

ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

YUKON, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES, NUNAVUT



March 2013

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Acronyms

GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HRSDC	Human Resources and Skills Development Canada
NWT	The Northwest Territories

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About the E-Scan

At least twice a year, the Labour Market Information division of Service Canada, Western Canada and Territories Region develops an Economic/Environmental Scan (E-Scan), a report that provides a general overview of the demographic, economic and labour market condition and trends for the three territories. E-Scans are mainly intended to support regional Service Canada operations by identifying potential pressures on service and program delivery in the regions. However, they may also be of interest to those who seek to know more about the state of a provincial or regional economy and labour market. They are also used by Service Canada economists to help determine outlooks for industries and occupations.

Facts and statistics presented in this document reflect information available as of February 2013.

Key Points

General Overview

- The major drivers of the territorial economy are commodities, specifically minerals (iron, gold, zinc, copper), diamonds, and to some extent oil and gas.
- Prices for these commodities have been depressed for the past couple of years. Lower potential profits and high costs of working in the north have caused some companies to reduce activity in mining exploration, and have forced some projects to be postponed or scaled back.
- Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth for the three territories is expected to be well above the Canadian average over the next few years. Federal Transfer payments and new mining royalty agreements should keep territorial government budgets balanced if not in surplus, while many new private-public training agreements will help local residents join the workforce.

Regional, Provincial and Local Labour Market Conditions

- Overall, the territories are poised to see employment growth in construction, mining, and related industries largely driven by exploratory and mining projects beginning in 2013.
- Although commodity prices are a limiting factor for development, even with recent depressed prices, employment growth in construction was observed in both Yukon (4.6%) and Nunavut (8.9%).
- The age group that had the fastest rate of growth between 2007 and 2012 was 55 and over; this was true for all three territories. Some of those workers continue to stay in the labour force instead of retiring.
- The Northwest Territories (NWT) has continued to face difficulties in recent years, with employment declining in several key industries across most age groups, largely due to struggles in diamond mining. As a result of decreasing job opportunities, NWT saw a net outmigration of 2,100 people, mostly headed to Alberta, where opportunities are more widespread.
- The strongest overall employment growth was seen in Nunavut which grew by four percent annually between 2007 and 2012. The most substantial contributor was from the forestry, fishing and mining industry, which recorded an annual rate of growth of 19%.

Introduction

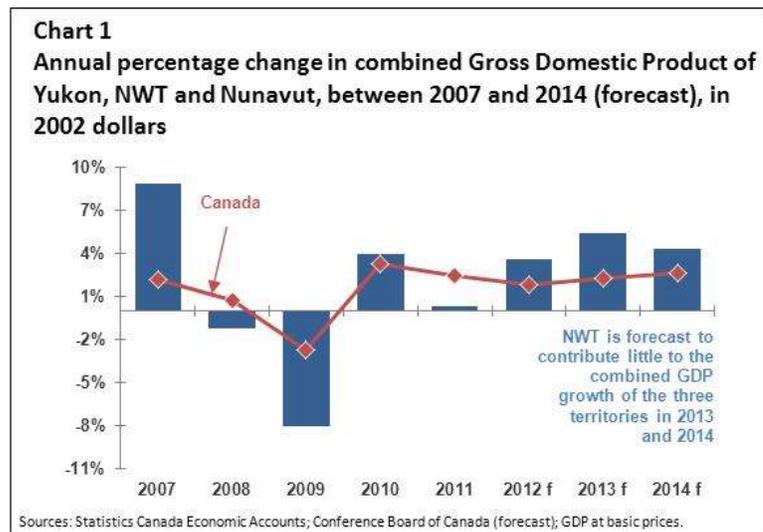
The purpose of the Environmental Scan is to outline the major trends and issues facing Canada and the three territories that will influence the economic and social environment in the current and future years. The document provides timely, evidence-based information that supports the business planning process; it is divided into two main parts. The first part of the document includes a general overview of the economic context and some employment outlook information; the second part provides perspective on the regional, provincial and local labour markets. Some terms and definitions are featured on page 15 in the appendices.

