

Housing Indicators

2019 NWT Community Survey

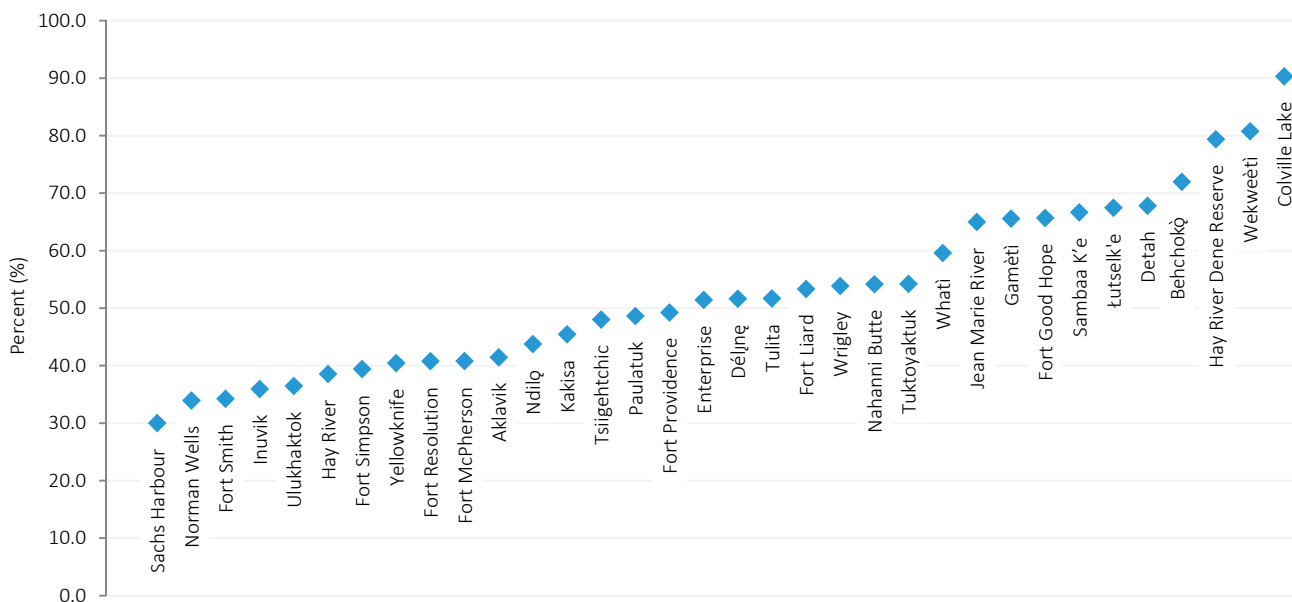
The Northwest Territories (NWT) Bureau of Statistics is releasing the second set of data products from the 2019 NWT Community Survey. This report focuses on nationally accepted housing indicators such as affordability, suitability and adequacy. Affordability is defined as spending less than 30% of the household income on housing costs. A house is considered to be adequate if it has running water and does not require major repairs. Suitability is defined as having the appropriate number of bedrooms for the characteristics and number of occupants.

Overview

In 2019, 6,308 (42.7%) of the 14,760 dwellings in the NWT had at least one housing problem. A house is considered to have a housing problem if it has an affordability, adequacy or suitability issue.

The proportion of dwellings with at least one housing problem in 2019 ranged from 30% in Sachs Harbour to 90% of houses in Colville Lake.

Figure 1: Percent of Dwellings with Housing Issues by NWT Community, 2019



Adequacy was the main contributor of housing problems in smaller communities with over 50% of dwellings in some communities requiring major repairs. Communities with the highest proportion of dwellings requiring major repairs included Colville Lake, Detah, Fort Good Hope, Hay River Dene Reserve, Jean Marie River, Łutsek'e, Nahanni Butte and Wekwèti.

Affordability was the main issue in most regional centers with nearly one in five Hay River households (19%) and one in three Yellowknife households (29%) spending 30% or more of their household income on housing costs.

Suitability issues were highest in the Tłıchq̓ region. In its largest community, Behchok̓, 39% of all households were not suitable.

Communities with relatively larger family sizes were more likely to have housing suitability issues. For instance, over 20% of households in Behchok̓, Colville Lake and Hay River Dene Reserve had 6 or more people living in the dwelling and higher rates of suitability problems.

