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# ECONOMIC

Spring 2009

Business and Community  
Newsletter Exploring Economic  
and Market Trends in Canada's  
Northwest Territories

# Trends

## HOME PROFILES AND OWNERSHIP

Census Canada has just released a series of community economic profiles for the NWT and Canada. In total there are close to 5,400 communities, including large and smaller metropolitan areas. Every community in the NWT is covered.

Table 1 lists community home ownership information from these profiles. The table shows that residents of Yellowknife and Inuvik are more likely to reside in row housing or apartments than residents of other communities. Row housing and apartments tend to be more cost efficient to construct and operate.

On the other hand, residents in smaller communities (all other) have a significantly higher tendency to live in single, detached homes (78% compared to a NWT average of 60%).

Home ownership is highest in Fort Smith and Hay River. The lowest percentages of ownership are in Inuvik and Norman Wells. Home ownership rates in other communities are fairly consistent.

Census also provides data on the age of community housing. This provides some indication of new growth and investment. Newer housing should also be more energy efficient and in better condition. As shown in the table, the NWT oldest housing stock is in the communities of Hay River, Fort Smith and Inuvik (in all these communities over 2/3 of dwellings were built prior to 1986).

By comparison, only 43% of the dwellings in "other (smaller) communities" was built prior to 1986.

**Table 1: Basic Community Home Ownership Profiles in the NWT**

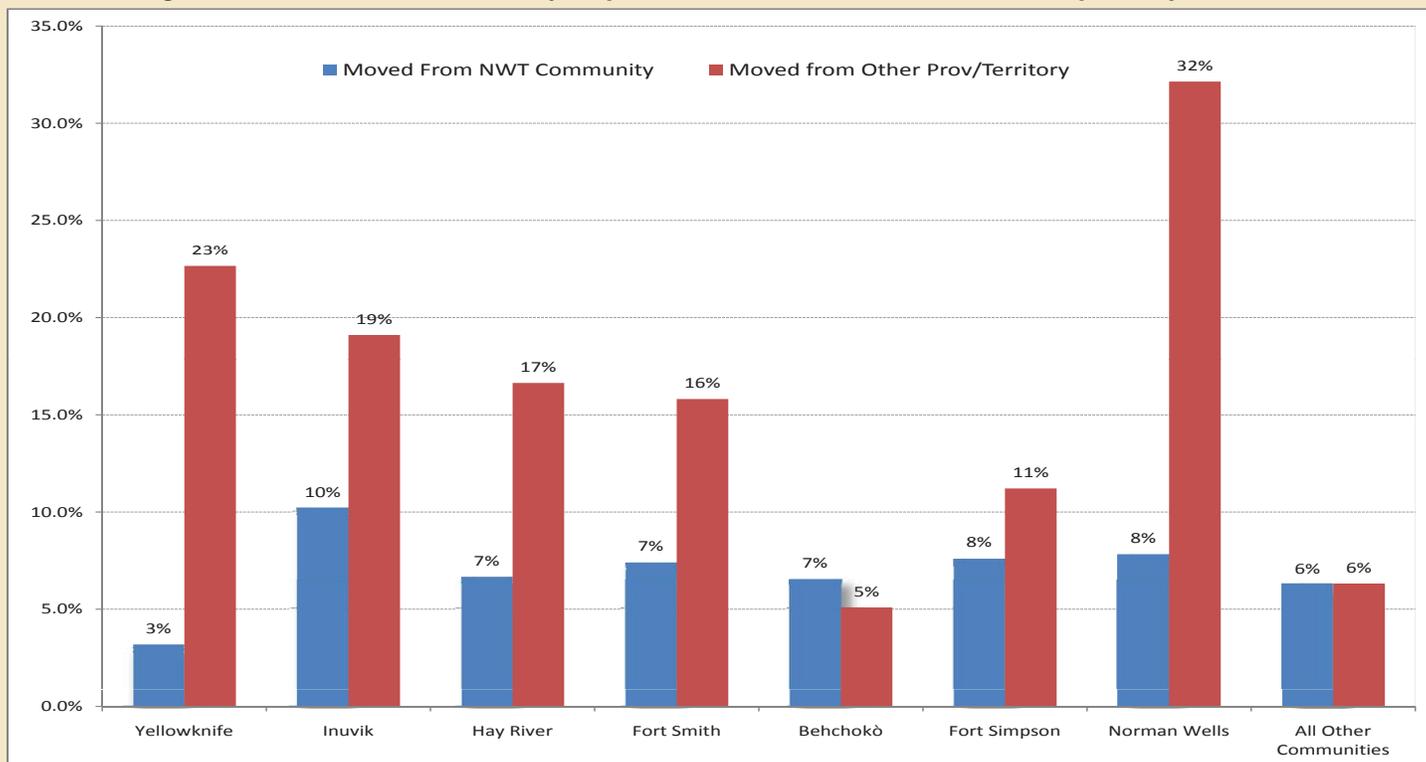
	NWT	Yellowknife	Inuvik	Hay River	Fort Smith	Behchokò	Fort Simpson	Norman Wells	All Other
Total private dwellings	14,235	6,630	1,250	1,320	865	450	435	305	2,980
# Single Detached	8484	3249	520	1030	550	340	275	195	2,326
% of homes detached	60%	49%	42%	78%	64%	76%	63%	64%	78%
# of homes owned	7520	3555	425	875	525	240	245	115	1,540
% of home ownership	53%	54%	34%	66%	61%	53%	56%	38%	52%
% of homes built before 1986	56%	54%	72%	70%	70%	48%	49%	64%	43%

