

WOMEN IN THE NWT

SUMMARY

Prepared by the NWT Bureau of Statistics



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WOMEN IN THE NWT - SUMMARY

Population

POPULATION

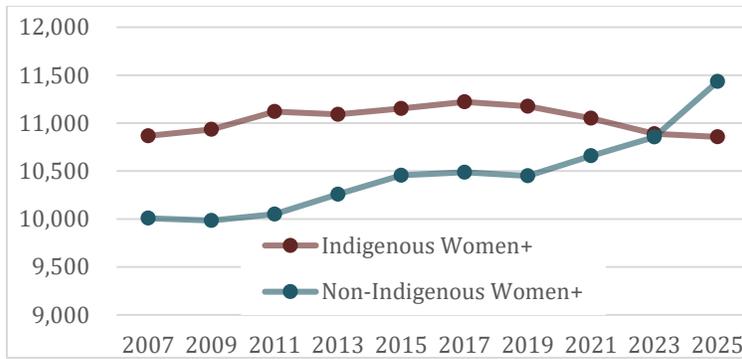
In 2025, there were 45,950 people living in the Northwest Territories (NWT) with women+ⁱ accounting for just under half of the population (49%). Similarly, 48% of the population are Indigenous (First Nation, Inuit and Métis) and 52% are Non-Indigenous. Of the 10,856 Indigenous women+ in the NWT, 65.4% are First Nation (Dene), 12.6% Metis and 22.0% Inuit.

2025 Population	NWT		Women+		Men+	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Total	45,950	100.0	22,289	100.0	23,661	100.0
Indigenous	22,124	48.1	10,856	48.7	11,268	47.6
Non-Indigenous	23,826	51.9	11,433	51.3	12,393	52.4

Source: NWT Bureau of Statistics Population Estimates

The women+ population in the NWT rose from 20,875 to 22,289 between 2007 and 2025.

NWT Women+ Population, 2007 to 2025

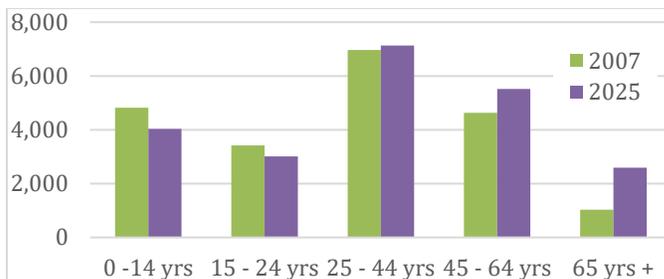


Source: NWT Bureau of Statistics Population Estimates

- Between 2007 and 2025, the women+ population increased 18% in Yellowknife, +1% in the smaller communities, and fell by 8% in the regional centres of Hay River, Fort Smith & Inuvik.

When looking at population, the number of people 65 years and over as well as persons under the age of 15 are often analyzed due to the impacts these populations have on resources such as health care, education, and housing.

NWT Women+ Population by Select Age Categories



Source: NWT Bureau of Statistics Population Estimates

- Between 2007 to 2025, the women+ population grew in all age categories in Yellowknife.
- The number of women+ under the age of 25 declined in regional centres and smaller communities.

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EMPLOYMENT

Differences emerge when comparing employment rates by ethnicity, geography and gender.

2025 Employment Rates	Women+	Men+
Northwest Territories	63.2%	67.8%
Indigenous	48.7%	51.3%
Non-Indigenous	74.2%	81.0%
Yellowknife	69.1%	79.2%
Indigenous	52.6%	65.0%
Non-Indigenous	73.3%	82.9%
Rest of Territories	54.5%	54.8%
Indigenous	47.5%	48.3%
Non-Indigenous	77.8%	78.3%

