SERNNOCA 2023 PORTRAIT OF THE NORTHERN SOCIAL ECONOMY

Census and Survey Report

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Executive Summary

Starting in 2006, a northern-based research network, the Social Economy Research Network for Northern Canada (SERNNoCa) was created to find out how social economy organizations in Canada's North could better help northern communities deal with the various social and economic problems they faced. This organization was active from 2006 until 2013 when a lack of funding resulted in reduced activities. The federal government is now planning on supporting social economy organizations (which they refer to as social purpose organizations) so they can be more effective in helping communities deal with the challenges they face. This is seen to be particularly important in the north and they have decided to fund a new portraiture project to gather more information about these organizations and what their needs are. Building on the earlier work of SERNNoCa, a new portraiture project was undertaken in 2023 to find out more information about what social economy organizations currently exist in the region and what are the challenges that they face.

The first activity undertaken by the new project was to revisit the original lists of social economy organizations (SEOs). New lists were created by updating the original lists and using lists created by various other groups. Overall, the number of social economy organizations increased by 40% from 2013 to 2023 but this growth was not the same in all regions of the north. Comparing the Territories, the Yukon saw the largest growth at 47% followed by Nunavut at 12%. Both Labrador and Nunavik also saw growth during this period. The Northwest Territories saw a decline in the number of social economy organizations during from 2013 to 2023. The activities that saw the largest increases in relative importance during this period were those involved in education, increasing from 5.6% of all SEOs in 2013 to 7.4% of social economy organizations in the region in 2023, and organizations involved in sports and recreation, which increased from 18.8% in 2013 to 20.3% in 2023. The largest declines came in the number of organizations engaged in religious activities. Activities that saw growth varied however from region to region. The Yukon saw the largest relative growth in organizations involved in law, advocacy, and politics and those involved in sports and recreation. For Nunavut, it was groups involved in education, and in particular day care centres, that increased the most, followed by social service-oriented organizations such as those involved in poverty reduction and affordable housing. Results for Nunavik mirror those of Nunavut while those for Labrador are similar to changes in the Yukon. The overall structure of the social economy in the NWT was stable.

A questionnaire survey was undertaken to find more detail about the characteristics of northern social economy organizations in 2023 and the challenges they face. While responses were low, they do appear to be relatively representative of the larger social economy. Some of the findings of the survey were that few social economy organizations in the region were registered charities, they tend to have relatively long life spans, most leaders of social economy organizations are women, Indigenous communities as a social group are the largest single clientele for northern social economy organization, and close to 30% of organizations saw an increase in users over the past three years compared to only 3% who saw a decrease. In terms of challenges, training staff and getting volunteers remain important issues but finding funding has become the most important problem for these organizations. This was confirmed in additional comments made by respondents who highlighted staff turnover due to uncompetitive wages, along with lack of housing, and inability to ensure long-term planning due to funding insecurity.

SERNNoCa 2023 Portrait of the Northern Social Economy: Census and Survey Summary Report

The initial research work done by SERNNoCa is now quite dated. As noted in this project's literature review report, the original list, or census, of the social economy was compiled from 2006 to 2008. It was updated during the life of the project and during a subsequent social enterprise survey so that it was reasonably accurate up until 2013. The list of social economy organizations (SEOs) in Northern Canada maintained by SERNNoCa was updated on an ad hoc basis after 2013 until the online website and database was taken offline in 2020 due to technical problems experienced by Yukon College, the host of the database and SERNNoCa website. As of the writing of this report, the database and website are still offline as what is now Yukon University is still trying to resolve the technical issues. Updates from 2013 to the closure of the site were done only when organizations specifically requested information be changed and as such, most changes in the social economy of the region are not reflected by the original database.

Following discussions with officials working with the Investment Readiness Program for Canada's social purpose organizations, it was noted that there was a need for more up to date information regarding social economy organizations in Canada's North. Officials working with this program noted some gaps around identifying and reaching out to social purpose organizations in the North, to inform them of the opportunity of applying to the program to strengthen their capacity to access social finance. There was also seen to be a need to better understand the current challenges facing these types of organizations in the north.

As a result, individuals formerly associated with SERNNoCa undertook a project, as part the Investment Readiness Program, to update the data originally collected by SERNNoCa until 2013. This work included a summary of existing research, the literature review report, as well as revisiting the 2013 database and the undertaking of a more limited survey of social economy organizations in the north based on the work done from 2007 to 2009. The results of these last two activities are the subject of this report.

Changes in the North since the Original Project

Before examining the changes occurring in the northern social economy, it is useful to look at overall changes in the region. As noted in previous work, in the past, socio-economic shifts in the region were often linked to resource development projects opening or coming to an end (Huskey and Southcott 2010, Southcott 2015). From 2013 to 2023, mining projects were the dominant activities during this period and several mines opened and closed in the different regions of the Canadian North. The impacts of these changes can best be seen in changes in the population of the region during this period.

Both Table 2.1 and Figure 2.1 shows these changes from 2011 to 2021 for the various regions of the Canadian North. The population data shows that changes in the population varied greatly between regions. As shown in Figure 2.1, the population of the Yukon increased by over 18% during this period. Both Nunavut and Nunavik also saw substantial population growth at 15.5% and 16.2% respectively. One can assume that such drastic changes in the population, and the variances among the regions, would have an impact on the social economy of the Canadian North. Despite growth in the Yukon, Nunavut, and Nunavik, the population of both the Northwest Territories and Labrador actually decreased slightly during this time period – by 0.9% in the NWT and by 0.3% in Labrador.

Table 2.1 Population of the Regions of the Canadian North: 2011 to 2021

Census Year	Yukon	NWT	Nunavut	Nunavik	Labrador
2011	33897	41462	31906	12090	26728
2016	35874	41786	35944	13188	27197
2021	40232	41070	36858	14050	26655

Table 2.1 * Data for all regions are from the 2021 and 2016 Census Profiles of Statistics Canada (https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/prof/index.cfm?Lang=E and https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2021/dp-pd/prof/index.cfm?Lang=E). Data for the Yukon, Northwest Territories, and Nunavut are based on the Territory, data for Nunavik is based on the Nunavik Health Region, and data for Labrador is based on the federal electoral district.