Section 1: General Overview / Economic Context

The Canadian economy struggled to get a firm footing in 2012, weighted down by low domestic spending and weak global markets. The European Union appeared to move from one crisis to another as it fought to keep the Euro afloat. Meanwhile, the US economic recovery remained slow, and BRIC economies (Brazil, Russia, India and China) laboured to maintain their momentum. Within Canada, federal and provincial governments reduced fiscal stimulus spending in an attempt to balance their budgets. As a result of these factors, Canada's GDP grew by only 1.8% in 2012, compared to 2.4% in 2011.

In the North, however, concerns are much more focused. The major drivers of the territorial economy are minerals (iron, gold, zinc, copper), diamonds, and to some extent oil and gas. In 2012, mineral prices for copper and zinc were down from the previous year, and gold prices appeared to have crested after four years of steady growth. However, diamond prices fell to about 80% of their 2011 value, while iron ore prices were down over 50% by the start of 2013. While commodity prices are relatively healthy compared to what they were at the start of this century, many of the new projects coming online in the North are also costly. Indeed, remote locations and a small local workforce mean that commodity prices need to be high in order for projects to be viable. For instance, recent volatility in iron ore prices, along with a weak global economy, forced stakeholders in the Mary River project in Nunavut to vastly scale back development plans.

Regardless, mining investment in the three territories has largely recovered from the 2008-2009 recession, and combined GDP growth for the region is expected to be well above the Canadian average over the next few years. Federal transfer payments and new mining royalty agreements should keep territorial government budgets balanced if not in surplus, while many new private-public training agreements will help local residents join the workforce.



Yukon

The Conference Board of Canada forecasts that the Yukon economy will grow by over seven per cent in 2013, as production at existing mines match or beat levels in 2011 and 2012, and two new underground mines begin operation. In addition, the territory's construction industry is anticipated to grow by 34% in 2014, as three more mines begin construction. While the most recent Conference Board forecast has slower GDP growth in 2014, preliminary information based on revised data from Statistics Canada suggests growth may be similar to 2013. According to Natural Resources Canada, investment in mining exploration is still double what it was in 2007, although investment has cooled somewhat in the past year.

Northwest Territories

Demand for diamonds continues to be soft in the face of flat economic growth in the US and Europe, and slower growth in China and India. NWT's economic output will grow slowly over the next couple of years as mature diamond mines reduce production. In fact, the Diavik and Ekati mines changed ownership in 2012, as two of the world's largest mining companies (Rio-Tinto and BHP Billiton) decided to reclaim their capital investment and refocus in the face of a challenging global commodities market. Nevertheless, existing mines will continue to operate over the medium term, and there will even be some expansion. For example, the Gahcho Kué diamond mine will begin construction in 2013 and production in 2015, and investment in mining exploration has been recovering steadily after bottoming out in 2009. In fact, the Conference Board of Canada anticipates that new metal mines (e.g. Fortune Mineral's NICO project) should begin offsetting waning diamond production by 2015; however, GDP growth will be flat this year for the North, and a relatively slim 2.6% in 2014. Meanwhile, oil and gas exploration continues, despite the fact that the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline is on indefinite hold due to low natural gas prices.

