



# Labour Market Bulletin

## Northwest Territories, Nunavut and Yukon

October 2021



This Labour Market Bulletin provides an analysis of Labour Force Survey results for all three of Canada's territories, including the Northwest Territories, Nunavut and Yukon.

### OVERVIEW

The combined employment numbers of Yukon, Northwest Territories (NWT) and Nunavut increased for the second consecutive month in October. The number of people employed across the three territories increased by 900 people to 58,800 in October. Employment in Northwest Territories remained constant in October, while the number of people employed in Nunavut and Yukon increased by 0.8% and 3.7% respectively.

From October 2020 to October 2021, employment in the territories rose 6.5% (+3,600). Both the goods-producing and services-producing sectors experienced employment increases over the year. Of the territories, Northwest Territories experienced the greatest annual increase in employment (+8.4%), while employment in Nunavut (+5.7%) and Yukon (+5.1%) increased more moderately over the past year.

### Northwest Territories, Nunavut and Yukon\* Monthly Labour Force Statistics

Seasonally Adjusted Data	October 2021	September 2021	October 2020	Monthly Variation		Yearly Variation	
				Number	%	Number	%
Population 15 + ('000)	92.2	91.9	91.1	0.3	0.3	1.1	1.2
Labour Force ('000)	63.6	62.8	60.5	0.8	1.3	3.1	5.1
Employment ('000)	58.8	57.9	55.2	0.9	1.6	3.6	6.5
Unemployment ('000)	4.9	4.9	5.2	0.0	0.0	-0.3	-5.8
Unemployment Rate (%)	7.7	7.8	8.6	-0.1	-	-0.9	-
Participation Rate (%)	69.0	68.3	66.4	0.7	-	2.6	-
Employment Rate (%)	63.8	63.0	60.6	0.8	-	3.2	-

\*Combined data - three month moving average

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey Table 14-10-0292-01 (formerly CANSIM 282-0100)

## Northwest Territories, Nunavut and Yukon Monthly Labour Force Statistics, by Economic Region

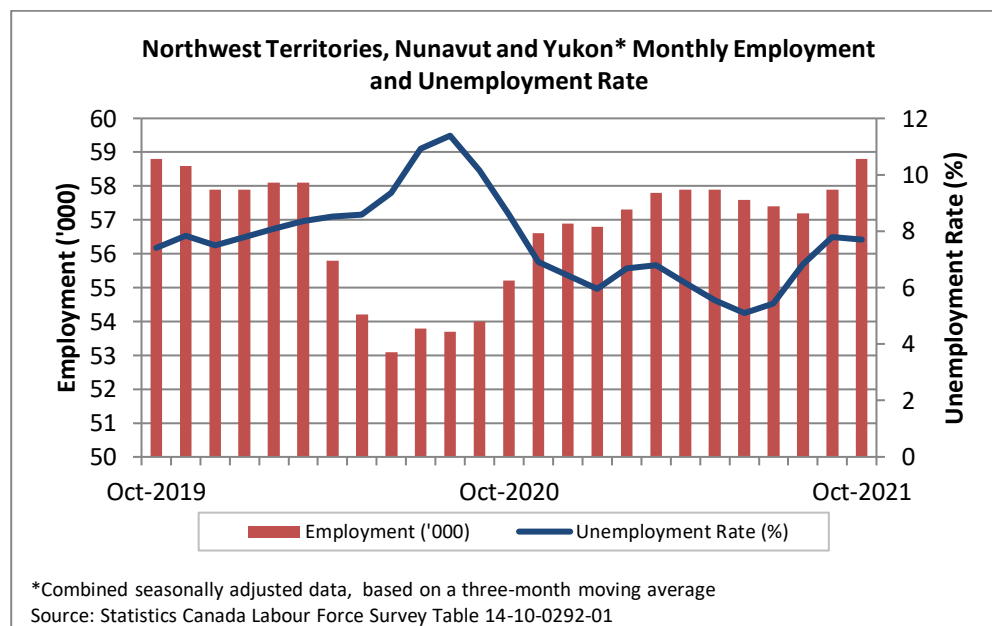
Seasonally Adjusted Data	Employment			Unemployment Rate		
	October 2021 ('000)	October 2020 ('000)	Yearly Variation (%)	October 2021 (%)	October 2020 (%)	Yearly Variation (% points)
Territories*	58.8	55.2	6.5	7.7	8.6	-0.9
Northwest Territories	23.3	21.5	8.4	4.5	8.1	-3.6
Nunavut	13.0	12.3	5.7	16.4	13.5	2.9
Yukon	22.5	21.4	5.1	5.1	6.1	-1.0

*\*Combined data - three month moving average*

*Note: Totals may not add due to rounding*

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey Table 14-10-0292-01 (formerly CANSIM 282-0100)

The unemployment rate for the three territories combined decreased slightly in October. It fell 0.1 percentage points to 7.7%. Year-over-year, the unemployment rate has declined in both Northwest Territories and Yukon by 3.6% and 1.0%, respectively. Meanwhile, Nunavut's employment rate increased 2.9 percentage points to 16.4% during the same period. Nunavut continues to have one of the highest unemployment rates in Canada: 9.7 percentage points higher than the national average of 6.5%.