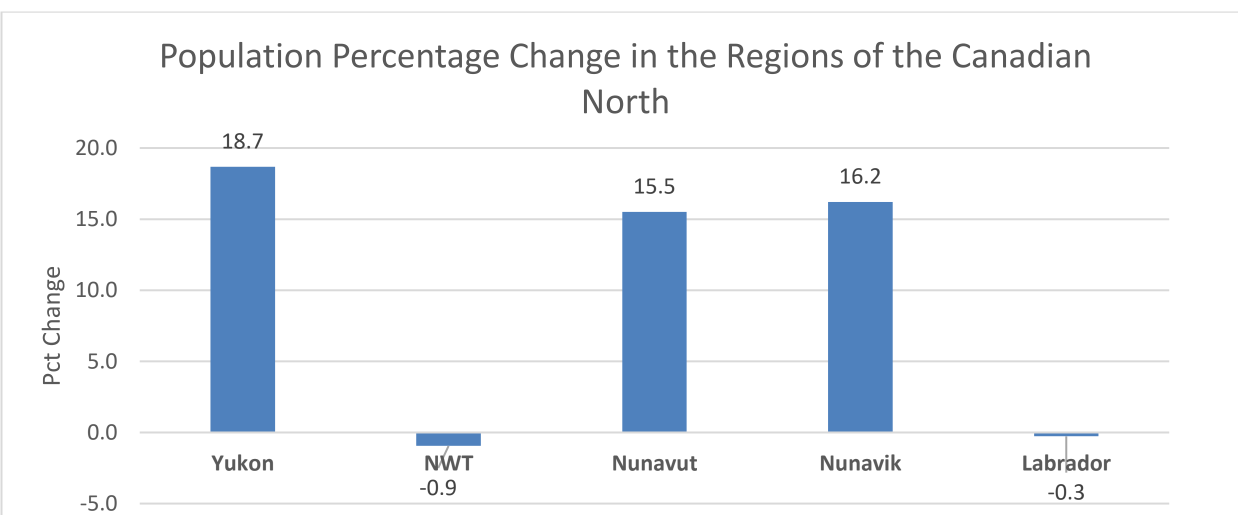

Figure 2.1

Updating the census

The first data collection activity undertaken by the new project was to revisit the original lists of social economy organizations. While resources did not permit a full census on the scale of the original SERNNoCa project, it was noted that the original lists developed by SERNNoCA had been maintained by some regionally-based organizations, and that other lists had been developed independently of the SERNNoCa lists. The project used these lists to the extent possible and, if necessary, adjusted them to meet the needs of the update. This was especially the case in the Yukon, Nunavut, Nunavik, and Labrador. In the Yukon, several social purpose organizations had collaborated to update the original SERNNoCa list starting in 2021. Indeed, the collaboration on the updating of these lists helped lead to the formation of a central organization for Yukon social economy organizations, the Yukon NGO Hub Society. In Nunavut, the list of social purpose/social economy organizations was taken over by the newly established Nunavut Association of Non-profit Organizations (NANPO). In Nunavik, as is the case in Quebec generally, social economy organizations are more firmly established, and a list is maintained by the Nunavik Social Economy Round Table. In Labrador, the Community Sector Council of Newfoundland and Labrador (CSCNL) maintains a director of "community organizations" in Newfoundland and Labrador. While not exactly the same, this directory is similar to the original list compiled by SERNNoCa and so was used as the base for updating the social economy database for Labrador.

The Northwest Territories proved to be the most difficult region for which to assemble an updated social economy database. There currently is no centralized database for either non-profit organizations, community organizations, social purpose organizations, or social economy organizations. The Government of the Northwest Territories does maintain a corporate registry of non-profit organizations and cooperatives but a comparison of this list to the original SERNNoCa list showed that many organizations are not included in the official corporate registry. A few other organizations have lists of types of social economy organizations, but none are close to the number of groups listed in the original SERNNoCa list. The project had to therefore use the original list and update it as best as possible by verifying which organizations were still in existence and by adding new organizations from the GNWT's corporate registry and other existing lists. Despite this work, it is likely that many groups, especially those established after the compiling of the original SERNNoCa lists, are not included in the updated NWT list.

It should be noted that the lists included in the SERNNoCa database sometimes vary from the lists compiled by regional organizations due to varying definitions of the types of organizations to be included in the lists. For some, labour unions are included in lists of social economy groups. In the SERNNoCa lists, labour unions were largely excluded except for those few that listed a social purpose, separate from their normal business activities, in their organizational descriptions. Large geographical areas of the Canadian North are governed by terms included in Modern Comprehensive Land Claims Agreements. These agreements often mandate that certain organizations be created to meet certain community needs. Examples of these organizations are Hunter and Trapper organizations (HTOs) in Nunavut, and Land Holding Corporations (LHCs) in Nunavik. When SERNNoCa started to compile its first list of social economy organizations, it included these organizations as social economy organizations. At the time, certain Indigenous organizations felt that to list these as social economy organizations rather than government organizations would serve to deny the sovereignty they felt was part of their land claim agreement. Others felt that some of these organizations, notably hunter and trapper organizations, were included in the treaty agreement to recognize their importance as community organizations

SERNNoCa lists tried to arrive at a compromise definition of which of these organizations should be included. Those organizations that came into being in order to manage the socio-economic conditions of the treaty were deemed to be expressions of sovereignty and excluded from the definition. Those that continue to exist in a more formal manner because of a treaty but which existed in some form prior to the treaty are included as part of the northern social economy. In the examples given above, Land Holding Corporations in Nunavik are excluded from the SERNNoCa list of social economy organizations while Hunter and Trapper Organizations are included. It should also be noted that definitions of what the social economy includes have evolved. Definitions used in 2013 differ slightly from 2023. In order to ensure that lists are comparable to each other, the lists from 2013 were vetted to ensure that the list from 2013 followed the same definition as that of 2023. As a result, the new list from 2013, created to compare the situation in 2023, is slightly different from that used previously.

Given the limited resources of this update project, the social economy lists for 2023 were constructed in the following manner. If new lists existed, as noted above, these lists were compared to those of 2013. Those organizations from 2013 that were not listed on the new lists were researched to see if they no longer existed or whether they were left off the new lists for some other reason. If they continued to exist, they were added to the new list. Next, the lists of non-profit organizations listed in territorial corporate registries were sought out to ensure that these were included in the new list for 2023. Whenever possible, social economy activists were consulted to ensure that new organizations were included, and defunct ones were excluded. This, however, was done in an ad hoc manner rather than a systematic one.

The Northern Social Economy in 2013 and 2023: Overall Numbers

Despite potential problems with the list for the Northwest Territories, a comparison of the lists of organization that existed in 2013 and those that existed in 2023 can tell us much about changes in the northern social economy. Table 2.2 shows the number of social economy organizations in the Canadian North in both 2013 and 2023.

Table 2.2 Change in Number of Social Economy Organizations: 2013 to 2023

		Labrador	Nunavik	Nunavut	Northwest Territories	Yukon	Total for North
Year	2013	168	42	256	303	570	1339
	2023	248	49	286	250	838	1671
Total Change		80	7	30	-53	268	332

Overall, the number of social economy organizations in the Canadian North increased by 332 from 2013 to 2023, although change varied considerably by region. Most of the increase is accounted for by the Yukon whose numbers increase by 268 organizations, from 570 in 2013 to

838 in 2023. This represents a 47% increase in the number of social economy organizations. In part this increase can be explained by the fact that the populations of the Yukon increased by 19% from 2011 to 2021, but it is clear that the growth of social economy organizations can not be explained solely by population growth. There was also substantial growth in the number of social economy organizations in Labrador. There are 80 more organizations on the list for 2023 than existed on the list for 2013, an increase of almost 48% during a period when the population of Labrador actually declined slightly. It is important to point out that this growth may be related to problems with the way the lists were collected in both 2013 and 2023. Lack of resources meant that the lists collected in 2013 in Labrador may have left out a number of groups. Still, the extent of the increase indicates that overall, the number of social economy organizations in Labrador increased substantially from 2013 to 2023.