Nunavut

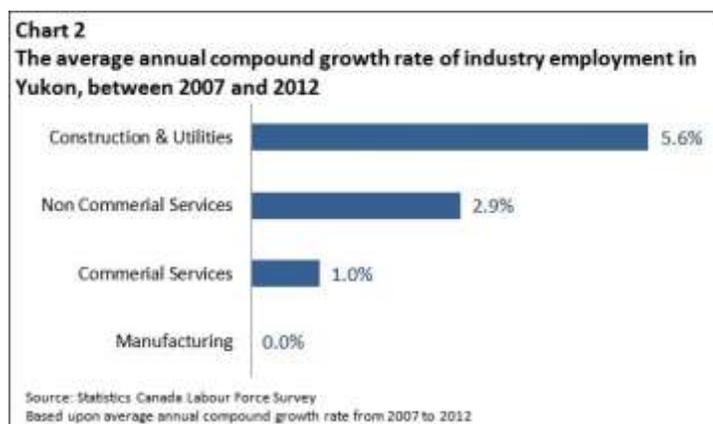
According to the Conference Board, Nunavut's economy is forecast to grow by 17% this year and 14% in 2014. In the short-term, the economy should remain vibrant, as the Meliadine gold mine begins construction this year (2013), and mining investments remain on par with levels previous to the 2008-2009 recession, if down somewhat compared to 2011. On the downside, the Mary River project has been scaled back in the face of unstable iron ore prices and a weak global economy – what was once a \$4 billion project involving rail systems and a deep-sea port is now budgeted at a more modest \$749 million. As a result, recent employment forecasts for the territory, which had anticipated unemployment rates below 10% in 2014 and 2015, will likely need to be revised. Nevertheless, every mine in Nunavut has a substantial economic impact, and therefore employment levels in the territory will continue to improve over the long-term.

Section 2: Regional, Provincial and Local Labour Market Condition

Employment by Sector

Yukon

Employment in construction and utilities was up 5.6% in 2012 from 2007. Most of the increase was due to construction, which is typically driven by non-residential projects, such as the development of mines. In recent years, mining companies have invested heavily in exploration, which has been the main economic driver in the territory. As a result of a Copper North's Carmacks Copper Mine and Victoria Gold's Eagle Gold Project beginning development over the next few years, construction employment will continue to climb.



Employment in Yukon is concentrated in resource-based industries: construction, and service-based industries. Despite declines in employment in some industries, the services-producing sector overall saw an increase of 1.9%. The industries that experienced a drop in employment include: trade 0.9%, transportation and warehousing 3.9%, and accommodation and food services 3.6%. Non-commercial services¹ had the second largest increase below construction and utilities at 2.9%; included in this is public administration, which alone grew by 2.5% annually.

The goods-producing sector also saw a healthy growth rate of 2.8%, mostly spurred by construction. The manufacturing industry in Yukon is quite small and has not shown signs of growth for several years.

¹ Refers to Educational Services, Health care and social assistance, and Public administration.

Table 1
Change in employment by industry in Yukon between 2007 and 2012

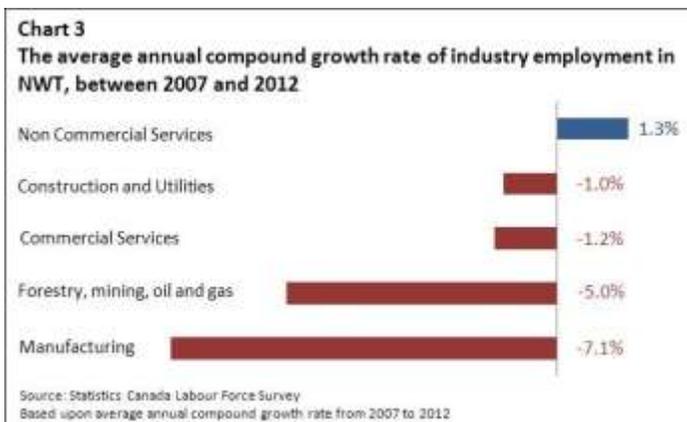
	2012	2007	% Share 2012	Growth rate*
Total, all industries	19.1	17.2	100.0%	2.1%
Goods-producing sector	3.1	2.7	16.2%	2.8%
Agriculture	-	-	-	-
Forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas	0.7	0.7	3.7%	0.0%
Utilities	0.1	-	0.5%	-
Construction	2.0	1.6	10.5%	4.6%
Manufacturing	0.3	0.3	1.6%	0.0%
Services-producing sector	15.9	14.5	83.2%	1.9%
Trade	2.1	2.2	11.0%	-0.9%
Transportation and warehousing	0.9	1.1	4.7%	-3.9%
Finance, insurance, real estate and leasing	0.8	0.7	4.2%	2.7%
Professional, scientific and technical services	1.1	0.8	5.8%	6.6%
Business, building and other support services	0.6	0.4	3.1%	8.4%
Educational services	1.5	1.2	7.9%	4.6%
Health care and social assistance	2.4	2.1	12.6%	2.7%
Information, culture and recreation	1.3	1.0	6.8%	5.4%
Accommodation and food services	1.0	1.2	5.2%	-3.6%
Other services	0.7	0.7	3.7%	0.0%
Public administration	3.5	3.1	18.3%	2.5%