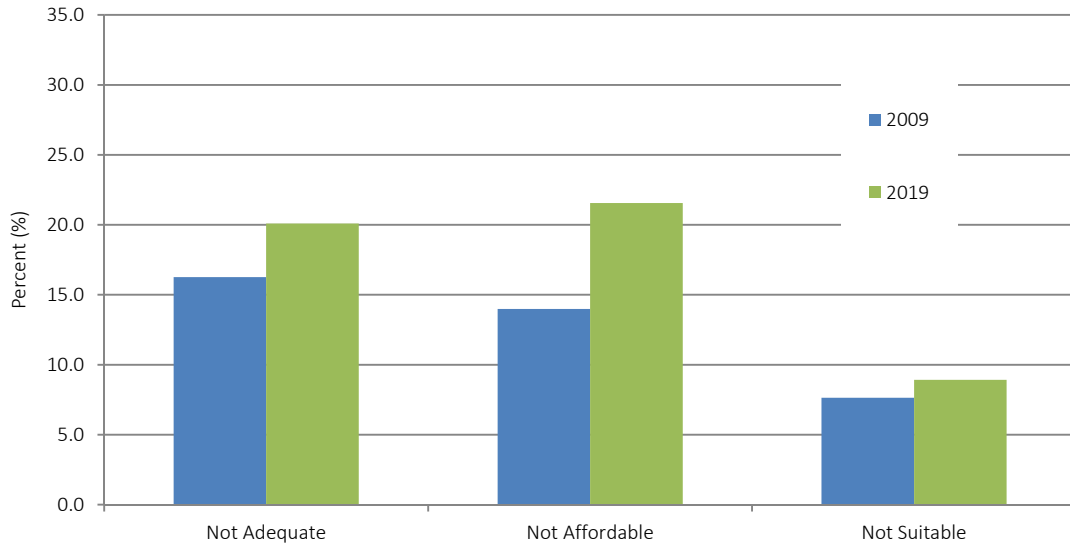
Table 1: Percent of Dwellings with Housing Issues by NWT Regions, 2019

	Total Households		Not Adequate		Not Affordable		Not Suitable	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Northwest Territories	14,760	100.0	2,965	20.1	3,182	21.6	1,318	8.9
Beaufort Delta	2,261	100.0	509	22.5	302	13.3	249	11.0
Inuvik	1,180	100.0	176	14.9	202	17.1	106	9.0
Smaller Communities	1,081	100.0	333	30.8	100	9.3	142	13.2
Dehcho	1,087	100.0	417	38.4	127	11.7	105	9.6
Fort Simpson	471	100.0	127	26.9	56	12.0	26	5.6
Smaller	616	100.0	291	47.2	70	11.4	79	12.8
Sahtu	816	100.0	320	39.3	93	11.4	102	12.5
Norman Wells	289	100.0	66	22.9	39	13.7	14	4.8
Smaller Communities	527	100.0	254	48.2	53	10.1	88	16.7
South Slave	2,691	100.0	602	22.4	459	17.1	150	5.6
Fort Smith	957	100.0	194	20.3	157	16.4	33	3.5
Hay River	1,383	100.0	260	18.8	264	19.1	81	5.9
Smaller Communities	351	100.0	149	42.4	39	11.1	36	10.2
Tłıchq̓	697	100.0	325	46.7	97	13.9	234	33.5
Behchok̓	471	100.0	215	45.7	71	15.0	184	39.1
Smaller Communities	226	100.0	110	48.8	26	11.7	50	21.9
Yellowknife Area	7,208	100.0	790	11.0	2,105	29.2	478	6.6

Historical Comparison

Approximately 43% of NWT dwellings in 2019 had at least one housing problem, compared to 32% in 2009. This increase of 11 percentage points over the 10 year period can be primarily attributed to rises in adequacy and affordability.

Figure 2: Percent of NWT Dwellings by Housing Problem, 2009 – 2019



Between 2009 and 2019, increases in housing problems in the larger NWT communities contributed to the rising rates. Over the 10 year period, the proportion of houses with affordability issues doubled in Yellowknife from 14% to 29%. Behchokò was the only regional centre to see a decrease in the proportion of houses not affordable (from 17% to 15%).

While adequacy issues continue to be the main housing problem in the smaller communities, Yellowknife saw a doubling of dwellings that were not adequate between 2009 and 2019.

Housing Tenure

In 2019, 54% of dwellings in the NWT were owned and 46% rented. Home ownership was most prevalent in Nahanni Butte where over 80% of all dwellings were owned by the occupants. Looking at regional centres, Hay River had the highest rates of home ownership (65%) while Inuvik and Norman Wells had the lowest (fewer than 40%).

Home owners were more likely to indicate they had no plans to move from their current dwelling compared to those in rentals. Only 31% of rental households were planning to stay in their current dwelling, compared to 53% of home owners. More than 40% of renters planned to move in less than 5 years. For those households considering a move, upgrading to a larger dwelling was selected most often as the reason to move.

Satisfaction

While close to 8 out of 10 households in the NWT were satisfied or very satisfied with their dwelling (78.8%), vast differences emerge when comparing communities. The highest levels of satisfaction were found in Norman Wells, Enterprise and Aklavik. In Colville Lake, Wekweètì, Nahanni Butte, and Jean Marie River, less than 50% of all households indicated they were satisfied with their current dwelling.

Households were asked to rate their satisfaction with certain aspects of their dwelling. Satisfaction was lowest for energy efficiency, being affordable and being able to maintain a comfortable temperature in the winter.

For additional information on housing results from the 2019 NWT Community Survey, visit the NWT Bureau of Statistics website at www.statsnwt.ca or call 1-888-STATSNT (1-888-762-8768). Releases on other topics such as Indigenous languages and traditional activities, financial security and additional housing indicators are forthcoming.