



# Labour Market Bulletin

## Northwest Territories, Nunavut and Yukon



September 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 continued to trend downwards for the second consecutive quarter. The number of people employed in the territories decreased by 0.5% to 62,500 in the third quarter of 2022 compared to the previous quarter. Employment levels in Nunavut increased by (+2.1%) in the third quarter of 2022, while employment in NWT fell by 2.4%. Employment levels in Yukon were unchanged this quarter.

From the third quarter of 2021 to the third quarter of 2022, employment in the territories has increased by 7.6% (+4,400). Employment in all three territories has increased year-over-year. During this period, the number of people employed increased considerably in Nunavut (+10.9%). Both Yukon and Northwest Territories recorded more moderate increases in employment, up 7.3% and 6.0% respectively.

### Northwest Territories, Nunavut, Yukon\* Quarterly Labour Force Statistics

Seasonally adjusted data	3rd Quarter 2022	2nd Quarter 2022	3rd Quarter 2021	Quarterly Variation		Yearly Variation	
				Number	%	Number	%
Population 15 + ('000)	93.6	93.3	91.9	0.3	0.3	1.7	1.8
Labour Force ('000)	66.2	66.8	62.9	-0.6	-0.9	3.3	5.2
Employment ('000)	62.5	62.8	58.1	-0.3	-0.5	4.4	7.6
Unemployment ('000)	3.7	3.9	4.8	-0.2	-5.1	-1.1	-22.9
Unemployment Rate (%)	5.6	5.8	7.6	-0.2	-	-2.0	-
Participation Rate (%)	70.7	71.6	68.4	-0.9	-	2.3	-
Employment Rate (%)	66.8	67.3	63.2	-0.5	-	3.6	-

\*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**

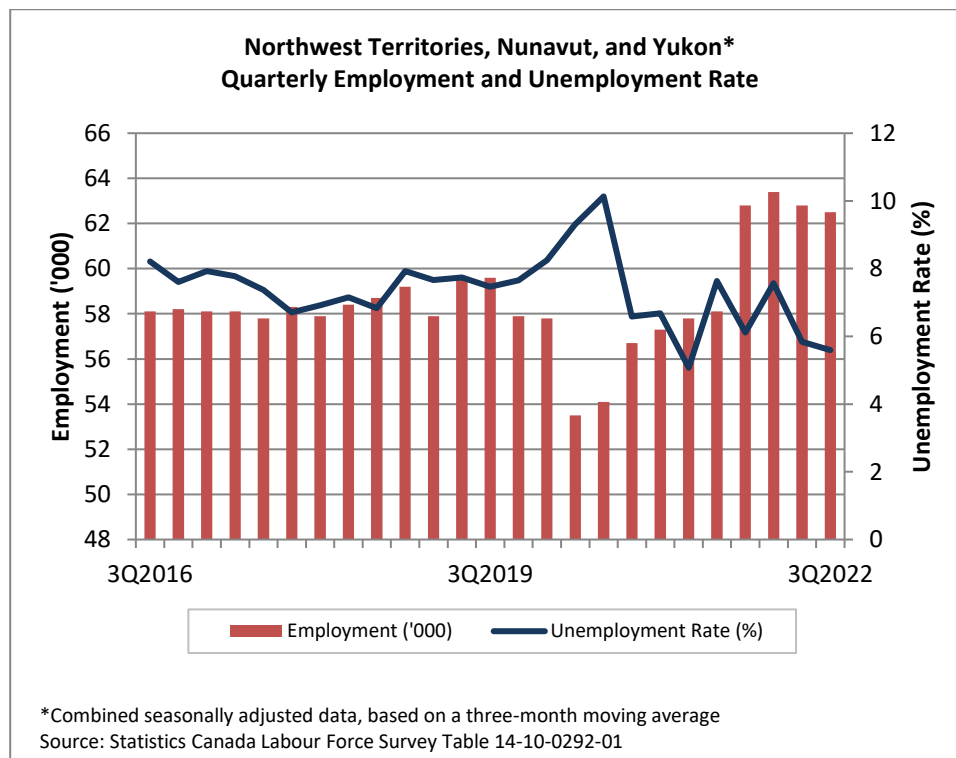
Seasonally adjusted data	Employment			Unemployment Rate		
	3rd Quarter 2022 ('000)	3rd Quarter 2021 ('000)	Yearly Variation (%)	3rd Quarter 2022 (%)	3rd Quarter 2021 (%)	Yearly Variation (% points)
<b>Total territories*</b>	62.5	58.1	7.6	5.6	7.6	-2.0
Yukon	23.5	21.9	7.3	2.5	5.6	-3.1
Northwest Territories	24.7	23.3	6.0	4.3	4.5	-0.2
Nunavut	14.3	12.9	10.9	12.0	15.5	-3.5