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey

*Based upon average annual compound growth rate from 2007 to 2012

Northwest Territories

Employment in manufacturing in the Northwest Territories (NWT) decreased annually by 5 % over the last five years. In 2009, two diamond processing facilities closed, Laurelton Diamonds and Arslanian Cutting Works NWT Ltd., which greatly reduced the number of people working in manufacturing. Since Deepak International Ltd. recently received the rights to process diamonds in NWT, there is a tentative plan to build a new facility, which would create more jobs in diamond processing.



Employment numbers in a few of NWT's key industries declined from 2007, most notably forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas (7.1%) and construction (2.1%). Non-commercial services, which include public administration, edged up by 1.3% reaching a recent high of 5,400 employed.

Table 2
Change in employment by industry in NWT between 2007 and 2012

	2012	2007	% Share 2012	Growth rate*
Total, all industries	22.6	23.5	100.0%	-0.7%
Goods-producing sector	3.7	4.6	16.3%	-4.1%
Agriculture	-	-	-	-
Forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas	1.7	2.4	7.3%	-7.1%
Utilities	0.3	0.2	1.4%	-
Construction	1.5	1.7	6.6%	-2.1%
Manufacturing	0.2	0.3	0.9%	-5.0%
Services-producing sector	18.9	18.9	83.7%	0.1%
Trade	2.3	2.6	10.3%	-1.9%
Transportation and warehousing	1.7	1.9	7.7%	-1.3%
Finance, insurance, real estate and leasing	1.1	0.9	4.6%	2.9%
Professional, scientific and technical services	0.9	1.2	3.9%	-6.3%
Business, building and other support services	0.5	0.6	2.1%	-4.8%
Educational services	2.1	1.5	9.1%	6.6%
Health care and social assistance	2.3	2.7	10.0%	-3.2%
Information, culture and recreation	0.9	1.0	3.9%	-2.6%
Accommodation and food services	1.1	1.0	4.7%	0.5%
Other services	0.8	0.6	3.5%	6.4%
Public administration	5.4	4.9	23.7%	1.7%

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey

*Based upon average annual compound growth rate from 2007 to 2012

Nunavut

Employment in mining increased substantially in Nunavut largely due to the Meadowbank Gold Mine, which opened in 2010. By the end of 2012, the annual employment growth rate reached an impressive 19%. Other mines, including the Mary River Iron Mine and the Meliadine Gold Mine, are progressing towards development and will reach peak production in 2020, at which point nearly 800 residents are projected to be directly employed in mining. Although construction and utilities together saw a slight decline from 2007, construction increased by 8.9% to 700, while utilities declined by 12% in 2012.

