

Northwest Territories Immigration Strategy

PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT TECHNICAL
REPORT 2017 TO 2022

AUGUST | 2023

Government of
Northwest Territories



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English

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French

Kīspin ki nitawih̄tīn ē nīhīyawih̄k ōma ācimōwin, tipwāsinān.

Cree

Tłıchq̄ yatı k'èè. Dı wegodi newq̄ dè, gots'ō gonede.

Tłıchq̄

ʔerih̄t'is Dēne Sų́nė yatı t'a huts'elkēr xa beyáyatı theᓯᓯ ᓯat'e, nuwe ts'ēn yóttı.

Chipewyan

Edı gondı dehgáh got'je zhatıé k'éé edat'éh enahddhę nıde naxets'é edahıı.

South Slavey

K'áhshó got'jne xədə k'é hederı ʔedjht'é yerıııwę nıde dúle.

North Slavey

Jii gwandak izhii ginjık vat'atr'ijáhch'uu zhit yınohthan jı', diıts'at ginohkhii.

Gwich'in

Uvanittuaq ilitchurisukupku Inuvialuktun, ququaqłuta.

Inuvialuktun

Ć^bđ< ɳɳ^{sb}Δ^c ʌɾLJ&ɾ^c Δɔ^bɳɳ<^{sb}ɾLɳɳ^b, ɔ<^cɳ^aɔ^c ɔ^ıɳ<ɾ^aε^{sb}ɳɳ^c.

Inuktitut

Hapkua titiqqat pijumagupkit Inuinnaqtun, uvaptinnut hivajarlutit.

Inuinnaqtun

Indigenous Languages:

Indigenous.Languages@gov.nt.ca

French:

867-767-9348

866-561-1664 Toll Free

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Introduction

This document reports on the goals and objectives of the [Northwest Territories' Immigration Strategy 2017 to 2022: Building a Skilled Workforce and a Vibrant Economy](#) (the Strategy). The Strategy focuses on growing the population, assisting employers in meeting critical workforce needs and increasing investment in the Northwest Territories (NWT). The Strategy includes five goals, eight objectives and eighteen actions designed to assist in building a skilled workforce and diverse economy while setting the direction for immigration programs, policies, and services in the NWT.

The actions in the Strategy were designed to fill labour market needs, promote population growth, and increase business services available to NWT residents. The Strategy outlines the Northwest Territories Nominee Program (NTNP) as a tool to assist employers in recruiting and retaining foreign nationals to build a skilled workforce and improve the economic outlook of the NWT. The Strategy was also the blueprint to further enhance and develop the NWT's immigration programs and services as the NTNP is central to immigration activities in the NWT.

The GNWT recognizes that immigration is a tool to help grow the NWT economy. The Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) continues to support the skills development and employment needs of Northerners and views immigration as a complementary solution to the ongoing labour market needs and economic development in the NWT. Supporting and increasing immigration is aligned with territorial labour market and economic growth objectives and is needed to meet labour force requirements. Immigration is essential to building our workforce and growing our economy in the long-term.

Northwest Territories Nominee Program

Immigration is a shared responsibility between the Government of Canada and the GNWT. The Government of Canada has sole responsibility for determining who is admitted to Canada, immigration classes and setting annual immigration levels. The NTNP is designed to allow the NWT to provide a pathway to permanent residency to foreign nationals who have the skills, education, and work experience to contribute to the economy and who want to live in the NWT permanently.

The NTNP is the GNWT's only immigration program and is delivered by both the departments of Education, Culture and Employment (ECE) and Industry, Tourism, and Investment (ITI). The program currently has 3 streams. ECE leads the NTNP and administers the Employer-Driven and Francophone Streams while ITI administers the Business Stream.

NWT Economy, Population and Labour Market

Over the years, the NWT's economic outlook has seen a mix of growth and contraction across various sectors. The NWT's gross domestic product (GDP) significantly declined in 2019 and 2020, falling by more than 11%, due to disruptions in economic activity, but made a strong rebound in 2021. The NWT's GDP is forecast for growth in the coming years, albeit at a slower rate of approximately 1%. The GNWT recognizes that diversity is key to a resilient, sustainable economy, and is committed to supporting and developing key sectors, including through investment by foreign nationals, that benefit Northerners.

Population change is driven by a combination of births and deaths, as well as migration and immigration

gains and losses. Historically, NWT migratory figures have been largely accounted for by Alberta interprovincial migrants, closely followed by Ontario. The NWT population has shown gradual but continuous increases between 2017 and 2022. However, significantly more people migrate out of the NWT than those that migrate in. The NWT's population is not forecast to grow significantly in the next decade unless positive measures are taken to actively curb outmigration and build a more stable population base.

