



Tourism in the NWT

A Year In Review

2023 | 2024

Government of
Northwest Territories

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Overview

Tourism in the NWT showed continued recovery in 2023, building on the rebound seen in the 2022 season. Travel restrictions related to COVID-19 were in effect until April 1, 2022. Based on available data, the NWT is returning to pre-pandemic visitor levels.



72,000
Visitors
13% growth compared to 2022



Key Tourism Indicators

Timing for most indicators is April 1, 2023 to March 31, 2024 unless otherwise noted.

The data comes from a variety of sources and maybe subject to ongoing revisions from suppliers. Data sources may be available monthly, quarterly, annually or seasonally.

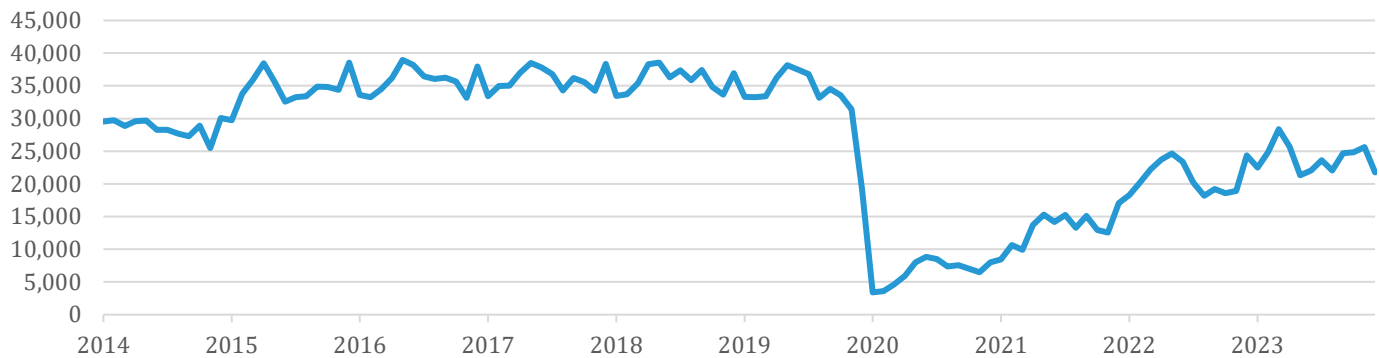
\$129MM
Visitor
Spending



13.4% growth compared to 2022

Visitor Travel And Activities

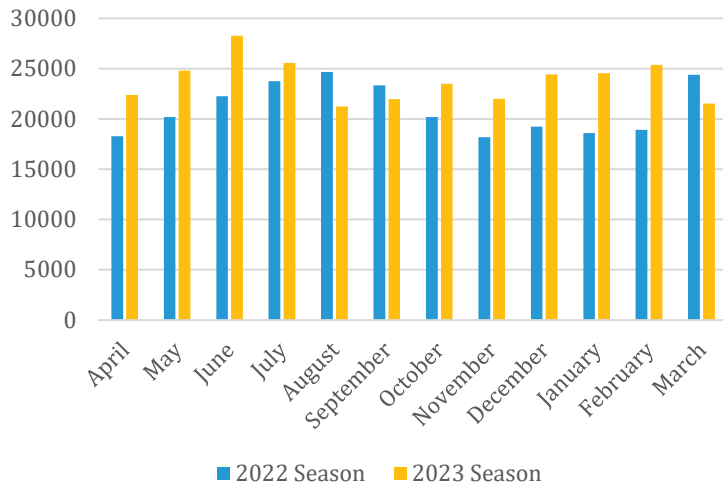
Monthly Air Passengers, April 2014 - March 2024



Air passenger volumes continue to recover from the covid lockdowns. Recovery has slowed in the last quarter of the 2023 season.

Achieving the pre-pandemic visitor volume of 35,000 by 2025 seemed feasible last year. However, media of the wildfires and evacuations likely hindered the recovery progress.