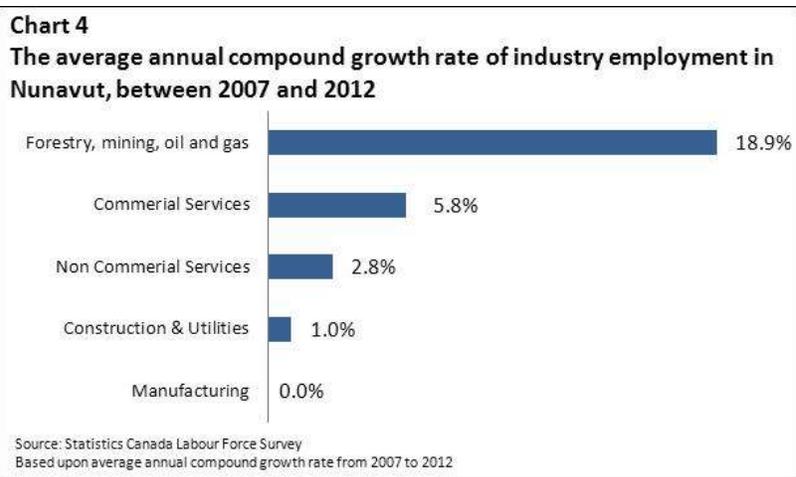


Table 3
Change in employment by industry in Nunavut between 2007 and 2012

	2012	2007	% Share 2012	Growth rate*
Total, all industries	11.8	9.7	100.0%	4.0%
Goods-producing sector	1.3	1.1	11.2%	3.0%
Agriculture	-	-	-	-
Forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas	0.5	0.2	4.0%	18.9%
Utilities	0.2	0.4	1.7%	-12.2%
Construction	0.7	0.4	5.5%	8.9%
Manufacturing	-	0.1	0.0%	-
Services-producing sector	10.5	8.6	88.8%	4.1%
Trade	1.8	1.1	15.1%	10.9%
Transportation and warehousing	0.8	0.5	7.1%	12.3%
Finance, insurance, real estate and leasing	0.6	0.5	5.3%	4.6%
Professional, scientific and technical services	0.2	0.1	1.3%	2.4%
Business, building and other support services	0.3	0.2	2.6%	11.0%
Educational services	1.5	1.1	12.9%	7.1%
Health care and social assistance	1.4	1.1	11.6%	4.1%
Information, culture and recreation	0.4	0.5	3.6%	-2.2%
Accommodation and food services	0.3	0.4	2.8%	-4.0%
Other services	0.3	0.4	2.7%	-2.0%
Public administration	2.8	2.8	23.9%	0.2%

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey

*Based upon average annual compound growth rate from 2007 to 2012

Commercial and non-commercial services rose by 5.8 and 2.8%, respectively, between 2007 and 2012. Leading industries within commercial services were Business, building and other services, and Transportation and warehousing, which grew annually by 11% and 12% respectively between 2007 and 2012. Information, culture and recreation, and Accommodation and food services offset steady growth for the services-producing sector by 2.2% and 4% respectively over the same timeframe.

Employment by Age

Yukon

Employment grew by 1,900 from 2007 to 2012, posting an average annual growth rate of 2.1%. In the same time frame, the age group which saw the largest average annual increase in employment was those aged 55 and over. Men and women typically split the labour force evenly; in 2012, the number of employed women was slightly higher than men. The figure for youth aged 15-24 is encouraging as the number of employed reached 2,600 in 2012.

Northwest Territories

Overall, employment declined by nearly one percent in NWT between 2007 and 2012. The ratio of men to women working is generally stable, with the percentage of men working at 53%. NWT will have to attract a younger workforce in order to replace those that are nearing retirement.

Nunavut

Unlike NWT, Nunavut's employment has been increasing across all age groups and, overall, the territory has seen employment grow by 4% annually between 2007 and 2012. Major projects in mining should help to provide job opportunities for youth who generally have the most difficulty finding employment. The ratio of men to women employed in Nunavut is similar to the NWT, with men making up just over 50%.

Non-Standard Employment

Yukon

Full and part-time employment in the Yukon rose by 2.1% and 2.3% between 2007 and 2012. The recession, which affected many full-time jobs across the country, caused the loss of full-time jobs in the Yukon to fall to a lesser degree compared to other provinces.

Northwest Territories

Full-time employment in the NWT was down by over 8% during the worst of the 2008/09 recession. The territory has not fully recovered those jobs, but has seen some growth in part-time employment over the last five years. Self-employment was impacted the most from the recession and has continued to fall since 2007. The number of self-employed in 2012 fell to 1,500, which is a recent low.