Table 2. Population Interprovincial Migration and Immigration 2018 to 2022

Year	Population	Net Interprovincial Migration	Net International
2022	45,605	-517	255
2021	45,597	-176	123
2020	45,346	-169	125
2019	45,070	-469	184
2018	44,981	-429	134

Source: NWT Bureau of Statistics

While labour market conditions and challenges vary across and within jurisdictions, labour market conditions in Canada and the NWT are tight. Labour market “tightness” refers to a situation where there are few available workers for available positions. This is in part due to an aging and retiring population. Policies and strategies that aim to attract skilled immigrants to the region can help to improve the economic outlook and build a strong and diversified workforce. Over the last five years, the labour force participation rate fell during 2020 but rebounded by 2022, while the unemployment rate saw some fluctuations. In the same period, the employment rate in the NWT remained relatively stable and consistently higher than the Canadian employment rate. The unemployment rate in the NWT has been somewhat more volatile than the Canadian unemployment rate between 2017 and 2020 but remained higher than the Canadian average.

Labour market conditions in the NWT vary between the capital and small communities. While 2021 indicators show positive trends in employment outside Yellowknife, employment indicators are lower in small communities due to more modest economic activity which limits employment opportunities.

Table 2: Participation, Unemployment and Employment NWT and Canada Comparison

Year	Northwest Territories			Canada		
	Participation	Unemployment	Employment	Participation	Unemployment	Employment
2017	71.8%	6.6%	67.1%	65.8%	6.3%	61.6%
2018	72.7%	6.9%	67.7%	65.4%	5.8%	61.6%
2019	72.2%	7.8%	66.6%	65.7%	5.7%	62%
2020	69.6%	8.5%	64%	64.1%	9.5%	58%
2021	73.2%	5.2%	69.4%	65.1%	7.5%	60.2%
2022	75.7%	5.5%	71.6%	65.4%	5.3%	62%

Source: NWT Bureau of Statistics & Statistics Canada

The Impact of COVID-19

Early 2020 marked the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic that led to world-wide lockdown measures and social distancing protocols, significantly disrupting the NWT's economic and social activity. With restrictions of movements of people across country borders, prospective applicants to the NTNP Business Stream were not able to conduct in-person visits to the NWT, which is an integral step in the application process. Therefore, the Business Stream paused intake in April 2020, and resumed operations again in April 2022. The hiatus did not significantly affect the number of nominees due to the requirement that the applicant's Business Performance Agreement must be in place for at least 18 months before the applicant is eligible for nomination. However, less nominees are expected in 2023-2024.

On the labour side, the impacts of COVID-19 pandemic created many challenges and some opportunities for foreign nationals looking to access permanent residency, as temporary policies were put in place by Government of Canada's Department of Immigration, Refugee and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) to enable temporary residents already working in Canada to apply for permanent residency. The labour market demand shifted during the early days of the pandemic, with some sectors of the economy growing (sanitation, security, delivery, and logistics) while others suffered greatly from the lockdowns (hospitality, tourism, restaurants, construction, transportation). The NTNP implemented temporary measures by pausing applications of prospective nominees who could not work and providing information on alternative programs to employers looking to recruit foreign nationals.

Methodology

Goal 1- Attract foreign nationals to the NWT whose skills are aligned with current workforce needs.

Data comes from the combined number of applications received by the Employer-Driven and Francophone streams and the number of nominations approved under these two streams captured by ECE.

Goal 2- Attract foreign investment to benefit the economy.

Data comes from the Business Stream program results captured by ITI.

Goal 3- Support and be responsive to settlement and integration needs.

The level of satisfaction with GNWT's responsiveness to the needs of stakeholders was determined through participation in and verbal feedback from the settlement and integration forums, such as the NWT Settlement and Integration Working Group.

The NWT Settlement and Integration Working Group meet twice a year and offers an opportunity for service provider organizations (SPOs) to provide input to GNWT on the gaps in settlement service offerings and the ongoing activities and success of the settlement sector of the NWT. The working group also offers an opportunity to provide feedback on potential areas of improvement and actions where the GNWT could support SPOs in promoting the NWT to foreign nationals.

Goal 4- Support the workforce by educating foreign nationals and NWT employers on workers' rights and responsibilities.

Nominees from 2017-2022 were surveyed regarding their level of awareness of workplace rights before and after participating in the NTNP. Employers who used NTNP between 2017-2022 were surveyed regarding their level of awareness of employer workplace responsibilities before and after participating in the NTNP. Survey questions can be found in [Appendix A](#).

Goal 5- Consolidate administrative efforts between ECE and ITI.

In February 2022, the GNWT initiated a review of the NTNP, intending to inform immigration priorities and potential changes in the GNWT's administration and delivery of the program, specifically the potential consolidation of the program into one department. An external consultant was contracted in March 2022 to gather feedback on how the NTNP could be improved. The results from the external review completed in May 2022 were used to assess stakeholders level satisfaction with the NTNP delivery.

Summary of Results

This report concludes that most goals and objectives laid out in the Strategy were successfully reached.

Goal 1: Attract foreign nationals to the NWT whose skills are aligned with current workforce needs.

