over 5000 people), there needs to be more effort made to grow this sector alongside existing efforts made to expand other clusters.

CMA	Culture Labour Force	% of Total Labour Force
Toronto	65,520	2.6
Montreal	42,140	2.39
Vancouver	28,120	2.68
Ottawa-Gatineau	12,760	2.18
Calgary	10,680	1.89
Edmonton	8,100	1.54
Quebec	6,320	1.75
Winnipeg	6,300	1.74
Hamilton	5,090	1.49
Victoria	4,430	2.7
Halifax	3,840	1.98
Kitchener	3,400	1.48
London	3,240	1.42

Hamilton's Culture Occupations

Of those identified in culture occupations in 2001, the majority of Hamiltonians were employed in the general category of performing, visual and literary arts, with many identified as musicians and singers (Figure 1). However, the highest number of Hamiltonians in a particular culture occupation category were graphic designers and illustrators (Table 2). These figures indicate where current strengths lie and can help inform efforts to cultivate growth in this cluster.

Figure 1: Hamilton's Prevalent Culture Occupations, 2001



Culture Occupation	% of Total Labour Force
Design	0.53
Architects	0.05
Graphic designers and illustrators	0.27
Industrial designers	0.07
Interior designers	0.08
Landscape architects	0.03
Theatre, fashion, exhibit and other creative designers	0.03
Information services	0.19
Editors	0.07
Journalists	0.06
Librarian	0.06
Performing, visual and literary arts	0.77
Actors and comedians	0.03
Artisans and craftspersons	0.1
Authors and writers	0.11
Conductors, composers and arrangers	0.02
Dancers	0.06
Musicians and singers	0.19
Other performers*	0.04
Painters, sculptors and other visual artists	0.07
Photographers	0.07
Producers, directors, choreographers and related	0.08

*Includes circus performers, magicians, models, puppeteers and other performers not elsewhere classified. They are employed by circuses, nightclubs, theatre, advertising and other production companies, or may be self-employed

Growth in Hamilton's Culture Labour Force

Between 1996 and 2001, Hamilton's culture labour force grew by 15.8%, more than double the percentage change for the non-culture labour force (Table 3). This impressive figure indicates the fact that this labour cluster is not only a growing part of Hamilton's workforce, but it demonstrates good potential for the community to prosper as a creative city.

CMA	Culture Labour Force 1996	Culture Labour Force 2001	% Change 1996-2001	Non-Culture Labour Force 1996	Non-Culture Labour Force 2001	% Change 1996-2001
Toronto	52,290	65,520	25.3	2,216,320	2,456,510	10.8
Montreal	34,530	42,140	22	1,658,030	1,723,630	4
Vancouver	22,740	28,120	23.7	970,610	1,021,790	5.3
Ottawa-Gatineau	11,530	12,760	10.7	539,230	573,170	6.3
Calgary	8,080	10,680	32.2	464,760	553,370	19.1
Edmonton	7,260	8,100	11.5	465,540	518,680	11.4
Quebec	5,800	6,320	9.1	345,790	354,000	2.4
Winnipeg	5,490	6,300	14.7	347,270	355,450	2.4
Hamilton	4,400	5,090	15.8	315,690	335,200	6.2
Victoria	3,470	4,430	27.6	157,910	159,490	1
Halifax	3,180	3,840	20.9	175,140	189,860	8.4
Kitchener	2,930	3,400	16.2	206,080	226,480	9.9
London	3,050	3,240	6.5	206,830	223,760	8.2

Artists in Hamilton

Looking specifically at the sub-group of *artists*⁵ helps to provide additional insight into the most prevalent segment of Hamilton's culture labour force. For the purpose of this analysis, *artists* refer to:

- Actors
- Artisans and craftspersons
- Conductors, composers and arrangers
- Dancers
- Musicians and singers
- Other performers
- Painters, sculptors and other visual artists
- Producers, directors, choreographers, and related occupations
- Writers

In 2001, Hamilton was ranked 10th in Canada in terms of the number of artists in the city, roughly the same as Victoria and Quebec (Table 4). At 2,420, this number represents about half of the total Hamilton culture labour force.

CMA	Number of Artists	% of Overall Labour Force
Toronto	28,865	1.09
Montreal	18,280	0.99
Vancouver	15,130	1.37
Ottawa-Gatineau	5,400	0.88
Calgary	4,940	0.83
Edmonton	3,865	0.7
Winnipeg	3,165	0.83
Victoria	2,470	1.42
Quebec	2,445	0.65
Hamilton	2,420	0.68
Halifax	1,985	0.97
Kitchener	1,625	0.67
London	1,625	0.68
St. Catharines - Niagara	1,415	0.71
Canada	130,695	0.8

The average earnings of Hamilton artists was the 5th highest in the country in 2001 (Table 5); a surprising number given the city's lower position nationally for other indicators.