Nunavut

Nunavut managed to avoid recessionary effects felt by the rest of Canada; full-time, part-time and self-employment all grew over the previous five years, with full-time employment increasing by nearly 2,000 jobs.

Labour Market Outcomes for Client Segments

Aboriginal Participation

Yukon

Yukon's Aboriginal population had a lower participation rate than the territory's non-Aboriginal population in 2006, 70.7% compared to 80.2%. Yukon's unemployment rate for Aboriginal persons was more in line with the other territories in 2006. That year, the rate for Yukon's Aboriginal population was 21.9%, compared to 6.2% for the territory's non-Aboriginal population.

Northwest Territories

There is a clear difference in the labour market activities of the NWT's Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal populations. For example, the participation rate for the Aboriginal population was a mere 65.3% in 2006. For the non-Aboriginal population, the rate was 86.5%. That same year, the unemployment rate for the territory's Aboriginal population was 20.1% in 2006, compared to 4.0% for the rest of the population.

Nunavut

Nunavut's participation rates closely mirror those of NWT's. In 2006, 59.1% of Nunavut's Aboriginal population participated in the labour market. This rate jumps to 90.4% for the non-Aboriginal population, an incredible 30% difference. That same year, Nunavut's unemployment rate for Aboriginal persons was a staggering 20.1%, compared to 3.5% for the non-Aboriginal population.

Workers with Disabilities

Yukon, Northwest Territories and Nunavut

Yukon has a significantly higher disability rate than the Northwest Territories and Nunavut. In 2006, 13.3% of Yukon residents self-identified some type of disability on their Census form. If this seems high, it is important to note that the three territories have a lower rate of disability than all four western provinces. Nationally, 14.3% of the population had some type of disability. In 2006, Nunavut had the lowest rate of disability in Canada (6.6%).

The low disability rates in Yukon, NWT and Nunavut have a lot to do with demographics. The territories have a relatively young population, with a low proportion of seniors. This alone will lower the rates of activity limitation or disability. The Participation and Activity Limitation Survey collected in 2006 is the latest data source available.

Older Workers

Yukon

Older workers, who are aged 55 and over, made up 20% of those employed in Yukon in 2012. The size of the 55 and over group is growing proportionately faster compared to younger age categories.

Northwest Territories

The number of older workers aged 55 and over employed in the NWT accounted for 17% in 2012. The 55 and over age group was the only group which grew between 2007 and 2012.

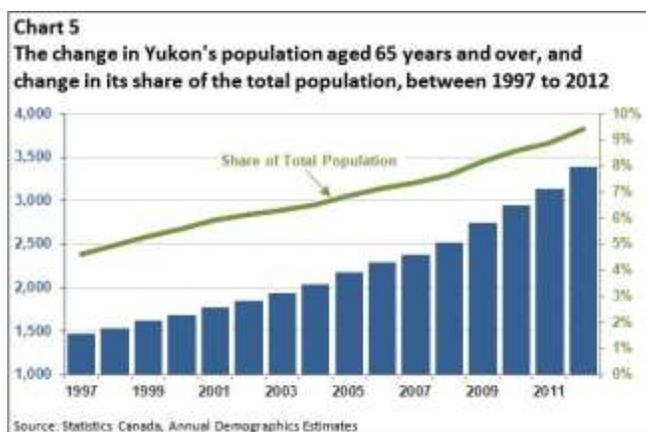
Nunavut

Although employment in all age groups increased between 2007 and 2012, those aged 55 and over saw the largest increase of 7.8%. Older workers in Nunavut are quite active in the labour market as the 2012 participation rate saw nearly 60% of those aged 55 and over either working or looking for work.

