

If this information is required in an accessible format, please contact 1-800-372-1102 ext. 2564



# The Regional Municipality of Durham Information Report

---

From: Commissioner of Planning and Economic Development  
Report: #2022-INFO-31  
Date: April 8, 2022

---

**Subject:**

2021 Census of Population – Population and Dwelling Counts Release, File: D01-03

---

**Recommendation:**

Receive for information

---

**Report:**

**1. Purpose**

1.1 This report presents an overview of Statistics Canada's first release of the 2021 Census of Population data, highlighting Durham Region's population and dwelling counts. Attachment 1 summarizes key statistics for Durham Region, the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA), and Canada.

**2. 2021 Census of Population**

2.1 On February 9, 2022, Statistics Canada released the first in a series of 2021 Census of Population statistics for municipalities across Canada, focusing on population and dwelling counts. The Census is conducted in Canada every five years.

2.2 The 2021 Census population reported by Statistics Canada for Durham Region is 696,992, an increase of 7.92% since 2016. However, this figure does not include an estimate of the Census net undercoverage, which accounts for factors such as missed enumeration and processing errors.

- 2.3 Based on previous years, it is estimated that the 2021 net undercoverage for Durham Durham will be approximately 3.75% which would result in a 2021 population for Durham of 723,129 persons. This figure is slightly higher than the population estimate of 713,680 reported by the Planning Division through its December 2021 report on Monitoring of Growth Trends, which presents population estimates based on housing completions and unit occupancy estimates.

### **3. Previous Reports and Decisions**

- 3.1 [2020-INFO-44](#) Durham Region Profile – Demographics and Socio-Economic Data
- 3.2 [2021-INFO-132](#) Monitoring of Growth Trends Report, December 2021

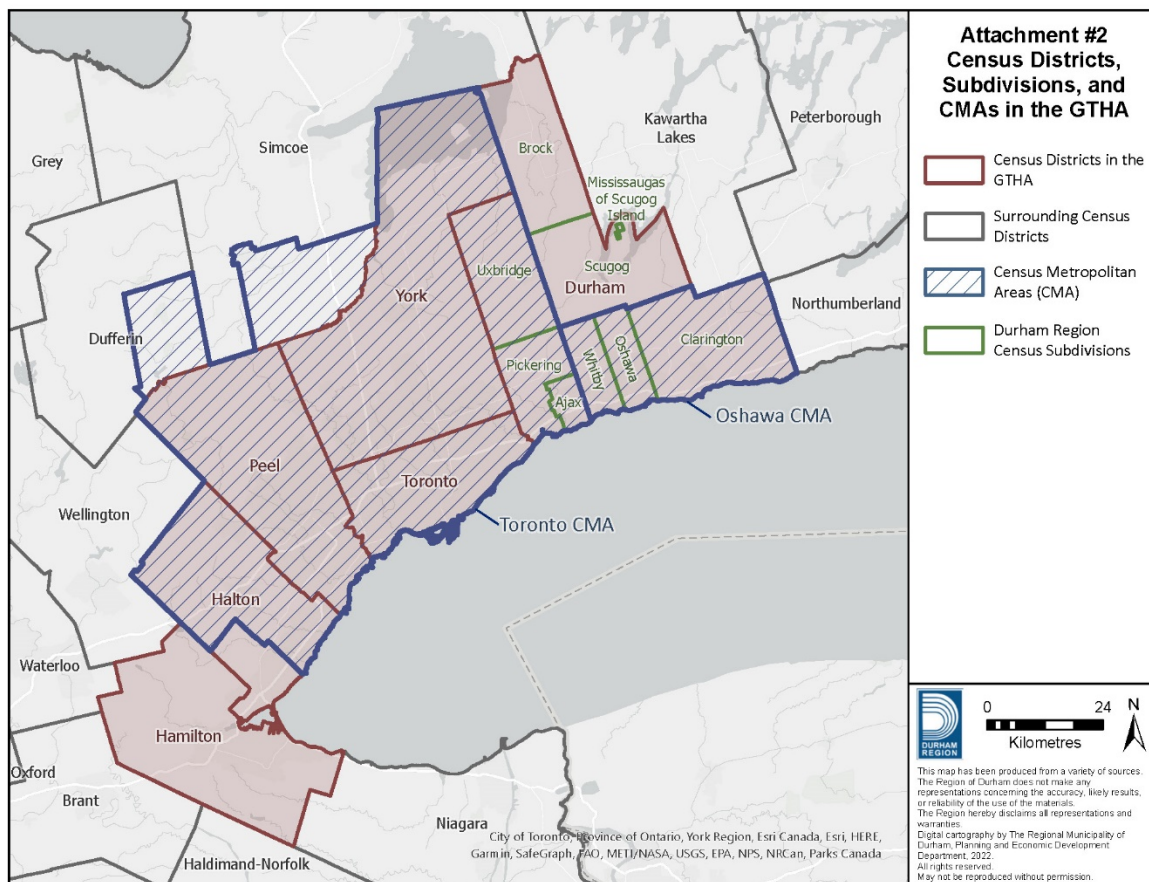
### **4. Federal and Provincial Growth Trends**

