



# Rural and Small Town Canada ANALYSIS BULLETIN



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## Rural Employment in the Culture Sector

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### Highlights

- ◆ In 2003, the culture sector employed 2.8 percent of the rural workforce, smaller than the 3.9 percent at the national level.
- ◆ Rural culture employment grew faster than total rural employment in the 1996 to 2003 period.
- ◆ Compared to other culture sub-sectors, the sub-sectors of *heritage* and *visual arts* had a higher proportion of their workforce employed in rural areas.
- ◆ Rural culture workers were more likely to work part-time, compared both to all workers and all culture workers.
- ◆ Rural areas in Newfoundland and Labrador and in Alberta reported a higher growth in culture workers between 1996 and 2003.

### Introduction

The culture sector has been identified as a driver of economic prosperity in urban and rural areas because of its direct and indirect contribution to the economy of a community. Besides creating jobs and generating income as any other sector, the cultural sector has peculiar advantages. The cultural vitality of a locality, whether rural or urban, increases its quality of life and thus its attractiveness to (potential) new residents, tourists and investors.

The recent literature on local economic development has underlined the role of the cultural sector as a catalyst for the creation of new jobs in a community. This potential spurs from

the fact that highly skilled people want to live in places that offer cultural richness. Although the presence of cultural institutions does not guarantee a community's economic growth, research suggests that investments in culture increase the chances of success of an economic development strategy (Storm, 2001). In order to thrive and become economically competitive, one of the strategies that is often suggested to localities is to capitalize on the synergies between the entrepreneurial environment and the creative and culturally rich environment, in which cultural activities improve the quality of life of residents and attract new residents, thus, generating economic spin-offs.



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The objective of this paper is to document the nature of culture employment in rural Canada. A number of studies conducted in Canada have pointed to the fact that culture employment is mainly located in so-called “culture clusters” in Canada’s major metropolitan centres such as Toronto, Vancouver and Montreal (e.g., Coish, 2004). Other studies have identified cities as the centre of culture activities (e.g. Scott, 2000). However, trends outside metro areas have rarely been investigated. There are a number of ways to define rural areas.<sup>1</sup> In this case, Census Metropolitan Areas (CMAs) and selected Census Agglomerations (CAs) are used as a proxy for urban areas and the remaining areas are used as a proxy for rural areas (Box 1).

In terms of statistical definition, culture remains a somewhat “fuzzy” concept. The culture sector and the creative sector are often used interchangeably. This analysis uses the *Canadian Framework for Culture Statistics* (Statistics Canada, 2004) to identify the specific sub-sectors identified in the culture sector (Box 2). The *Framework* defines the culture sector as “creative artistic activity and the goods and services produced by it, and the preservation of human heritage.” This broad definition encompasses activities of creation, production, manufacturing, distribution and support services. The annual data for 1996 to 2003 are derived from Statistics Canada’s Labour Force Survey. See Box 3 for the definitions of employment used in this analysis.

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1. For more information on the different ways to define rural, see du Plessis *et al.* (2001).

## **Box 1 Rural and urban**

- **Rural areas:** In this bulletin, “rural areas” refers to areas outside CMAs (Census Metropolitan Areas) and outside selected CAs (Census Agglomerations) (as listed below). The selected CAs are relatively significant cities within their respective provinces.

- **Urban areas:** In this bulletin, “urban areas” are:

1. CMAs

St. John’s, Halifax, Saint John, Chicoutimi-Jonquière, Québec City, Montréal, Sherbrooke, Ottawa, Sudbury, Toronto, Hamilton, St. Catharines-Niagara, London, Windsor, Kitchener-Waterloo, Thunder Bay, Winnipeg, Regina, Saskatoon, Calgary, Edmonton, Vancouver, Victoria, Oshawa, Hull, Trois-Rivières;

2. Selected CAs

Corner Brook-Deer Lake, Charlottetown, Summerside, Sydney-Sydney Mines, New Glasgow, Truro, Bathurst, Chatham-Newcastle, Moncton, Fredericton, Edmunston, Sept-Îles, Baie-Comeau, Rimouski, Rouyn-Noranda/Val-d’or-Malartic, Cornwall, Kingston, Peterborough, Guelph, Brantford, Sarnia-Clearwater, Sault Ste. Marie, North Bay, Brandon, Moose Jaw, Prince Albert, Lethbridge, Medicine Hat, Red Deer, Grande Prairie, Fort McMurray, Kelowna, Kamloops, Matsqui, Chilliwack-Hope, Nanaimo, Prince George and Dawson Creek.

