

GOVERNMENT OF NUNAVUT

Tunngasugitti, and Welcome to Nunavut!

The Economy

The Government of Nunavut has adopted a unique collaborative approach to the development of the Nunavut economy. The Nunavut Economic Development Strategy is the result of this collaboration. The strategy lays the foundation for the development of the Nunavut economy over the next several years and sets out achievable goals and objectives. It also identifies the need to develop sector-specific strategies in key areas, such as the mining, fisheries, tourism, arts and cultural industries. The strategy is based on the premise that economic development is necessary if Nunavummiut are to obtain what the Conference Board of Canada has described as the basic goal of economic development, which is “a high and sustainable quality of life.”

The strategy brings together government, Inuit Organizations and the private sector in Nunavut to pursue economic growth together.

Nunavut's economy is based on the harvesting traditions of its Inuit majority, which continues to maintain strong ties to the land. The harvesting economy is worth at least \$40 million annually and provides many families with an affordable and important source of nutritious food.

Supplementing these traditions are new opportunities, which are rapidly transforming the economy of Nunavut. In 2004, mineral exploration activity was over \$150 million, up from \$35 million in 1999, and created additional employment and investment opportunities for Nunavut residents and Canadians. Diamond, gold, and base metal deposits are being explored throughout Nunavut. The first diamond mine in the Kitikmeot, Jericho, is expected to be in production by 2006.

Nunavut's oil and gas reserves will in the future provide the world with a stable and safe energy source and strengthening Nunavut's economic self reliance.



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The Economy (2)

Nunavut is successfully establishing new commercial turbot, shrimp, and char fisheries that offer global markets access to a unique range of products. The turbot fishery is a major employer in the Baffin region, with Kivalliq and Kitikmeot mainly involved in the char fisheries. With much of its commercial fishing stock still unexplored, the fishery provides an important and growing contribution to the territory's economy.

The establishment of three national parks and several territorial parks presents another opportunity for visitors seeking to explore Nunavut's extraordinary beauty.

The unique Inuit culture and the outstanding natural beauty of Nunavut continue to attract tourists from around the world. An estimated 18,000 people visit Nunavut annually. The range of tourism activities includes eco-tourism, sports hunting and fishing, and cultural, adventure and educational tourism activities. Cruise ships now visit four Baffin communities annually, providing an important source of income for many residents.

The production of Inuit art continues to play an important role in the economies of many of Nunavut's communities. Over 27 percent of Nunavut's population is involved at some level of arts production. Many of the Territory's artists have received international recognition. While most Canadians are familiar with soapstone carvings and prints from communities such as Cape Dorset and Baker Lake, internationally recognized tapestries and weavings are being produced in Pangnirtung. Nunavut artists are rapidly making a name for themselves in film, broadcasting, and new media; the recent international success of *Atanarjuat – The Fast Runner* highlights both the talent of Nunavut's resident producers, and the attractiveness of Nunavut as a venue for film production.

Challenges to developing these sectors include the high cost of transportation and development, lack of marine infrastructure, an extreme climate, and the remoteness of the resources. The Government is working with other levels of government and the private sector to ensure these challenges are met.