CMA	Average Earnings – Artists	Average Earnings - Overall Labour Force
Toronto	\$31,543	\$38,598
Ottawa-Gatineau	\$29,120	\$38,011
Montreal	\$26,433	\$31,730
Vancouver	\$26,217	\$34,007
Hamilton	\$23,250	\$35,360
Windsor	\$22,667	\$37,655
Calgary	\$22,357	\$36,851
Quebec	\$22,231	\$29,789
Kitchener	\$21,243	\$33,985
Halifax	\$20,297	\$30,614
Winnipeg	\$19,533	\$29,359
Edmonton	\$19,200	\$31,999
St. Catharines - Niagara	\$19,005	\$30,384
London	\$17,552	\$32,393
Canada	\$23,489	\$31,757

Other notable characteristics of this artist sub-group include the fact that between 1991-2001 there was a 30% growth in the number of Hamilton artists, more than four times the percentage change in the city's overall labour force and slightly higher than the national average (Table 6). In addition, over the same period, the income of Hamilton artists rose 30%, again higher than the national average (Table 7). These figures indicate very positive trends for this labour cluster.

CMA	Number of Artists 1991	Number of Artists 2001	% Change	% Change of Overall Labour Force
Hamilton	1,865	2,420	30	7
Canada	101,605	130,695	29	10

CMA	Earnings in 1991	Earnings in 2001	Net Change	% Change
Hamilton	\$17,969	\$23,250	\$5,281	29
Canada	\$18,635	\$23,490	\$4,856	26

Conclusions

An analysis of the Statistics Canada data reveals some interesting characteristics of Hamilton's culture labour force. Specifically, this is a growing cluster in Hamilton and it has grown at a rate more than double the non-culture labour force (between 1996-2001). However, Hamilton's culture labour force is not as large a part of the overall labour force as compared to other cities across the country.

When looking at specific occupations, graphic designers and illustrators, followed by musicians and singers, and authors and writers were the most prevalent culture labour force occupations in Hamilton in 2001.

An analysis of the sub-group of artists shows that they rank high nationally in average earnings and that the percentage growth in both the number of artists and their income through the 1990s was higher than the national average. Additionally, the percentage growth in Hamilton artists between 1991-2001 was more than four times larger than the percentage change in the overall local labour force.

This snapshot of Hamilton's culture labour force highlights some of the challenges and opportunities facing the city as it tries to expand this cluster. First, Hamilton will need to expand the size of its cultural cluster if it is to compete with other Canadian communities in establishing itself as a major creative centre. There appears to be an excellent base to build from, and the rate of growth within this cluster in the past is a good indication that things are moving in the right direction.

However, the role of the municipality in helping this sector is more complex than was once thought. The positive trends outlined in this Bulletin require further study to learn more about the reasons for the strengths of the cluster, in order to ensure that any policies or strategies developed do not impeded future success. Additionally, while a municipality cannot force people to become more creative, it can help ensure adequate investment in the infrastructure that attracts a culture labour force. For example, the urban core, with its variety and abundance of interesting spaces and heritage structures provides Hamilton with a huge competitive advantage over its suburban neighbours in the competition for the Creative Class. Downtown Hamilton possesses the built characteristics and level of density that is conducive to clusters of cultural activities and a culture labour force, making it ideal economic infrastructure. Thus, this is one area where the municipality can focus its efforts in order to develop the potential of this economic cluster.

Overall, if Hamilton is serious about developing a more significant cultural cluster as part of its economic development strategy, more resources will need to be allocated to the project. This includes building on existing strengths in the culture labour force and focussing on what Hamilton is capable of offering, such as fully realizing the potential of our urban spaces that attract creative activity.

Endnotes

¹ Culture Occupations:

Architects

Landscape architects

Industrial designers

Writers

Editors

Journalists

Producers, directors, choreographers and related occupations

Conductors, composers and arrangers

Musicians and singers

Dancers

Actors

Painters, sculptors and other visual artists

Photographers,

Other performers (includes circus performers, magicians, models, puppeteers and other performers not elsewhere classified. They are employed by circuses, nightclubs, theatre, advertising and other production companies, or may be self-employed.)

Graphic designers and illustrators

Interior designers

Theatre, fashion, exhibit and other creative designers

Artisans and craftpersons

Librarians

Conservators and curators

Archivists

² Coish, David, *Census Metropolitan Areas as Culture Clusters, Statistics Canada, 2004, p. 70-72.*

³ *Ibid.*, p. 70.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 72.

⁵ Hill Strategies Research, *Artists in Canada's Provinces, Territories and Metropolitan Areas*, Statistical insights on the arts, Vol. 3 No. 2, 2004, p. 1.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 24.