



Labour Market Bulletin

Northwest Territories, Nunavut and Yukon



June 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 fell 0.9% (-600) in the second quarter (April, May, June) of 2022, compared to the previous quarter (January, February, March). Employment gains in Yukon (+4.0%) were offset by losses in Northwest Territories (-0.4%) and Nunavut (-9.1%).

From the second quarter of 2021 to the second quarter of 2022, employment in the territories increased by 5000 (+8.7%). Employment in all three individual territories increased throughout the year. Nunavut had the largest annual increase (+15.7%), followed by Yukon (+7.3%) and Northwest Territories (+6.3%).

Northwest Territories, Nunavut, Yukon* Quarterly Labour Force Statistics

Seasonally adjusted data	2nd Quarter 2022	1st Quarter 2022	2nd Quarter 2021	Quarterly Variation		Yearly Variation	
				Number	%	Number	%
Population 15 + ('000)	93.3	92.9	91.5	0.4	0.4	1.8	2.0
Labour Force ('000)	66.8	68.7	61.1	-1.9	-2.8	5.7	9.3
Employment ('000)	62.8	63.4	57.8	-0.6	-0.9	5.0	8.7
Unemployment ('000)	3.9	5.2	3.1	-1.3	-25.0	0.8	25.8
Unemployment Rate (%)	5.8	7.6	5.1	-1.8	-	0.7	-
Participation Rate (%)	71.6	74.0	66.8	-2.4	-	4.8	-
Employment Rate (%)	67.3	68.2	63.2	-0.9	-	4.1	-

* Combined data based on monthly three-month moving averages

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

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

Quarterly Labour Force Statistics by Territory

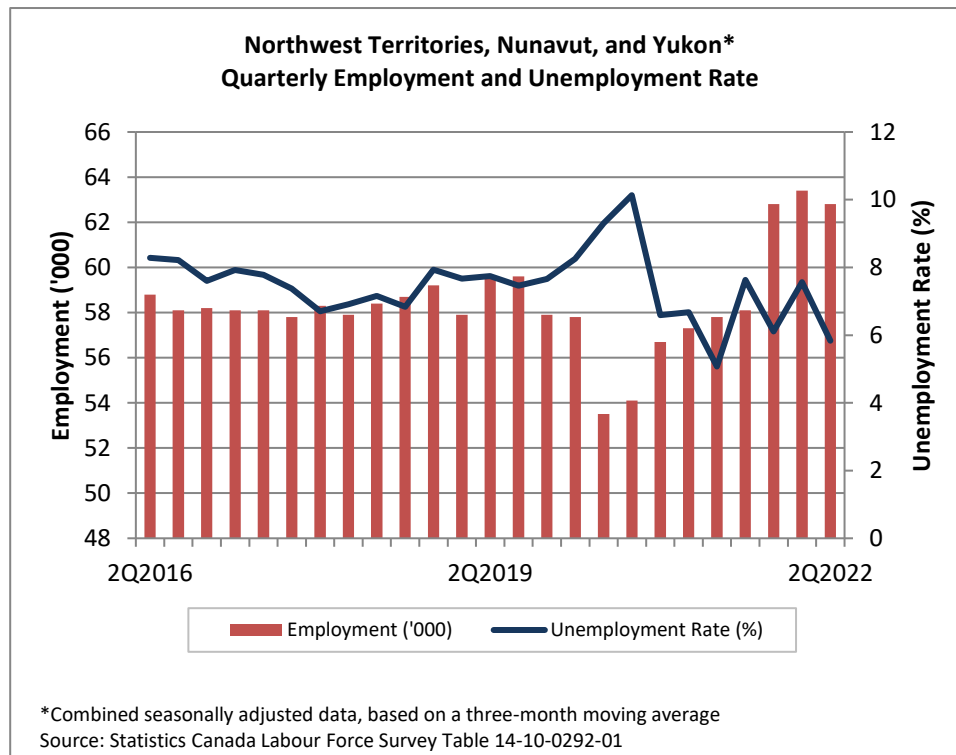
Seasonally adjusted data	Employment			Unemployment Rate		
	2nd Quarter 2022 ('000)	2nd Quarter 2021 ('000)	Yearly Variation (%)	2nd Quarter 2022 (%)	2nd Quarter 2021 (%)	Yearly Variation (% points)
Total territories*	62.8	57.8	8.7	5.8	5.1	0.7
Yukon	23.5	21.9	7.3	2.5	6.8	-4.3
Northwest Territories	25.3	23.8	6.3	4.5	4.4	0.1
Nunavut	14.0	12.1	15.7	13.3	3.5	9.8