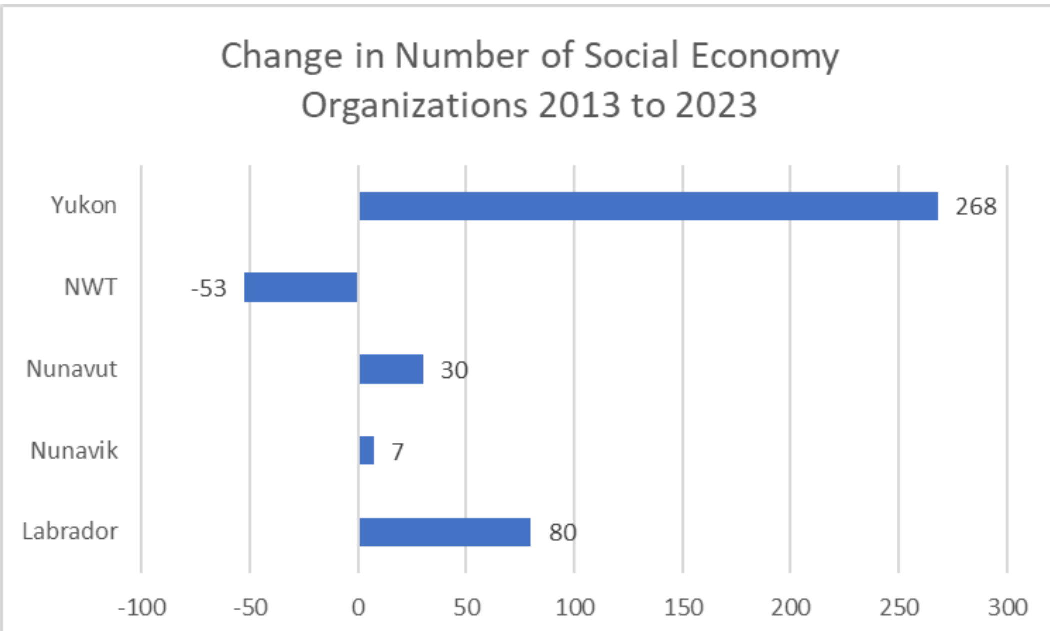

Figure 2.2

The number of social economy organizations in both Nunavik and Nunavut increased from 2013 to 2023 although to a lesser extent than in the Yukon and Labrador. Numbers in Nunavik increased by close to 17% while numbers in Nunavut increased by close to 12%. Both of these regions had similar growth in population size, around 16%, during the period of 2011 to 2021. The only region where the existing numbers indicate a decline in the number of social economy organization from 2013 to 2023 was the Northwest Territories. Numbers here declined by 53 organizations, or 17%. The Northwest Territories also had the largest population decline from 2011 to 2021 when it lost 1% of its people. As noted above, some of the decline may be due to the lack of an up-to-date list of non-profits and that it was difficult to discover new social economy organizations in the NWT.

Social Economy Organizations by Activity

Analysis of the data from both years show considerable changes in the activities performed by social economy organizations in the Canadian North. Table 2.3 shows the total number of SEOs by main activity for the region as a whole as well as the percentage of organizations engaged in each activity. In terms of numbers of organizations, the biggest changes are in organizations involved in Sports and Recreation which saw 88 more groups in 2023 than existed in 2013. This is followed by groups involved in Arts and Culture and groups involved in Law, Advocacy and Politics which each saw 52 more organizations in 2023 compared to 2013. Only one category of activity saw a decrease in numbers during this period. Groups involved in Trade, Finance and/or Insurance decreased by 9 organizations.

Table 2.3 Social Economy Organizations by Activities: Canadian North 2013 and 2023

	2013		2023	
	Number of organizations	**% within Region**	**Number of organizations**	**% within Region**
Law, Advocacy and Politics	133	9.90%	185	11.10%
Arts & Culture	167	12.50%	219	13.10%
Business Association or a Professional Association	132	9.90%	133	8.00%
Development and Housing	71	5.30%	91	5.40%
Education	75	5.60%	123	7.40%
Environment	58	4.30%	64	3.80%
Health	51	3.80%	59	3.50%
Manufacturing, processing and/or construction	2	0.10%	5	0.30%
Religion	140	10.50%	141	8.40%
Social services	110	8.20%	151	9.00%
Sports & Recreation	252	18.80%	340	20.30%
Grant-making, Fundraising and Voluntarism Promotion	75	5.60%	98	5.90%
Trade, Finance and/or Insurance	71	5.30%	62	3.70%
Total	1337	100.00%	1671	100.00%

An examination of changes in the percentage of social economy organizations in each category shows us more changes however. These are seen graphically in Figure 2.3. Here we see the most important change from 2013 to 2023 was a relative decline in religious organization. While the total number of organizations engaged in this activity increased by one during this period, their percentage of all SEOs decreased from 10.5% of all social economy groups in 2013 to only 8.4% of these organizations in 2023. Two other groups that saw decreases in their relative importance compared to other SEOs were those that were business or professional associations, which declined from 9.9% in 2013 to 8% in 2023, and groups engaged in trade, finance and/or insurance, which declined from 5.3% in 2013 to 3.7% in 2023. The activities that saw the largest increases in relative importance during this period were those involved in education, increasing from 5.6% of all SEOs in 2013 to 7.4% of social economy organizations in the region in 2023, and organizations involved in sports and recreation, which increased from 18.8% in 2013 to 20.3% in 2023.