The NTNP attracted foreign nationals to the NWT, indicated by the steady increase in applications received and approved from 2017 to 2022. The Employer-Driven Stream approved over 363 nominees in this period. Francophone applications show slight increases but remained low over the years with a total 16 approved nominations between 2017-2022.

Goal 2: Attract foreign investment to benefit the economy.

The NTNP attracted foreign investment to the NWT, indicated by approval of applicants to the Business Stream from 2017 to 2022. In this period, a total of just over \$4.5 million was invested by foreign nationals via the NTNP, resulting in a total of 17 nominees and their families settling in Yellowknife and Hay River. Businesses were primarily opened in accommodation and food services, tourism, arts, entertainment and recreation, and retail trade.

Goal 3: Support and be responsive to settlement and integration needs.

The GNWT was supportive and responsive to settlement and integration needs by being active members in several NWT settlement and integration forums and by creating resources for newcomers to the NWT.

Goal 4: Support the workforce by educating foreign nationals and NWT employers on workers' rights and responsibilities.

The GNWT was successful in increasing the level of awareness of workplace rights and responsibilities of foreign nationals and employers who use the NTNP. A survey showed that the level of awareness increased for both groups after using the NTNP.

Goal 5: Consolidate administrative efforts between ECE and ITI.

The GNWT took actions to consolidate the administrative efforts of ECE and ITI, most notably by launching a joint online application portal in 2020. Other actions included a joint communication plan to promote the program and ensuring that program guidelines are consistent between the streams and complemented each other.

Goal 1: Attract foreign nationals to the NWT whose skills are aligned with current workforce needs

Between 2017 and 2022, the NTNP's Employer-Driven Stream approved 363 nominees and accompanying them were 141 dependents, for a total of 504 individuals making the NWT their permanent home. To achieve this goal, two objectives were set.

Objective 1(a): To increase the number of approved nominees per year

Performance Measurement – Number of applicants to the NTNP, by stream

Table 3. Number of applications by the NTNP Employer-Driven Stream and approved between 2017-2022 calendar year

Year	Applications received	*Applications approved (Nominations)
2017	61	39
2018	45	28
2019	65	47
2020	67	77
2021	141	67
2022	142	105
**Total	521	363

*An approved application is a nomination

**The difference between applications received and approved is due to some applications being denied, withdrawn, or transferred to the next year while still being processed.

***The Francophone stream was launched in September 2022

Goal 1 includes a target to increase the number of approved nominees by 25% annually from 2017, until 2019. In 2017, the NTNP approved 39 applications, setting the target at 49 nominations for 2018 and 61 nominations for 2019.

Key actions taken to achieve objective 1(a):

- Partnered with community organizations promoting job opportunities in the NWT and on-going promotion of the NTNP;

- Through the Forum of Minister Responsible for Immigration (FRMI), NTNP staff participated in working groups to review and discuss policy updates, program integrity best practices and program design improvement ideas to ensure the NTNP is competitive with other jurisdictions and responsive to the NWT labour market;
- Implemented a comprehensive communications marketing Strategy in 2019 to promote the NTNP to both employers and foreign nationals at the local, national and international level; The marketing strategy included:
 - Updating the www.immigrateNWT.ca website to be more user friendly
 - Creating video testimonials of NTNP Clients
 - Creating promotional materials (FAQ's, Fact Sheets, Welcome to the NWT guide)
 - Creating social media accounts and maintain a social media presence
 - Holding Employer Information Sessions
 - Hosting Webinars for foreign nationals (Destination Canada in France, Belgium & Morocco)
- Promoted the program in 2019-2022 through social media platforms, Instagram and Facebook, with biweekly posts that promoted living, working and owning or operating a business in the NWT. In 2021 a LinkedIn page was created to reach new audiences; and
- Explored options to update the NTNP guidelines, design new streams and improve process to further assist employers in meeting their labour market needs and expand the pool of eligible foreign nationals to the NTNP.

Why report on this measure?

Comparing the applications received and approved from 2017 to 2022 gives a measure of success of both the marketing campaigns and the introduction of new program streams. It is important to note that the NTNP is demand driven and the number of applications received and approved was impacted by external factors, such as temporary policies implemented by IRCC, labour mobility and the COVID-19 pandemic.

What do the results of this measure tell us?

Despite losing some applications due to IRCC temporary public policy in 2021 and 2022, the Employer-Driven Stream showed continued growth throughout the years of the strategy.

The eligibility criteria of the Employer-Driven Stream changed in July 2017, stemming from client feedback, program integrity considerations and policy requirements of Government of Canada. The changes impacted the application intake to the Employer-Driven Stream which declined significantly in 2018.

The decrease in nominations for 2021 was due to a temporary program created by IRCC as a result of COVID-19 pandemic. Since nearly all the NTNP applicants became eligible to the temporary program, many applications and previously approved nominations were withdrawn by Nominees or revoked by IRCC in 2021 and 2022, as foreign nationals accessed permanent residency through this new program.