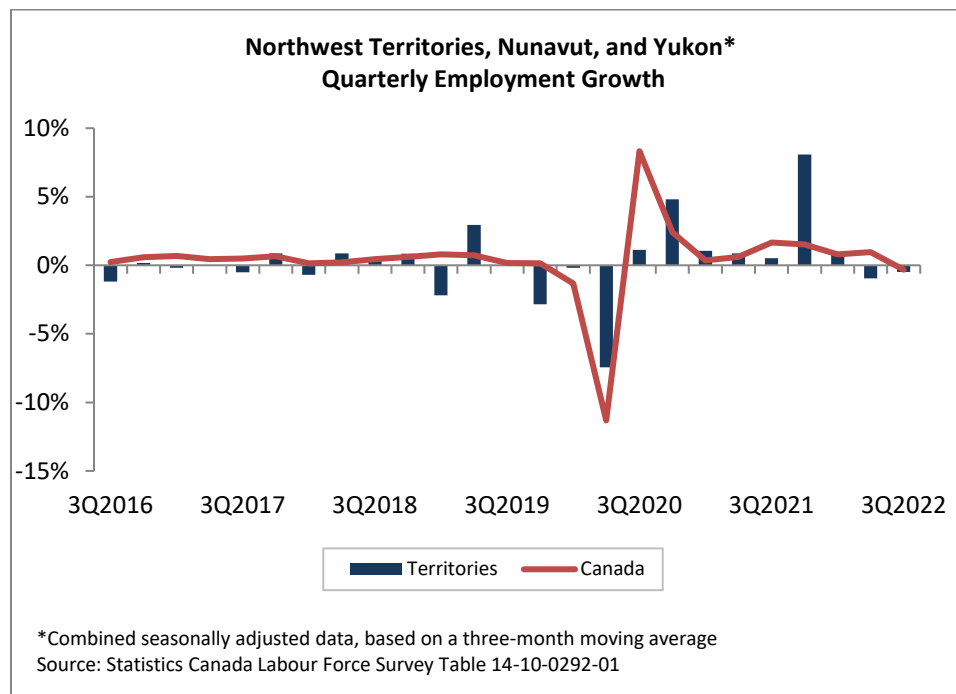
\*Combined data based on a three-month moving average

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 5.6% in the third quarter of 2022, down 0.2 percentage points from the second quarter of 2022. Between the third quarter of 2021 and third quarter of 2022, the unemployment rate decreased across all three territories. Nunavut posted the largest decline, with its unemployment rate falling 3.5 percentage points to 12.0%. Northwest Territories' unemployment rate dropped 0.2 percentage points to 4.3%, while the unemployment rate in Yukon decreased by 3.1 percentage points to 2.5%.





Compared to the third quarter of 2021, the unemployment rate for youth (15 to 25 years) in the territories dropped slightly, down 0.7 percentage points to 9.8% on an annual basis. The unemployment rate for young women increased by 1.0 percentage point to 8.5% during this period. In contrast, the unemployment rate for young men decreased by 1.9 percentage points to 11.1%.

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

Seasonally unadjusted data	3rd Quarter 2022 (%)	3rd Quarter 2021 (%)	Yearly Variation (% points)
<b>Total</b>	5.4	7.3	-1.9
<b>25 years and over</b>	4.7	7.0	-2.3
Men - 25 years and over	4.5	7.1	-2.6
Women - 25 years and over	4.8	7.0	-2.2
<b>15 to 24 years</b>	9.8	10.5	-0.7
Men - 15 to 24 years	11.1	13.0	-1.9
Women - 15 to 24 years	8.5	7.5	1.0

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

**EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY**

Employment in the **goods-producing sector** was up 1,000 in the third quarter of 2022, an increase of 13.5% from the same time last year. Employment increased across almost all industries within the sector between the third quarter of 2021 and the third quarter of 2022, with mining (+700) and construction (+400) posting the strongest employment gains.