The youth (15 to 24 years) unemployment rate for the three territories combined was 15.9% in October. This represents a decrease of 0.3 percentage points compared to October 2020. The unemployment rate for young women decreased 4.0 percentage points to 10.3% during the past year, while the unemployment rate for young men jumped 5.0 percentage points to 20.0%.

**Northwest Territories, Nunavut and Yukon\***  
**Monthly Unemployment Rates, by Gender and Age**

Seasonally Unadjusted Data	October 2021 (%)	October 2020 (%)	Yearly Variation (% points)
<b>Total</b>	7.4	8.4	-1.0
<b>25 years and over</b>	6.0	7.3	-1.3
Men - 25 years and over	6.0	8.6	-2.6
Women - 25 years and over	6.0	6.4	-0.4
<b>15 to 24 years</b>	15.9	16.2	-0.3
Men - 15 to 24 years	20.0	15.0	5.0
Women - 15 to 24 years	10.3	14.3	-4.0

*\*Combined data - three month moving average*

*Note: Totals may not add due to rounding*

*Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey – ESDC custom table*

## EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY

Employment in the **goods-producing sector** increased by 200 positions in October, an increase of 2.5% from October 2020. Employment losses in manufacturing were offset by gains in the mining and utilities industries.

The goods-producing sector should continue to see steady growth in the short-term as a number of new construction and mining-related projects are expected to begin shortly. For instance, the Kitikmeot Inuit Association is proceeding with its Grays Bay Road and Port project in Nunavut following a nearly two-year delay due to COVID-19 and rising construction costs.<sup>1</sup> The estimated \$550 million project includes a 227-km all-weather road and a deep-sea port at Grays Bay on Coronation Gulf.<sup>2</sup>

In Yukon, Sabre Gold Mines Corp. announced in October that it is planning to submit a new project proposal to the Yukon government. The project aims to increase gold production next year at the Brewery Creek Mine near Dawson City.<sup>3</sup> Sabre Gold also submitted a renewal application for a 10-year extension for the mine.<sup>4</sup> The mine is currently operating under an agreement with Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and about half of the staff working at the mine site are residents from the First Nation.<sup>5</sup>

In addition, the outlook for the Territories' fishing and manufacturing industries is also positive. For example, Iqaluit-based Baffin Fisheries plans to expand its fleet with the purchase of a \$72 million, 80-metre, stern trawler. The vessel will be the largest Canadian-owned fishing vessel and is expected to enter into service in 2024. The new vessel should create approximately 30 crew positions. A new mentorship program will also be developed to train engineering support, cook, factory and trawl boss positions.<sup>6</sup>

Meanwhile, construction of a new fish processing plant in Northwest Territories is currently underway. Arctic Canada Construction Ltd. was awarded the contract to build the fish plant in Hay River.<sup>7</sup> The new plant is

expected to create job opportunities such as processing, packaging, selling, and transporting positions for residents in the Hay River region. The \$12.93 million project is expected to be completed in summer 2022.<sup>8</sup>

### Northwest Territories, Nunavut and Yukon\* Monthly Labour Force Statistics, by Industry

Seasonally Unadjusted Data ('000)	October 2021	October 2020	Yearly Variation	
			Number	%
<b>Total employed, all industries</b>	59.1	55.6	3.5	6.3
<b>Goods-producing sector</b>	8.1	7.9	0.2	2.5
Agriculture	0.2	0.0	0.2	--
Forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas	2.5	2.0	0.5	25.0
Utilities	0.7	0.4	0.3	75.0
Construction	4.4	4.3	0.1	2.3
Manufacturing	0.2	0.9	-0.7	-77.8
<b>Services-producing sector</b>	51.1	47.7	3.4	7.1
Trade	6.2	6.4	-0.2	-3.1
Transportation and warehousing	2.7	2.8	-0.1	-3.6
Finance, insurance, real estate and leasing	2.1	2.6	-0.5	-19.2
Professional, scientific and technical services	2.3	2.3	0.0	0.0
Business, building and other support services	1.9	1.0	0.9	90.0
Educational service	5.9	4.5	1.4	31.1
Health care and social assistance	6.7	7.1	-0.4	-5.6
Information, culture and recreation	2.2	2.4	-0.2	-8.3
Accommodation and food services	3.0	3.0	0.0	0.0
Other services	2.2	2.0	0.2	10.0
Public administration	15.5	13.5	2.0	14.8

\*Combined data - three month moving average

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey - ESDC custom table

Employment also increased in the **services-producing sector** in October. It increased 7.1% (+3,400) to 51,100 positions from October 2020 to October 2021. The largest gains were in business, building and other support services, educational services and public administration.