- 4.1 Between 2016 and 2021, Canada's population increased 5.2%, from 35,151,728 to 36,991,981, compared with a 5.0% increase during the previous five-year period. This is the fourth consecutive Census period where Canada's population growth was the highest among the G7 countries<sup>1</sup>. International immigration accounted for roughly four-fifths of Canada's population growth during this period.
- 4.2 Most provinces and territories experienced population growth between 2016 and 2021, with the exception of Newfoundland and Labrador, and the Northwest Territories. The Yukon Territories had the highest rate of growth, increasing 12.1% during this period, while Nunavut was the fastest-growing province in Canada in the previous 5-year period (+12.7%). Ontario's population increased 5.8%, compared to a 4.6% increase during the previous five-year period between 2011 and 2016.
- 4.3 For the purposes of data collection, Canada's largest urban agglomerations are divided into 43 census metropolitan areas (CMAs). In 2021, the CMAs accounted for 78% of Canada's population (28,769,426 persons), representing a 9.6% increase since 2016. This increase means that nearly 8 in 10 Canadians now live in or near urban areas. The three largest CMAs, (Toronto, Montreal, and Vancouver) collectively account for 35.5% of Canada's total population (see Attachment 1, Table 4).

---

<sup>1</sup> World Bank's DataBank, population estimates and projections, and Census of Population, 2016 and 2021 (3901). (<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/220209/cg-a001-eng.htm>)

- 4.4 The Toronto CMA alone accounted for 16.8% of Canada's population (6,202,225 persons). It is comprised of 24 census subdivisions (CSD)<sup>2</sup> including Pickering, Ajax, and Uxbridge. The population growth for the Pickering, Ajax, and Uxbridge CSDs between 2016 and 2021 was 4.6%, which indicates a slower growth rate than in the previous 5-year period between 2011 and 2016 (6.2%).
- 4.5 The Oshawa CMA, including Whitby, Oshawa, and Clarington, ranked eighth in Ontario and fifteenth nationally, based on total population size (415,311 persons). The Oshawa CMA population increased 9.3% between 2016 and 2021, representing a faster rate of growth than the previous 5-year period (6.6%). The Townships of Brock and Scugog are not included within a designated CMA.