Air Passenger Volumes, 2022-2023

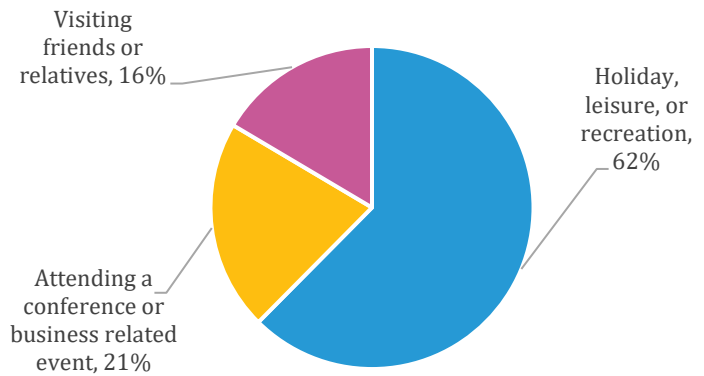


Seasonal travel increased through the summer of 2023 compared to 2022. Despite this, there was an unexpected decline in air passenger volumes in March, 2024. It is unclear whether this was part of a trend for a slower summer tourism season.

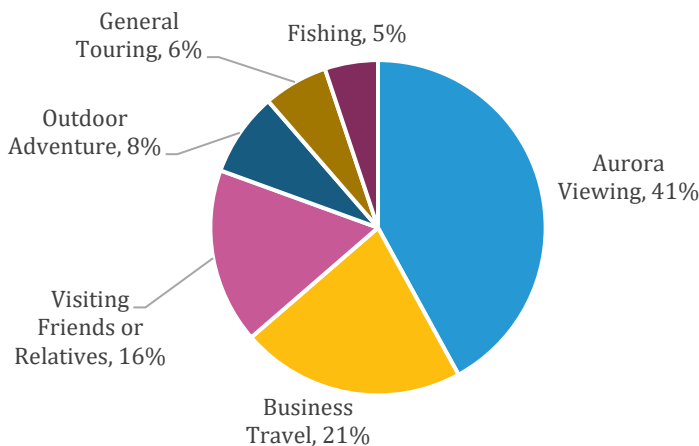
Note that the above figures include all travellers, including seasonal workers, relatives visiting family, and other no-tourist related travel.

61% of visitors reported holiday, leisure or recreation as the main purpose of their stay. Business travel remains to be a significant reason for visiting the NWT. Business travel accounts for 21% of visitors, comparable to 27% before the pandemic.

% of Visitors by Main Purpose of Trip



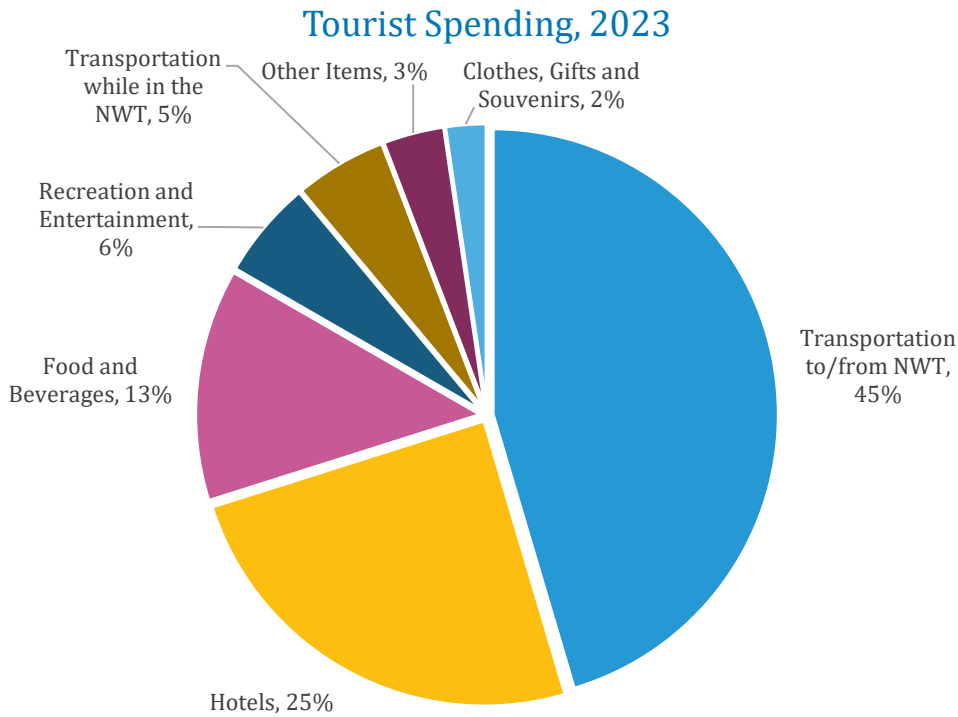
% of Visitors By Main Purpose of Travel



Non-residents over 18 reported a variety of activities they'd taking part in while in the NWT (excluding out of territory workers).