Source: Statistics Canada: <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/>.

Profiles for NWT communities have been compiled into an Excel spreadsheet for the NWT. This can be downloaded from the Industry, Tourism and Investment web site.

# MOBILITY PATTERNS IN THE NWT

**Chart 1: Origin and Percent of Community Population which has moved over the past 5 years**



Source: 2006 Census Community Profiles

The 2006 census included questions on mobility. As shown in Table 2, below, the highest number of people moving within the NWT went to Yellowknife. Inuvik was second, with 320 NWT migrants, followed by Hay River. There has also been significant movement between smaller communities (540).

Chart 1 plots the mobility of residents as a percentage of community populations. The chart shows that Inuvik has the highest percentage of residents from other NWT communities, followed by Fort Simpson and Norman Wells. Overall, migration to Yellowknife from other NWT communities has a relatively minor impact on city

population. In comparison, 23% of the city's population originated outside the NWT over the past five years.

A significant portion of Behchokò's population, 67%, has not moved residence or communities in five years. The percentage is the same in "other" communities.

Migration from other provinces is important to all regional centres except Behchokò. Almost 1/3 of Norman Well's population originated outside the NWT. Yellowknife was also high with 23% provincial migration.

**Table 2: Mobility over the past 5 years**

	NWT	Yellowknife	Inuvik	Hay River	Fort Smith	Behchokò	Fort Simpson	Norman Wells	All Other
<b>Over 5 years</b>									
<b>Total population 5 years and over</b>	37,825	17,145	3,140	3,365	2150	1670	1115	700	8,540
<b>Lived at the same address</b>	18995	7200	1140	1765	1130	1120	630	280	5,730
<b>Non-mobile Percent</b>	50%	42%	36%	52%	53%	67%	57%	40%	67%
<b>Moved from other NWT Community</b>	2,035	545	320	225	160	110	85	55	535
<b>% from other NWT Community</b>	5%	3%	10%	7%	7%	7%	8%	8%	6%
<b>Lived in a different province</b>	6,360	3,885	600	560	340	85	125	225	540
<b>% from a other province</b>	17%	23%	19%	17%	16%	5%	11%	32%	6%
<b>Lived in a different country</b>	695	555	45	30	15	10	10	15	15

Source: 2006 Census Community Profiles

## WEAKENING ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE

Retail trade is impacted by seasonality, personal disposable incomes, and population. In the NWT and Canada, Christmas is the peak period. As shown in the table, month to month sales have declined this year. More importantly, there was a significant decline from last year in November. This may reflect the initial impact of declining world economic conditions on NWT consumers.

Wholesale trade has declined significantly, almost 20% this November. Total sales have declined \$10 million since September.

Manufacturing has continued its sharp decline, as problems persist with the diamond manufacturing industry. November shipments were only 42% of those in September. Monthly sales were also down 42% compared to the previous year.

Statistics for the other two indicators are not as current. Labour income from July to September actually shows significant growth over the previous year; anywhere from 4-6% a month.