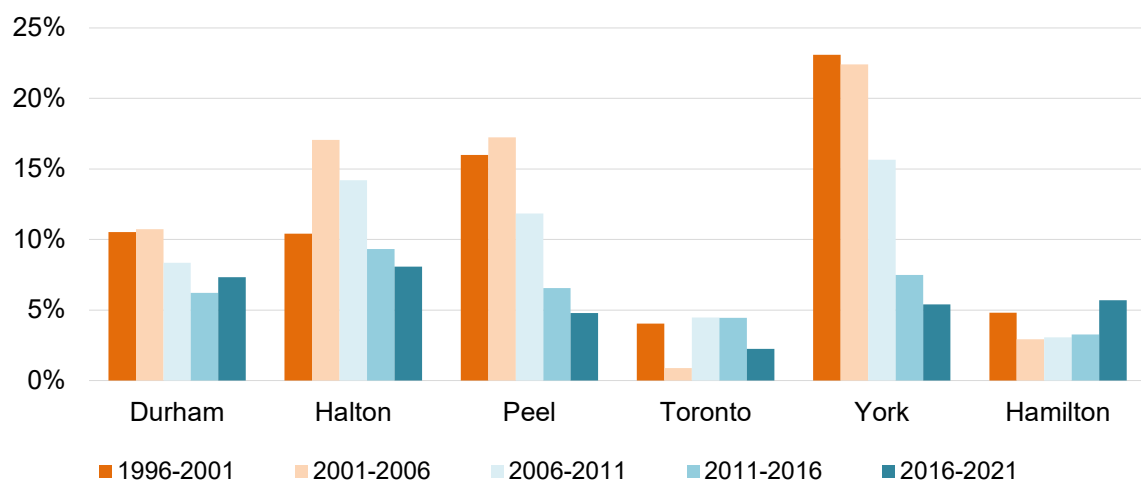


<sup>2</sup> Census subdivisions (CSD) is the general term for municipalities (as determined by provincial/territorial legislation) or areas treated as municipal equivalents for statistical purposes (e.g., First Nations reserves/settlements, and unorganized territories). Municipal status is defined by laws in effect in each province and territory in Canada (Statistics Canada Dictionary, Census of Population, 2021).

## 5. Durham and GTHA Growth Trends

- 5.1 The Durham Region Census Division (CD)<sup>3</sup> ranks fifth in Ontario and tenth nationally in total population compared to other regions, counties, and large cities. Toronto ranks first both in Ontario and nationally. The rankings for both Durham and Toronto did not change from the 2016 Census (refer to Attachment 1, Table 5).
- 5.2 The Census population growth rate trends for the GTHA municipalities since 1996, are illustrated in Figure 1. Durham's population increased by 6.2% (37,738 persons) between 2011-2016 and 7.3% (51,130 persons) between 2016-2021. Durham's +7.3% increase over the past five years compares to increases of 2.2% in Toronto, 4.8% in Peel, 5.4% in York, 5.7% in Hamilton, and 8.1% in Halton (refer to Attachment 1, Table 3).

**Figure 1 | Comparison of Population Growth Rates in the GTHA, 1996-2021**

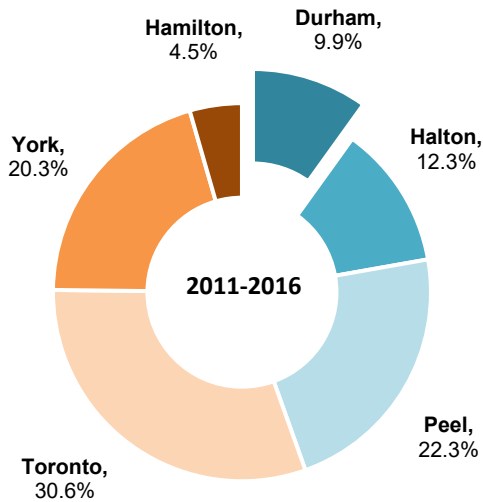


### Share of Population Growth

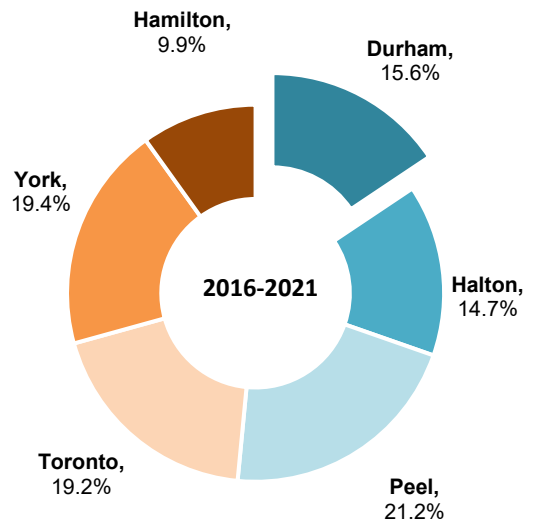
- 5.3 Regional shares of GTHA growth is shown in Figures 2(a) and 2(b). Durham's share increased significantly from 9.9% in the 2011-2016 period to 15.6% during the 2016-2021 period. During this time, Peel had the greatest share of population growth (21.2%) followed by York (19.4%) and Toronto (19.2%).