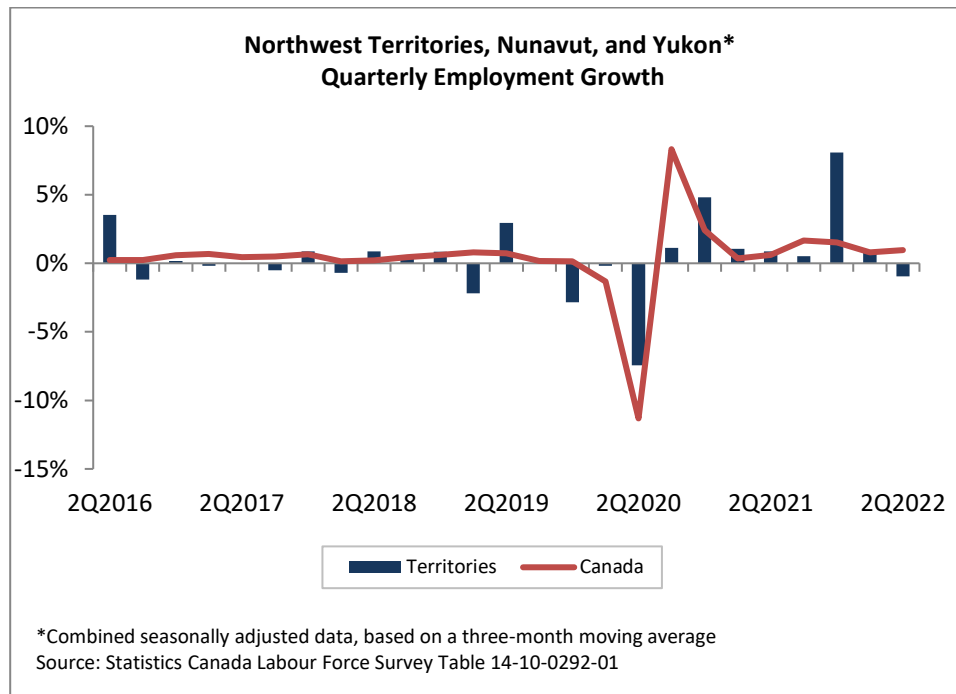
* Combined data based on a three-month moving average

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 was 5.8% in the second quarter of 2022. This represents a decrease of 0.7 percentage points compared to the second quarter of 2021. Compared to the same period last year, Yukon was the only territory to see a decrease in its unemployment rate, down 4.3 percentage points to 2.5%, the lowest rate since September 2019. In contrast, Northwest Territories' unemployment rate increased 0.1 percentage points to 4.5% over the year. Meanwhile, Nunavut experienced the greatest annual increase, with the unemployment rate rising 9.8 percentage points to 13.3%.





The unemployment rate for youth (15 to 24 years) in the combined territories decreased 2.1 percentage points to 10.2% in the second quarter of 2022 compared to the same quarter in 2021. Within this age group, the unemployment rate for young women decreased substantially by 4.1 percentage points to 6.7%. The corresponding unemployment rate for young men decreased more moderately, down 2.7 percentage points to 11.6%.

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

Seasonally unadjusted data	2nd Quarter 2022 (%)	2nd Quarter 2021 (%)	Yearly Variation (% points)
Total	6.0	5.4	0.6
25 years and over	5.3	4.5	0.8
Men - 25 years and over	6.2	5.5	0.7
Women - 25 years and over	4.3	3.4	0.9
15 to 24 years	10.2	12.3	-2.1
Men - 15 to 24 years	11.6	14.3	-2.7
Women - 15 to 24 years	6.7	10.8	-4.1

*Combined data based on a three month moving average
Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey – ESDC custom table

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY

There were 7,600 people employed in the **goods-producing sector** in the second quarter of 2022, up 11.8% (+800) compared to the same quarter last year. These gains are mainly the result of increased employment in the mining and construction industries.

Employment in the construction and mining industries increased substantially between the second quarter of 2021 and second quarter of 2022, with more growth expected over the short-term. A number of mining and construction projects are scheduled to begin over the next few years. For instance, the Government of Northwest Territories sold a major tungsten mining project, Mactung Tungsten, to Fireweed Metals Corp. for \$15 million in June 2022.¹ The mine is one of the largest tungsten deposits outside of China. Fireweed plans to increase employment opportunities at the mine for Indigenous groups and residents of NWT.²

In Nunavut, Agnico Eagle Mines Ltd. has submitted a proposal to extend the life of the Meliadine gold mine near Rankin Inlet. The company plans to add 11 wind turbines, underground mining in three open pit areas of the current site and a new airstrip near the mine. The proposed project is expected to extend Meliadine's mine life by 11 years to 2043.³

In addition, Sabina Gold and Silver Corp. plans to begin production at its Goose gold mine site located in Nunavut's Kitikmeot region by 2025. Once funding is in place, the construction of the mine is expected to take two years to complete. Sabina has signed an Inuit Impact and Benefits agreement with the Kitikmeot Inuit Association to provide job training to Inuit in the region. Currently the site employs approximately 90 workers, about 15-20% of whom are Inuit.⁴

