



Northern Market Basket Measure

Northwest Territories, 2023

Statistics Canada has released 2023 Canadian, provincial, and territorial poverty estimates.¹ Poverty estimates are calculated by comparing disposable income with a threshold representing the cost to meet a modest, basic standard of living. Anyone with a disposable income below this threshold is considered to be in poverty.

In 2023, an estimated 17.0% of the Northwest Territories' (NWT) population, or approximately 7,200 people, were in poverty. Among the three territories, Nunavut's poverty rate was highest at 43.4%, while Yukon was lowest at 9.9%. Provincial estimates ranged from 7.4% in Quebec to 12.9% in both Nova Scotia and Saskatchewan.

Table 1. Percentage of Persons in Poverty
Provinces and Territories, 2023

	Percent (%)
Canada	10.2
Northwest Territories	17.0
Yukon	9.9
Nunavut	43.4
Newfoundland & Labrador	11.5
Prince Edward Island	11.3
Nova Scotia	12.9
New Brunswick	11.6
Quebec	7.4
Ontario	11.1
Manitoba	10.9
Saskatchewan	12.9
Alberta	8.9
British Columbia	11.3

¹ Statistics Canada uses the Northern Market Basket Measure (MBM-N) to measure poverty in the three territories, while the Market Basket Measure (MBM) is used in the provinces. The MBM-N and MBM are conceptually similar but adjustments are made to the MBM-N to address various aspects of northern living.

Poverty rates for the Northwest Territories are available going back to 2018. Although NWT poverty rates have fluctuated over time, these changes are not statistically significant as the upper and lower bounds of the confidence intervals overlap². In 2023, the NWT poverty estimate could be anywhere between 11.3% (lower bound) and 22.7% (upper bound).

The Canadian Income Survey (CIS) is used to assess the income levels needed to calculate poverty estimates and is only available at the territorial level in the NWT. However, poverty threshold values are available for each of the NWT regions (Table 2). These thresholds represent the cost to meet the modest, basic standard of living for a family of 2 adults and 2 children with five broad categories included: clothing, food, shelter, transportation, and other.

Poverty thresholds were highest for the Sahtu and Beaufort Delta regions and lowest in the South Slave. Yellowknife tended to have the lowest costs for many of the categories; however, it had the highest shelter cost among the regions.

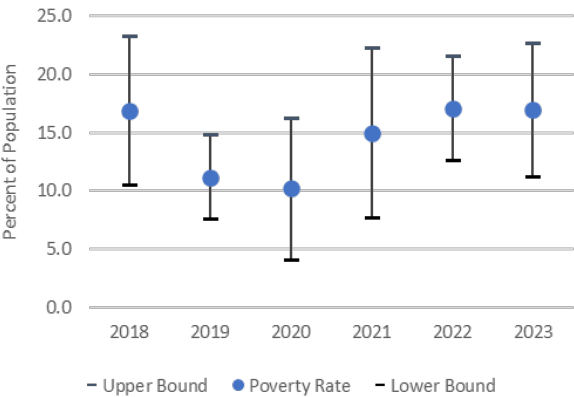
Table 2.
2023 Poverty Threshold by Category for a Family of 2 Adults & 2 Children, by Region

	Threshold Total	Clothing	Food	Shelter	Transportation	Other
	Dollars (\$)					
Beaufort Delta	\$84,516	\$4,491	\$25,325	\$24,367	\$7,257	\$23,076
Sahtu	\$85,816	\$4,234	\$27,738	\$21,662	\$7,649	\$24,534
Tłı̨chǫ	\$69,587	\$3,816	\$20,442	\$19,601	\$6,580	\$19,148
Dehcho	\$73,482	\$4,221	\$21,471	\$20,729	\$6,870	\$20,191
South Slave	\$69,547	\$3,957	\$19,743	\$20,754	\$6,311	\$18,781
Yellowknife	\$70,294	\$3,612	\$15,599	\$29,083	\$6,367	\$15,634

Note: data may not sum due to rounding

Among provincial cities, the highest 2023 poverty threshold was Vancouver at \$58,163, followed by Calgary (\$57,909) and Toronto (\$57,531), while Québec was lowest at \$47,768.

Figure 1. Percent of Persons in Poverty
NWT, 2018 to 2023



² The Canadian Income Survey 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.