Aurora viewing remains the largest draw for tourists coming to the NWT, at 41%. Business travel and visiting friends or relatives were also core reasons tourists visited the NWT.

Tourist Spending

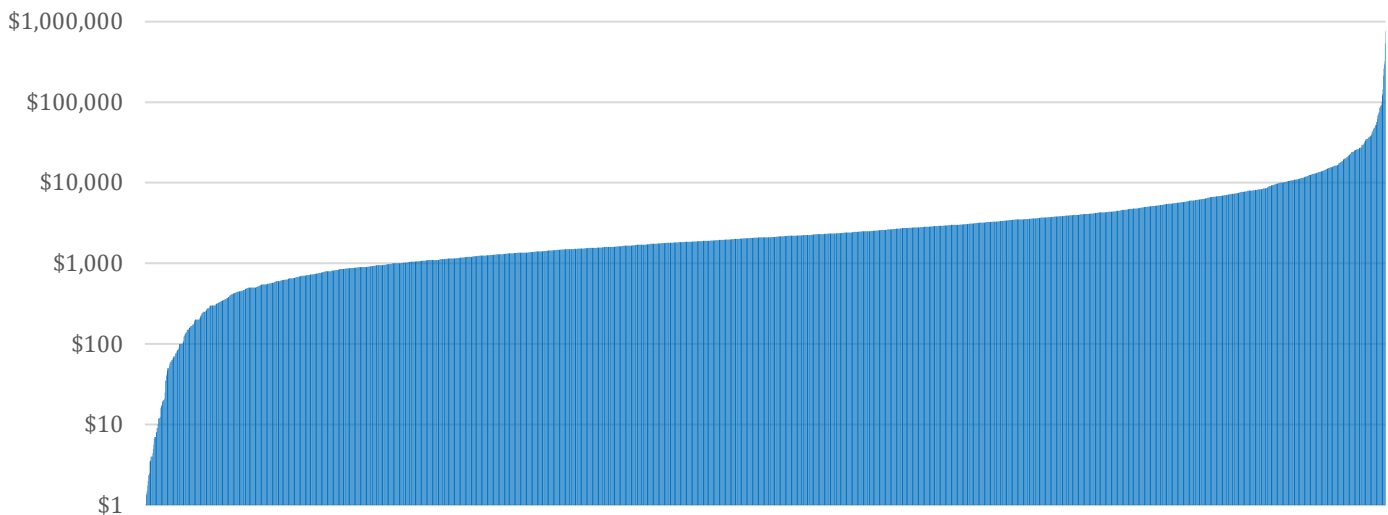


Median Tourist Budget

\$2100

Surveys report a wide range of travel and spending budgets across different types of tourists. Some tourists reported family supporting their travels. Others reported making investments or travelling for extended periods.

