



REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROFILE

► SOUTH SLAVE



The Regional Economic Development Plans (REDPs) are a part of the Government of the Northwest Territories' (GNWT) mandate to diversify the Northwest Territories (NWT) economy. The profiles for each of the six NWT regions are designed to continue the discussion with key partners, invested northerners, and interested groups and organizations during the July to October 2022 engagement sessions.

These profiles are not complete. They provide basic overviews of initial research and conversations with Indigenous Governments and community leaders. We are looking for meaningful discussions and suggestions on additional opportunities and challenges as we work to finalize the profiles through the engagement sessions.

The South Slave Region is in the southeastern part of the Northwest Territories (NWT) and is bordered by the North Slave Region to the north, Alberta and Saskatchewan to the south, the Dehcho Region to the west and Nunavut to the east. The South Slave Region is situated along the south shore of Great Slave Lake and home to rivers, waterfalls, salt plains and abundant forests.

There are seven communities in the South Slave: Fort Resolution, Fort Smith, Hay River, K'atl'odeeche (Hay River Reserve), Kakisa, Enterprise and Fort Providence. The population of the region is 8,193 with communities ranging in size from the smallest, Kakisa with 36 people, to the largest, Hay River with 3,749 people. Hay River is the industrial and transportation hub for the region and Fort Smith is the education centre for the region.

There are no modern comprehensive, land, resources, and self-government treaties in the region, but three groups are currently negotiating agreements including: the Dehcho Process being negotiated by the Dehcho First Nation; the Akaitcho Dene First Nation, negotiating an Agreement-in-Principle, and the Northwest Territory Métis Nation (NTMN), which signed an Agreement-in-Principle in 2015. These agreements, once finalized, will establish land and resource ownership and local government, and provide for the active participation by beneficiaries in the co-management of land and resources within their respective claim areas.

The economy in the South Slave is the most diversified outside of Yellowknife. In addition to the public sector, the region also has well developed industries including transportation, education, manufacturing, tourism, retail, commercial fishing, trapping and traditional harvesting, and a growing agriculture industry. Historically, there has been oil and gas drilling and production in the region, as well as mining activities. There is potential for a new mine to open in the next few years.

The region is well-positioned to take advantage of the tremendous opportunities presented with its resources and geographical location in the NWT. Stakeholders and governments have identified some of the opportunities and that work is ongoing. There are barriers and challenges, such as access to land for development and the settlement of land claims.

SECTORS WITH GROWTH POTENTIAL

Transportation

Hay River is known as the transportation hub of the NWT and is home to the northern most rail line in Canada. The rail line, which is primarily used to ship fuel to the north, terminates in the Marine Transportation Company's (MTC) shipyard. Goods transported via rail to Hay River are often shipped to other destinations through other modes of transportation including, truck, barge or airplane.

- Any new mining development in the region, and potentially the territory, could benefit from accessing the rail line in Hay River to ship ore south. The expected re-opening of the Pine Point mine, for example, will see ore freight moved by rail to southern processing facilities. The rail line in Hay River will also play a vital role in shipping the ore mined at the Nechalacho rare earth elements project to southern jurisdictions.
- Work with CN Rail on the expansion of the Hay River Rail Line to serve resupply needs and expand the system per the demand.
- Work with the Canadian Coast Guard and Fisheries and Oceans Canada to sufficiently maintain federal community resupply port facilities and marine services in the NWT and restoring safe marine operating conditions in the Port of Hay River and at key sections of the Mackenzie River Corridor.

Tourism

The South Slave already benefits tremendously from a well-developed tourism sector but there is still room for growth. The region has great tourism infrastructure and good road access into the South Slave from other regions in the NWT as well as from Alberta and southern Canada.

- The South Slave is blessed with natural beauty with waterfalls, rivers, and national and territorial parks. There is sophisticated tourism infrastructure in place, including full-service park facilities offering water and electricity to campers.
- Indigenous/local culture provides arts and traditional crafts.
- Well-developed infrastructure allows for potential expansion in virtually any direction.