## Box 2 Components of the “culture sector”

Details of the specific NAICS (North American Industry Classification System) codes (Statistics Canada, 2003) that are included in the “culture sector” are documented in Statistics Canada (2004) and in Appendices D, E and F in Singh (2004). For many industrial sectors, only specific occupations are included. The industrial sectors that are included, in whole or in part, in the culture sector are:

- **Advertising** includes establishments engaged in advertising, display advertising and distribution of advertising materials. Activities of these establishments encompass creation, production and distribution;
- **Architecture** includes establishments engaged in architectural and landscape architectural services. Activities relate to creation and support services;
- **Broadcasting** includes public and private establishments engaged in radio and television broadcasting. Activities of these establishments relate to creation, production, distribution and support services;
- **Design** includes establishments engaged in interior, industrial, graphic and other specialized design activities. Activities generally relate to creation services;
- **Festivals** include establishments engaged in producing festivals without facilities. Activities include creation, production and support services;
- **Film industry** includes establishments engaged in motion pictures, film and video. Activities of these establishments involve creation, production, manufacturing, distribution and support services;
- **Heritage** includes establishments such as museums, heritage and historic sites, zoos, botanical gardens and other institutions. Activities include production and support services;
- **Performing arts** includes establishments engaged in live theatre, dance and promotion activities. Activities include creation, production, distribution and support services;
- **Photography** includes establishments mainly engaged in photographic services and photo finishing. Activities include creation, production, distribution and support services;
- **Sound recording and music publishing** includes establishments engaged in sound recording, record production and music publishing. Activities include creation, production, manufacturing, distribution and support services;
- **Visual arts** includes establishments engaged in pottery manufacturing, commercial screen printing and dealing in original arts. Activities include creation, production, manufacturing, distribution and support services;
- **Written media** includes establishments engaged in publishing activities such as newspapers, books and periodicals. Activities of these establishments encompass creation, production, manufacturing, distribution and support services; and
- **Other information services** include establishments such as libraries, archives and news syndicates. Their activities include creation, production and support services.

### **Box 3 Definitions of employment**

- **Employment:** Employed persons are those who, during the reference week, did any work for pay or profit, or had a job and were absent from work.
- **Full-time employment:** consists of persons who usually work 30 hours or more per week at their main or only job.
- **Part-time employment:** consists of persons who do not work full-time. These can include those working part-time and on a contract basis.