In June 2022, the federal and Yukon governments approved BMC Mineral's Kudz Ze Kayah (KZK) polymetallic project that could generate an estimated \$720 million in capital expenditures for the territory's economy. The KZK project is an open pit and underground polymetallic (silver, copper, gold, lead and zinc) mine, with an estimated mine life of ten years.⁵ The project is anticipated to create 500 construction jobs and approximately 400 operational jobs.⁶

Turning to public construction projects, the federal government is contracting Iqaluit-based Pilitak Enterprises Ltd. to build a new \$37.7 million small craft harbour in Clyde River, Nunavut. Construction is scheduled to begin in summer 2022 and will take about three years to complete.⁷ The construction contract also included an Inuit Benefits Plan to support training and employment for local Inuit people. The new harbour is expected to improve the delivery of goods to coastal communities, create opportunities for sustainable commercial fishing operations, and enhance tourism in the region.⁸

The Chu Niikwan Development Corporation is partnering with Northwestel to build a new 41,250 square-foot headquarters for the northern Canadian telecommunications company in downtown Whitehorse.⁹ The building will house 300 employees and 13,500 square-foot will be available for office or retail space. The project will be completed by January 2024.¹⁰

The Government of Northwest Territories is designating \$15.9 million in funding to renovate and expand schools across the territory. These projects include the renovation of the Chief Jimmy Bruneau School in Behchoko, the expansion of the Mangilaluk School in Tuktoyaktuk and the Ecole Itlorepplaces J.H. Sissons School in Yellowknife.¹¹

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

Seasonally Unadjusted Data ('000)	2nd Quarter 2022	2nd Quarter 2021	Yearly Variation	
			Number	%
Total employed, all industries	63.2	57.8	5.4	9.3
Goods-producing sector	7.6	6.8	0.8	11.8
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	0.9	-0.3	-33.3
Construction	4.1	3.3	0.8	24.2
Manufacturing	0.6	0.6	0.0	0.0
Services-producing sector	55.5	51.0	4.5	8.8
Trade	6.5	6.2	0.3	4.8
Transportation and warehousing	3.7	3.3	0.4	12.1
Finance, insurance, real estate and leasing	2.0	2.5	-0.5	-20.0
Professional, scientific and technical services	2.5	2.1	0.4	19.0
Business, building and other support services	1.5	1.5	0.0	0.0
Educational services	6.9	5.4	1.5	27.8
Health care and social assistance	9.3	7.6	1.7	22.4
Information, culture and recreation	3.2	1.5	1.7	113.3
Accommodation and food services	2.7	3.3	-0.6	-18.2
Other services	1.8	2.0	-0.2	-10.0
Public administration	15.5	15.6	-0.1	-0.6

* Combined data based on a three-month moving average

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey – ESDC custom table

Employment in the **services-producing sector** was up by 4,500 in the second quarter of 2022, an increase of 8.8% compared to the same quarter in 2021. Falling employment in the accommodation and food services and finance, insurance, real estate and leasing industries was offset by growth in the health care and social assistance and information, culture and recreation industries. Gains in the information, culture and recreation industry were primarily the result of the removal or reduction of COVID-19 related restrictions.