Seniors

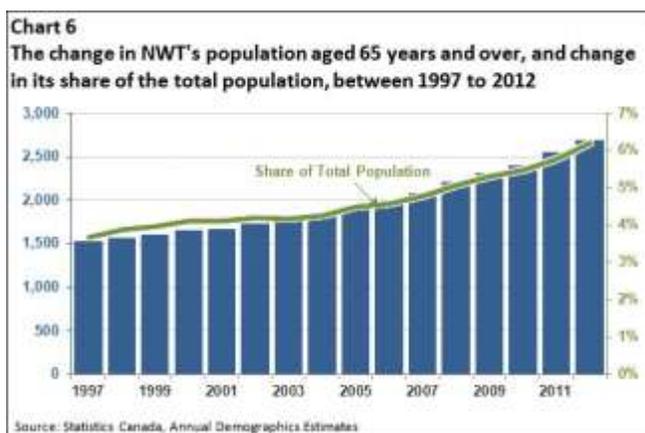
Yukon

The number of seniors aged 65 years and over steadily increased from 1,500 to 3,400 over last the 15 years. The proportion of those aged 65 and over is increasing, a similar pattern seen across Canada, and originates from the spike in birth rates experienced in the mid-20th century. A large percentage of income that seniors received in 2010 came from employment, signifying that those aged 65 and over are continuing to work into retirement. Since there continues to be a lack of a young skilled workforce, more pressure is put on the older generations to fill the employment gap.



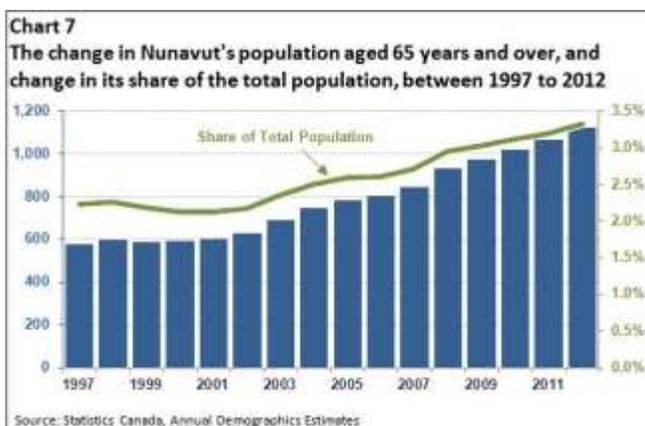
Northwest Territories

The number of seniors in NWT has steadily risen between 1997 and 2012, reaching a high of 2,700. The largest source of seniors' income comes from government transfers at 42%, while private pensions (17%) and employment income (34%) make up the next largest income sources. The contribution of seniors' income from employment is even higher than in Yukon.



Nunavut

The population aged 65 and over has not increased as quickly as in the other territories. Of the three territories, Nunavut has the highest proportion of seniors' income from employment, which reached 45% in 2010. Conversely, Nunavut also has the lowest proportion of seniors' income from private pensions.



Youth Labour Force

Yukon

Of the three territories, the Yukon has maintained the lowest overall unemployment rate, most recently posting 7% for the working-aged labour force in 2012. However, the youth unemployment rate continued to increase in 2012 from hitting a low in 2010 of 8.3%. Attracting and retaining a young workforce is challenging in the north.

Northwest Territories

The unemployment rate in NWT has been on a slow steady climb from 5.6% in 2007 to 8.3% in 2012. NWT has undergone some difficulty in the last year seeing the largest change in population in Canada and decreases in employment for a number of their key industries. Youth continue to face the most difficult time obtaining and retaining employment demonstrated by the unemployment rate continuing to inch towards 20%. Since hitting a recent low in 2009 of 48%, the participation rate has climbed to nearly 60% in 2012, meaning more youth are actively pursuing employment.

Nunavut

Nunavut's unemployment rate improved between 2011 and 2012, declining to 15.1%.

After four years of increases in the youth unemployment rate, the rate declined by an impressive 6% in 2012. The upcoming Mary River Iron Ore project will help to provide local residents with job prospects in the coming years.