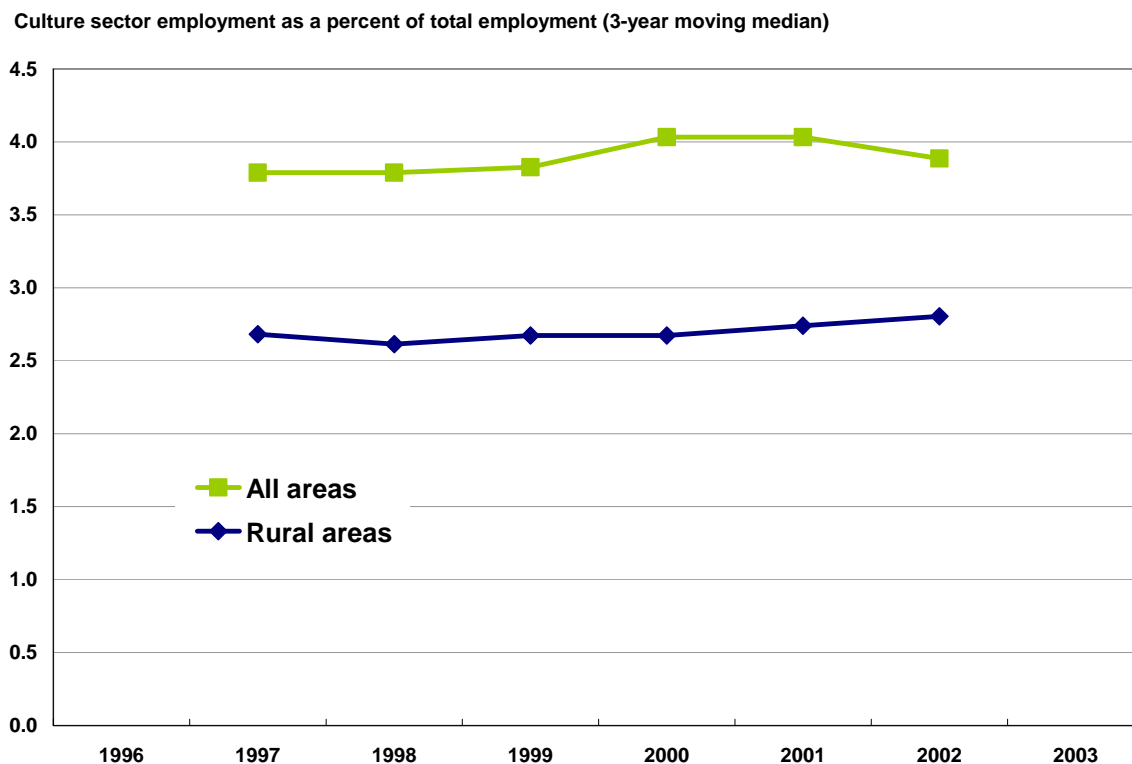
See Statistics Canada (2005) for a full definition of these terms.

### **Relatively fewer rural people are employed in the culture sector**

At the Canada-level at the end of the 1996 to 2003 period, 2.8 percent of the rural workforce was

employed in the culture sector, compared to 3.9 percent at the national level (Figure 1). Thus, the likelihood of finding a rural resident employed in the culture sector is about three quarters of that of the average Canadian worker.

**Figure 1 In 2002, 2.8 percent of the rural workforce was employed in the culture sector**



**Note:** Because a 3-year moving median is used, data is only shown for 1997 to 2002.

**Source:** Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, 1996 to 2003

Rural culture employment grew more quickly than overall rural employment during the 1996 to 2003 period. Rural cultural employment grew at about 2.6 percent per year whereas overall rural

employment grew at 1.5 percent per year (Table 1). Thus, the culture employment share within rural areas is rising, marginally.

**Table 1 Culture employment is growing faster than total employment both in rural areas and at the national level, Canada, 1996 to 2003**

|             | Annual rate of employment growth, <sup>1</sup> percent per year, 1996 to 2003 |             |
|-------------|---|-------------|
|             | Culture sector  | All sectors |
| Rural areas | 2.6   | 1.5         |
| All areas   | 2.8   | 2.2         |

1. Calculated as the slope of a regression of the logarithm of the level of employment regressed on time.

**Source:** Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, 1996 to 2003

Similarly, at the Canada level, the culture sector is growing faster (2.8 percent per year) than national employment growth (2.2 percent per year). Thus, the culture employment share within the national economy is showing a slight upward trend (but not in every year).

Rural areas have a higher share of jobs in some culture sub-sectors than in others. As a point of reference, rural areas as defined in this bulletin (Box 1) represent 27 percent of all jobs in Canada, on average over the 1996 to 2003 period (Table 2). None of the individual culture sectors achieved this share. However, over this period, about 26 percent of all ‘heritage sub-sector’ jobs were in rural areas. Thus, rural areas have almost

their market share of ‘heritage-related’ jobs. Similarly, 22 percent of the national jobs in the ‘visual arts sub-sector’ are held by rural residents. Again, rural areas appear to have comparable share of jobs related to the visual arts, as their overall market share.

Of note is the weak concentration of architecture, advertising and performing arts in rural areas. These sectors have over 90 percent of their workforce in cities. For example, most of the architecture work is related to construction sites located in cities (such as commercial building projects) and thus most of the workers are likely to work in cities.