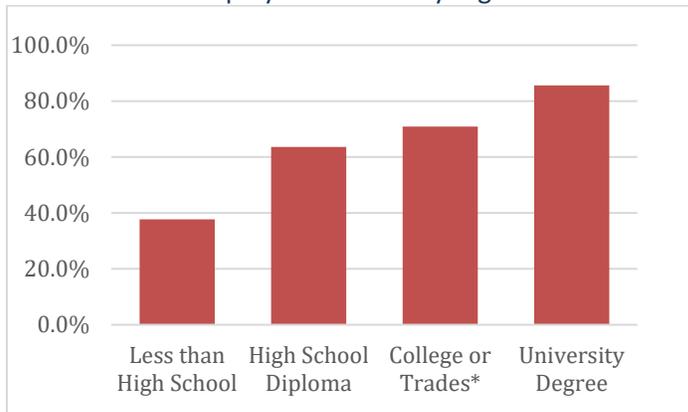
Source: LFS, Statistics Canada

- Women+ had lower employment rates than men+ in the NWT, particularly in Yellowknife.
- Non-Indigenous women+ had higher employment rates compared to Indigenous women+ with an overall rate of 74.2% vs 48.7%.

EDUCATION

The relationship between education and employment is evident when comparing employment rates by highest level of education for women+ in the NWT as those with higher levels of formal education have higher rates of employment.

NWT Women+ Employment Rates by Highest Level of Schooling, 2025



Source: LFS, Statistics Canada * Post-secondary Certificate or Diploma

- Employment opportunities are limited for people with lower levels of formal education. This pattern generally holds regardless of ethnicity, gender or geography.
- Employment rates for women+ in the NWT range from 38% for those with less than a high school diploma to 86% for those with a university degree.

While formal education levels for women+ have increased in the NWT, Indigenous highest levels of education remain below that of Non-Indigenous.

NWT Women+ Highest Education Level, 2025	Indig.	Non-Indig.
No certificate, diploma or degree	34.6%	8.6%
High school diploma	21.8%	19.4%
Other Certificate or Diploma	34.6%	26.9%
University degree	9.0%	46.2%

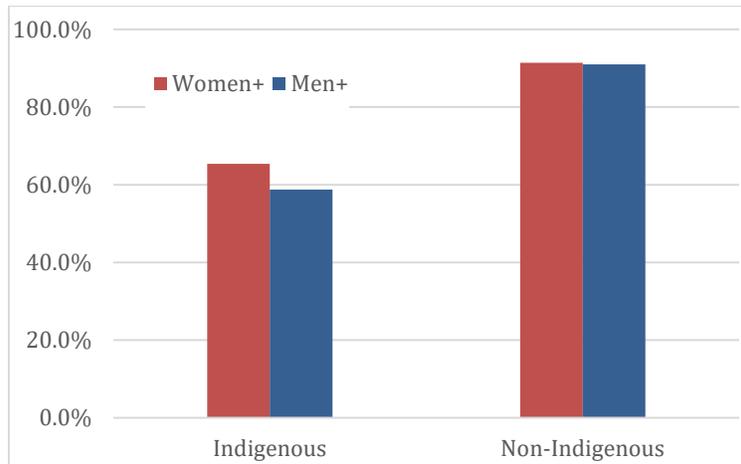
Source: LFS, Statistics Canada

- In 2025, 34.6% of Indigenous NWT women+ had less than a high school diploma as their highest level of education compared to 8.6% of Non-Indigenous.

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Obtaining a high school diploma is generally an important predictor of social indicators such as health, income and housing stability. Indigenous women+ and Non-Indigenous persons had higher levels of formal education.

Percentage of NWT Population with a High School Diploma or Higher, 2025



Source: LFS, Statistics Canada

- Indigenous women+ were more likely than Indigenous men+ to have a high school diploma, post-secondary diploma or certificate, or a university degree.
- In 2025, 91% of Non-Indigenous women+ and men+ in the NWT had high school or higher education levels.

Education & Income

INCOME & WORK ACTIVITY

Higher levels of education are associated with both higher employment prospects and higher income. In comparing employment income of women+ working full-time and a full year, NWT women+ with higher levels of education had higher average earnings.

NWT Women+
Average Employment Income, 2020

NWT Average (full year, full-time)	\$92,900
No certificate, diploma or degree	\$59,200
High school diploma	\$73,600
College	\$86,600
University	\$114,900

Source: 2021 Census, Statistics Canada

- In 2020, average employment income (full-time, full year) for NWT women+ was \$92,900 compared to \$100,200 for men+.
- Full-time, full year is defined as more than 30 hours per week and more than 49 weeks per year.

