



Northern Market Basket Measure

Northwest Territories, 2022

Today Statistics Canada released 2022 poverty estimates for Yukon, Northwest Territories (NWT) and Nunavut using the Northern Market Basket Measure (MBM-N).¹ The MBM (as used in the rest of Canada) and MBM-N are based on the cost of a basket of goods (threshold) that represents a modest, basic standard of living. Anyone with a disposable income below this threshold is considered to be in poverty.

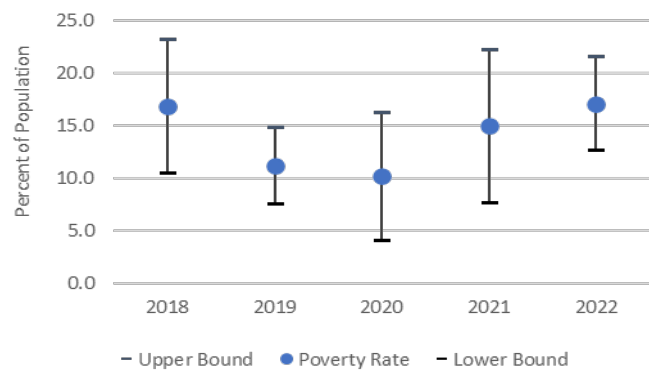
Estimates for 2022 indicate 17.1% of the NWT population, or approximately 7,300 people, were in poverty. However, this estimate could be anywhere between 12.7% (lower bound) and 21.6% (upper bound) (Figure 1).

The Canadian Income Survey (CIS) is used to assess the income levels needed to calculate poverty estimates. Due to the relatively small sample size in the NWT, poverty estimates tend to have high variability from one year to the next.

Although the results show poverty rates increased in 2022, the change was not statistically significant, meaning the upper and lower bounds overlap.

Among the three territories, Nunavut had the highest poverty rate with 44.5%, while Yukon had the lowest at 12.9%. Poverty estimates for the provinces based on the CIS were released earlier in the year. In 2022, provincial estimates ranged from 6.6% in Quebec to 13.1% in Nova Scotia. All provinces experienced an increase in rates during 2022.

Figure 1. Percent of Population in Poverty
NWT, 2018 to 2022



¹ As part of the *Poverty Reduction Act*, Canada adopted the Market Basket Measure (MBM) as their official measure of poverty. Conceptually, poverty estimates for the NWT and Yukon are similar to what is produced for the provinces, however adjustments were made to address various aspects of Northern living. Additional adjustments were made for Nunavut.

**Table 1. Percentage of Persons in Poverty
Canada, Provinces, and Territories, 2021 and 2022**

	2021	2022
Canada	7.4	9.9
Northwest Territories ²	15.0	17.1
Yukon ²	7.7	12.9
Nunavut ²	39.7	44.5
Newfoundland & Labrador	8.1	9.8
Prince Edward Island	7.4	9.8
Nova Scotia	8.6	13.1
New Brunswick	6.7	10.9
Quebec	5.2	6.6
Ontario	7.7	10.9
Manitoba	8.8	11.5
Saskatchewan	9.1	11.1
Alberta	7.8	9.7
British Columbia	8.8	11.6

2. Based on MBM-N methodologies for Yukon, NWT and Nunavut.

To determine the number of people in poverty, income levels are compared to the threshold value. Table 2 shows the threshold values for each of the NWT regions. These thresholds represent the cost to meet the modest, basic standard of living for a family of 2 adults and 2 children, and include five broad categories: clothing, food, shelter, transportation and other. The thresholds were highest for the northern regions of Sahtu and Beaufort Delta and lowest in the Tłı̄chǫ. Yellowknife tended to have the lowest costs for many of the categories, however, it had the highest shelter cost among the regions. For comparison, the highest 2022 threshold among provincial cities was Calgary with \$55,771.

Table 2. 2022 Thresholds by NWT Region and Category

	Total	Clothing	Food	Shelter	Transportation	Other
	Dollars (\$)					
Beaufort Delta	\$80,064	\$4,361	\$22,679	\$23,590	\$7,093	\$22,340
Sahtu	\$81,150	\$4,111	\$24,839	\$20,971	\$7,476	\$23,752
Tłı̄chǫ	\$65,957	\$3,706	\$18,306	\$18,976	\$6,431	\$18,538
Dehcho	\$69,657	\$4,099	\$19,228	\$20,068	\$6,714	\$19,548
South Slave	\$65,967	\$3,843	\$17,680	\$20,093	\$6,168	\$18,182
Yellowknife	\$66,991	\$3,508	\$13,969	\$28,156	\$6,223	\$15,136

Note: data may not sum due to rounding

While thresholds are available at the sub-territorial level, poverty estimates are only available at the territorial level largely due to limitations of the CIS data.