Distribution of Surveyed Tourist Budgets, 2023



Tourist Demographics

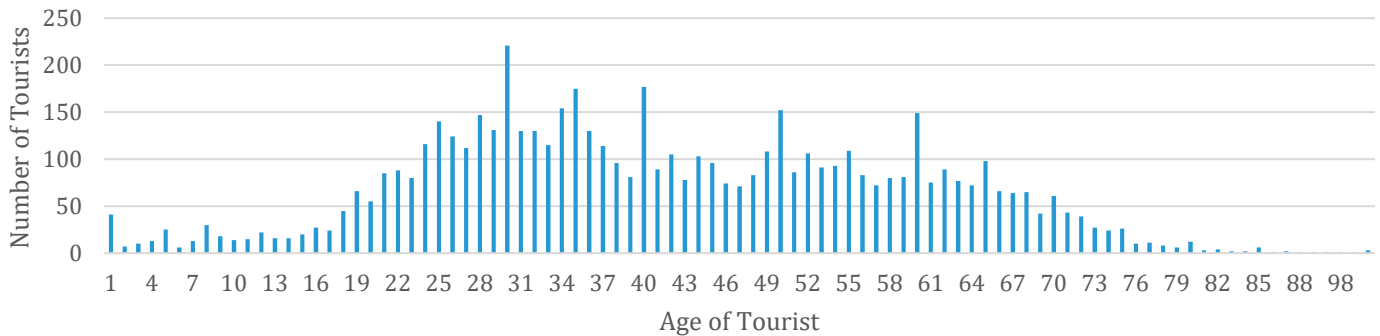


Average Age
41.7

Male to
Female Ratio
1:08

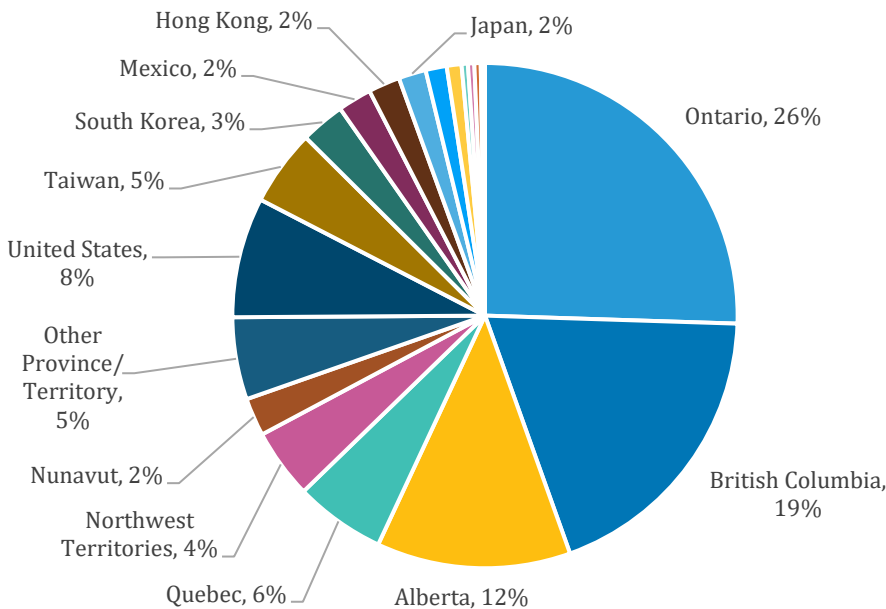
Tourists' ages are varied, with a strong showing from a tourist's early 20s to their early 70s.

Age Dispersion



Tourist Origins

Airport Exit Survey: Where do you live? Q1 2024



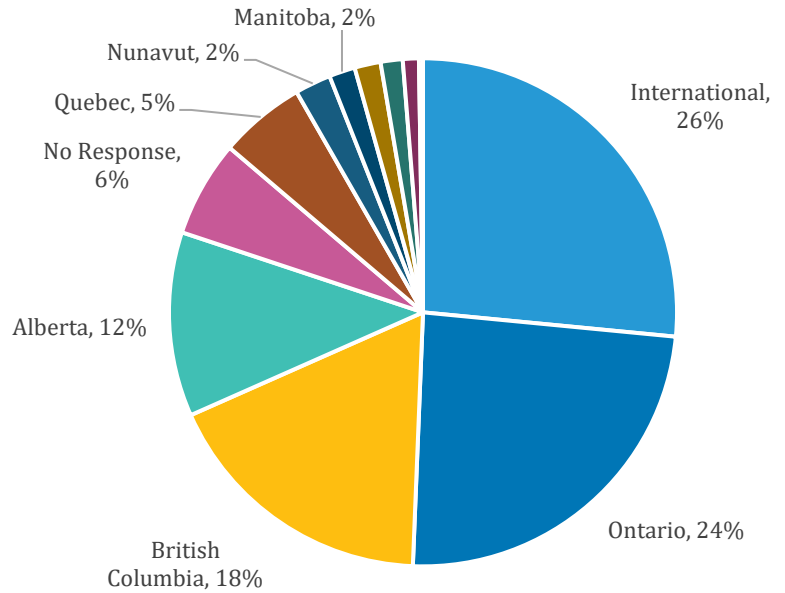
Canadians represented the bulk of tourists visiting the NWT. The United States continues to provide the majority of international tourists, with a strong presence of visitors from East Asia.

Visitor Origin

According to survey data, one quarter of outgoing air travellers are from Ontario and international regions. British Columbia and Alberta comprised 18% and 12% of travelers. The remainder of travellers being from other parts of Canada or giving no response.