**Table 2 The heritage sub-sector has the largest share of workers in rural areas, Canada, 1996 to 2003**

| Sector                               | Percent of national workforce residing in a rural area, average 1996 to 2003 |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Employment in all sectors</b>     | <b>27</b>  |
| Heritage                             | 26   |
| Visual arts                          | 22   |
| Photography                          | 20   |
| Written media                        | 19   |
| Broadcasting                         | 18   |
| <b>Total culture sector</b>          | <b>16</b>  |
| Sound recording and music publishing | 14   |
| Film industry                        | 13   |
| Design                               | 12   |
| Performing arts                      | 8  |
| Advertising                          | 8  |
| Architecture                         | 8  |
| Festivals                            | F  |
| Libraries                            | F  |

F: too unreliable to publish.

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, 1996 to 2003



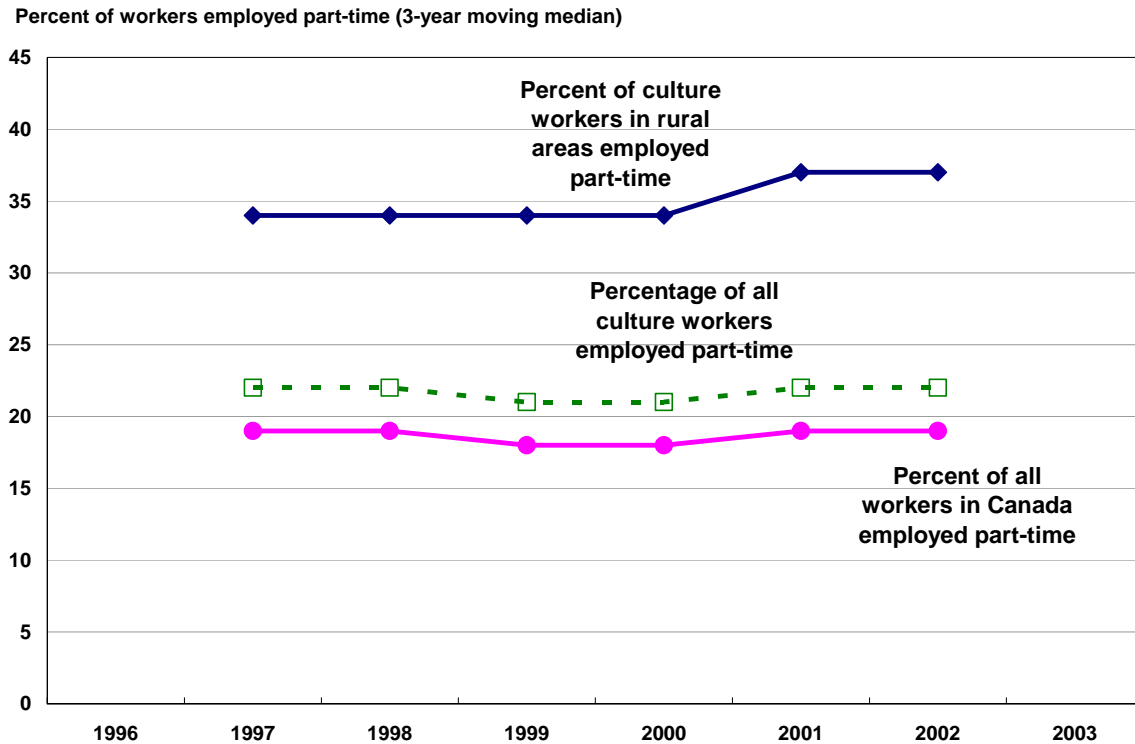
## **Over one-third of rural culture workers are employed part-time**

Compared to both the average rural worker and the average culture worker, rural culture workers are more likely to be employed part-time. Over the 1996 to 2003 period, less than 20 percent of Canada's workforce<sup>2</sup> was working part-time (Figure 2). At the Canada level, about 22 percent of workers in the culture sector were working part-time at the end of the study period. This compares to 37 percent part-time employment amongst rural culture workers. Thus, rural culture workers are relatively more likely to have part-time jobs.

