



Labour Market Bulletin

Northwest Territories, Nunavut and Yukon



August 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

Employment levels in the combined territories (Yukon, Northwest Territories and Yukon) were unchanged in August 2022 compared to July 2022.

On an annual basis, employment in the territories increased 9.4% (+5,400) between August 2021 and August 2022. Both the goods-producing and services-producing sectors experienced employment increases over the year. Employment was substantially higher in Nunavut (+19.8%) in August 2022 compared to August 2021. Employment levels in Yukon (+7.8%) and Northwest Territories (+5.5%) increased more moderately during this period.

Northwest Territories, Nunavut and Yukon* Monthly Labour Force Statistics

| Seasonally Adjusted Data | August 2022 | July 2022 | August 2021 | Monthly Variation | | Yearly Variation | |
|--------------------------|-------------|-----------|-------------|-------------------|------|------------------|-------|
| | | | | Number | % | Number | % |
| Population 15 + ('000) | 93.5 | 93.5 | 91.8 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 1.7 | 1.9 |
| Labour Force ('000) | 66.5 | 66.8 | 61.9 | -0.3 | -0.4 | 4.6 | 7.4 |
| Employment ('000) | 63.0 | 63.0 | 57.6 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 5.4 | 9.4 |
| Unemployment ('000) | 3.5 | 3.8 | 4.2 | -0.3 | -7.9 | -0.7 | -16.7 |
| Unemployment Rate (%) | 5.3 | 5.7 | 6.8 | -0.4 | - | -1.5 | - |
| Participation Rate (%) | 71.1 | 71.4 | 67.4 | -0.3 | - | 3.7 | - |
| Employment Rate (%) | 67.4 | 67.4 | 62.7 | 0.0 | - | 4.7 | - |

*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**

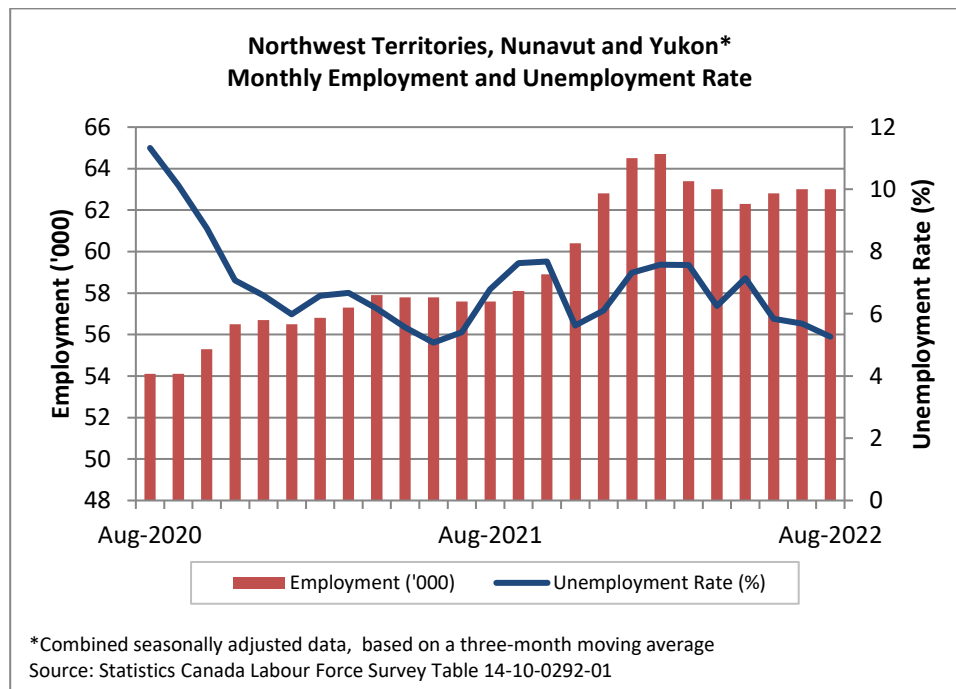
| Seasonally Adjusted Data | Employment | | | Unemployment Rate | | |
|------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------------|-------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|
| | August 2022 ('000) | August 2021 ('000) | Yearly Variation (%) | August 2022 (%) | August 2021 (%) | Yearly Variation (% points) |
| Territories* | 63.0 | 57.6 | 9.4 | 5.3 | 6.8 | -1.5 |
| Northwest Territories | 25.0 | 23.7 | 5.5 | 4.2 | 4.8 | -0.6 |
| Nunavut | 14.5 | 12.1 | 19.8 | 12.1 | 12.4 | -0.3 |
| Yukon | 23.5 | 21.8 | 7.8 | 1.7 | 5.6 | -3.9 |

*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 between July and August 2022, down 0.4 percentage points to 5.3%. Year-over-year, the unemployment rate dropped slightly both in Northwest Territories (NWT) and Nunavut, reaching 4.2% and 12.1%, respectively. Yukon posted the largest annual decrease, with its unemployment rate falling 3.9 percentage points to 1.7%. In August 2022, Yukon continued to have the lowest unemployment rate the country (1.7%), well below the national rate of 5.4%.