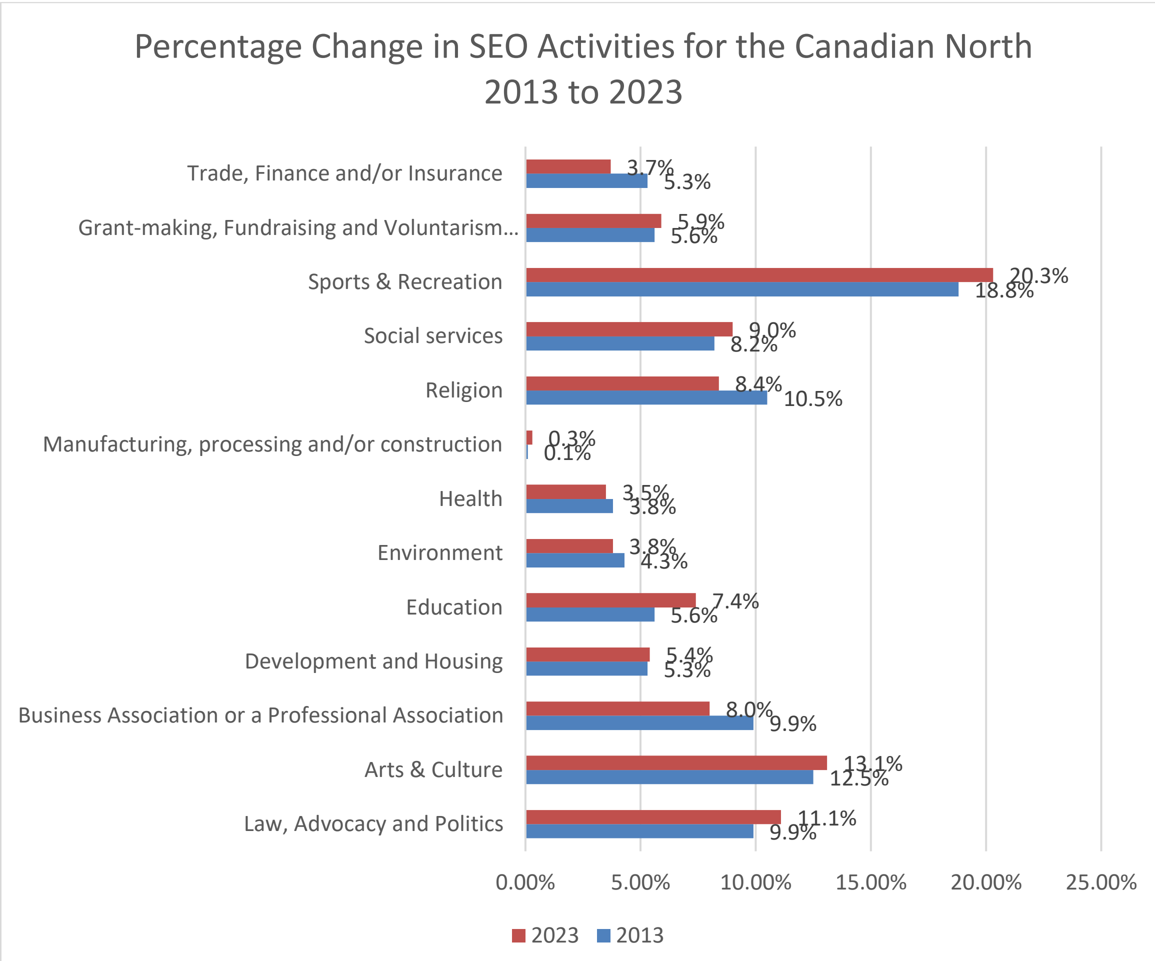

Figure 12.3

Changes in Activity by Region: The Yukon

A better understanding of these changes in activities can be understood by examining these changes in each region of the Canadian North. There are noticeable differences in each region that can be at least partially explained by factors within each region. As noted earlier, the region with the biggest increase in SEOs was the Yukon. This was also the region that had the largest population increase between the 2011 census and the 2021 census. The number of people living in the region increased by 18.7% during this period. The number of social economy organizations increased by 268, or 47%, from 2013 to 2023. As seen in Table 2.4, groups engaged in sports and recreation represent those SEOs that had the largest increase in terms of numbers. There were 88 more groups in this category in 2023 compared to 2013. The next largest increase was in groups engaged in law, advocacy and politics whose numbers increased by 57 from 2013 to 2023. No category of activity saw a decrease in the numbers of SEOs from 2013 to 2023 as far as the Yukon was concerned. All activity categories saw more groups in 2023 than existed in 2013.

Table 2.4 Social Economy Organizations by Activities: The Yukon 2013 and 2023

	2013		2023	
	Number of organizations	% within Region	Number of organizations	% within Region
Law, Advocacy and Politics	59	10.4%	116	13.8%
Arts & Culture	88	15.4%	124	14.8%
Business Association or a Professional Association	50	8.8%	66	7.9%
Development and Housing	17	3.0%	18	2.1%
Education	28	4.9%	39	4.7%
Environment	37	6.5%	41	4.9%
Health	24	4.2%	27	3.2%
Manufacturing, processing and/or construction	2	0.4%	5	0.6%
Religion	41	7.2%	54	6.4%
Social services	43	7.5%	49	5.8%
Sports & Recreation	140	24.6%	228	27.2%
Grant-making, Fundraising and Voluntarism Promotion	41	7.2%	63	7.5%
Trade, Finance and/or Insurance	0	0.0%	8	1.0%
Total	570	100.0%	838	100.0%

An examination of the percentage of organizations in each category can tell us more about the way that the social economy sector in the Yukon is changing. This can be seen in Figure 2.4. The groups that increased their relative importance the most in the Yukon from 2013 to 2023 were first, those engaged in law, advocacy, and politics, groups which represented 10.4% of social economy organizations in 2013 but by 2023 represented 13.8% of this sector, and those engaged in sports and recreation, which increased from 24.6% of the total social economy sector in 2013 to 27.2% in 2023. Groups that decreased their relative importance in the Yukon during this period were those related to social services, which represented 7.5% of all social economy groups in the Yukon in 2013 but only 5.8% in 2023, and those engaged in environmental activities, which went from 6.5% of all SEOs in the Yukon in 2013 to 4.9% in 2023. Other patterns can be seen in the communities served by new social economy organizations. Of 333 new organizations whose home community was identified, 249 were in Whitehorse or 75%. This indicated a relatively stronger growth of SEOs in Whitehorse whose population represented 71% of the Yukon's population in 2021.

