



Labour Market Bulletin

Northwest Territories, Nunavut and Yukon



July 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 of Yukon, Northwest Territories and Nunavut decreased for a second consecutive month in July. The number of people employed in the Territories fell 0.3% from June to 57,400. Employment levels in Nunavut and Yukon were lower on the month, while employment in Northwest Territories increased slightly.

On a year-over-year basis, employment in the Territories is up 6.7% (+3,600). The number of people employed was up significantly in Northwest Territories (+13.9%), while employment in Yukon (+2.4%) and Nunavut (+1.7%) increased more moderately. These employment gains were largely due to more businesses reopening and employers recalling staff back to work as governments loosen COVID-19 restrictions.

Northwest Territories, Nunavut and Yukon* Monthly Labour Force Statistics

Seasonally Adjusted Data	July 2021	June 2021	July 2020	Monthly Variation		Yearly Variation	
				Number	%	Number	%
Population 15 + ('000)	91.7	91.5	90.8	0.2	0.2	0.9	1.0
Labour Force ('000)	60.7	60.8	60.4	-0.1	-0.2	0.3	0.5
Employment ('000)	57.4	57.6	53.8	-0.2	-0.3	3.6	6.7
Unemployment ('000)	3.3	3.1	6.6	0.2	6.5	-3.3	-50.0
Unemployment Rate (%)	5.4	5.1	10.9	0.3	-	-5.5	-
Participation Rate (%)	66.2	66.4	66.5	-0.2	-	-0.3	-
Employment Rate (%)	62.6	63.0	59.3	-0.4	-	3.3	-

*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

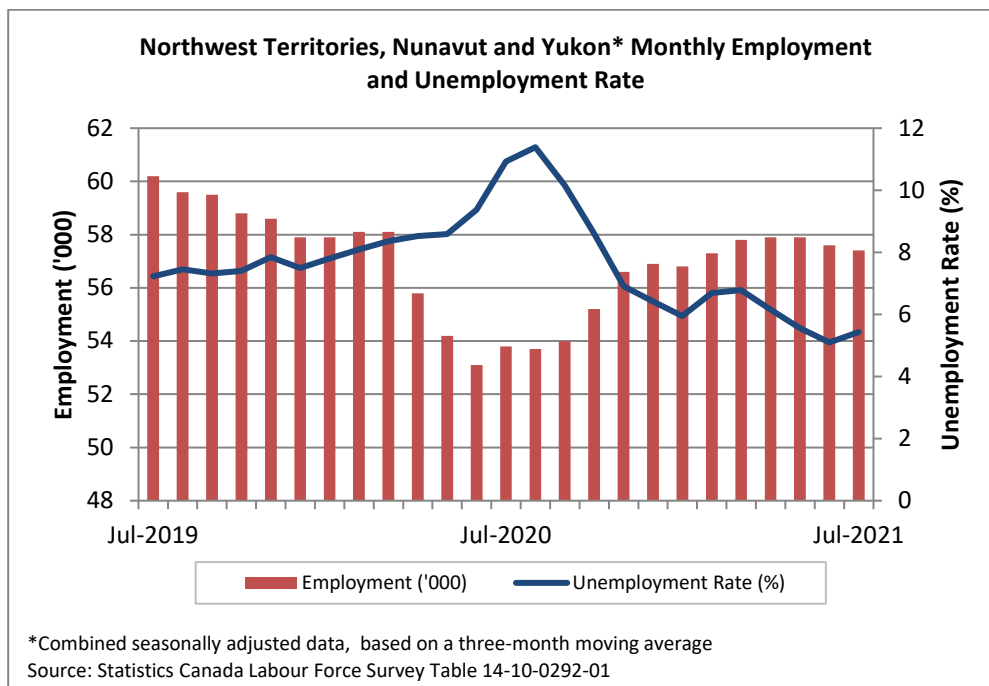
Seasonally Adjusted Data	Employment			Unemployment Rate		
	July 2021 ('000)	July 2020 ('000)	Yearly Variation (%)	July 2021 (%)	July 2020 (%)	Yearly Variation (% points)
Territories*	57.4	53.8	6.7	5.4	10.9	-5.5
Northwest Territories	23.8	20.9	13.9	4.4	9.9	-5.5
Nunavut	12.0	11.8	1.7	5.9	17.9	-12.0
Yukon	21.6	21.1	2.4	6.1	7.5	-1.4