The youth (15 to 24 years) unemployment rate for the three territories combined was 7.2% in August 2022. This represents a decrease of 3.6 percentage points compared to August 2021. The unemployment rate for young women increased 0.7 percentage points to 6.0% during the past year. In contrast, the unemployment rate for young men dropped considerably, down 4.5 percentage points to 8.5%.

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

| Seasonally Unadjusted Data | August 2022 (%) | August 2021 (%) | Yearly Variation (% points) |
|----------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|
| Total | 5.0 | 6.6 | -1.6 |
| 25 years and over | 4.6 | 6.0 | -1.4 |
| Men - 25 years and over | 4.9 | 7.1 | -2.2 |
| Women - 25 years and over | 4.0 | 4.9 | -0.9 |
| 15 to 24 years | 7.2 | 10.8 | -3.6 |
| Men - 15 to 24 years | 8.5 | 13.0 | -4.5 |
| Women - 15 to 24 years | 6.0 | 5.3 | 0.7 |

*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

There were 8,500 people employed in the **goods-producing sector** in August 2022. This corresponds to a 7.6% (+600) increase in employees compared to July 2022. These gains are mainly the result of increased employment in the mining and construction industries.

Employment growth in the goods-producing sector is likely to continue for the short to medium term. Planned infrastructure and mining development and remediation projects will create additional job opportunities across the North. For instance, the federal government has earmarked nearly \$2.0 million to expand the Natilik Heritage Centre in Gjoa Haven, Nunavut. The expansion will include a new tourism office to support cultural arts and tourism opportunities in the Kitikmeot community. The project is expected to create construction jobs for local residents.¹

In Northwest Territories, the federal government announced in August 2022 funding towards the development of a 1-megawatt solar farm in Inuvik. It will provide \$5.58 million in funding to the northern Indigenous-owned and operated company, Nihtat Energy Ltd for the project. This renewable energy project is expected to reduce greenhouse emissions and the community's consumption of diesel. Construction is anticipated to be completed by the end of 2022.²

The federal government also awarded a total of \$57 million to three contracts and one standing offer for the Faro Mine Remediation Project in Yukon in August 2022. These contracts will help advance the remediation design planning and environmental and geotechnical monitoring of the project. The Faro Mine Remediation Project is one of the largest and most complex abandoned mine sites in Canada. The project is anticipated to take 15 years to complete. It will create long-term northern jobs for local First Nations and neighbouring communities.³

In mining development, Sabina Gold & Silver Corp. announced on September 7, 2022 it will move forward with the \$610 million Goose gold mine in Nunavut. The mine, located in the Black River gold district, has already completed pre-development activities and will be ready for full construction in 2023. Gold production is expected

to begin in 2025.⁴ The project will create about 800 positions during its construction phase and the company is looking to hire residents from the Kitikmeot region.⁵

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

| Seasonally Unadjusted Data ('000) | August 2022 | August 2021 | Yearly Variation | |
|---|-------------|-------------|------------------|-------|
| | | | Number | % |
| Total employed, all industries | 64.5 | 58.9 | 5.6 | 9.5 |
| Goods-producing sector | 8.5 | 7.9 | 0.6 | 7.6 |
| Agriculture | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | -- |
| Forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas | 2.6 | 2.2 | 0.4 | 18.2 |
| Utilities | 0.6 | 0.9 | -0.3 | -33.3 |
| Construction | 4.7 | 4.1 | 0.6 | 14.6 |
| Manufacturing | 0.5 | 0.4 | 0.1 | 25.0 |
| Services-producing sector | 55.9 | 51.1 | 4.8 | 9.4 |
| Trade | 6.6 | 7.2 | -0.6 | -8.3 |
| Transportation and warehousing | 3.2 | 2.8 | 0.4 | 14.3 |
| Finance, insurance, real estate and leasing | 1.8 | 2.3 | -0.5 | -21.7 |
| Professional, scientific and technical services | 2.3 | 2.5 | -0.2 | -8.0 |
| Business, building and other support services | 1.4 | 1.3 | 0.1 | 7.7 |
| Educational services | 6.9 | 4.4 | 2.5 | 56.8 |
| Health care and social assistance | 9.9 | 7.8 | 2.1 | 26.9 |
| Information, culture and recreation | 3.1 | 1.9 | 1.2 | 63.2 |
| Accommodation and food services | 2.1 | 3.1 | -1.0 | -32.3 |
| Other services | 2.0 | 1.9 | 0.1 | 5.3 |
| Public administration | 16.6 | 15.9 | 0.7 | 4.4 |

*Combined data - 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 4,800 in August 2022, an increase of 9.4% compared to August 2021. The largest employment gains were in educational services, health care and social assistance and information, culture and social assistance.