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

Seasonally Unadjusted Data ('000)	3rd Quarter 2022	3rd Quarter 2021	Yearly Variation	
			Number	%
<b>Total employed, all industries</b>	63.6	59.2	4.4	7.4
<b>Goods-producing sector</b>	8.4	7.4	1.0	13.5
Agriculture	0.0	0.2	-0.2	-100.0
Forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas	2.6	1.9	0.7	36.8
Utilities	0.8	0.6	0.2	33.3
Construction	4.6	4.2	0.4	9.5
Manufacturing	0.4	0.3	0.1	33.3
<b>Services-producing sector</b>	55.1	52.0	3.1	6.0
Trade	6.0	7.1	-1.1	-15.5
Transportation and warehousing	3.3	2.8	0.5	17.9
Finance, insurance, real estate and leasing	1.8	1.7	0.1	5.9
Professional, scientific and technical services	2.5	2.5	0.0	0.0
Business, building and other support services	1.6	1.6	0.0	0.0
Educational services	6.8	5.7	1.1	19.3
Health care and social assistance	9.9	6.9	3.0	43.5
Information, culture and recreation	3.1	2.1	1.0	47.6
Accommodation and food services	1.8	3.1	-1.3	-41.9
Other services	2.1	1.9	0.2	10.5
Public administration	16.2	16.3	-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

The goods-producing sector should continue to see steady growth over the short to medium-term as large-scale mining projects and investment in public infrastructure will help to generate new employment opportunities. For instance, the Hecla Mining Company completed its purchase of Alexco Resource Corp., which owns and operates the Keno Hill Silver District in Yukon. Hecla will focus on investing in development, infrastructure and equipment that could bring the Keno Hill mine to full production by the end of 2023.<sup>1</sup>

The Arctic Canadian Diamond Company has awarded IHC Mining with a contract to build an underwater mining crawler to extract diamond-bearing kimberlite ore from its Ekati mine in the Northwest Territories. The new mining crawler is expected to have a lower environmental impact than conventional mining methods. The crawler could extend Ekati's mine life by at least 10 years.<sup>2</sup>

In Nunavut, the Government of Canada has approved a proposal from Baffinland Iron Mines Corp. to increase ore production at its Mary River Mine until the end of 2022. The company stated that the approval will protect over 1,100 jobs, with over 300 of those positions being occupied by Inuit.<sup>3</sup>

In public infrastructure, work to upgrade the Northwest Territories' Inuvik Mike Zubko Airport began recently. Improvements include extending the runway by 3,000 feet and modernizing the lighting, navigational and military aircraft landing system.<sup>4</sup> The federal and NWT governments invested \$41.2 million in July this year on drainage, earthworks and quarry material production for the airport improvement project. All these projects will help the airport to increase its resiliency to climate change and protect the permafrost below the airport.<sup>5</sup>

The Government of Canada and Government of Yukon are jointly providing \$22.5 million in funding towards the construction of a new public school, Kêts'ádañ Kù (learning house), in Burwash Landing. The school will replace the aging Kluane Lake School located in Destruction Bay.<sup>6</sup> The new facility will include a learning circle to welcome elders, a kitchen space, language resource room and multi-purpose gymnasium space.<sup>7</sup>

Nasittuq Corporation has been awarded an eight-year \$122 million contract to provide operation services for the Canadian Forces Station (CFS) Alert located in Nunavut. The CFS Alert is a military station that maintains signals intelligence to support Canadian military operations in the Arctic. Nasittuq will cover all site support services including accommodations, maintenance and the operation of the grounds and roads, power plants, buildings and water and sewage treatment systems.<sup>8</sup> The contract will also provide training and employment opportunities for Inuit to become apprentices, red seal technicians and heavy equipment operators.<sup>9</sup>

There were 55,100 people employed in the **services-producing sector** in the third quarter of 2022. Employment in this sector was up 6.0% compared to the same quarter of 2021. Employment losses in trade and accommodation and food services were offset by gains in educational services and in health care and social assistance.