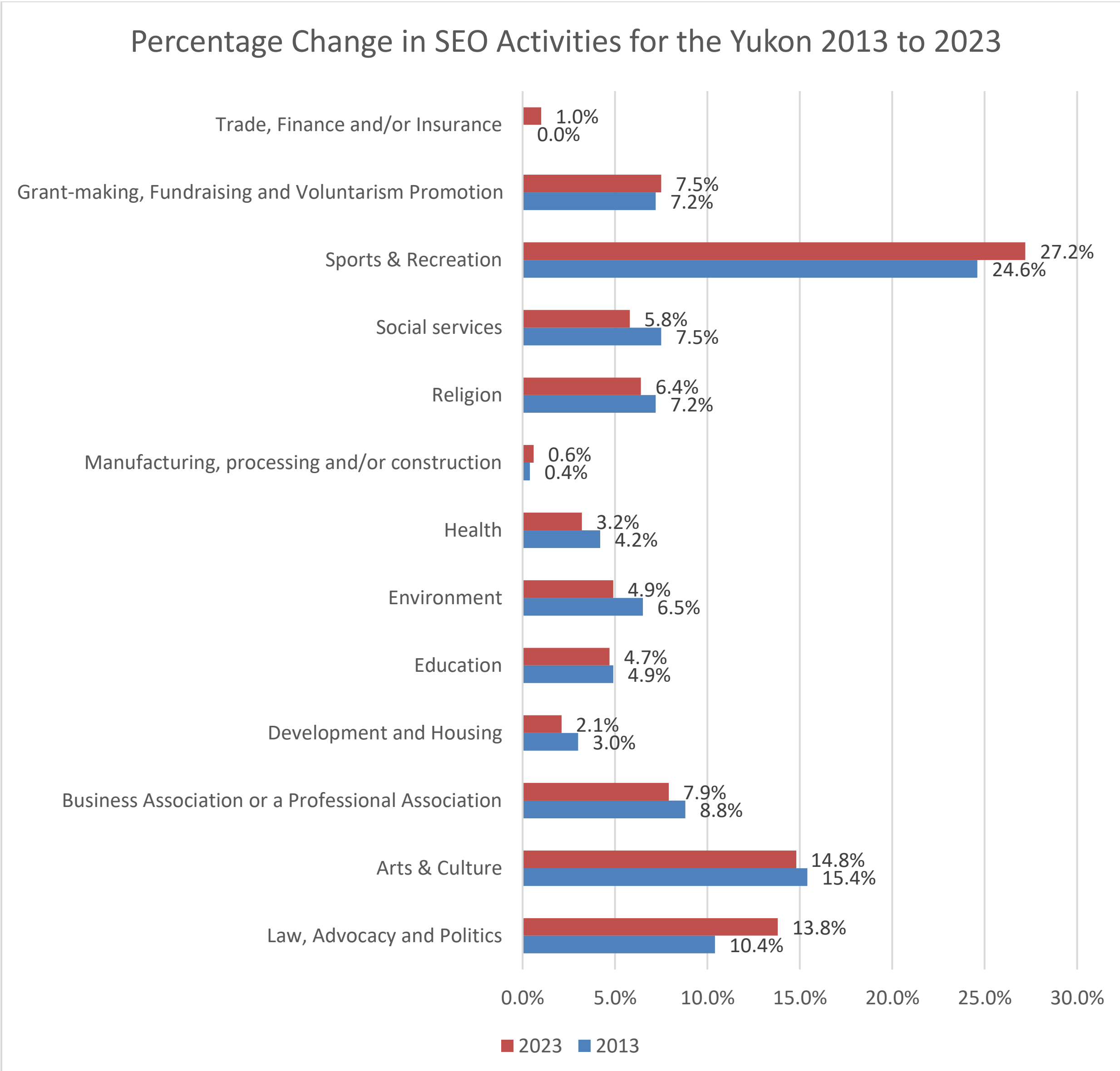

Figure 2.4

Change in Activity by Region: the Northwest Territories

As pointed out earlier, the Northwest Territories did not see a significant increase in the number of social economy organizations. Indeed, numbers appear to have decreased from 2013 to 2023. While some of this decrease may have been due to an inability to identify new social economy organizations in the territory, conversations with social economy activists there indicated that social economy development was, at best, stagnant. That this is likely the case can be supported by the fact that the population of the NWT actually declined by 1% from 2011 to 2021. Overall, as seen in Table 2.5, numbers in each category of activity appear to be relatively stable. Only two categories saw an increase in numbers of SEOs from 2013 to 2023. Groups involved in Development and Housing increased by 3, from 14 to 17, and groups engaged in trade, finance and/or insurance increased by 2, from 6 to 8. Other categories saw decreases, led by those involved in law, advocacy and politics and those involved in health. Each of these categories decreased by 8 groups.

Table 2.5 Social Economy Organizations by Activities: The NWT 2013 and 2023

	2013		2023	
	Number of organizations	% within Region	Number of organizations	% within Region
Law, Advocacy and Politics	38	12.5%	30	12.0%
Arts & Culture	26	8.6%	22	8.8%
Business Association or a Professional Association	30	9.9%	26	10.4%
Development and Housing	14	4.6%	17	6.8%
Education	14	4.6%	9	3.6%
Environment	17	5.6%	13	5.2%
Health	21	6.9%	13	5.2%
Manufacturing, processing and/or construction	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Religion	47	15.5%	42	16.8%
Social services	39	12.9%	32	12.8%
Sports & Recreation	36	11.9%	29	11.6%
Grant-making, Fundraising and Voluntarism Promotion	15	5.0%	9	3.6%
Trade, Finance and/or Insurance	6	2.0%	8	3.2%
Total	303	100.0%	250	100.0%

The overall stability of the social economy is also seen in percentage changes from 2013 to 2023, as seen in Figure 2.5. Groups involved in development and housing and religion increased their importance slightly while groups involved in health-related activities and those involved in grant-making, fundraising, and voluntarism promotion decreased in importance during this period. An examination of new groups and dissolved groups do not seem to show any patterns. Only 5 new groups have been identified as existing in 2023 but not 2013. Three of these deal with poverty related issues. Of the 64 groups that existed in 2013 but not in 2023, they seem to show a wide range of activities with no one area being highlighted.

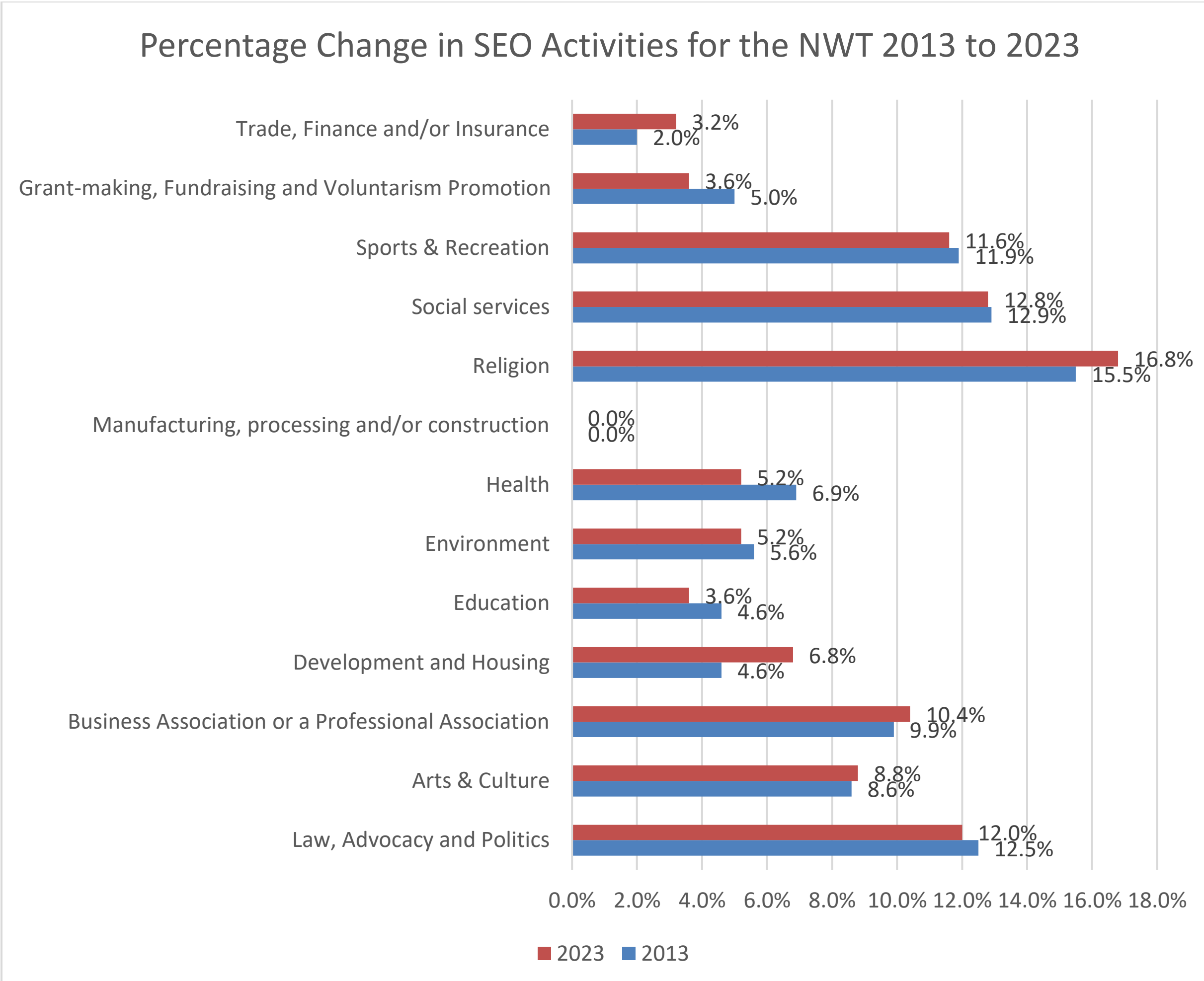

Figure 2.5

Changes in Activity by Region: Nunavut

The social economy sector of Nunavut saw healthy growth with 30 more groups existing in 2023 than existed in 2013. Similar to the situation in the Yukon, some of this growth can be accounted for by growth in the territory's population, a population that increased by 15.5% from 2011 to 2021. Unlike the Yukon however, most of the growth of the population in Nunavut was due to natural increase rather than migration. This difference is a possible partial explanation for the fact that changes in the activities of SEOs in Nunavut were quite different than that of the Yukon. The most important changes in the social economy sector of Nunavut from 2013 to 2023 was an increase in groups involved in activities relative to education, which increased by 29, and those involved in social services, which increased by 24. Decreases were seen in the number of groups involved in religion, which decreased by 10, and business and professional associations, which decreased by 8.