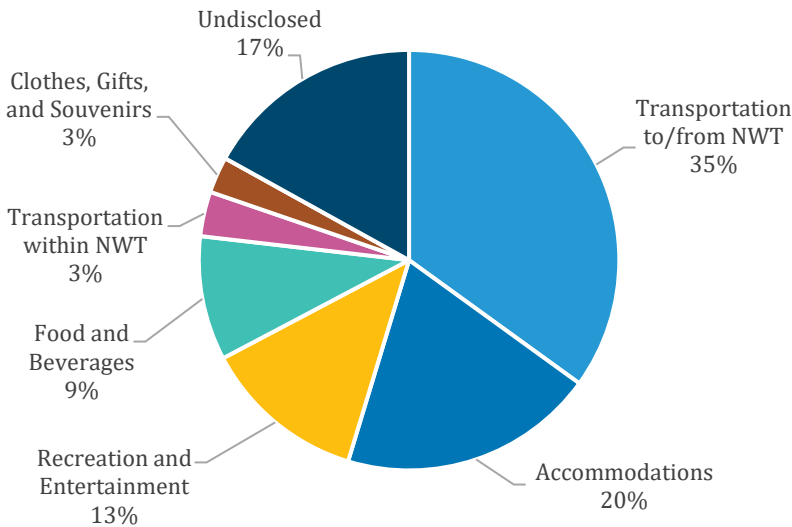
These results show that Canada continues to provide most of the NWT’s visitation and spending support. Meanwhile international travellers comprise an important section of that tourism support as well.

Airport Exit Survey: Place of Origin, Q1 2024



Visitor Spending

Airport Exit Survey: Distribution of Reported Spending, Q1 2024



Transportation was the main expense for NWT tourists, totaling 38% of all expenses. Accommodations followed at 20% of expenses.

**Note that undisclosed spending was the difference between total disclosed spending minus all the sub-categories of disclosed spending. Further, within the AES itself some survey respondents seemed to confuse “travelling party’s total spending” with individual spending, resulting in some skewed spending figures. For this reason, median spending figures for each sub-category were used instead of average spending.*

NWT Parks

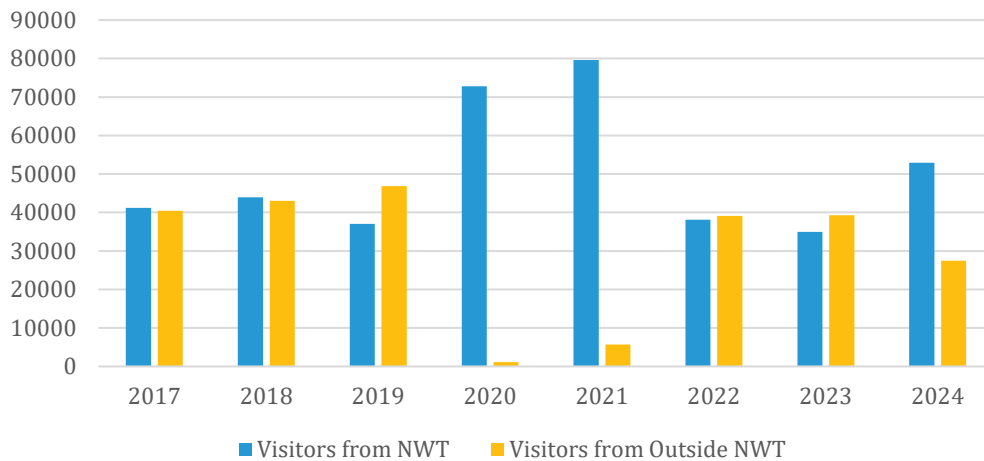
The 2023 season began with reservation levels comparable to those seen before the pandemic. Concerns surrounding wildfires caused cancellations during the busiest time of the year.

| NWT PARKS - ESTIMATED OVERNIGHT VISITORS BY REGION | | | | | | 2023 vs 2024 |
|--|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|
| | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | % Change |
| Beaufort Delta | 2,694 | 3,630 | 10,053 | 13,796 | 5,148 | -63% |
| Dehcho | 4,387 | 4,676 | 4,848 | 4,592 | 2,924 | -36% |
| North Slave | 47,898 | 54,674 | 36,322 | 30,521 | 51,508 | 69% |
| South Slave | 18,957 | 22,301 | 26,025 | 25,341 | 20,890 | -18% |
| Total Overnight Visitors | 73,936 | 85,282 | 77,248 | 74,250 | 80,470 | 8% |

Flooding and wildfires affected park visitations across the NWT in 2022 and 2023, and resulted in park closures. Park visitations near large communities usually include more NWT residents, and were less affected.



