



# Labour Market Bulletin

## Northwest Territories, Nunavut and Yukon



August 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

There were 57,200 people working in Yukon, Northwest Territories (NWT) and Nunavut in August 2021, a slight decrease of 200 (-0.3%) from July. Employment gains in Nunavut were offset by declines in Yukon and Northwest Territories.

Employment in the Territories was up 3,500 (+6.5%) from August 2020, and it was within 900 (-1.5%) of the pre-pandemic employment in February 2020.

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

Seasonally Adjusted Data	August 2021	July 2021	August 2020	Monthly Variation		Yearly Variation	
				Number	%	Number	%
Population 15 + ('000)	91.8	91.7	91.0	0.1	0.1	0.8	0.9
Labour Force ('000)	61.6	60.7	60.6	0.9	1.5	1.0	1.7
Employment ('000)	57.2	57.4	53.7	-0.2	-0.3	3.5	6.5
Unemployment ('000)	4.2	3.3	6.9	0.9	27.3	-2.7	-39.1
Unemployment Rate (%)	6.8	5.4	11.4	1.4	-	-4.6	-
Participation Rate (%)	67.1	66.2	66.6	0.9	-	0.5	-
Employment Rate (%)	62.3	62.6	59.0	-0.3	-	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**

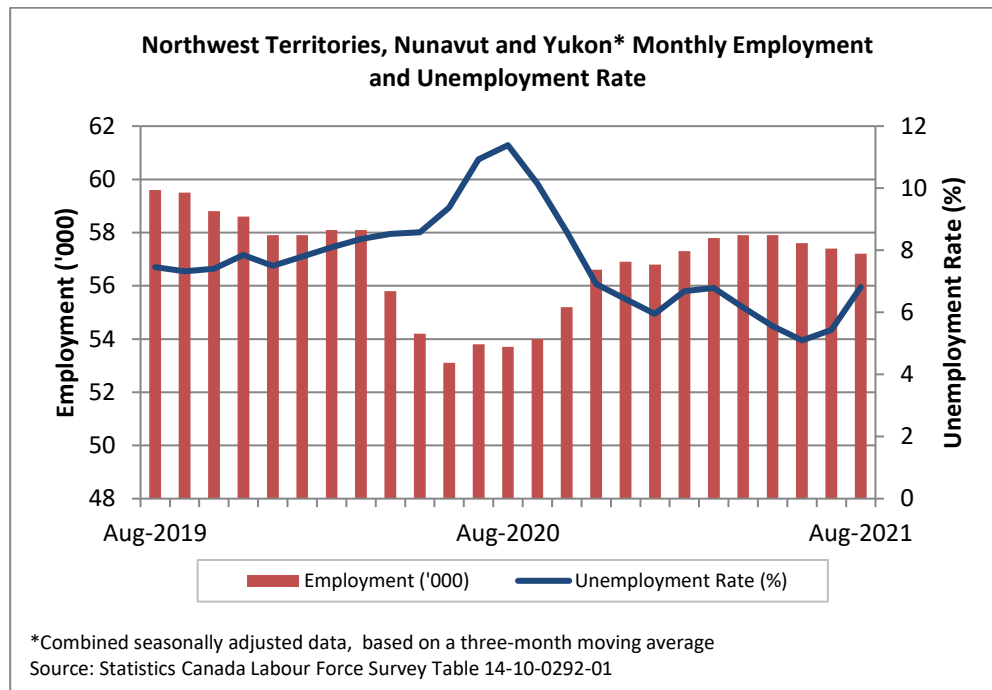
Seasonally Adjusted Data	Employment			Unemployment Rate		
	August 2021 ('000)	August 2020 ('000)	Yearly Variation (%)	August 2021 (%)	August 2020 (%)	Yearly Variation (% points)
<b>Territories*</b>	57.2	53.7	6.5	6.8	11.4	-4.6
<b>Northwest Territories</b>	23.6	20.6	14.6	4.8	11.2	-6.4
<b>Nunavut</b>	12.1	12.1	0.0	12.4	16.4	-4.0
<b>Yukon</b>	21.5	21.0	2.4	5.7	8.3	-2.6