Table 2.6 Social Economy Organizations by Activities: Nunavut 2013 and 2023

	2013		2023	
	Number of organizations	% within Region	Number of organizations	% within Region
Law, Advocacy and Politics	13	5.1%	11	3.8%
Arts & Culture	32	12.6%	28	9.8%
Business Association or a Professional Association	45	17.7%	37	12.9%
Development and Housing	30	11.8%	30	10.5%
Education	31	12.2%	60	21.0%
Environment	2	0.8%	6	2.1%
Health	5	2.0%	8	2.8%
Manufacturing, processing and/or construction	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Religion	21	8.3%	11	3.8%
Social services	11	4.3%	35	12.2%
Sports & Recreation	31	12.2%	28	9.8%
Grant-making, Fundraising and Voluntarism Promotion	5	2.0%	8	2.8%
Trade, Finance and/or Insurance	28	11.0%	24	8.4%
Total	254	100.0%	286	100.0%

These changes in total numbers are mirrored in the importance of each type of activity within the territorial social economy sector. The relative importance of educational-related organization increased the most from 2013 to 2023. In 2013 these groups represented 12.2% of all SEOs in Nunavut but in 2023 this percentage had increased to 21%. As seen in Figure 2.6, these groups are now the most important sector of Nunavut's social economy.

In large part, this is due to an increase in day care centers in Nunavut. An examination of the new groups, those that existed in 2023 but not 2013, show that the single largest category was day care organizations with 27 new day care organizations being created between 2013 and 2023. The next most important increase was seen in social service-oriented groups. These represented 4.5% of all social economy organizations in 2013 but by 2023 this percentage had increased to 12.2%. This increase is largely due to an increase in organizations trying to deal with poverty and housing concerns. Sixteen new food banks were created between 2013 and 2023. While such services had been provided by ad hoc unorganized organizations previously, they are increasingly being provided by more formalized groups.

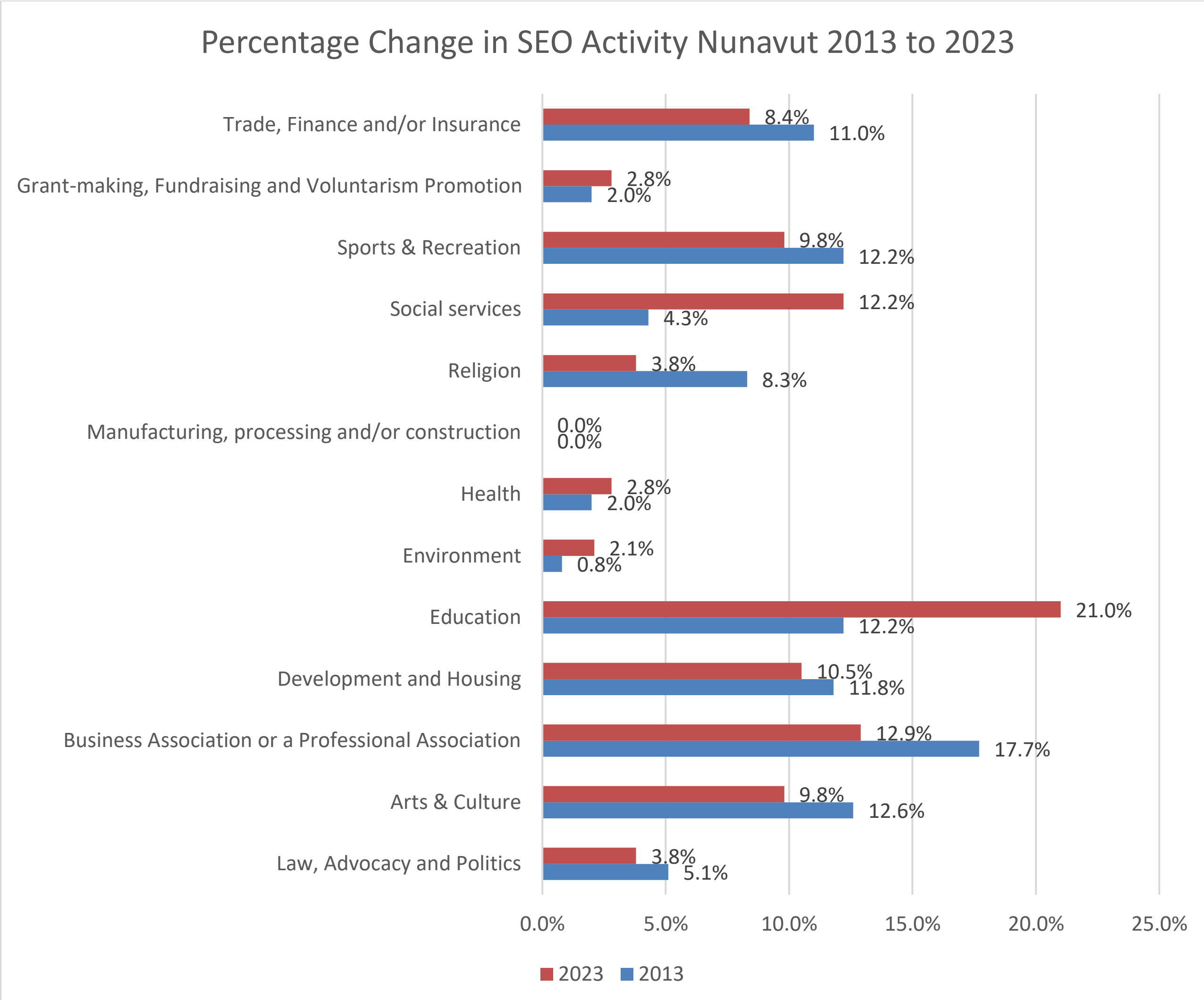

Figure 2.6

Changes in Activity by Region: Nunavik

It is more difficult for us to analyze changes to the social economy in Nunavik primarily because the original lists for 2013 were not exhaustive lists.[1] A shortage of resources during the original SERNNoCa research meant that lists for both Nunavik and Labrador were not as complete as for the other regions of the Canadian North. Still, partners in these two regions did help us to compile lists that, while not complete, were representative of the social economy of the region. While our analysis for Nunavik has limitations, we can see that the changes in the region are similar to that of Nunavut in that the most important sector of growth for the social economy in

[1] It should be noted that the analysis of data for Nunavik included in the national analysis above included data for the Nunavut Financial Services Cooperative as a separate SEO in each community in Nunavik in 2013. Our analysis here counts this SEO as being one for the entire region for both 2013 and 2023. As such the numbers differ slightly for 2013.