<sup>3</sup> Census divisions (CDs) are groups of neighbouring municipalities joined together for the purposes of regional planning and managing common services (such as police or ambulance services). These groupings are established under laws in effect in certain provinces of Canada. Census divisions are intermediate geographic areas between the province/territory level and the municipality (census subdivision).

**Figure 2(a) | Share of Population Growth in the GTHA, 2011-2016**



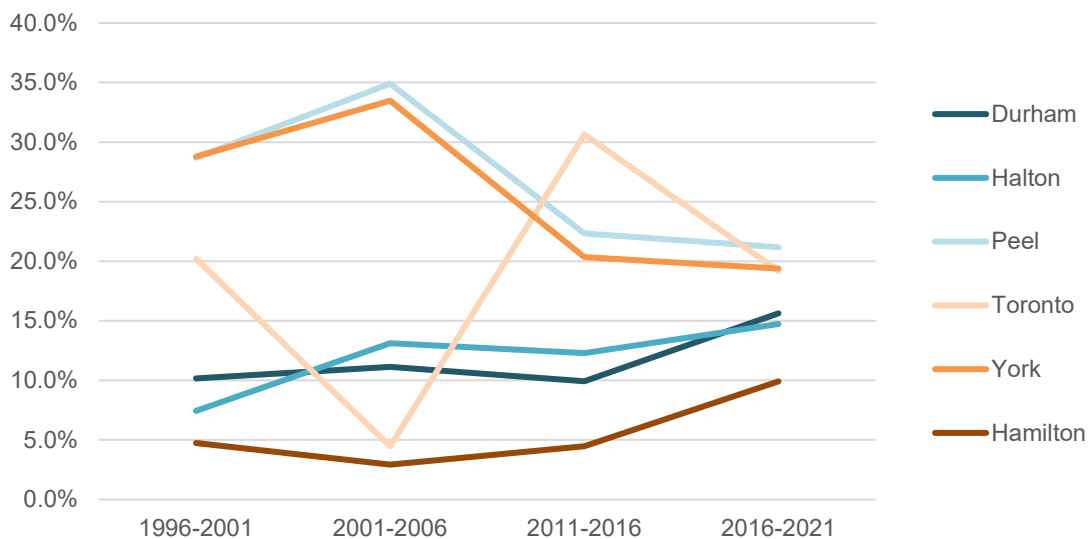
**Figure 2(b) | Share of Population Growth in the GTHA, 2016-2021**



### Population Growth Rates

5.4 Durham, Halton, and Hamilton experienced an increase in their rate of population growth overall compared to the previous 5-year period, while Toronto, Peel, and York experienced a decrease (refer to Figure 3). Toronto, in particular, experienced a significant decline (-11.4%) in its growth rate from 30.6% in 2011-2016 to 19.2% in the 2016-2021 period.