Updates to the NTNP guidelines were made in 2017, 2018, 2020, and 2022 as a result of client feedback, IRCC policy changes and labour market needs. It is worth noting that application denials decreased throughout the years of the Strategy.

Objective 1(b): To increase the number of approved Francophone nominees

Performance Measurement – Number of applicants to the NTNP, by stream

Table 4. Number of Francophone Applications received by the NTNP Employer-Driven Stream and approved from 2017-2022

Year	Francophone* Applications received	Francophone Applications approved
2017	3	0
2018	1	1
2019	4	0
2020	4	5
2021	9	3
2022	5	7
**Total	26	16

* A “Francophone” application is when the supporting documents submitted by foreign nationals for their nomination are in French.

**The difference between applications received and approved is due to some applications being denied, withdrawn, or transferred to the next year while still being processed.

Goal 1 includes a target to increase francophone applications by five percent per year until 2022. Although this target wasn’t met, there was an increase in Francophone applications over the duration of the Strategy.

Key actions taken to achieve objective 1(b):

- Developed French promotional material (FAQ’s, fact sheets, program guidelines, social media posts) www.immigratenwt.ca website and application portal;
- Developed a French “Welcome to the NWT” guide;
- Participated in the *Francophone Immigration Week* and *Tournée de Liaison* outreach events
- Partnered with community organizations attending Destination Canada job fair to promote the NTNP to French speaking foreign nationals;
- Attended Destination Canada job fair virtual event during the COVID-19 pandemic; and
- Implemented a stream specific to French-speaking foreign nationals: the Francophone Stream.

Why report on this measure?

For this measure, the baseline data are the number of Francophone applications received per year and the number of Francophone applications approved per year in 2017 (Table 2). Comparing applications received and approved from 2017 to 2022 gives us a measure of the success of the NTNP in promoting the program to French-speaking foreign nationals and increasing the number of Francophone Nominees.

What do the results of this measure tell us?

Although the number of Francophone nominees is low, a measure specific to Francophone nominees is relevant in the context of the Canadian immigration landscape and because French is an official language of the NWT. The Government of Canada, through different initiatives, promotes and supports the settlement of French-speaking immigrants outside of Québec. The GNWT is taking advantage of the programs and events targeting this cohort of immigrants through partnership with Francophone community organizations, such as Conseil de développement économique des Territoires du Nord-Ouest

(CDÉTNO), Fédération Franco-ténoise and Collège Nordique Francophone. Through these partnerships, the GNWT is creating synergies and maximizing the resources available to promote the NWT to French-speaking foreign nationals.

Goal 2: Attract foreign investment to benefit the economy

Since 2015, the Business Stream has seen 17 applicants and their families open and operate businesses in Yellowknife and Hay River, contributing to the local economy. All applicants have been nominated for permanent residency. In addition, 44 family members have accompanied the primary applicants to the NWT for a total of 61 individuals living in the NWT due to the NTNP Business Stream.

All key actions taken were to increase the overall number of applicants to the NTNP Business Stream, in support of the three objectives set to achieve Goal 2:

- NTNP Business Stream Application Guidelines continually being updated to ensure a streamlined and client focused process.
- A three-year marketing plan was developed and implemented.
- Distributed information kits to promote the NTNP Business Stream as a preferred immigration program to foreign nationals.

Objective 2(a): To increase foreign investment through the establishment or purchase of a business by a foreign national

Performance Measurement - Dollar amount of foreign investment in the NWT via the Business Stream

Table 5. Dollar amount of foreign investment in the NWT via the Business Stream

Year Nominated	\$ Invested in the NWT via the NTNP Business Stream
2018	635,767
2019	947,486
2020	802,486
2021	1,668,507
2022	481,310
Total	4,535,556

Why report on this measure?

Investment into businesses in the NWT creates new jobs and can help to fill goods and services gaps. Dollars spent in the NWT directly benefits local businesses. New businesses provide employment opportunities, add consumer choice, fill gaps in services, invest in the local economy, and provide opportunity for human capital resources to be potentially developed through training and skills transfer. The goal was met as investment from foreign nationals increased overall from the start of 2017 to 2022.

What do the results of this measure tell us?

- Investment in the NWT averaged just under \$1 million per year for the duration of the strategy.
- The average amount invested per nominee decreased in 2022, due to more investment made outside of the city of Yellowknife, where less investment is required under program guidelines.
- On average, nominees have 2 or 3 family members accompanying them.

Objective 2(b): To increase economic diversification

Performance Measurement - Number of approved NTNP businesses by economic sector

Table 6. Number of approved NTNP businesses by economic sector

Economic sector	Number of businesses from Nominated Business Stream applicants
Accommodation and food services	5
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	1
Arts, entertainment and recreation	3
Dry cleaning and Laundry Services	1
Information and cultural industries	1
Retail Trade	3
Tourism	3

Why report on this measure?