Interprovincial migration

Overall, the statistics show that migration to the NWT from other provinces or territories has declined compared to 2006/07. As diamond production matures in NWT, a net out-migration to other provinces and territories where there are more employment opportunities will continue. Indeed, NWT saw the largest exodus out of the three territories in 2011/12, recording nearly 3,000 less people; nearly double that of the Yukon.

Conclusion

Although each territory is unique in its struggles and successes, overall, the territories have a lot of growth potential by tapping into their abundance of resources in minerals, diamonds, and oil and gas. Indeed, the territories are poised to see employment growth in construction, mining, and related industries.

Yukon's economy is set to increase in 2013 through investments in large-scale mining projects. These projects are expected to increase demand for labour and, as a result, employment levels in several key industries should continue to rise. One limiting factor for Yukon is the continual demographic shift towards older workers. Utilizing these large-scale projects as a tool to build a young skilled workforce could help offset this trend.

The Northwest Territories continues to face employment difficulties, still not having recovered completely from the economic downturn in 2008/09, which saw its diamond processing industry significantly reduced. New mining projects, such as the Gahcho Kué Mine, will ideally halt the large decline in jobs seen in the mining industry over the last five years and curtail the out-migration that saw nearly 3,000 people leave NWT in 2011/12.

Nunavut's economy is expected to grow despite the scaling back of the Mary River Iron Mine on Baffin Island. The employment growth seen over the last few years has been largely attributable to the Meadowbank Gold Mine which opened in 2010. This mining activity has uplifted Nunavut's employment numbers in every age group. Indeed, the number of employed is expected to continue to improve in the long-term with the construction of the Mary River and Meliadine mines.

Note: *In preparing this document, the authors have taken care to provide clients with labour market information that is timely and accurate at the time of publication. Since labour market conditions are dynamic, some of the information presented here may have changed since this document was published. Users are encouraged to also refer to other sources for additional information on the local economy and labour market. Information contained in this document does not necessarily reflect official policies of Employment and Social Development Canada.*

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Appendices

Appendix A: Glossary of Terms

Aboriginal Identity Population – Refers to individuals who reported identifying with at least one Aboriginal group, i.e. First Nations people, Métis or Inuit and/or who reported being a Treaty Indian or a Registered Indian as defined by the Indian Act of Canada and/or who reported they were members of an Indian Band or First Nation.

Average Annual Compound Growth Rate – The average year-on-year growth rate of a given indicator over a number of years. Although indicators seldom change at a constant rate, the compound annual return smoothes out figures by assuming constant change.

Employed – Persons who worked during the Labour Force Survey reference week.

Gross Domestic Product (GDP) – Refers to the total value of the goods and services produced in Canada or in a province or territory, often referred to as a global measure of economic activity.

Immigrant Population – Refers to persons residing in Canada who were born outside of Canada, excluding temporary foreign workers, Canadian citizens born outside Canada and those with student or working visas.

Labour Force – Refers to the total number of individuals 15 years of age and over who are either employed or unemployed in the week prior to a given survey such as the Labour Force Survey or the Canadian Census.

Non-Standard Employment – Refers to employment other than permanent full-time work, including part-time, temporary, and self-employment.

Older Workers – Refers to workers aged 55 and over.

Participation Rate – The labour force expressed as percentage of the population 15 years of age and over.

Seniors Population – Refers to persons aged 65 and over.

Unemployed – Refers to persons who were without work and were available for work during the Labour Force Survey reference week.

Unemployment Rate – The unemployed expressed as a percentage of the labour force.

West Texas Intermediate (WTI) Oil: A light, sweet (low sulphur) crude oil that is used as a benchmark in North American oil pricing. WTI oil sells at higher prices than heavy sour (high sulphur) crudes which yield oil products such as gasoline and jet fuel. (Source: Natural Resources Canada)

Workers with Disability – Refers to persons who self-identify as having a physical condition, a mental condition, or a health problem, that reduces the amount or the kind of activity that they are able to do. These include difficulty hearing, seeing, communicating, walking, climbing stairs, bending, learning or doing any similar activities.