Following historic patterns, men+ were more likely to work full year, full-time than women+, with higher proportions of women+ working part-time or not in the workforce. The work activity difference between genders is less than the difference between ethnicity in the NWT¹. Approximately 56% of NWT men+ worked full year, full-time, compared to 54% of women+ (a 2% difference), whereas 63% of Non-Indigenous women+ worked full-time, full year compared to 40% of Indigenous women+ (a 20% difference).

¹ Ages 25 to 64.

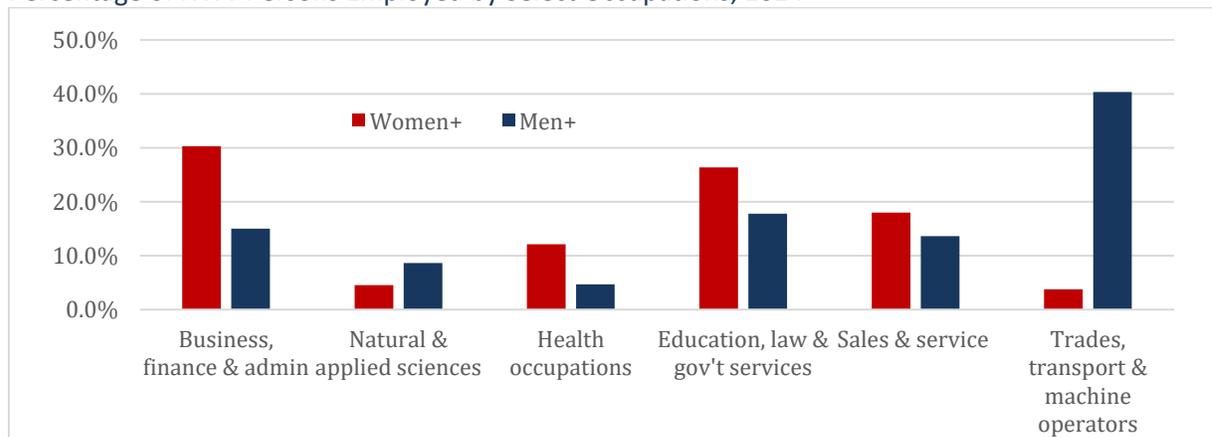
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For both men+ and women+, approximately one in ten Non-Indigenous people (11%) aged 25 to 64 years did not work compared to one in three Indigenous people (33%).

OCCUPATIONS

In 2024, women+ working outside the home in the NWT were most likely to work in occupations related to business, finance & administration, closely followed by jobs within education, law, and social, community & government. These included occupations such as school teachers, office & administrative support and policy & program officers. In contrast, the top occupations for males included truck drivers, trades helpers, trades positions such as electricians & carpenters, and servers. Approximately 4% of NWT women+ were employed in the trades, transport or in equipment operating occupations compared to 40% of NWT men+.

