



Labour Market Bulletin

Northwest Territories, Nunavut and Yukon



May 2022

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 (NWT) and Nunavut trended downward for a third consecutive month in May 2022. The number of people employed in the Territories in May dropped 1.1% (-700) to 62,300 compared to April. Employment gains in Northwest Territories in May (+1.6%) were offset by losses in Nunavut (-5.4%) and Yukon (-1.3%).

Despite monthly losses in combined employment in the territories, from May 2021 to May 2022, overall employment in the territories rose 7.8% (+4,500). Both the goods-producing and services-producing sectors experienced employment increases during the twelve-month period. Nunavut experienced the greatest annual increase in employment (+17.6%) of the territories. Employment in Northwest Territories (+6.3%) and Yukon (+4.1%) increased more moderately during the twelve-month period.

Northwest Territories, Nunavut and Yukon* Monthly Labour Force Statistics

Seasonally Adjusted Data	May 2022	April 2022	May 2021	Monthly Variation		Yearly Variation	
				Number	%	Number	%
Population 15 + ('000)	93.2	93.0	91.5	0.2	0.2	1.7	1.9
Labour Force ('000)	67.2	67.2	61.1	0.0	0.0	6.1	10.0
Employment ('000)	62.3	63.0	57.8	-0.7	-1.1	4.5	7.8
Unemployment ('000)	4.8	4.2	3.4	0.6	14.3	1.4	41.2
Unemployment Rate (%)	7.1	6.3	5.6	0.8	-	1.5	-
Participation Rate (%)	72.1	72.3	66.8	-0.2	-	5.3	-
Employment Rate (%)	66.8	67.7	63.2	-0.9	-	3.6	-

*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)

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

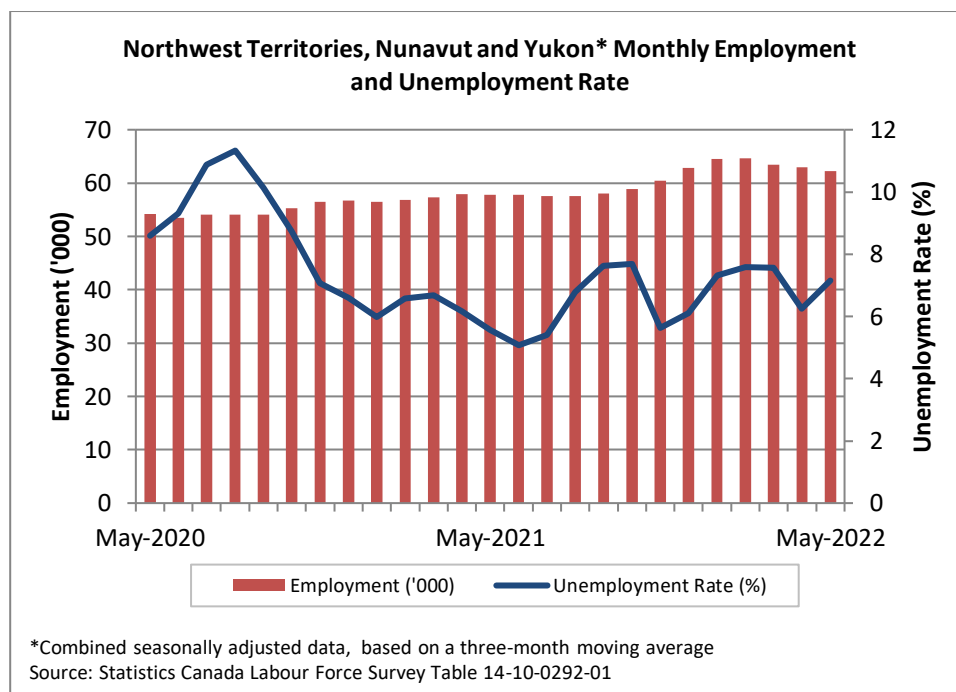
Seasonally Adjusted Data	Employment			Unemployment Rate		
	May 2022 ('000)	May 2021 ('000)	Yearly Variation (%)	May 2022 (%)	May 2021 (%)	Yearly Variation (% points)
Territories*	62.3	57.8	7.8	7.1	5.6	1.5
Northwest Territories	25.4	23.9	6.3	5.6	4.4	1.2
Nunavut	14.0	11.9	17.6	12.8	5.4	7.4
Yukon	22.9	22.0	4.1	5.4	6.8	-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 to 7.1% in May 2022, up 1.5 percentage points compared to May 2021. Year-over-year, Yukon was the only territory that experienced a decrease in its unemployment rate, falling 1.4 percentage points to 5.4% in May 2022. In contrast, the Northwest Territories' unemployment rate climbed 1.2 percentage points to 5.6%. The unemployment rate in Nunavut increased 7.4 percentage points to 12.8%. Nunavut continues to have one of the highest unemployment rates in Canada: 7.7 percentage points higher than the national average of 5.1%.