*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 combined Territories increased 0.3 percentage points to 5.4% from June to July. On an annual basis, Nunavut posted the most significant decline, with its unemployment rate falling 12.0 percentage points to 5.9%. However, the drop in Nunavut’s unemployment rate was driven by a significant decline in the labour force. Meanwhile, both Yukon and Northwest Territories saw a decrease in their unemployment rate over the year, falling to 6.1% and 4.4% respectively. Northwest Territories has the lowest unemployment rate in the country, well below the national rate of 7.5%



The youth (15 to 24 years) unemployment rate for the combined Territories was 8.9% in July, representing a decrease of 18.3 percentage points from the same time last year. The unemployment rate for young men dropped significantly over the year, down 22.0 percentage points to 9.8%. Meanwhile, the unemployment rate for young women fell 13.9 percentage points to 7.7%.

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

Seasonally Unadjusted Data	July 2021 (%)	July 2020 (%)	Yearly Variation (% points)
Total	5.2	10.6	-5.4
25 years and over	4.6	8.1	-3.5
Men - 25 years and over	5.5	7.7	-2.2
Women - 25 years and over	3.8	8.5	-4.7
15 to 24 years	8.9	27.2	-18.3
Men - 15 to 24 years	9.8	31.8	-22.0
Women - 15 to 24 years	7.7	21.6	-13.9

*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** is down 7.4% on an annual basis, meaning 600 fewer people were employed in this sector in July compared to a year ago. The largest declines were in forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas, and manufacturing.

The COVID-19 pandemic has negatively affected the goods-producing sector across the North, particularly the mining industry. However, the industry should see improvement over the next two years as all major mines have restarted operations and recalled their staff back to work. For instance, Baffinland Iron Mines Corp. is bringing over 200 Nunavut workers back to work at its Mary River Mine for the first time since March 2020. The company sent workers home at the onset of the pandemic to reduce the risk of COVID-19 spreading to communities.¹

Meanwhile, Vancouver-based North Arrow Minerals is resuming diamond exploration at its Naujaat property in Nunavut this summer after a year delay in operations due to the pandemic. The company has hired 25 Naujaatmiut to work on the project, which is scheduled to run until the end of this summer.²

Looking ahead, the goods-producing sector should see some growth in the short-term as a number of new construction and mining-related projects are expected to begin in the next few years. For example, work on the \$1 billion Giant Mine Remediation project has begun near Yellowknife.³ The project is expected to create several hundred jobs over the next two years. The remediation will take approximately ten years to complete.⁴

Agnico Eagle Mines Limited is entering a business partnership to bring wind power to its Hope Bay mining project. Hiqiniq Energy Corp. and Tugliq Energy Corp. have agreed to build and operate a wind turbine at the mine located in Nunavut's Kitikmeot region. The project will help reduce greenhouse emissions and energy costs for Hope Bay and surrounding communities. Currently, all of Agnico Eagle's mines in Nunavut are entirely dependent on diesel.⁵

Also, the federal and the Northwest Territories governments are providing a total \$60 million in funding to build a new 170km hydroelectric transmission line connecting Fort Providence and Kakisa to the Taltson hydropower transmission system south of Hay River. The new transmission line is anticipated to reduce diesel-generated electricity and provide reliable and efficient renewable energy for communities in the region.⁶

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

Seasonally Unadjusted Data ('000)	July 2021	July 2020	Yearly Variation	
			Number	%
Total employed, all industries	58.6	54.8	3.8	6.9
Goods-producing sector	7.5	8.1	-0.6	-7.4
Agriculture	0.0	0.0	0.0	--
Forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas	1.8	2.1	-0.3	-14.3
Utilities	0.8	0.7	0.1	14.3
Construction	4.0	4.2	-0.2	-4.8
Manufacturing	0.4	1.0	-0.6	-60.0
Services-producing sector	51.2	46.7	4.5	9.6
Trade	6.6	6.8	-0.2	-2.9
Transportation and warehousing	2.8	3.1	-0.3	-9.7
Finance, insurance, real estate and leasing	2.4	2.0	0.4	20.0
Professional, scientific and technical services	2.4	2.4	0.0	0.0
Business, building and other support services	1.2	0.9	0.3	33.3
Educational services	5.1	4.0	1.1	27.5
Health care and social assistance	8.1	7.2	0.9	12.5
Information, culture and recreation	1.7	2.1	-0.4	-19.0
Accommodation and food services	3.1	2.2	0.9	40.9
Other services	2.1	1.6	0.5	31.3
Public administration	15.5	14.5	1.0	6.9

*Combined data - three month moving average

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey - ESDC custom table

Employment climbed higher in the **services-producing sector** – increasing 9.6% (+4,500) from July 2020. Employment growth in the services-sector was driven by gains in several large industry groups including educational services, public administration, and health care and social assistance.