\*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 fell from 11.4% one year ago to 6.8% in August 2021. Year-over-year, all three territories saw a decrease in the unemployment rate. The Northwest Territories posted the largest annual decline, with its unemployment rate falling 6.4 percentage points to 4.8% – the lowest rate across the country. Meanwhile, the unemployment rates in Yukon and Nunavut fell to 5.7% and 12.4% respectively.



For the combined Territories, the unemployment rate for **youth** (15 to 24 years) dropped considerably on an annual basis, down 11 percentage points to 10.8% in August. The unemployment rate for young men fell 12 percentage points to 13% over the year. Meanwhile, the unemployment rate for young women also fell significantly during the same period, down 12.6 percentage points to 5.3% – the lowest rate on record.

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

Seasonally Unadjusted Data	August 2021 (%)	August 2020(%)	Yearly Variation (% points)
<b>Total</b>	6.6	10.8	-4.2
<b>25 years and over</b>	6.0	9.2	-3.2
Men - 25 years and over	7.1	9.1	-2.0
Women - 25 years and over	4.9	9.2	-4.3
<b>15 to 24 years</b>	10.8	21.8	-11.0
Men - 15 to 24 years	13.0	25.0	-12.0
Women - 15 to 24 years	5.3	17.9	-12.6

\*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

There were approximately 7,900 people employed in the **goods-producing sector** in August, down 700 (-8.1%) from one year ago. Employment gains in utilities were offset by losses in construction and manufacturing.

Despite these employment losses, the outlook for the goods-producing sector should improve over the near-term as large-scale infrastructure and mining remediation projects will help to create plenty of job opportunities across the North. For instance, the Government of Canada is providing \$41.7 million for the construction of the Nunavut Recovery Centre located in Iqaluit, which will offer treatment for substance use and trauma. Construction of the new facility is expected to start next summer and will take two years to complete.<sup>1</sup>

The federal and Yukon governments are also providing a total of \$54.8 million in funding to 14 community infrastructure projects across Yukon. These projects include upgrades to roadways, recreation spaces, and water and sewer systems.<sup>2</sup> Meanwhile, the Yukon government has awarded a \$42.8 million contract to Whitehorse-based Ketz Construction Corporation to design and build a new elementary school in Whistle Bend. The new school is expected to be completed for the 2023-2024 school year.<sup>3</sup>

In Northwest Territories, the federal government and the Yellowknives Dene First Nation (YKDFN) have signed a Community Benefits Agreement for the remediation of the former Giant Mine. The agreement promises up to \$20 million over 10 years and includes jobs for YKDFN members in the remediation project. The funding is also expected to help support community-based training and monitoring of the site.<sup>4</sup>

Furthermore, the federal and Northwest Territories governments recently earmarked over \$25.3 million toward 15 community infrastructure projects across the territory. These projects include upgrades to the Tuktoyaktuk's water treatment plant and construction of a new Dene cultural centre for central gathering place for residents and visitors in NWT.<sup>5</sup>

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

Seasonally Unadjusted Data ('000)	August 2021	August 2020	Yearly Variation	
			Number	%
<b>Total employed, all industries</b>	58.9	55.3	3.6	6.5
<b>Goods-producing sector</b>	7.9	8.6	-0.7	-8.1
Agriculture	0.0	0.0	0.0	--
Forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas	2.2	2.2	0.0	0.0
Utilities	0.9	0.7	0.2	28.6
Construction	4.1	4.7	-0.6	-12.8
Manufacturing	0.4	0.9	-0.5	-55.6
<b>Services-producing sector</b>	51.1	46.7	4.4	9.4
Trade	7.2	6.7	0.5	7.5
Transportation and warehousing	2.8	3.1	-0.3	-9.7
Finance, insurance, real estate and leasing	2.3	2.2	0.1	4.5
Professional, scientific and technical services	2.5	2.5	0.0	0.0
Business, building and other support services	1.3	1.0	0.3	30.0
Educational services	4.4	4.0	0.4	10.0
Health care and social assistance	7.8	7.2	0.6	8.3
Information, culture and recreation	1.9	2.2	-0.3	-13.6
Accommodation and food services	3.1	1.9	1.2	63.2
Other services	1.9	1.5	0.4	26.7
Public administration	15.9	14.3	1.6	11.2