The youth (15 to 24 years) unemployment rate for the combined territories was 10.0% in May 2022, a decrease of 3.2 percentage points compared to May 2021. The unemployment rate for young men decreased 3.8 percentage points to 11.4% from May 2021 to May 2022, while the unemployment rate for young women decreased 2.7 percentage points to 8.7%.

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

Seasonally Unadjusted Data	May 2022 (%)	May 2021 (%)	Yearly Variation (% points)
Total	7.4	5.7	1.7
25 years and over	7.0	4.8	2.2
Men - 25 years and over	8.5	5.2	3.3
Women - 25 years and over	5.4	4.4	1.0
15 to 24 years	10.0	13.2	-3.2
Men - 15 to 24 years	11.4	15.2	-3.8
Women - 15 to 24 years	8.7	11.4	-2.7

*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** was up by 900 in May 2022, an increase of 13.2% compared to the same time last year. The forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, and oil and gas, and the construction industries experienced substantial employment growth over the twelve-month period, up 27.8% and 14.3%, respectively. Employment growth in these industries has been driven by mining exploration and public infrastructure projects across the North in 2021 and 2022.¹

The goods-producing sector should continue to see steady growth over the short-term. Many public infrastructure projects will help to generate new employment opportunities. For instance, the Government of Yukon is planning to replace the 70-year-old École Whitehorse Elementary School. The estimated \$48 million new school will include outdoor learning spaces and new technology. Construction is expected to begin in the fall of 2023.²

The Yukon government also awarded \$160 million to Graham Infrastructure LP to replace the Nisutlin Bay Bridge.³ According to the territorial government, the bridge replacement project is one of the largest capital projects in Yukon history. The new bridge is expected to accommodate increased traffic volumes and will allow larger loads of commercial goods to supply Yukon and Alaska from the rest of Canada. The project is anticipated to begin in June and to be completed in 2026.⁴ About 45 workers will be required to live in the community of Teslin during the construction phase.⁵

In Nunavut, the Pitquhirnikkut Ilihautiniq/Kitikmeot Heritage Society, with support from the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency, is building a new \$1.7 million cultural centre in Cambridge Bay. The new building will use new technologies and materials to increase energy efficiency and reduce emissions. The structure will be built on-site this summer.⁶

The Northwest Territories government and Gahcho Kué Mine are sharing the costs of building a new bridge at the Redknife River crossing on the Mackenzie Highway.⁷ The bridge is expected to help restore fish passage for

migratory species due to the construction of the mine. Gahcho Kué is contributing \$9.5 million and the territorial government will provide the remaining funding. The project is expected to begin in 2023 and to take three years to complete.⁸

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

Seasonally Unadjusted Data ('000)	May 2022	May 2021	Yearly Variation	
			Number	%
Total employed, all industries	62.4	57.4	5.0	8.7
Goods-producing sector	7.7	6.8	0.9	13.2
Agriculture	0.0	0.0	0.0	-
Forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas	2.3	1.8	0.5	27.8
Utilities	0.6	0.7	-0.1	-14.3
Construction	4.0	3.5	0.5	14.3
Manufacturing	0.6	0.5	0.1	20.0
Services-producing sector	54.6	50.5	4.1	8.1
Trade	6.5	6.5	0.0	0.0
Transportation and warehousing	3.7	3.3	0.4	12.1
Finance, insurance, real estate and leasing	2.0	2.1	-0.1	-4.8
Professional, scientific and technical services	2.2	2.4	-0.2	-8.3
Business, building and other support services	1.7	1.4	0.3	21.4
Educational services	6.8	5.3	1.5	28.3
Health care and social assistance	8.9	7.9	1.0	12.7
Information, culture and recreation	3.2	1.5	1.7	113.3
Accommodation and food services	2.8	3.1	-0.3	-9.7
Other services	1.9	1.9	0.0	0.0
Public administration	14.9	15.2	-0.3	-2.0

*Combined data - three month moving average

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey - ESDC custom table

From May 2021 to May 2022, employment in the **services-producing sector** in the combined territories increased by 8.1% (+4,100) to 54,600. Employment growth in the services-sector has been driven by employment gains in several large industry groups including health care and social assistance, educational services and information, and culture and recreation. Gains in the information, culture and recreation industry were primarily the result of the removal or reduction of COVID-19 related restrictions.