A vibrant and diverse economy provides a strong foundation for the NWT and is key to ensuring a strong and resilient NWT economy. Seeing where foreign nationals invest allows us to track which sectors are of interest to foreign direct investment, and potentially encourage future investment into priority sectors. Investment from Business Stream nominees were made in 7 economic sectors, therefore some economic diversification occurred.

What do the results of this measure tell us?

- Most investment went to businesses in the accommodation and food services sector.
- Tourism, arts, entertainment and recreation, and retail trade were also popular sectors for investment.
- The foreign investments made so far support economic diversification, but only in specific sectors, as listed in table 4 above.

Objective 2(c): To increase the number of approved business applicants

Performance Measurement - Number of NTNP Business Stream applicants who have signed a Business Performance Agreement

Table 7. Number of approved NTNP businesses nominees with signed Business Performance Agreements by Year

Year Nominated	Number of Nominees (signed Business Performance Agreements)
2018	2
2019	3
2020	4
2021	5
2022	3
Total	17

Why report on this measure?

Business Performance Agreements contain the terms under which the applicant will execute their approved business plan. A signed Business Performance Agreement indicates that an applicant has been approved for the NTNP and is committed to establishing and operating their business in the NWT. It is typically two years from signature to nomination of the applicant for Permanent Residency, with business activity and progress monitored by NTNP staff. All applicants with Business Performance Agreements have been nominated for permanent residency.

What do the results of this measure tell us?

All 17 approved business applicants have successfully started and operated their businesses for the duration of the NTNP program and have since become nominees.

The number of nominees increased overall from 2017-2021. There were less nominees in 2022 due to the Business Stream pausing the application intake in 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Goal 3: Support and be responsive to settlement and integration needs

Newcomers to the NWT, whether employees or business owners, face many challenges with their settlement and integration, such as securing housing, registering in education, improving language skills, and integrating into the local culture.

IRCC funds Settlement and Integration services to various settlement SPOs within the NWT. Settlement and integration services are intended to help permanent residents adjust and thrive in Canadian society. These services include Language Instruction for Newcomers (LINC), employment readiness, and information about community services, the school system, and health care. Being responsive to settlement and integration needs helps newcomers make the NWT their home, supporting them to fully participate in and contribute to all aspects of living in the North.

One objective was set to achieve Goal 3.

Objective 3: To improve partnerships with the Federal Government and Territorial stakeholders to ensure the NWT is responsive to the needs of foreign nationals and Northern employers

Key actions taken to achieve objective 3:

- Created an NWT Immigration and Settlement Working Group in 2019, which holds semi-annual meetings with the SPOs. This provided a forum for discussion, collaboration and partnership on all matters related to immigration in the NWT, with a focus on ways to support the attraction, settlement and integration of immigrants into NWT communities and collaboration in advancing immigration actions outlined in the Strategy.
- Created a bilingual “Welcome to the NWT” resource guide, which has information about living, working and settling in the NWT. This guide can be used by foreign nationals who are exploring or have made the NWT their new home. It was also shared with the SPOs to use as a resource tool with clients and to promote the NWT at different job fairs.
- NTNP staff participated in several forums and events related to settlement and integration, to remain aware of the needs of stakeholders, employers, and foreign nationals:
 - Le Réseau en immigration francophone des Territoires du Nord-Ouest (RIFTNO): brings together the resources and expertise of a variety of stakeholders and sectors within a region to support newcomers in settling into the Francophone community of their choice. Members include Francophone community organizations, stakeholders with an interest in hiring French speaking foreign nationals, IRCC and GNWT.
 - The Yellowknife Immigration Partnership (YIP): a community partnership focused on the development of settlement strategies for newcomers. These strategies bring together and support service delivery to newcomers, while promoting positive relationships, opportunity, and use of local resources effectively. Members are drawn from diverse sectors of the community. Members can include but are not limited to school boards, faith groups, settlement services, labour market, health organizations, cultural groups and different levels of government.
 - Northern Immigration Summit: an annual gathering bringing together Settlement service providers, territorial Governments and IRCC, it supports the improvement of the delivery of settlement services in the three Territories.
- A multi-year agreement in December 2020 with Collège Nordique Francophone (CNF) to provide funding for a Canadian English Language Proficiency Index Program (CELPIP) language testing services in Yellowknife. Following this, CNF added offerings for Test d'évaluation du français (TEF). This service has been well used, as a language test is mandatory for any NTNP application and some Federal immigration applications. As of May 2023, 342 individuals have taken the CELPIP test at CNF and 12 individuals took the TEF.
- Canada-Northwest Territories Settlement and Integration Working Group: The purpose of this working group is to foster and enhance bilateral collaboration and partnership related to the settlement and integration of newcomers.

Performance Measurement – Level of satisfaction with GNWT’s responsiveness to the needs of stakeholders (service provider organizations, employers, and foreign nationals)

The level of satisfaction with GNWT's responsiveness to the needs of stakeholders was determined through participation in and verbal feedback from the settlement and integration forums, such as the NWT Settlement and Integration Working Group.