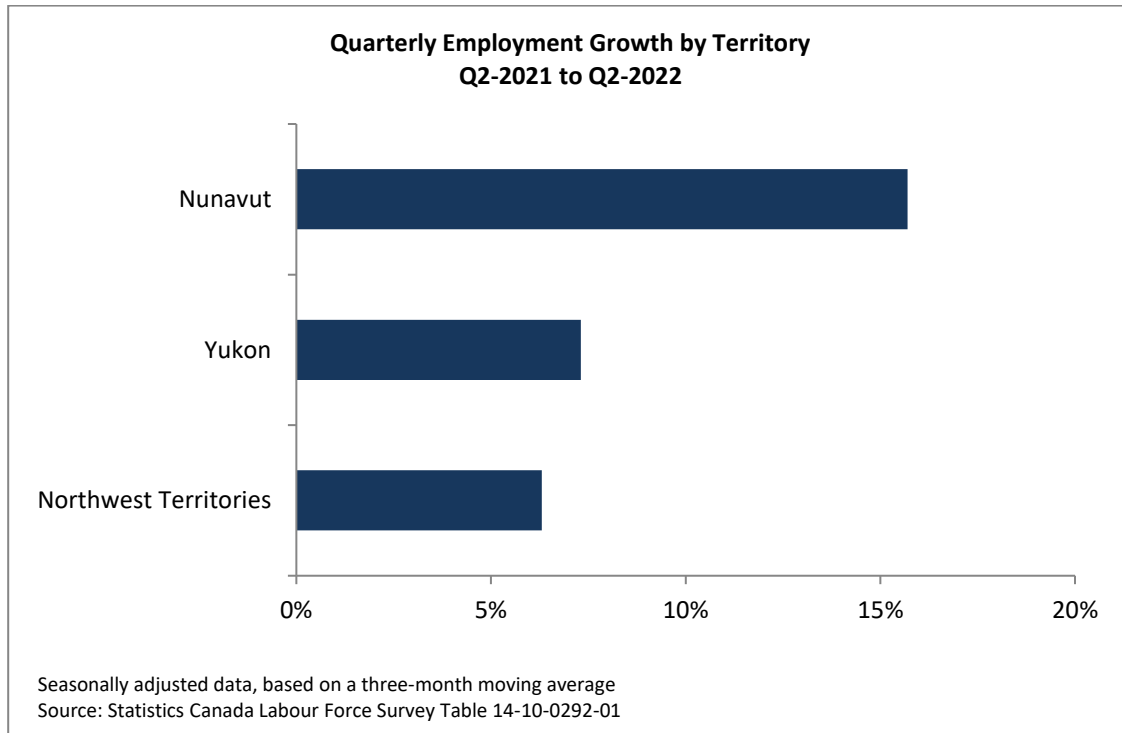
With major infrastructure improvement projects underway across the North, employment growth over the next two years is likely in the transportation and warehousing, professional, scientific and technical services, and trade industries. For example, the Yukon government, through the Canada Community Building Fund, is providing \$5.1 million to improve water and wastewater services in Whitehorse. Improvements will include storm sewer drainage and maintenance of city sewers for the winter months.¹²

In Nunavut, the federal and Nunavut governments pledged a total \$201.6 million to the Katittuq Nunavut Fibre Link project that will connect Iqaluit to Milton, Newfoundland and Labrador. The project is expected to provide more reliable internet service for local residents and businesses. The cable will be laid in 2024 and service could begin in 2025.¹³

In addition, the federal government is spending \$4.9 billion to upgrade the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) over the next 6 years.¹⁴ NORAD will replace the North Warning Systems located in Nunavut

that monitor missile threats across the three territories. The system will also help to detect, deter and defend against aerospace threats to North America.¹⁵

The federal government is providing \$2.3 million to renovate and expand the Gwich'in Wellness Camp located in Inuvik, Northwest Territories.¹⁶ The funding is part of a \$108.8 million program to fund Indigenous cultural centres across the country. The project will create a culturally appropriate and accessible space for women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people in Inuvik region.¹⁷



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 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

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- ¹ Yukon News (June 29, 2022). [Yukon mining firm to buy Tungsten project from NWT government.](#)
 - ² CBC News (June 7, 2022). [NWT gov't agreed to sell its tungsten mining project – and could make \\$15M from it.](#)
 - ³ Nunatsiaq News (July 5, 2022). [Proposed Meliadine mine extension to be assessed.](#)
 - ⁴ CBC News (June 22, 2022). [Sabine moves closer to kick-starting western Nunavut gold mine.](#)
 - ⁵ Kudz Ze Kayah (June 20, 2022). [BMC Announces Proposed Silver-Zinc Mine Receives Positive Decision from Yukon and Canada Governments.](#)
 - ⁶ Canadian Mining Journal (June 16, 2022). [BMC's Kudz Ze Kayah polymetallic project in Yukon reaches permitting stage.](#)
 - ⁷ Government of Canada (June 21, 2022). [New small craft harbour will improve safety and bring economic benefits to Clyde River.](#)
 - ⁸ Nunatsiaq News (June 24, 2022). [Clyde River to get small craft harbour by 2026.](#)
 - ⁹ Yukon News (June 17, 2022). [New headquarters planned for Northwestel.](#)
 - ¹⁰ CBC News (June 13, 2022). [Kwalin dun First Nation to develop Northwestel's new HQ in Whitehorse.](#)
 - ¹¹ NNSL News (June 20, 2022). [340 NWT graduates in 2020-21 \(page 6/7\)](#)
 - ¹² Government of Yukon (June 8, 2022). [City of Whitehorse improving water and wastewater services.](#)
 - ¹³ Government of Nunavut (June 10, 2022). [GN Reaches Mileston for Internet Fibre Link.](#)
 - ¹⁴ CBC News (June 22, 2022). [NORAD upgrades a 'good move' for northern security, says Nunavut MP.](#)
 - ¹⁵ Government of Canada (June 20, 2022). [Minister Anand announces continental defence modernization to protect Canadians.](#)
 - ¹⁶ Government of Canada (June 29, 2022). [Canada and the Gwich'in Tribal Council move forward on Gwich'in Wellness Camp renovation.](#)
 - ¹⁷ CBC News (June 30, 2022). [\\$2.3M announced for the renovation of Gwich'in Wellness Camp.](#)