Percentage of NWT Persons Employed by Select Occupations, 2024

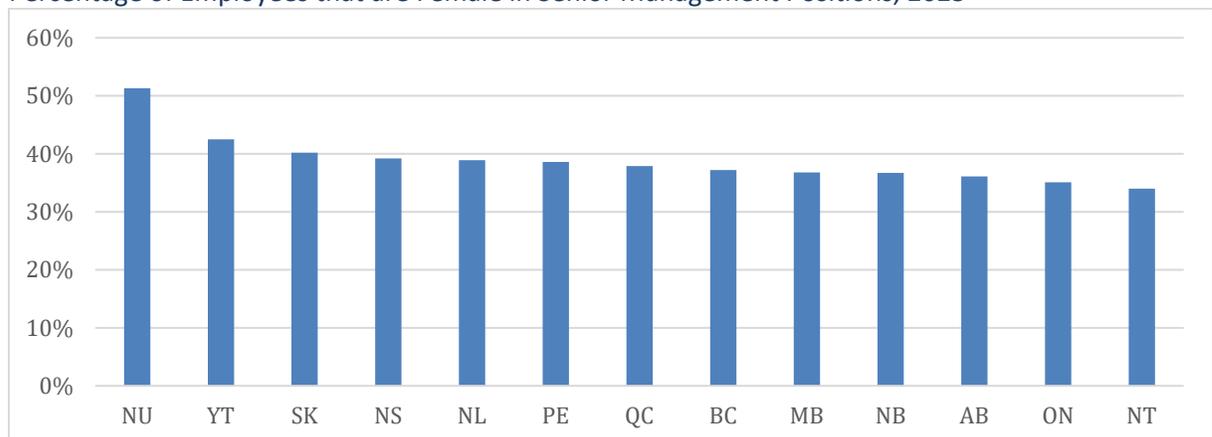


Source: 2024 NWT Community Survey

MANAGEMENT

At 34%, the NWT had the lowest rate of senior management positions filled by females amongst the territories and provinces. Nunavut was the only jurisdiction with over 50% of senior management positions filled by women.

Percentage of Employees that are Female in Senior Management Positions, 2025



Source: Statistics Canada, 2025 Canadian Survey on Business Conditions, first quarter of 2025

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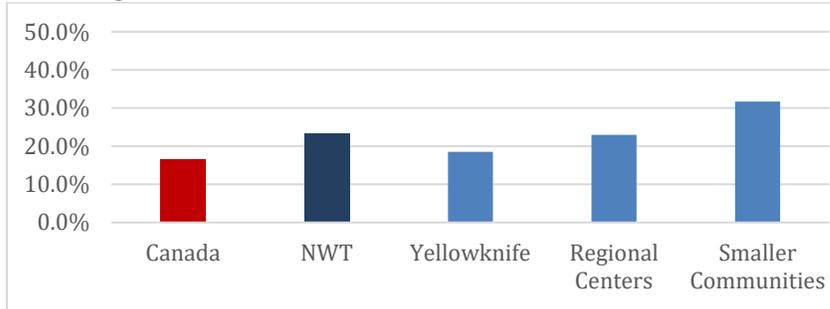
Families

FAMILIES

In 2020, the NWT had the highest family median income of all Canadian provinces and territories at \$156,000. Median income in woman+ lone-parent families was \$79,500, compared to a median income of \$98,000 for man+ lone-parent families.

NWT had a higher proportion of lone parent families than Canada with one in three families in smaller NWT communities led by a single parent.

Percentage of NWT Families that are Lone Parents, 2021



Source: 2021 Census, Statistics Canada

- Single parent families in the NWT were 73% lone-woman+ and 27% lone-man+.

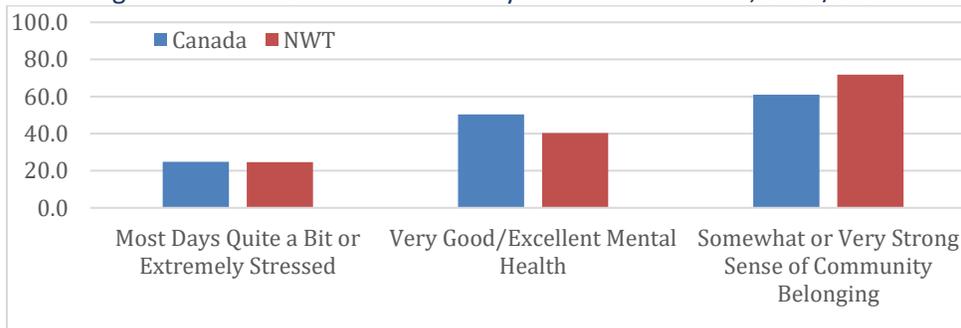
Health & Wellness

HEALTH & WELLNESS

A variety of indicators can be used to help measure the health and wellness of a population, including measures of stress, mental health and a sense of community belonging.

Approximately 25% of females in Canada and in the NWT 18 years and older indicated that they were quite a bit or extremely stressed most days. Canadian females rated their mental health above that of NWT females, with 50% in very good or excellent mental health nation-wide vs. 40% in the NWT. NWT females felt a stronger sense of connection to their community with over 72% indicating a somewhat or very strong connection compared to the Canadian rate of 61%.