The employment outlook for the services-producing sector is positive over the short-term as funding from all levels of government for health care and education initiatives will help to support growth. For example, the federal government is providing the Nunavut government with \$3.1 million to improve and expand the delivery of virtual health care services in the territory. The Nunavut government is responsible for the design and delivery of the services and funding will also go towards staff training and salaries.⁷

In the Northwest Territories, the federal government has earmarked \$8 million in funding over two years to support the transition of Aurora College into a polytechnic university. The transformation will benefit residents in the territory, especially youth and Indigenous peoples, by increasing access to more degree programs along

with applied training for students to obtain skills needed in the workforce. The transition is anticipated to be complete by 2026.⁸

In addition, the Northwest Territories government is accepting applications for its Addictions Recovery and Aftercare Fund, which provides funding to Indigenous Governments and community groups to hire addictions counsellors. These counsellors will support people living in recovery from addictions and provide aftercare programming. This funding is one of many initiatives the territorial government is providing to increase the number and variety of community-based mental wellness and addictions recovery programs.⁹

Meanwhile, in Yukon, the federal government is pledging \$42 million to create 110 new regulated early learning and childcare spaces within the next five years across the territory. The funds will also go toward training and career development for staff, as well as raising the minimum wage to just under \$30 per hour for fully qualified early childhood educators.¹⁰

***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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For information on the Labour Force Survey, please visit the Statistics Canada Web site at: www.statcan.gc.ca

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¹ Nunatsiaq News, Nunavut workers allowed back to Mary River mine, July 15, 2021.

<https://nunatsiaq.com/stories/article/nunavut-workers-allowed-back-to-mary-river-mine/>

² Nunavut News, Diamond exploration resumes in Naujaat, July 16, 2021.

<https://www.nunavutnews.com/news/diamond-exploration-resumes-in-naujaat/>

³ 100.1 True North news, Giant Mine remediation work starting Monday, July 9, 2021.

<https://www.mytruenorthnow.com/56485/giant-mine-remediation-work-starting-monday/>

⁴ Cabin Radio, After more than a decade, full remediation of Giant Mine begins, July 9, 2021.

<https://cabinradio.ca/67338/news/yellowknife/after-more-than-a-decade-full-remediation-of-giant-mine-begins/>

⁵ Nunatsiaq News, Agnico Eagle looks to tap wind power at Hope Bay mine site, July 29, 2021.

<https://nunatsiaq.com/stories/article/agnico-eagle-looks-to-tap-wind-power-at-hope-bay-mine-site/>

⁶ Government of Canada, Canada and the Northwest Territories invest in more reliable and efficient energy generation in Fort Providence and Kakisa. July 16, 2021.

<https://www.canada.ca/en/office-infrastructure/news/2021/07/canada-and-the-northwest-territories-invest-in-more-reliable-and-efficient-energy-generation-in-fort-providence-and-kakisa.html>

⁷ Nunavut News, feds to spend \$3.1M on virtual health care for Nunavummiut, July 27, 2021.

<https://nunatsiaq.com/stories/article/feds-to-spend-3-1m-on-virtual-health-care-for-nunavummiut/>

⁸ CBC News, N.W.T.'s Aurora College receiving \$8 million boost to transition into polytechnic university, July 13, 2021.

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/aurora-college-funding-transition-polytechnic-university-1.6100707>

⁹ Government of Northwest Territories, Addictions Recovery and Aftercare Fund, July 21, 2021.

<https://www.gov.nt.ca/en/newsroom/addictions-recovery-and-aftercare-fund>

¹⁰ Yukon News, Feds contribute \$42 million toward affordable, improved childcare, July 28, 2021.

<https://www.yukon-news.com/news/feds-contribute-42-million-toward-affordable-improved-childcare/>