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2. The share of the overall workforce employed part-time was roughly similar in urban and rural areas during this time period. Overall, about 19 percent of the national workforce was employed part-time, compared to 18 percent in urban areas (specifically, in CMAs and CAs) and 20 percent in rural areas (specifically, in non-CMA/CA areas) (Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, CANSIM Table 282-0066)

**Figure 2 Rural culture workers were more likely to work part-time than the average culture worker and the average worker, Canada, 1996 to 2003**



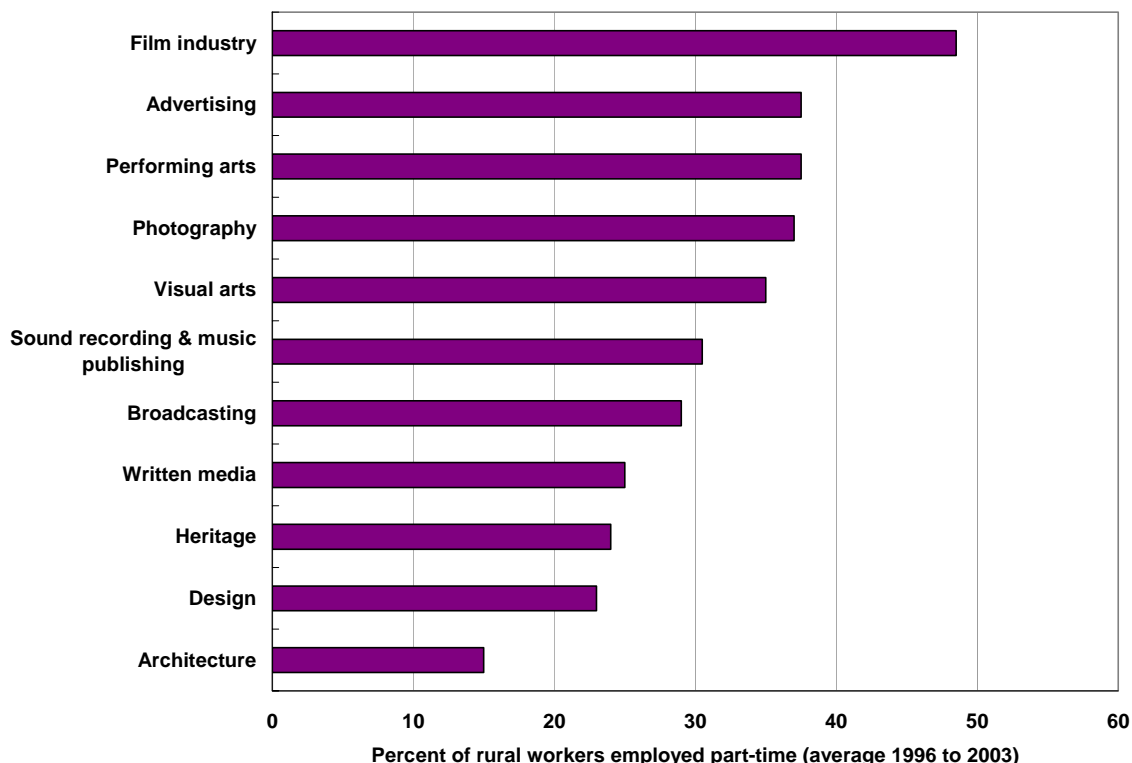
**Note:** Because a 3-year moving median is used, data is only shown for 1997 to 2002.

**Source:** Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, 1996 to 2003

Within rural areas, rural workers are more likely to be employed part-time in the film industry (Figure 3). Much of this work is on a project or contract basis. Other culture sectors where more

than one-third of the workforce is employed part-time include advertising, performing arts, photography and visual arts.