Percentage of Females 18 Years & Older by Selected Indicators, 2023/2024



Source: 2023/20 Canadian Community Health Survey

In looking at health indicators, and healthy behaviors in particular, differences of note exist between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous women+ in the NWT.

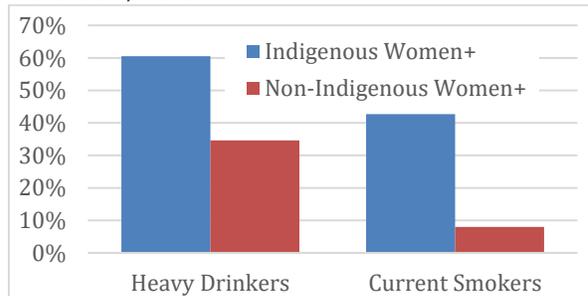
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Health & Wellness

While more NWT Non-Indigenous women+ drank alcohol (82.4% vs. 56.7%), Non-Indigenous women+ drank less frequently and consumed less when they did drink.

Of current drinkers, 60% of NWT Indigenous women+ were considered heavy drinkers compared to 35% of NWT Non-Indigenous women+.

Percentage of NWT Women+ by Selected Health Indicators, 2023



Source: 2023 NWT Tobacco, Alcohol and Drug Survey

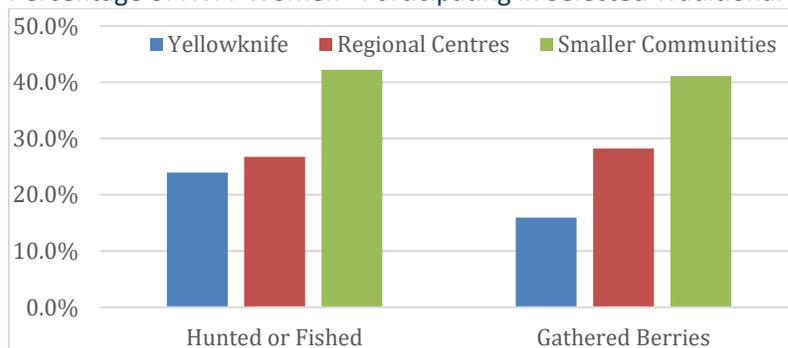
- Heavy drinking is defined for women+ as consuming four or more drinks on one occasion at least once per month.
- In 2023, 43% of Indigenous women+ in the NWT were daily or occasional smokers, a drop from 59% in 2002.

While smoking rates have dropped historically in the NWT, the use of marijuana has increased. In 2023, after its legalization, 29% of women+ had used marijuana in the past 12 months, up from 16% in 2002. Rates of marijuana use increased for both Indigenous and Non-Indigenous NWT women+.

TRADITIONAL ACTIVITIES

Women+ living outside of Yellowknife were more likely to participate in traditional activities such as fishing and hunting, gathering berries and doing arts and crafts.

Percentage of NWT Women+ Participating in Selected Traditional Activities, 2024



Source: 2024 NWT Community Survey

- Indigenous women+ in the NWT were more likely to be active in traditional activities like fishing and hunting, or berry picking than Non-Indigenous women+.

Over the past 20 years, participation in hunting or fishing fell slightly in the NWT. In 2024, 36.4% of those over the age of 15 hunted or fished compared to 42.0% in 1999. Indigenous men+ (55%) and Indigenous women+ (38%) were more likely to have hunted or fished in 2024 than their Non-Indigenous counterparts.

Approximately 1 in 4 NWT Indigenous women+ (26.3%) indicated they were involved in making or producing arts or crafts, with sewing or making jewelry the most common. Of the over 4,000 NWT women+ involved in arts or crafts in 2024, 24.0% had sold their work.

Traditional Activities

WOMEN IN THE NWT - SUMMARY

Contact

CONTACT INFORMATION

Please contact the NWT Bureau of Statistics for more information on any of the topics provided in this summary.

Phone: (867) 767-9169
Toll-free: 1-888-STATSNT (1-888-782-8768)
Website: www.statsnwt.ca

ⁱ Female+/Women+ includes cisgender women, transgender women, and some non-binary people.
Male+/Men+ includes cisgender men, transgender men, and some non-binary people.