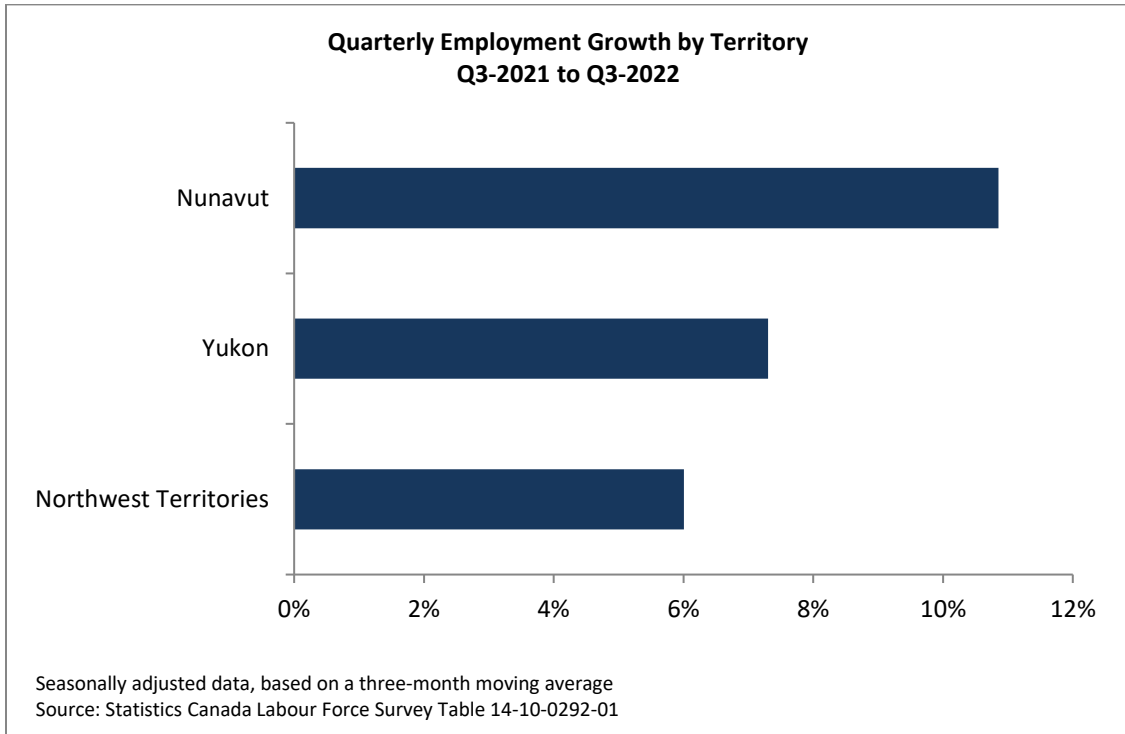
Tourism-related industries, such as accommodation and food services and retail, have been hardest hit in the past two years due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Employment in both industries dropped considerably between the third quarter of 2021 and the third quarter of 2022, down 41.9% and 15.5% respectively. While all three territories reported they are seeing signs of recovery in tourism this year, staffing shortages are making it difficult for tourism-related businesses to operate at full capacity, particularly in NWT and Yukon.

According to the Government of Northwest Territories, the territory's tourism industry is struggling to recover due to the loss of many skilled workers at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020.<sup>10</sup> Businesses such as hotels, restaurants and retail stores are currently facing critical labour shortages.<sup>11 12</sup> To cope with this fallout, the federal and territorial governments earmarked a total of \$750,000 through the Tourism Restart Investment Program in June this year to help licensed tourism operators to recruit and train new and returning employees.<sup>13</sup>