Despite employment increases in education and health care services, the territories are experiencing critical shortages of staff in these two sectors. Canada wide labour shortages in health care are also impacting the territories. The Government of Northwest Territories, for example, is looking to recruit more healthcare workers, including nurses and paramedics, due to staffing shortages across its health centres. As of August 2022, about 15 health centres across the territory were providing reduced or emergency only services.⁶

Labour shortages in health care across the territories will be intensified by upcoming retirements within the workforce. According to a survey by the Registered Nurses Association of Nunavut, about 43% of nurses in Nunavut⁷ and 49% of nurses in NWT plan to retire in the next 5-10 years.⁸ This result is due to mandated overtime, burnout, staffing shortages and workplace violence. The report also stated some solutions nurses

recommend that could convince them to stay working. These include annual cash incentives, more professional development opportunities, flexibility in their schedule and addressing their concerns about workplace violence.⁹

To help ease the shortage of healthcare staff, the Government of Northwest Territories is investing \$2.3 million in initiatives that aim to increase the retention and recruitment of staff at the territory's health centres. These initiatives include paramedic support, travel subsidies and rewards for referrals.¹⁰ The Government of Nunavut has also developed a five-year plan that aims to recruit and retain more healthcare professionals in the territory.¹¹

In the education sector, Yukon is facing a shortage of teachers across the territory, particularly in remote communities due to housing shortages. In the beginning of August 2022, there were 25 vacant teaching positions in the territory, with four in Whitehorse and 21 in rural communities. The number of vacant positions was three times higher in August 2022 compared to August 2021 when only eight vacant positions were recorded in the territory.¹²

According to the Government of Nunavut, the territory is currently experiencing a severe shortage of teachers. Around 10% of teaching positions remained unfilled at the beginning of 2022 school year. There were 95 vacant teaching positions across the territory as of August 23. A lack of housing, the high cost of living and COVID fatigue are cited as causes of the shortage.¹³

While both Yukon and Nunavut have struggled to fill teaching positions at the start of 2022-2023 school year, school boards in the Northwest Territories have filled most of their teaching positions. However, school boards in the Northwest Territories have reported that they are seeing fewer qualified applicants this year. They have also been unable to hire very qualified teachers due to a national teacher shortage. It is particularly difficult to find French Immersion teachers, as there is a high demand across the entire country.¹⁴

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- ¹ Government of Canada (August 11, 2022). [Minister Vandal announces CanNor investment of nearly \\$2 million to expand important community space in Gjoa Haven, Nunavut.](#)
 - ² Government of Canada (August 15, 2022). [Indigenous-owned company forging a new path toward renewable energy in Inuvik.](#)
 - ³ Government of Canada (August 17, 2022). [Government of Canada awards new contracts to advance clean8-up of Faro Mine.](#)
 - ⁴ Sabina Gold & Silver Corp. (September 7, 2022). [Sabina Gold & Silver makes formal construction decision for the Goose Gold Mine.](#)
 - ⁵ Nunavut News (December 16, 2021). [Sabine negotiating funds to put Goose mine into production.](#)
 - ⁶ CBC News (August 25, 2022). [National paramedic shortage could put hitch in N.W.T. recruitment plan.](#)
 - ⁷ Registered Nurses Association of the Northwest Territories and Nunavut (February 2022). [Nurse Retention and Recruitment Survey 2021.](#)
 - ⁸ Government of Northwest Territories (July 2022). [Northwest Territories nurse retention and recruitment survey 2021.](#)
 - ⁹ CBC News (August 17, 2022). [Nearly half of nurses in N.W.T. and Nunavut plan to retire in the next decade, survey shows.](#)
 - ¹⁰ Radio Canada International (August 19, 2022). [Paramedics to help out at N.W.T. health centres as territory contends with staff shortages.](#)
 - ¹¹ Meadow Lake Now (August 25, 2022). [‘This is a crisis:’ COVID compounds health-care worker shortages in the North.](#)
 - ¹² CBC News (August 12, 2022). [Lack of teachers will mean ‘tough decisions’ this year, says Yukon education official.](#)
 - ¹³ CBC News (August 29, 2022). [School’s back in Nunavut, but teachers remain in short supply.](#)
 - ¹⁴ CBC News (August 19, 2022). [N.W.T. school boards report adequate teachers supply, an outlier amid national teacher shortages.](#)