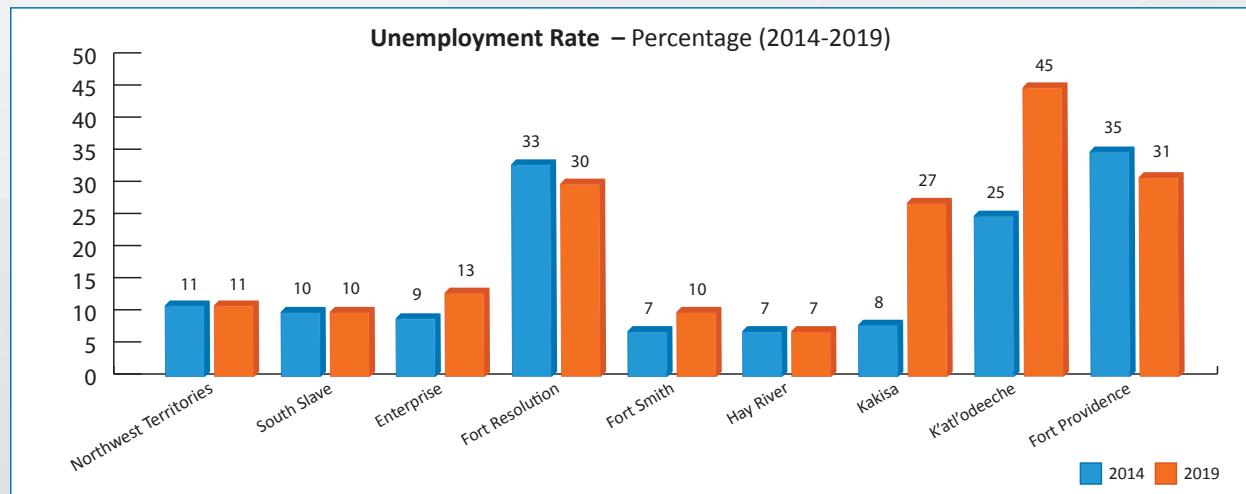
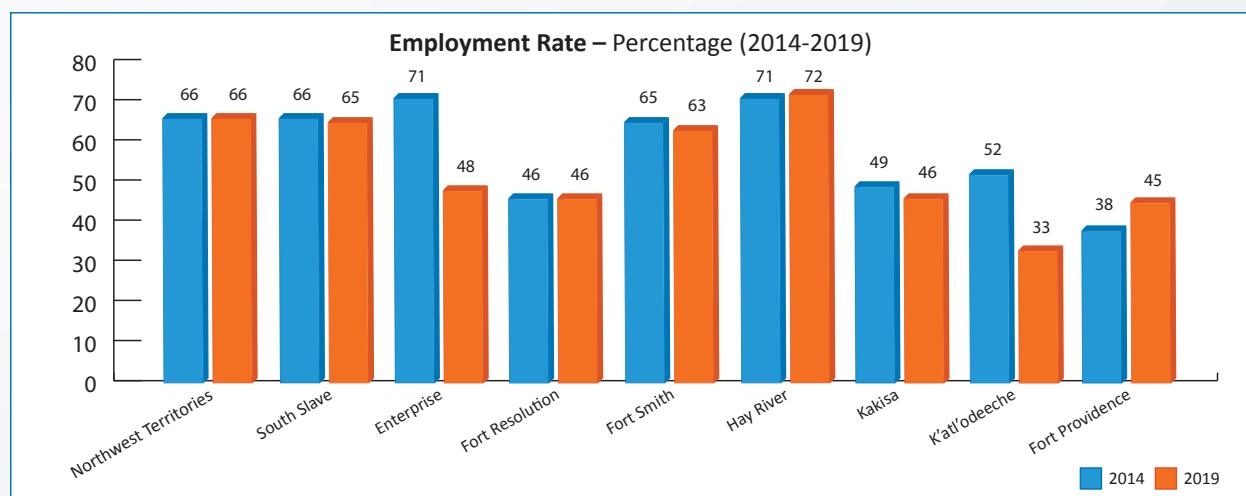
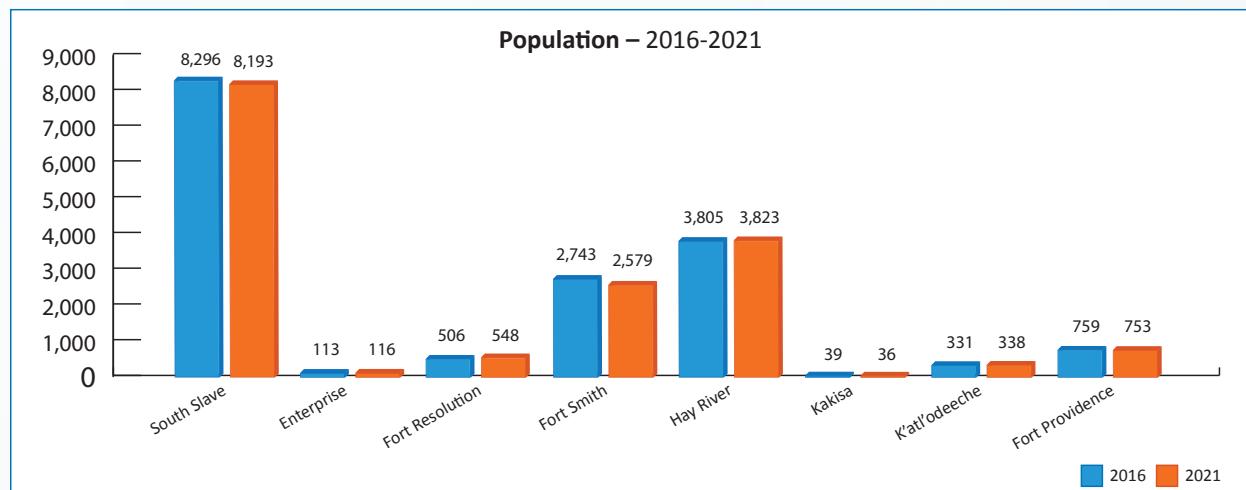
► SECTORS WITH GROWTH POTENTIAL