Number of Overnight Visitors

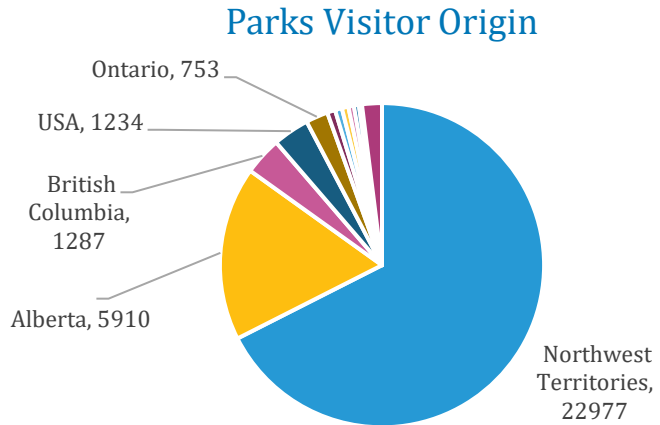


Visitors to NWT parks originated mostly from outside of the NWT, but within Canada.

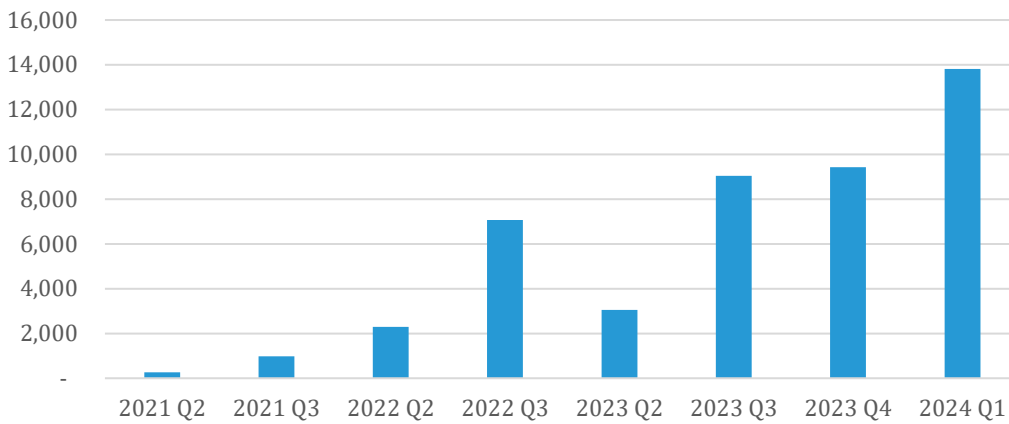
NWT Parks do attract US and international visitors. The share of total park visitors from outside Canada equalling 7% of visitors.

Visitor Information Centres (VICs)

Parks visitors report being mostly NWT residents, a sustaining trend for 2023. 30% of parks visitors were from Alberta and other Canadian provinces and territories. The United States and represented the largest international group of visitors.



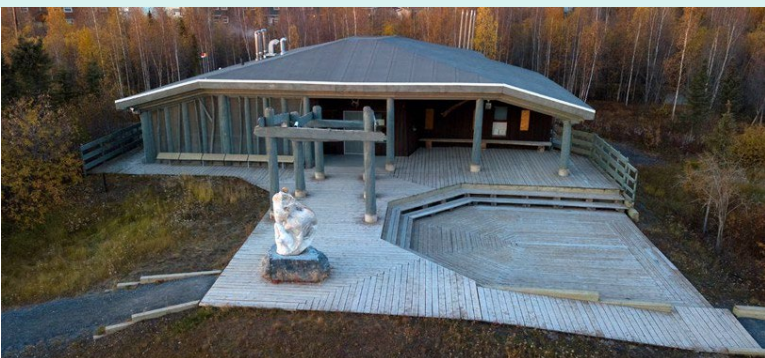
Visitor Information Centre Visits



Visitor Information Centre (VIC) visits continue to recover from Pandemic lows. This shows more visitors are using roads and parks across the NWT.*

**Note that due to reporting delays, not all VIC visitor data are captured in the graphic.*

Canada remains a key contributor to VIC visits. Large numbers of visitors to VICs were from other countries including USA, Japan, Korea and China.



VIC Visitor Country of Origin