Why report on this measure?

Building relationships and maintaining open dialogue to better assess the settlement and integration needs of newcomers creates an environment where the GNWT can raise awareness around immigration and lend support to the settlement sector. This helps the GNWT in determining what role, if any, it should play to foster a welcoming NWT to newcomers.

What do the results of this measure tell us?

The interactions and feedback from group members indicate that they are generally satisfied with the GNWT and their responsiveness to settlement needs. Throughout the working group meetings, SPOs raised the issue of the ineligibility of temporary residents to Federally funded settlement services, although this request was not addressed directly by GNWT, different actions were taken to address the issue. Expanding eligibility to settlement services is a request frequently made by GNWT during bilateral meetings and consultations with IRCC through the FRMI. It is also worth noting that the implementation of the NWT Intercultural Centre in Yellowknife, brings together most of the settlement services under one roof, with the adjacent GNWT funded NWT Career Center providing a one-stop shop for newcomers in Yellowknife.

Goal 4: Support the workforce by educating foreign nationals and NWT employers on workers' rights and responsibilities

There is a continued need to provide education on workplace safety and rights. The NWT *Employment Standards Act* and Regulations set the minimum terms and conditions of employment that serve the needs of both employers and workers.

In Canada and the NWT, workers' rights are protected by law. It is expected that both employers and foreign nationals should understand their rights and responsibilities.

The Employment Standards office serves the needs of both employers and employees by providing information and education on the rights of employees and the responsibilities of employers under the jurisdiction of the *Employment Standards Act*.

Please note: The *Employment Standards Act* does not apply to federal or territorial government employees or those in federally regulated industries such as airlines, banks and most telecommunication operations. These employees are under the Government of Canada's *Canada Labour Code* legislation.

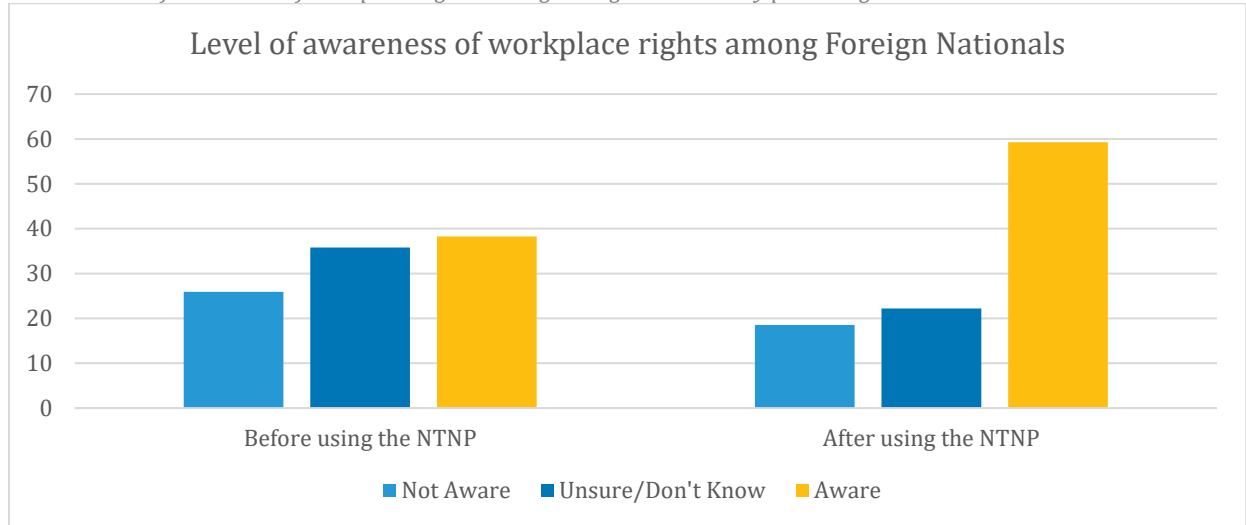
Objective 4(a): To increase awareness of workplace safety and rights among foreign nationals

Key actions taken to achieve objective 4(a):

- Active referrals to foreign nationals inquiring about their workplace rights from NTNP staff to NWT Employment Standards Office.
- Signed an Information Sharing Agreement with Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) on Temporary foreign workers protection.

Performance Measurement - Level of awareness of workplace rights among Foreign Nationals

Chart 1. Level of awareness of workplace rights among Foreign Nationals by percentage



Why report on this measure?

The Government of Canada grants foreign nationals the right to work temporality in Canada. In most applications to the NTNP, foreign nationals are already working in the NWT under a temporary work permit. In the other instances, the approved nominees will obtain a temporary work permit after being nominated, allowing foreign nationals to work in the NWT while they await a decision on their permanent residency. The work permits are issued after an NTNP nomination and are closed to the nominating employer, meaning they cannot work for another employer.