Agriculture

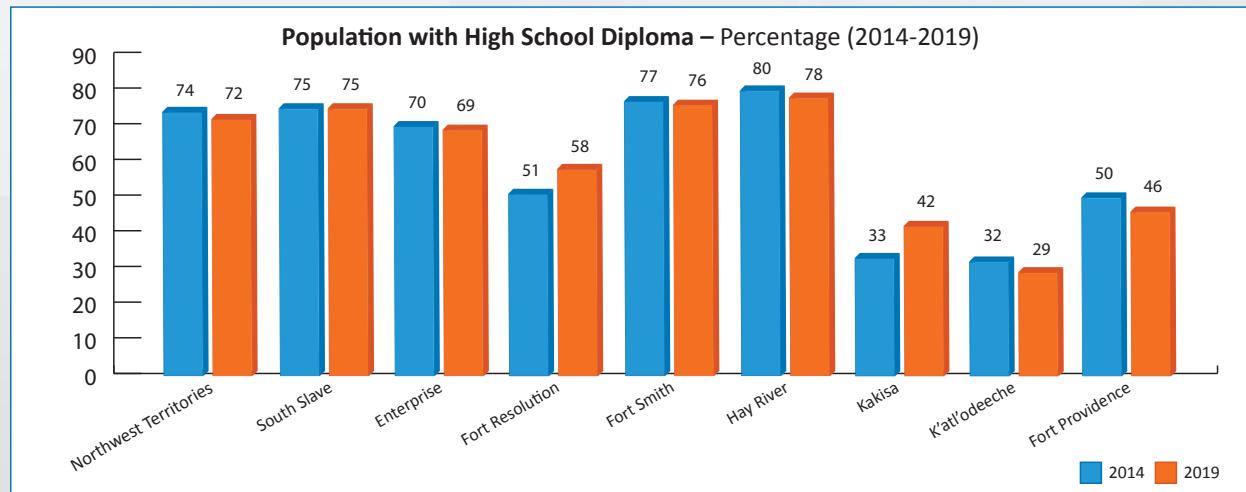
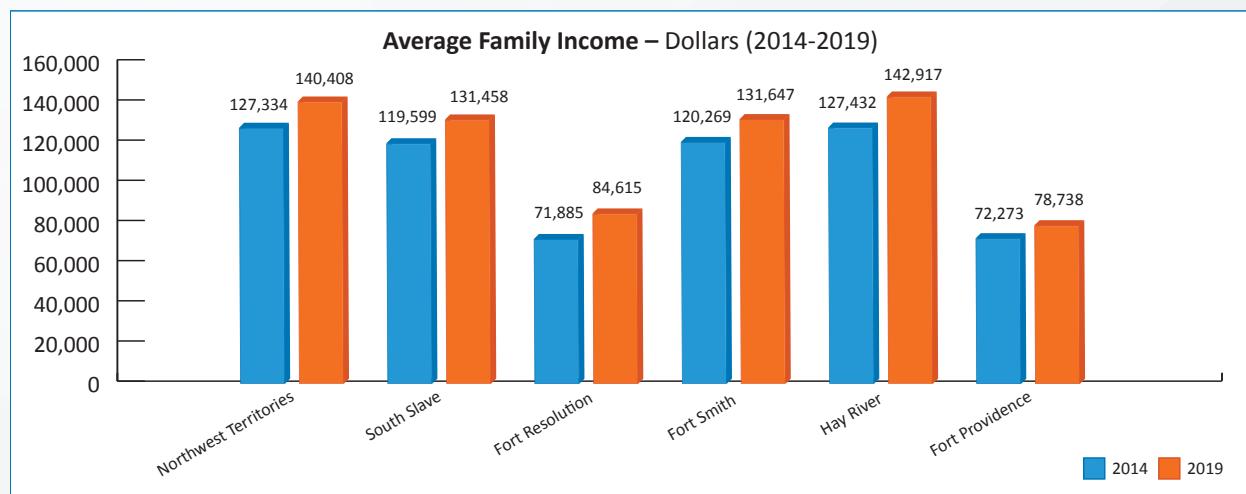
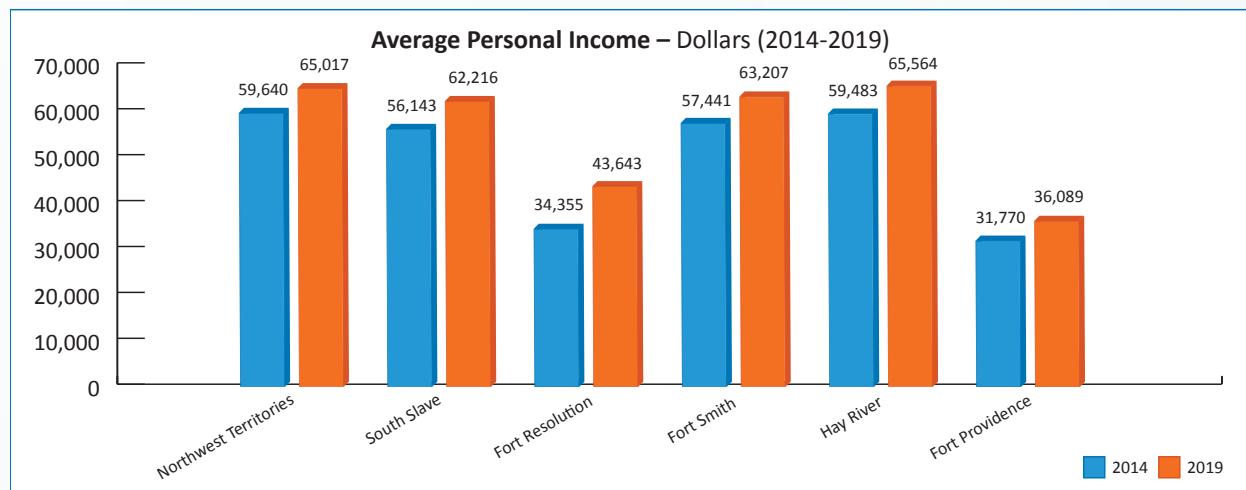
The South Slave has vast amounts of arable land and a temperate climate which provides the region with ideal conditions for agricultural activities.

- Hay River is home to the Northern Farm Training Institute (NFTI). Through the NFTI, students can take flexible and diverse training programs to develop the skills and knowledge to become successful farmers. NFTI also offers courses in other communities throughout the territory.
- The region currently has nine community and school gardens and 21 commercial producers, including seven in crop production, six in animal production, six in mixed production, and two in forest products. The floods from the river have decimated the sector, and it is currently in recovery.
- Hay River is home to the NWT's oldest farmers market, which is held at the Hay River Fisherman's Wharf where three of the South Slave's major producers had their start. There is also a compost production business which serves local demand and ships compost to Yellowknife.

SOUTH SLAVE REGION ECONOMIC INDICATORS



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NOTES