Nunavik is in childcare centres. At least 13 new childcare centres were established in Nunavik recently. Another area of growth for the social economy in Nunavik is in social service-oriented organizations. A number of new innovative SEOs have been established in Nunavik to deal with the social challenges faced by communities in the region. These include housing organizations designed to deliver social services to those facing substance abuse or family difficulties, as well as "family houses" created to provide day services to those in need. Several new organizations have also been established to provide housing and services to the elderly. It should be noted that cooperatives remain the foundation of the social economy in Nunavik. They remain active and continue to be important institutions in each community

Table 2.7 Social Economy Organizations by Activities: Nunavik 2013 and 2023

	2013		2023	
	Number of organizations	% within Region	Number of organizations	% within Region
Law, Advocacy and Politics	3	10.34%	2	4.10%
Arts & Culture	2	6.90%	1	2.00%
Business Association or a Professional Association	2	6.90%	1	2.00%
Development and Housing	0	0.00%	5	10.20%
Education	0	0.00%	13	26.50%
Environment	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Health	0	0.00%	2	4.10%
Manufacturing, processing and/or construction	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Religion	1	3.45%	0	0.00%
Social services	3	10.34%	9	18.40%
Sports & Recreation	1	3.45%	0	0.00%
Grant-making, Fundraising and Voluntarism Promotion	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Trade, Finance and/or Insurance	17	58.62%	16	32.70%
Total	29	100.00%	49	100.00%

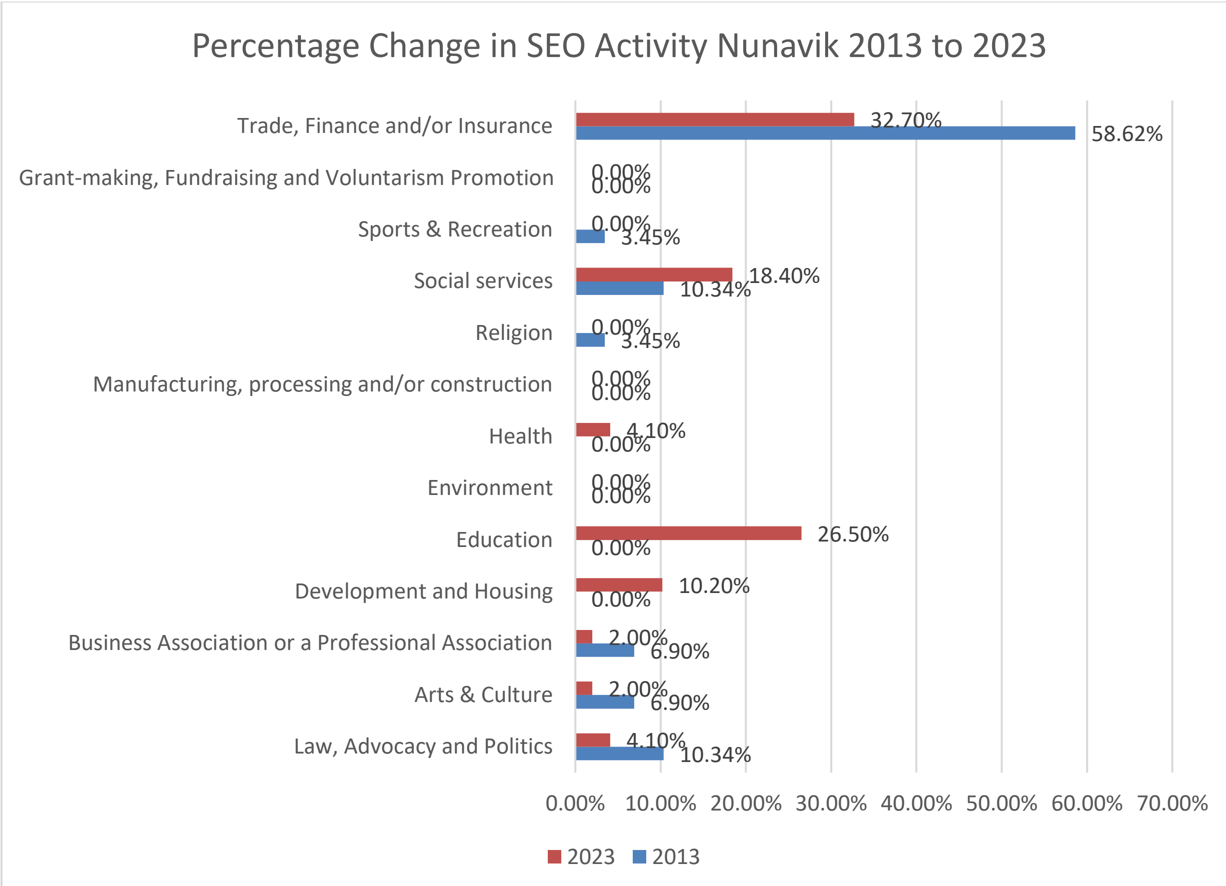

Figure 2.7

Changes in Activity by Region: Labrador

As was the case for Nunavik, our analysis for Labrador is hampered by the fact that our 2013 list was not as exhaustive as for other regions. At the same time, it was believed to be relatively representative of the Labrador social economy. Despite this limitation, current numbers indicate that the social economy in Labrador has grown since 2013. The list for 2023 indicates there are 248 social economy organizations in the region compared to 168 listed on the 2013 list, an increase of 80. Since it is unlikely that this many were left off the original list, it is evident that the social economy in Labrador has grown substantially since 2013. This is especially interesting given that the population of the region actually decreased slightly from 2011 to 2021.

Similar to the Yukon, the largest single sector of the social economy in Labrador are those engaged in sports and recreation, at 55 out of 248. This is followed by arts and culture at 44 SEOs. The third largest sector of the social economy in Labrador is religious organizations at 34. Given the problems with the 2013 list, it is difficult to be precise about changes in the Labrador social economy from 2013 to 2023. Still, it does appear that there has been substantial growth in the arts and culture sector, followed by growth in both the health sector and the development and housing sector. It also appears that religious-based social economy organizations saw the largest decline in Labrador, followed by sports and recreation-based organizations.

Table 2.8 Social Economy Organizations by Activities: Labrador 2013 and 2023

	2013		2023	
	Number of organizations	% within Region	Number of organizations	% within Region
Law, Advocacy and Politics	20	11.9	26	10.5
Arts & Culture	19	11.3	44	17.7
Business Association or a Professional Association	5	3.0	3	1.2
Development and Housing	10	6.0	21	8.5
Education	2	1.2	2	0.8
Environment	2	1.2	4	1.6
Health	1	0.6	9	3.6
Manufacturing, processing and/or construction	0	0.0	0	0.0
Religion	30	17.9	34	13.7
Social services	14	8.3	26	10.5
Sports & Recreation	44	26.2	55	22.2
Grant-making, Fundraising and Voluntarism Promotion	14	8.3	18	7.3
Trade, Finance and/or Insurance	7	4.2	6	2.4
Total	168	100.0	248	100.0