Bringing awareness to workers' rights and responsibilities helps protect foreign workers, as they are often in a vulnerable position having closed work permits with their employers. This creates a more significant power imbalance, as these foreign workers cannot work anywhere else, and their applications for permanent residency depend on their employment.

What do the results of this measure tell us?

The survey showed that most nominees' level of awareness of workplace rights increased after using the NTNP. Specifically, the survey showed that prior to using the NTNP, 38% of respondents felt they were aware of their workplace rights, 36% said they were unsure and 26% said they were not aware. Comparatively, the level of awareness of workplace rights after nomination increased to 59% being aware, 22% unsure and 18.5% not aware.

The survey also had an open-ended question allowing nominees to provide written response and comments about workplace rights. Most of the nominees who completed the survey did not provide a response to this question, however, a small number of nominees (16%) addressed the issue of the power imbalance between foreign workers and employers. Some specifically noted that they felt the Employer used the nomination as leverage in the employment relationship.

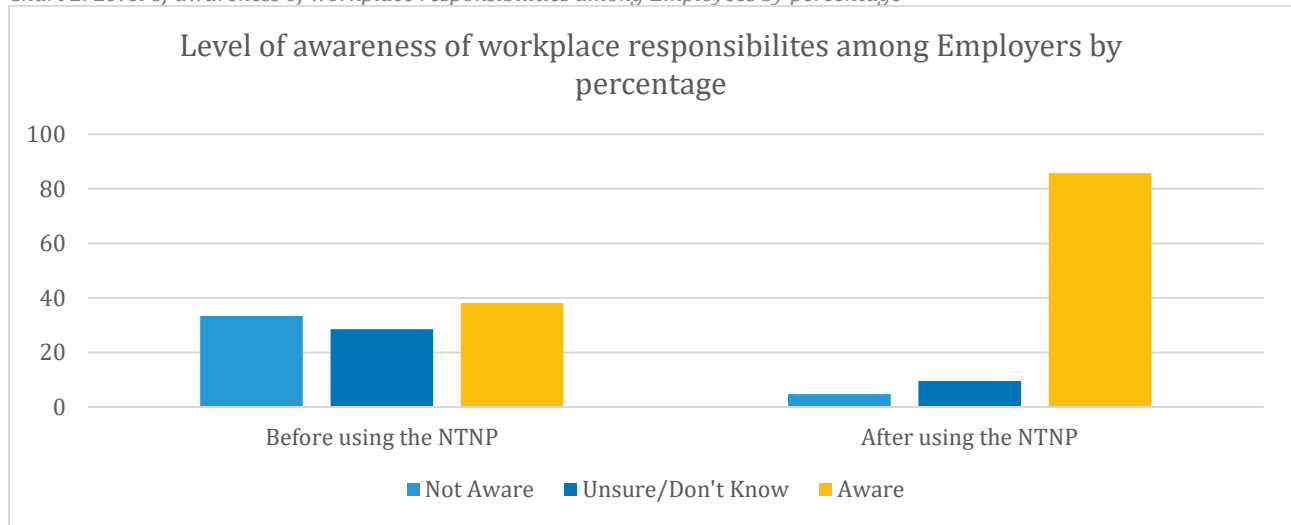
Objective 4(b): To increase awareness of workplace safety and responsibilities among NWT employers.

Key actions taken:

- The Employment Standards office delivers information sessions to employers, including those who use the NTNP. The sessions include pertinent information about the *Employment Standards Act* and Regulations, such as employment contracts, payment and deductions of wages, hours of work, minimum wage, termination, meal, coffee breaks and all other areas related to working in the NWT.

Performance Measurement - Level of awareness of workplace responsibilities among Employers

Chart 2. Level of awareness of workplace responsibilities among Employees by percentage



Why report on this measure?

It is essential that employers are aware and knowledgeable of their workplace responsibilities. This is especially important when employers hire temporary foreign workers. These workers' statuses in Canada are often tied directly to the employment relationship with the employer and creating a power imbalance that leaves temporary foreign workers in a vulnerable position. To ensure that the employment relationship is fair and that the minimum employment standards are being met, it is crucial that employers know and understand the legislation that governs the employment rules they must follow, such as the *Employment Standards Act* or the *Canada Labour Code*.

What do the results of this measure tell us?

The survey showed that employers' level of awareness for workplace responsibilities when hiring a foreign worker increased significantly after using the NTNP. Prior to using the NTNP, 38% of respondents felt they were aware of workplace responsibilities as an employer, 29% said they were unsure and 33% said they were not aware. Comparatively, Employers level of awareness of workplace responsibilities when hiring a foreign worker increased to 86% being aware, 9.5% unsure and 5% not aware, after using the NTNP.

The efforts made by the NTNP through referrals to the Employment Standards Office for the Employer Information Sessions shows it had an influence on NTNP employers' level of awareness for workplace responsibilities when hiring a foreign national.