**Figure 3 Almost half of rural workers in the film industry are employed part-time, Canada, 1996 to 2003**



Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, 1996 to 2003

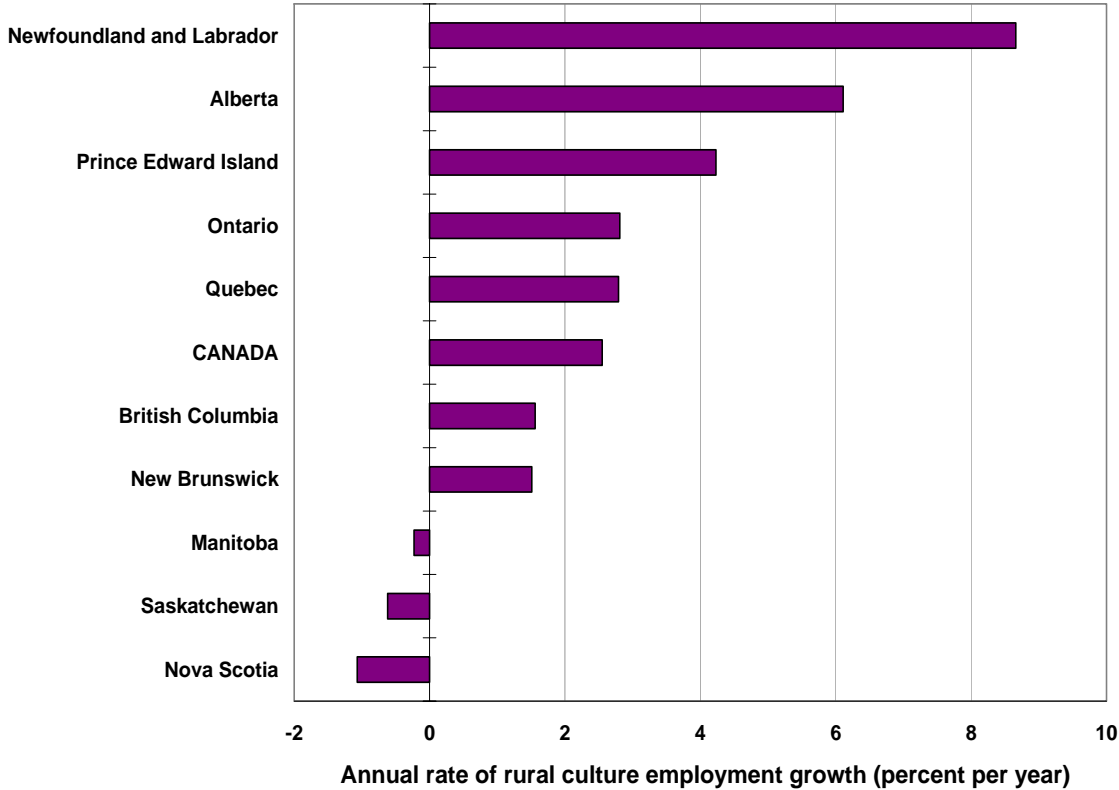
### **Strong growth in the rural culture sectors of Newfoundland and Labrador and Alberta**

Within rural areas of Canada’s provinces, the culture sectors of Newfoundland and Labrador reported the strongest growth in employment over the 1996 to 2003 period, growing over 8 percent

per year, on average (Figure 4). Alberta’s rural areas also reported strong growth in their culture sectors – about 6 percent per year in this period.

On the other hand, there was a decline in culture employment in rural areas in Nova Scotia, Saskatchewan and Manitoba.

**Figure 4 Strong growth<sup>1</sup> in rural culture employment in Newfoundland and Labrador, 1996 to 2003**



1. Growth is calculated as the slope of a regression of the logarithm of the level of employment regressed on time.

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, 1996 to 2003

**Summary**

The culture sector tends to be an urban-based sector. The culture sector contributes only 2.8 percent of rural employment whereas the culture sector contributes 3.9 percent to the national workforce.

The urban concentration increased slightly during the 1996 to 2003 period because rural culture employment growth was less than the national rate of growth of culture employment.

However, within rural areas, culture employment is growing faster than overall rural employment. Thus, culture sectors are a leading group of sectors in rural areas. The heritage sector (museums, heritage and historic sites, zoos, botanical gardens etc.) is a relatively large rural culture sector.

Rural culture workers are more likely to work part-time, compared to other workers.

The culture sector in rural Newfoundland and Labrador and in rural Alberta reported strong growth during the 1996 to 2003 period.

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