**Figure 3 | Population Growth Rates, 1996-2021**



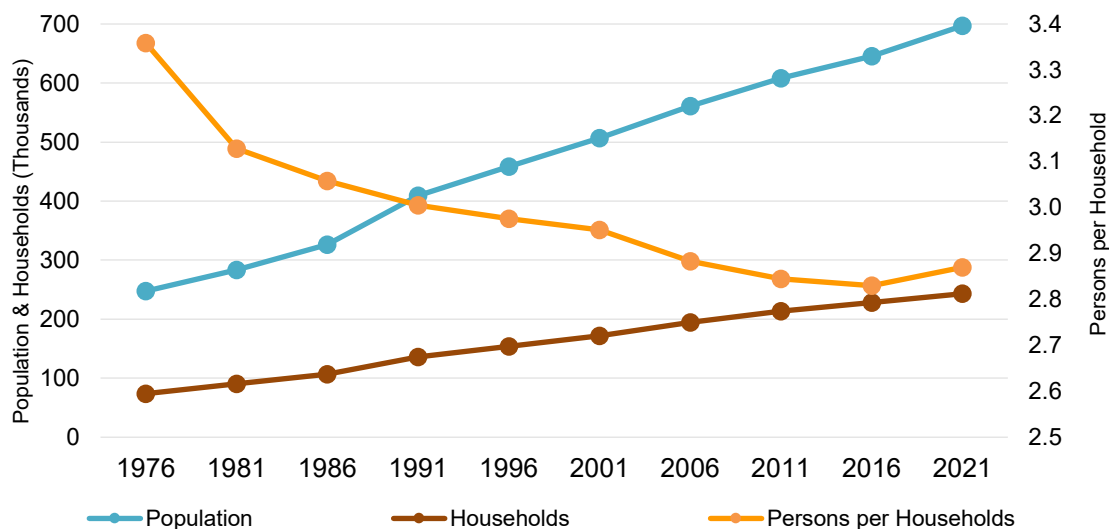
## Household Growth

5.5 While the population in Durham increased by 7.9% from 2016 to 2021, the number of occupied private dwellings (i.e. “households”) only increased by 6.6%, from 227,906 in 2016 to 243,048 in 2021, indicating that, for the first time since 1976, the Region’s population has grown at a faster rate than the number of households. This is consistent with Durham’s significant increase in its share of the GTHA population between 2016 and 2021, as illustrated in Figures 2(a) and 2(b).

## Persons per Household

5.6 In previous years, the national trend of persons per household declining over time generally meant that more housing units have sheltered the same number of people. The 2021 Census data suggests that the average number of persons per household has increased for the first time since 1976 from 2.83 persons in 2016 to 2.87 persons in 2021. Figure 4 illustrates this trend in Durham, and the shifts it has experienced in the 2016-2021 period.

**Figure 4** | Population, Households, and Persons per Household in Durham, 1976-2021



## Potential Impacts of COVID-19

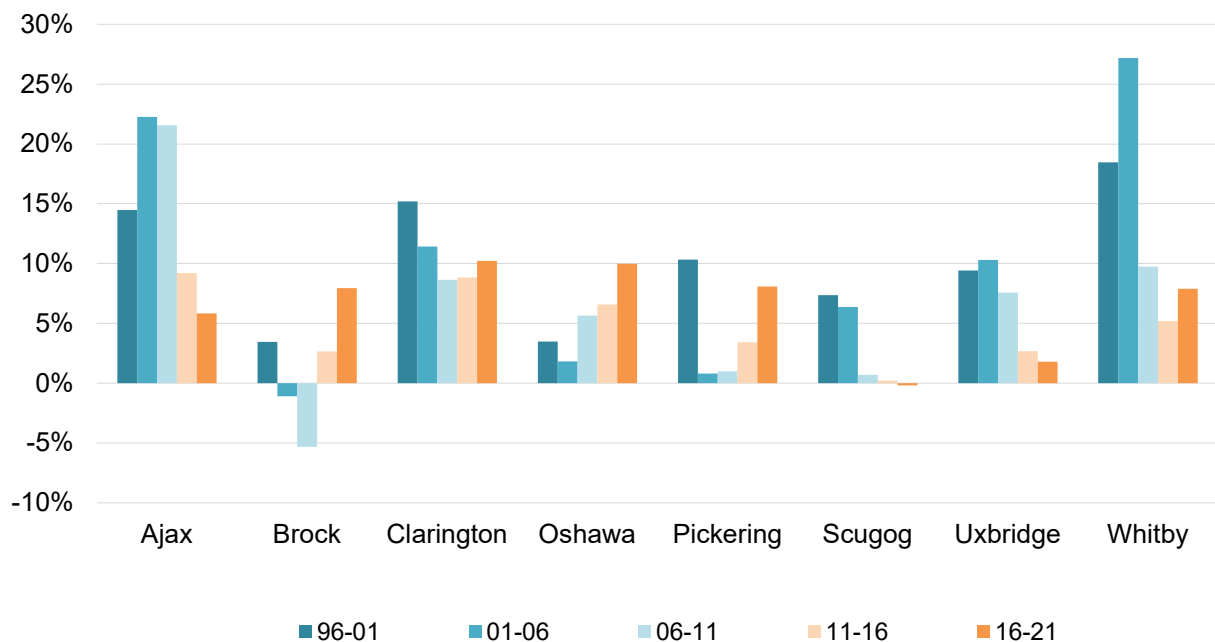
5.7 The COVID-19 pandemic has had significant impacts on population and demographic growth trends across the globe. The pandemic has also influenced growth patterns in the GTHA. For example, employers moving towards remote and virtual workspaces could potentially mean portions of the population are no longer required to live close to their place of work, and have moved outside of highly urbanized areas to places where housing could be more affordable. These trends