Goal 5: Consolidate administrative efforts between the Departments of Education, Culture and Employment and Industry Tourism and Investment

The NTNP is a tool for both employers and foreign investors to build the workforce and diversify the economy. Consolidating administrative efforts could lead to more effective program delivery. Additionally, stakeholders expressed the continued need to review existing program guidelines to ensure there are no systemic barriers.

Objective 5: To increase the coordination of Nominee Program delivery

Key actions taken to achieve objective 5:

- Established a joint online application portal for applicants that also serves as an online database.
- Coordinated comprehensive marketing strategy, including social media accounts and website updates.
- Updated program guidelines with consistent language and formatting between the program streams.
- Held quarterly meetings between the two Departments to discuss the NTNP
- Conducted a program review to inform immigration priorities and potential changes in the GNWT's administration and delivery of the program.

Performance Measurement - Level of satisfaction with coordination of program delivery among ECE and ITI employees

In February 2022, the GNWT initiated a review of the NTNP, intending to inform immigration priorities and potential changes in the GNWT's administration and delivery of the program, specifically the potential consolidation of the program into one Department. An external consultant was contracted in March 2022 to gather feedback on how the NTNP could be improved. The results from the external review completed in May 2022 were used to assess stakeholders level satisfaction with the NTNP delivery.

Why report on this measure?

The GNWT delivers the NTNP from two separate government departments, coordination of NTNP administration is paramount for efficient and effective delivery of the program. Monitoring what worked well, what could be improved is critical to enhancing the NTNP internal and external stakeholder experience.

What do the results of this measure tell us?

The external review concluded that program staff from both departments seemed generally satisfied with the current delivery of the program. While some staff members saw potential benefits of the program being delivered by a single department, the current model has advantages:

- ECE is best suited to deliver the Employer-Driven and Francophone Stream as the Department is familiar with the current and forecasted labour conditions.
- ITI is best suited to deliver the Business Stream as the Department has deep rooted relationships with industry, knowledge of investment opportunities in the NWT, as well as international promotional experience.

Performance Measurement - Level of satisfaction with the NTNP guidelines among employers and Foreign Nationals.

The Employer-Driven Stream updated their guidelines in 2017, 2018, 2020 and 2022.

The Business Stream updated their guidelines in 2018, 2020 and 2022.

The results from the external review completed on the NTNP in May 2022 were used to assess the level of client satisfaction with the NTNP delivery.

Why report on this measure?

Having clear guidelines ensures program applicants have a good understanding of the program outcome and will receive a timely decision on their application. The NTNP guideline changes were done as a result of client feedback, to enhance program integrity, adapt to IRCC policy updates and to ensure the program remains responsive to the NWT labour market. On the Business Stream side, guideline updates were made to ensure promotion of business development, to drive economic diversification and growth, and attracts foreign nationals.

What do the results of this measure tell us?

The report concluded that foreign nationals using the Employer-Driven Stream are aware of the requirements and believed the process to be straightforward. Some foreign nationals voiced frustrations that the Employers are responsible for submitting the applications on their behalf and had issues with Employers not applying in a timely manner, which sometimes caused issues with expiring immigration documents.

Most Employers who used the Employer-Driven Stream also thought it was straightforward. Some employers found the amount of paperwork required to be burdensome, however, it was also noted that the online application system was a significant improvement to the previous paper-based applications. Employers also flagged certain eligibility criteria which made the process more difficult, primarily the advertising criteria. This was addressed in the most recent Employer-Driven Stream updates released in September 2023, which allowed for greater flexibility to this requirement.

Foreign nationals using the Business Stream are aware of the program's mandatory eligibility criteria requirements. Applicants found the process long as there are many steps required. Language requirements were mentioned, on one hand as being too high, but on the other hand low language skills made it difficult to do business due to miscommunication. Overall, applicants are happy with program staff and the level of service they receive.

Appendix A: Survey questions used to capture results of Goal 4

Survey to nominees:

We would like to know whether your participation in the NT Nominee Program increased your awareness of your workplace rights.

On a scale of 1-3, where 1 is not aware, 2 is unsure/don't know, and 3 is aware, please rate the following:

- your level of awareness of your workplace rights before using the NT Nominee Program
- your level of awareness of your workplace rights after receiving your nomination from the NT Nominee Program?
- Do you have any other feedback on employee workplace rights for individuals participating in the NT Nominee Program? [open field]

Survey to employers:

We would like to know whether your participation in the NT Nominee Program increased your awareness of your workplace responsibilities as an employer.

On a scale of 1-3 where 1 is not aware, 2 is unsure/don't know, and 3 is aware, please rate the following:

- your level of awareness of employer workplace responsibilities when hiring a foreign national, before using the NT Nominee Program?
- your level of awareness of employer workplace responsibilities when hiring a foreign national, after using the NT Nominee Program?
- Do you have any other feedback on workplace responsibilities for employers participating in the NT Nominee Program?