Oil and gas production continues to decline, down 21-28% in value from last year.

Northwest Territories, All Stores (Seasonally Adjusted)		
		% Change from Prev Year
<b>Retail Trade in \$'000 (2008)</b>		
Nov	56,426	-7.4
Oct	58,930	2.8
Sep	59,765	5.5
<b>Wholesale Trade in \$'000 (2008)</b>		
Nov	47,364	-19.5
Oct	49,459	-14.8
Sep	58,091	7.8
<b>Manufacturing Shipments in \$'000 (2008)</b>		
Nov	1473	-42
Oct	1628	-60.3
Sep	3453	32.6
<b>Value of Labour Income in \$'000 (2008)</b>		
Sep	177891	3.8
Aug	179080	6.3
Jul	175375	5.6
<b>Value of Oil and Gas Production \$'000 (2008)</b>		
Aug	17062	-20.5
Jul	16859	-26.5
Jun	16479	-28.3

Source: NWT Bureau of Statistics

## IMMIGRANTS INTO THE NWT

	NWT	Yellowknife	Inuvik	Hay River	Fort Smith	Behchokò	Fort Simpson	Norman Wells	All Other
<b>Total population</b>	41,060	18,510	3,430	3,610	2,315	1,885	1,195	765	9,350
<b>Non-immigrants</b>	37,985	16,155	3,250	3,385	2,185	1,865	1,155	720	9,270
<b>Immigrants</b>	2,810	2,140	170	215	120	15	35	35	80
<b>Before 1991</b>	1,465	1,015	110	145	80	10	25	20	60
<b>1991 to 2000</b>	745	615	30	50	25	10	-	10	5
<b>2001 to 2006</b>	600	510	25	25	15	-	10	10	5
<b>Share of Immigrants to NWT</b>	100%	76%	6%	8%	4%	1%	1%	1%	3%

Source: 2006 Census Community Profiles

Immigrants play an important role in economic development. Typically they bring new skills and ambition into the local economy.

Before 1991 there were significant numbers of immigrants moving into smaller communities. Most of this movement stopped after 1991. Migrants represent a significant opportunity to bring new skills and investment into the community. Sig Phillips in Fort Providence, the Kaiser family in Fort Smith and others all added to significant community growth and development.

In fact, Yellowknife accounts as the preferred destination for 76%, or 2,140, immigrants to the NWT. This represents over \$47 million in additional transfer payments from the Government of Canada.



## NEW RELEASES

The NWT Bureau of Statistics recently released Consumer Price Index (CPI) numbers for 2008.

Upcoming releases of interest to the Business Population in the NWT include:

- 1) Public and Private Investments in the NWT and Canada for 2008 and projections for 2009, released on February 25
- 2) Gross Domestic Product (GDP) numbers for 2008, released by end of April.
- 3) Community population estimates for 2008 will be released by end of March.

Visit the NWT Bureau of Statistics website to access this data: <http://www.stats.gov.nt.ca/>

The GNWT seeks input on proposed changes to procurement policy. To view document please visit <http://www.iti.gov.nt.ca/mediaroom/whatsnew.shtml#2009-01-29>

# CALENDAR

*A listing of business and economic related forums scheduled for the upcoming months in the NWT.*

# OF EVENTS

*NWT Chamber of Commerce Annual General Meeting - Fort Smith - March 30-31  
For more information contact John Curran at (867) 920-9505*

*Hay River Chamber of Commerce is having their 2009 Gala Awards Dinner - Hay River Community Hall - February 20  
For more information contact Stephanie Fisher at (867) 874-2565*

*Meet the North 2009 - Edmonton - May 11-14  
For more information visit <http://www.meetthenorth.com/>*

*YK Chamber of Commerce is having their Spring Tradeshow - Yellowknife - May 9-10  
For more information visit <http://ykchamber.com/spring-trade-show> or call (867) 920-4640  
(867) 874-2565*

*Bizpal Launch for Hay River and Fort Smith - February 27  
For more information contact Terry Lancaster at (867) 873-7360*

*GNWT Seeks Input on Proposed Changes to the Business Incentive Policy - Comments due by March 27  
For more information visit <http://www.iti.gov.nt.ca/mediaroom/whatsnew.shtml#2009-01-29> or call BIP Monitoring Office at (867) 873-7215*