are observed in the GTHA, and demonstrated by the decline in growth rates in Toronto, York, and Peel, and subsequent increases in Durham, Halton, and Hamilton, as illustrated in Figure 3. While local factors, such as a lack of vacant and/or developable land, could have an impact on declining growth rates, it is possible that the pandemic played a key role. Another potential trend includes adult children staying at home longer, or moving back into their family homes due to remote work or school, resulting in a higher number of persons per household on average, as illustrated in Figure 4. Future data releases of the 2021 Census and beyond will provide further insight into these shifts, the longevity of their impacts, and whether they represent long-term trends.

## 6. Area Municipal Growth Trends

6.1 The population growth trends for Durham’s area municipalities between 1996 and 2021 are illustrated in Figure 5. All area municipalities in Durham experienced population growth between 2016-2021, except Scugog, which experienced a 0.2% decline in its population. Clarington experienced the highest rate of growth (10.2%), followed by Oshawa (10%), and Pickering (8.1%).

**Figure 5 |** Periods of population growth in Durham by Area Municipality, 1996-2021

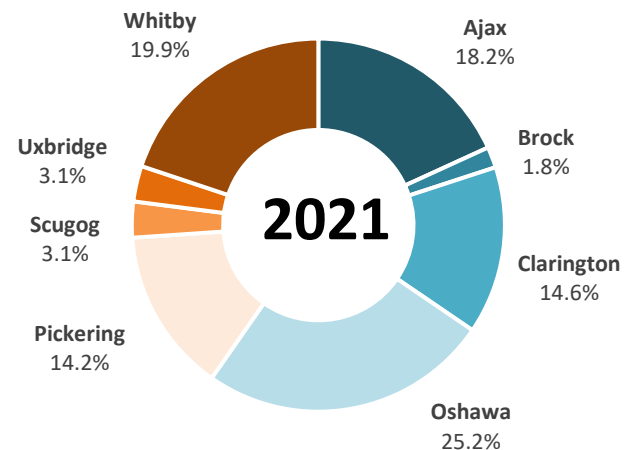


6.2 The rate of population growth varies with each Census period, with some municipalities growing more rapidly than others. The growth rate in Brock increased significantly by 13.2% over a 10-year period between 2011 and 2021, from -5.3% in

2011 to +7.9% in 2021. Other municipalities have also experienced an increased rate of growth in the last 10-year period, including Pickering (+7.1%), Oshawa (+4.3%), and Clarington (+1.6%).

6.3 Figure 6 illustrates the share of population distribution among Durham's area municipalities in 2021. Oshawa continues to maintain the dominant share of Durham's population with 25.2%, an increase from 24.7% in 2016. Clarington (14.6%) and Pickering (14.2%) also experienced an increase in population share, while Brock and Whitby maintained their share. All other municipalities decreased their share of Durham's population distribution since 2016.