The employment outlook for the services sector is optimistic in the near-term. Funding from all levels of government for health care, education and tourism-related initiatives should create new employment opportunities. For instance, in 2021, the federal and Northwest Territories governments provided an additional \$1.44 million for tourism operators and tourism-related businesses to support their recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. The NWT Tourism Restart Investment Program will provide eligible applicants financial support to help improve infrastructure, training, recruiting and marketing activities.<sup>9</sup>

In Yukon, the federal and Yukon governments are providing \$800,000 to early learning and childcare program operators and educators. The funds will be used to enhance culturally appropriate learning programs and francophone language development programs. To accommodate this programming, additional staff may be required depending on community needs.<sup>10</sup>

The federal government also invested \$10 million to support early learning and childcare programs in Nunavut. This funding is expected to create more childcare spaces across the territory and increase training and professional development opportunities for early childhood educators. Moreover, the federal government pledged a one-time transfer of \$2.8 million for 2021-2022 to support Nunavut's early childhood educator recruitment and retention efforts, particularly in remote communities.<sup>11</sup>

**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.

**Prepared by:** Labour Market Information (LMI) Directorate, Service Canada, Northwest Territories, Nunavut and Yukon

**For further information,** please contact the LMI team at: [http://www.esdc.gc.ca/cqi-bin/contact/edsc-esdc/eng/contact\\_us.aspx?section=lmi](http://www.esdc.gc.ca/cqi-bin/contact/edsc-esdc/eng/contact_us.aspx?section=lmi)

**For information on the Labour Force Survey,** please visit the Statistics Canada Web site at: [www.statcan.gc.ca](http://www.statcan.gc.ca)

© Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada as represented by Employment and Social Development Canada, 2021, all rights reserved

---

<sup>1</sup> CBC News, Arctic coast road, deep sea port project back in motion with \$7.25M loan agreement, October 19, 2021.  
<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/kitikmeot-inuit-association-arctic-coast-road-port-1.6212100>

<sup>2</sup> Nunatsiaq News, Grays Bay Road and Port Project “stalled,” says Kitikmeot Inuit Association, October 8, 2020.  
<https://nunatsiaq.com/stories/article/grays-bay-road-and-port-project-stalled-says-kitikmeot-inuit-association/>

<sup>3</sup> Sabre Gold Mines Corp., Sabre Gold – Copperstone & Brewery Creek Project Update, October 13, 2021.  
<https://www.globenewswire.com/fr/news-release/2021/10/13/2313387/0/en/Sabre-Gold-Copperstone-Brewery-Creek-Project-Update.html>

<sup>4</sup> Financial Post, Tr’ondëk Hwëch’in Provides Support To Golden Predator for Brewery Creek Mine License Renewals, April 28, 2021.  
<https://financialpost.com/globe-newswire/trondek-hwechin-provides-support-to-golden-predator-for-brewery-creek-mine-license-renewals>

<sup>5</sup> Whitehorse Daily Star, Mining production could resume in 18 months, July 3, 2019.  
<https://www.whitehorsestar.com/News/mining-production-could-resume-in-18-months>

<sup>6</sup> Nunatsiaq News, Baffin Fisheries buying \$72M fishing vessel, October 29, 2021.  
<https://nunatsiaq.com/stories/article/baffin-fisheries-buying-72m-fishing-vessel/>

<sup>7</sup> NNSL Media, Small business week: Flat out at Home Building Centre in Hay river, October 18, 2021.  
<https://www.nnsl.com/business/small-business-week-flat-out-at-home-building-centre-in-hay-river/>

<sup>8</sup> Government of Northwest Territories, Hay River Companies Chosen to Build New Fish Plant, May 10, 2021.  
<https://www.gov.nt.ca/en/newsroom/hay-river-companies-chosen-build-new-fish-plant>

<sup>9</sup> Government of Northwest Territories, GNWT announces additional support funding for tourism businesses, September 22, 2021.  
<https://www.gov.nt.ca/en/newsroom/gnwt-announces-additional-support-funding-tourism-businesses>

<sup>10</sup> Government of Yukon, Enhanced early learning offers Yukon children deeper foundations for educational success, October 18, 2021.  
<https://yukon.ca/en/news/enhanced-early-learning-offers-yukon-children-deeper-foundations-educational-success>

<sup>11</sup> Nunatsiaq News, Early learning and childcare funding extended to 2025, September 29, 2021.  
<https://nunatsiaq.com/stories/article/early-learning-and-childcare-funding-extended-to-2025/>