Yukon's accommodation and food services industry partially recovered from the COVID-19 pandemic in the third quarter of 2022. The territory recorded a substantial increase of visitors in summer 2022 compared to summer 2021. There were about 200,000 visitors registered between May and September this year at six Yukon visitor information centres compared to the 69,000 visitors registered during the same period in 2021. The hotel occupancy rate from January to June in 2022 was 47% compared to 30% during the same period in 2021.<sup>14</sup> Facing a similar labour shortage to NWT, many local businesses in Yukon were unable to recruit enough staff during the tourism season and had to reduce their operating hours and services.<sup>15</sup> At 8.9% Yukon had the highest job vacancy rate in the Canada in the second quarter of 2022, compared to the national rate of 5.9%.<sup>16</sup>

To provide support for Yukon's tourism industry, the Government of Yukon extended its Tourism Non-Accommodation Sector Supplement program in June 2022. Applicants have received up to \$20,000 per month with a four-month maximum of \$40,000 for the summer season to help them operate and hire staff.<sup>17</sup> The territorial government stated that it will work closely with local businesses to adapt and implement economic support programs to help them return to pre-pandemic operations.<sup>18</sup>

Nunavut has experienced a partial rebound in tourism in 2022 and local businesses are benefiting from the increase of visitors. For instance, passenger cruise ships returned to Nunavut in summer 2022, following a two-year ban due to COVID-19 restrictions. By early September, nine cruise ships had brought 1,800 passengers to Cambridge Bay and 13 cruise ships passed through Northwest Passage and stopped in more than half of Nunavut communities.<sup>19</sup>



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- <sup>1</sup> Alexco Resources Corp. (September 7, 2022). [Hecla completes acquisition of Alexco Resource Corp.](#)
  - <sup>2</sup> Arctic Canada Diamond Company (September 14, 2022). [URM development goes into next phase: Arctic Canadian Company awards IHC Mining with contract for underwater mining crawler.](#)
  - <sup>3</sup> CBC News (October 4, 2022). [Northern Affairs minister approves Baffinland’s temporary production increase - with conditions.](#)
  - <sup>4</sup> Government of Northwest Territories (September 29, 2022). [Inuvialuit Regional Corporation, Gwich’in Tribal Council, Government of Northwest Territories reach deal on runway and civil Infrastructure projects at Inuvik Airport.](#)
  - <sup>5</sup> NNSL News (September 29, 2022). [Deal to finish Mike Zubko Airport runway struck between, GDC, IRC and GNWT.](#)
  - <sup>6</sup> Government of Yukon (September 26, 2022). [Canada announces funding for new school in Burwash Landing.](#)
  - <sup>7</sup> Kluane First Nation News (February 4, 2021). [Tendering process begins for new Kluane First Nation school in Burwash Landing.](#)
  - <sup>8</sup> Government of Canada (October 3, 2022). [Government of Canada awards support services contract for Canadian Forces Station \(CFS\) Alert, Nunavut.](#)
  - <sup>9</sup> Nunatsiaq News (October 4, 2022). [Nasittuq Corporation awarded \\$122M contract for Alert.](#)
  - <sup>10</sup> Government of Northwest Territories (2022). [NWT Tourism 2022/23 Marketing Plan.](#)
  - <sup>11</sup> CBC News (August 11, 2022). [N.W.T. tourism industry sees signs of recovery.](#)
  - <sup>12</sup> Cabin Radio News (April 7, 2022). [NWT’s employers are put to work in ‘really hot labour market’.](#)
  - <sup>13</sup> Government of Northwest Territories (June 8, 2022). [TRIP funding to help tourism operators with reopening.](#)
  - <sup>14</sup> Yukon News (September 29, 2022). [Yukon’s tourism sector sees ‘strong return’ in 2022: data.](#)
  - <sup>15</sup> Radio Canada International (August 1, 2022). [Tourists return to Yukon, Canada, but season isn’t without challenges.](#)
  - <sup>16</sup> Statistics Canada (September 20, 2022). [Job vacancies, payroll employees, job vacancy rate and average hourly wage by provinces and territories.](#)
  - <sup>17</sup> Government of Yukon (June 23, 2022). [Support for tourism businesses impacted by COVID-19 extended.](#)
  - <sup>18</sup> Whitehorse Daily Star (June 27, 2022). [Help for tourism businesses extended.](#)
  - <sup>19</sup> CBC News (October 5, 2022). [Cambridge bay welcomes an upswing in cruise ship tourists after 2 years of quiet.](#)
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