Figure 6 | Population distribution by area municipality, 2021



6.4 As previously noted, total households in Durham increased 6.6% (15,142 households) between 2016 and 2021. Clarington experienced the largest increase in household growth with 9.5% (3,115 households), followed by Pickering (8.1%), Whitby (6.7%), and Oshawa (6.5%).

6.5 Oshawa maintained the largest share of household distribution among Durham's area municipalities with 27.4% in 2021, followed by Whitby (19.1%), Ajax (16.3%) and Clarington (14.8%). Clarington, Pickering, and Whitby increased their share of households; while all other municipalities decreased their share (refer to Attachment 1, Table 2).

6.6 The 2021 Census count of Durham's households (243,048) is slightly below the 244,385 households estimated by the Planning and Economic Development Department in its December 2021 Monitoring of Growth Trends report (Commissioner's Report 2021-INFO-132). Minor differences between the Census and the Monitoring of Growth Trends reporting may occur because of differences between the completion and occupancy of a dwelling, demolitions of existing dwellings, and the timing of the Census enumeration day.

## 7. Relationship to Strategic Plan

7.1 This report aligns with/addresses the following strategic goals and priorities in the Durham Region Strategic Plan:



- a. Goal 5.3 – Demonstrate commitment to continuous quality improvement and communicating results.

## 8. Conclusion

- 8.1 The Census is an essential source of data on the demographic characteristics over time. Statistics Canada expects to release the following additional data this year:
  - April 27 – Age, sex, and type of dwelling;
  - May 11 – Census of Agriculture
  - July 13 – Families, households, and marital status; Canadian military experience; and income;
  - August 17 – Language
  - September 21 – Indigenous peoples and housing;
  - October 26 – Immigration, place of birth, and citizenship; ethnocultural and religious diversity, and mobility and migration;
  - November 30 – Education, labour, language of work, commuting, instruction in the official minority language.
- 8.2 The 2021 Census information will be used as input to various Regional projects, including the update to the Regional Official Plan through the Municipal Comprehensive Review (Envision Durham), infrastructure master planning, annual infrastructure capital budgets and forecasts, the annual Business Plan and Budgeting process, Development Charges Studies, and the Durham Region Profile.
- 8.3 The Planning and Economic Development Department will update the Durham Region Profile once all the 2021 Census data is released. The Profile provides important statistical data about Durham’s population, households, families, and other demographic factors. To help communicate the 2016 Durham Profile, the Department introduced an interactive [data dashboard](#) and plan to use a similar dashboard for 2021 Census data.
- 8.4 The under-enumerated population (net undercoverage) is taken into account when completing planning-related studies and analyses. As previously noted, the 2021 net undercoverage for Durham is estimated to be approximately 3.75%. Statistics Canada has confirmed that final adjustments for net under-enumeration is scheduled to be released in 2023.
- 8.5 A copy of this report will be forwarded to the area municipalities and be made available on the Region’s website.

**9. Attachments**

Attachment #1: Statistics Canada Census of Population, First Release

Respectfully submitted,

Original signed by

---

Brian Bridgeman, MCIP, RPP  
Commissioner of Planning and  
Economic Development

**Attachment 1**

Statistics Canada Census of Population, First Release (Population and Dwellings)

**Table 1**  
Population change in Durham municipalities

<b>Municipality</b>	<b>2016 #</b>	<b>2016 %</b>	<b>2021 #</b>	<b>2021 %</b>	<b>% change</b>
Ajax	119,677	18.5%	126,666	18.2%	5.8%
Brock	11,642	1.8%	12,567	1.8%	7.9%
Clarington	92,013	14.2%	101,427	14.6%	10.2%
Oshawa	159,458	24.7%	175,383	25.2%	10.0%
Pickering	91,771	14.2%	99,186	14.2%	8.1%
Scugog	21,748	3.4%	21,706	3.1%	-0.2%
Uxbridge	21,176	3.3%	21,556	3.1%	1.8%
Whitby	128,377	19.9%	138,501	19.9%	7.9%
Durham	645,862	100.0%	696,992	100.0%	7.9%

Note: The population of Scugog includes the Township of Scugog (21,581 persons) and the Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation (125 persons).