\*Combined data - three month moving average

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey - ESDC custom table

The **service-producing sector** gained ground in August, with employment reaching 51,100, an increase of 4,400 (+9.4%) from one year ago. Several large industry groups, including public administration, accommodation and food services, and health care and social assistance had the largest year-over-year job growth.

The services sector should continue to see steady growth over the short-term as funding from all levels of government for health care and education initiatives will help to create employment opportunities. For example, the Government of Yukon will open the territory's first supervised consumption site in Whitehorse in late September. The facility has hired fully trained staff specialized in harm and overdose preventions. The territorial government is also partnering with Blood Ties Four Directions Centre to operate management and programming at the site.<sup>6</sup>

Meanwhile, the federal and Nunavut governments are extending the Canada-Nunavut Early Learning and Child Care Agreement. The federal government will contribute \$10 million over four years toward early learning and childcare programs and services in the territory. In addition, another investment of \$2.8 million will be provided to the territory aims to support early childhood educator recruitment and retention efforts.<sup>7</sup>

The federal government is also pledging \$1.6 million to an Indigenous-led organization, Iliqaqiniq-Nunavut Literacy Council, for its Youth Employment and Skills Strategy (YESS) initiative. The project is anticipated to

provide workplace skills training to 72 youth across the Territories. In Nunavut, the participation rate of Indigenous youth reached a low point of 21.6% in May 2021 compared to 48.6% in September 2020. However, non-Indigenous youth in the territory experienced a much steadier participation rate of 76.9% in September 2020 compared to 75.1% in May this year.<sup>8</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.

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

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<sup>1</sup> CBC News, Funding finalized for Nunavut’s new addiction and trauma treatment centre, August 13, 2021.  
<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/igaluit-treatment-centre-1.6140467>

<sup>2</sup> Government of Yukon news, Residents of the Yukon to benefit from improvements to community infrastructure, August 4, 2021. <https://yukon.ca/en/news/residents-yukon-benefit-improvements-community-infrastructure>

<sup>3</sup> Government of Yukon news, Construction contract awarded for Whistle Bend elementary school, August 4, 2021.  
<https://yukon.ca/en/news/construction-contract-awarded-whistle-bend-elementary-school>

<sup>4</sup> CBC News, Yellowknives Dene and federal government sign 3 agreements on Giant Mine apology and compensation, August 13, 2021. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/three-new-giant-mine-agreements-1.6141054>

<sup>5</sup> Government of Canada news, Investing in improved community and cultural infrastructure across the Northwest Territories, August 5, 2021.  
<https://www.canada.ca/en/office-infrastructure/news/2021/08/investing-in-improved-community-and-cultural-infrastructure-across-the-northwest-territories.html>

<sup>6</sup> CBC News, Opening postponed for Yukon's 1st supervised consumption site, August 31, 2021.  
<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/yukons-supervised-consumption-site-opening-postponed-1.6159076>

<sup>7</sup> Government of Canada news, The Government of Canada and the Government of Nunavut announce extension of support for quality early learning and child care across the territory, August 13, 2021.  
<https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/news/2021/08/elcc-nr-nunavut.html>

<sup>8</sup> Government of Canada, Providing support to 72 young northern Canadians, August 10, 2021.  
<https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/news/2021/08/providing-support-to-72-young-northern-canadians.html>