The employment outlook for the services-producing sector is positive over the short-term. Funding from all levels of government for health care and social assistance and education initiatives will help to support growth. The Government of Northwest Territories, for example, has developed a new human resources plan to recruit and retain health care and social services workers. The three-year plan includes professional development, academic support, bursaries, and mentorship.⁹

In Nunavut, The Canadian Institutes of Health Research is providing approximately \$1.7 million over four years to the project Inuit Youth Develop a Virtual Qaqqiq: Using Technology and Cultural Knowledge to Support

Resilience Outside the (Digital) Box.¹⁰ Led by Inuit communities, the project aims to improve the mental health of Inuit youth across Nunavut through virtual resources and tools.¹¹

In Yukon, the territorial government, in partnership with Yukon University and ComIT, will host a training program for Yukon First Nations students. The free program offers coding training and an opportunity to gain a technology position after graduation. A multi-level partnership has also been established with Yukon First Nations, industry, academia and government departments to promote and recruit for this training.¹²

Turning to other industries, the tourism sector is gradually recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic across the North. The federal and three territorial governments have reserved funding to support tourism-related businesses across the Territories. For example, the federal government is providing nearly \$1 million in funding to two Northwest Territories tourism projects. These include a marketing campaign to promote travel from Alberta and a two-year project to grow the tourism sector in Tuktoyaktuk.¹³

The federal government also pledged \$1 million for four projects that aim to support Nunavut's tourism industry. These projects include infrastructure upgrades in Pond Inlet, new safety equipment for Arctic Bay and Cambridge Bay to meet pandemic-related regulations, and equipment to support small scale freighting and tourism charters in the Kivalliq. The projects will create 25 part-time jobs and support five existing jobs.¹⁴

The federal and Yukon governments are also providing \$1.95 million to the Yukon Elevate Tourism Program. The funding will be used to support tourism owners and operators to adapt and grow beyond the pandemic. The territorial government will also ensure that Indigenous and wilderness operators across the territory can access funding through the program.¹⁵

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

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

© Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada as represented by Employment and Social Development Canada, 2022, all rights reserved

-
- ¹ Conference Board of Canada (March 24, 2022). [Territorial Outlook – Surging demand for minerals key to long-term growth.](#)
 - ² CBC News (June 03, 2022). [Whitehorse Elementary School to be replaced with new school in Takhini.](#)
 - ³ Government of Yukon (May 05, 2022). [Contract awarded to replace Nisutlin Bay Bridge.](#)
 - ⁴ Yukon News (May 11, 2022). [\\$160-million Nisutlin Bay Bridge dubbed 'largest capital project in Yukon history'.](#)
 - ⁵ Construct Connect Canada (May 25, 2022). [Yukon begins largest capital project ever.](#)
 - ⁶ CBC News (May 17, 2022). [New culture centre is on its way to Cambridge Bay.](#)
 - ⁷ Government of Northwest Territories (May 26, 2022). [Gahcho Kué mine and Government of the Northwest Territories partner on bridge project to restore fish habitat.](#)
 - ⁸ Cabin Radio (May 30, 2022). [Gahcho Kué and GNWT to partner on Highway 1 bridge.](#)
 - ⁹ Government of Northwest Territories (June 3, 2022). [Minister of Health and Social Services announces release of 2021-2024 Human Resources Plan.](#)
 - ¹⁰ Nunatsiaq News (May 2, 2022). [Project aimed towards Inuit youth mental health gets funding boost.](#)
 - ¹¹ Polar Journal (May 10, 2022). [Virtual qaggiq draws on tradition to protect Inuit youth.](#)
 - ¹² Government of Yukon (May 5, 2022). [The Government of Yukon, Yukon University and ComIT partner to bring coding training to Yukon First Nations students.](#)
 - ¹³ Government of Canada (June 3, 2022). [Government of Canada makes key investment of nearly \\$1 million in Northwest Territories tourism projects as part of National Tourism Week.](#)
 - ¹⁴ Government of Canada (June 3, 2022). [The Government of Canada makes investments in support of Nunavut's tourism industry, as part of National Tourism Week.](#)
 - ¹⁵ Government of Yukon (May 27, 2022). [Government of Canada and the Government of Yukon invest \\$1.95 million to support Yukon tourism sector as it adapts grows beyond the pandemic.](#)