**Table 2**  
Households in Durham municipalities

<b>Municipality</b>	<b>2016 #</b>	<b>2016 %</b>	<b>2021 #</b>	<b>2021 %</b>	<b>% change</b>
Ajax	37,549	16.5%	39,488	16.2%	5.2%
Brock	4,543	2.0%	4,788	2.0%	5.4%
Clarington	32,838	14.4%	35,953	14.8%	9.5%
Oshawa	62,595	27.5%	66,634	27.4%	6.5%
Pickering	30,919	13.6%	33,425	13.8%	8.1%
Scugog	8,270	3.6%	8,292	3.4%	0.3%
Uxbridge	7,663	3.4%	8,008	3.3%	4.5%
Whitby	43,529	19.1%	46,460	19.1%	6.7%
Durham	227,906	100.0%	243,048	100.0%	6.6%

Note: The number of households for Scugog includes the Township of Scugog (8,243 households) and the Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation (49 households).

**Table 3**

Population change in Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA) municipalities

<b>Municipality</b>	<b>2016 #</b>	<b>2016 %</b>	<b>2021 #</b>	<b>2021 %</b>	<b>% change</b>
Durham	645,862	9.3%	696,992	9.6%	7.9%
Halton	548,435	7.9%	596,637	8.2%	8.8%
Peel	1,381,739	19.9%	1,451,022	19.9%	5.0%
Toronto	2,731,571	39.3%	2,794,356	38.4%	2.3%
York	1,109,909	16.0%	1,173,334	16.1%	5.7%
Hamilton	536,917	7.7%	569,353	7.8%	6.0%
GTHA	6,954,433	100.0%	7,281,694	100.0%	4.7%

**Table 4**  
Census Metropolitan Areas (CMA)

<b>Rank</b>	<b>Census Metropolitan Area</b>	<b>2016 #</b>	<b>2021 #</b>	<b>% change</b>
1	Toronto	5,928,040	6,202,225	4.6%
2	Montreal	4,104,074	4,291,732	4.6%
3	Vancouver	2,463,431	2,642,825	7.3%
4	Ottawa - Gatineau	1,371,576	1,488,307	8.5%
5	Calgary	1,392,609	1,481,806	6.4%
6	Edmonton	1,321,441	1,418,118	7.3%
7	Quebec	806,406	839,311	4.1%
8	Winnipeg	783,099	834,678	6.6%
9	Hamilton	747,545	785,184	5.0%
10	Kitchener - Cambridge - Waterloo	523,894	575,847	9.9%
11	London	494,069	543,551	10.0%
12	Halifax	426,932	465,703	9.1%
13	St. Catherines - Niagara	406,074	433,604	6.8%
14	Windsor	398,718	422,630	6.0%
15	Oshawa	379,848	415,311	9.3%

**Table 5**  
Census Division (CD)

<b>Rank</b>	<b>Census Division</b>	<b>2016 #</b>	<b>2021 #</b>	<b>% change</b>
1	Toronto	2,731,571	2,794,356	2.3%
2	Greater Vancouver	2,463,431	2,642,825	7.3%
3	Montreal	1,942,044	2,004,265	3.2%
4	Division No. 6 (Alberta)	1,498,778	1,590,639	6.1%
5	Division No. 11 (Alberta)	1,366,050	1,462,041	7.0%
6	Peel	1,381,739	1,451,022	5.0%
7	York	1,109,909	1,173,334	5.7%
8	Ottawa	934,243	1,017,449	8.9%
9	Division No. 11 (Manitoba)	708,823	753,938	6.4%
10	Durham	645,862	696,992	7.9%
11	Halton	548,435	596,637	8.8%
12	Quebec	569,717	588,777	3.3%
13	Waterloo	535,154	587,165	9.7%
14	Hamilton	536,917	569,353	6.0%
15	Simcoe	479,635	533,169	11.2%