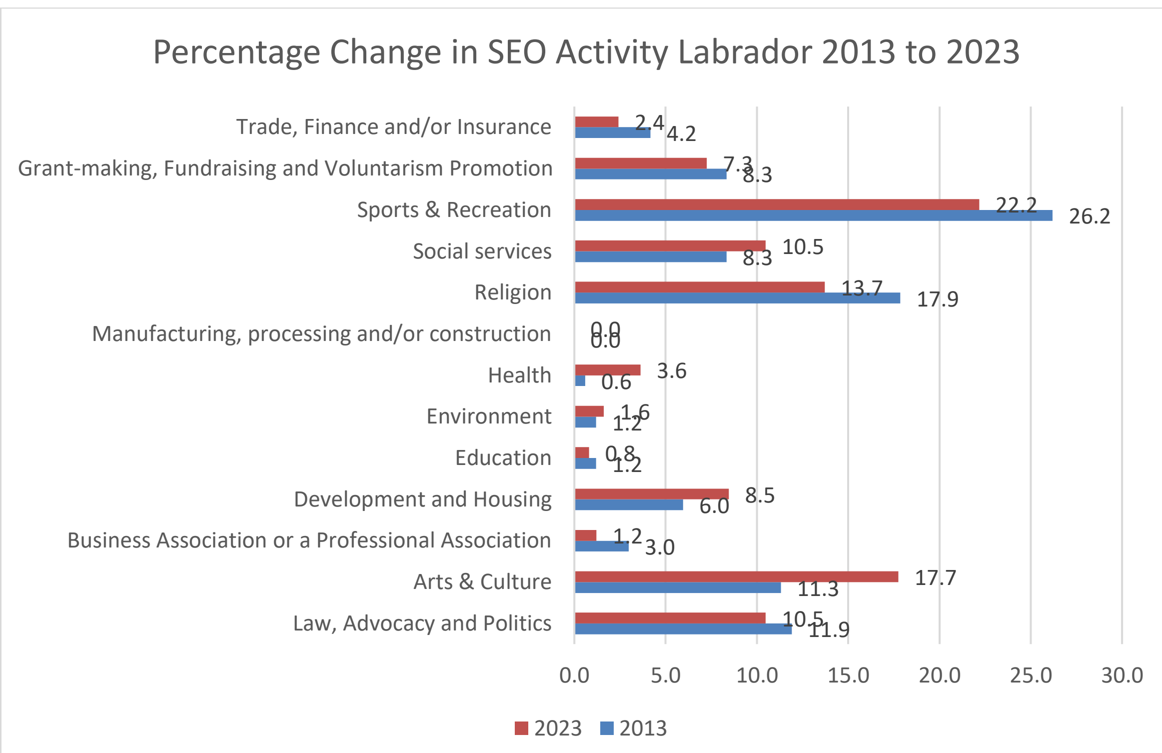

Figure 2.8

The Questionnaire Survey

Background and methodology

During the original SERNNoCa research, in addition to the census, questionnaire surveys were conducted in order to obtain more detailed information about the characteristics of social economy organizations and the challenges that they face. Questionnaire surveys are difficult to do in the Canadian North but the information that they provide is often extremely useful. The most successful survey conducted, from 2008 to 2010, yielded 311 responses and provided researchers with relatively reliable information about the conditions and challenges faced by social economy organizations in the region. While resources for this update were more limited and time more limited, a new questionnaire survey, based largely on the 2008 to 2010 survey, was conducted. The earlier survey used a combination of mailed and online questionnaires, and telephone and in-person interviews. Given the limited resources for the update, it was decided to only use online questionnaires for this survey. It was also decided to limit the survey to the Territorial North, excluding Nunavik and Labrador.

Ethics approval and research licenses were obtained to allow for the survey to be conducted until the end of 2024. The survey was conducted from September 18, 2024 until the end of the year. Originally, a representative sample of organizations were selected from the census lists and were sent an email invitation to fill in the questionnaire online, followed by reminders. Low response rates and short time spans led to the subsequent decision to send emails to all organizations on the census lists. Response rates remained low and, as such, the data obtained by the survey is likely much less reliable than that of the 2008 to 2010 survey.

Findings: Representivity of Sample

A total of 58 questionnaires were completed during the survey. Over 60 percent of respondent organization were located in the Yukon, followed by 26 percent in the NWT and 14 percent in Nunavut. As seen in Figure 2.9, while the numbers are small, the sample of questionnaire respondents is fairly representative of the Territorial North with the NWT being slightly over represented and Nunavut being slightly under represented.

Table 2.9 Questionnaire respondents by Territory

	Number	Percent
Nunavut	8	13.8
NWT	15	25.9
Yukon	35	60.3
Total	58	100

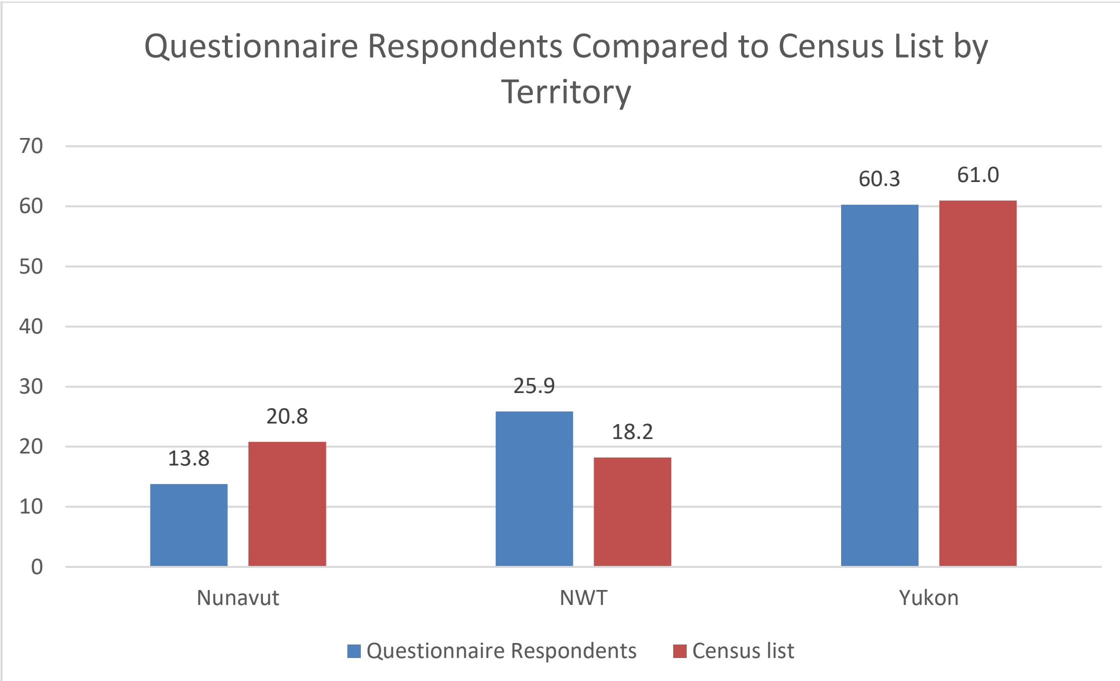

Figure 2.9

While the sample of questionnaire respondents may be fairly representative of the social economy in the Territorial North as far as location is concerned, it is somewhat less so in terms of activities. Table 2.10 shows the questionnaire respondents by the type of activity conducted by their organization. Figure 2.10 compares the percentages of questionnaire respondents by activity to the percentages of the census list by activity. Important differences exist between the two in some activities. The most significant of these differences is that SEOs engaged in arts and culture are overrepresented in the sample by 9.7 percent. Next important is that no religious SEOs completed the questionnaire meaning that they are underrepresented by 7.8 percent. Another significant difference is that SEOs that are business or professional associations are underrepresented in the sample by 6 percent. Other than these differences, the sample of questionnaire respondents is fairly representative of the Territorial

Table 2.10 Questionnaire respondents by Activities

	Number	Percent
Law, Advocacy, Politics	8	13.8
Arts & Culture	13	22.4
Business or Professional Association	2	3.4
Development and Housing	2	3.4
Education and Research	8	13.8
Environment	2	3.4
Health	4	6.9
Manufacturing, processing and/or construction	0	0
Religion	0	0

Social Services	7	12.1
Sports, Recreation, Tourism	9	15.5
Volunteerism	1	1.7
Trade, Finance and or Insurance	1	1.7
No Answer	1	1.7

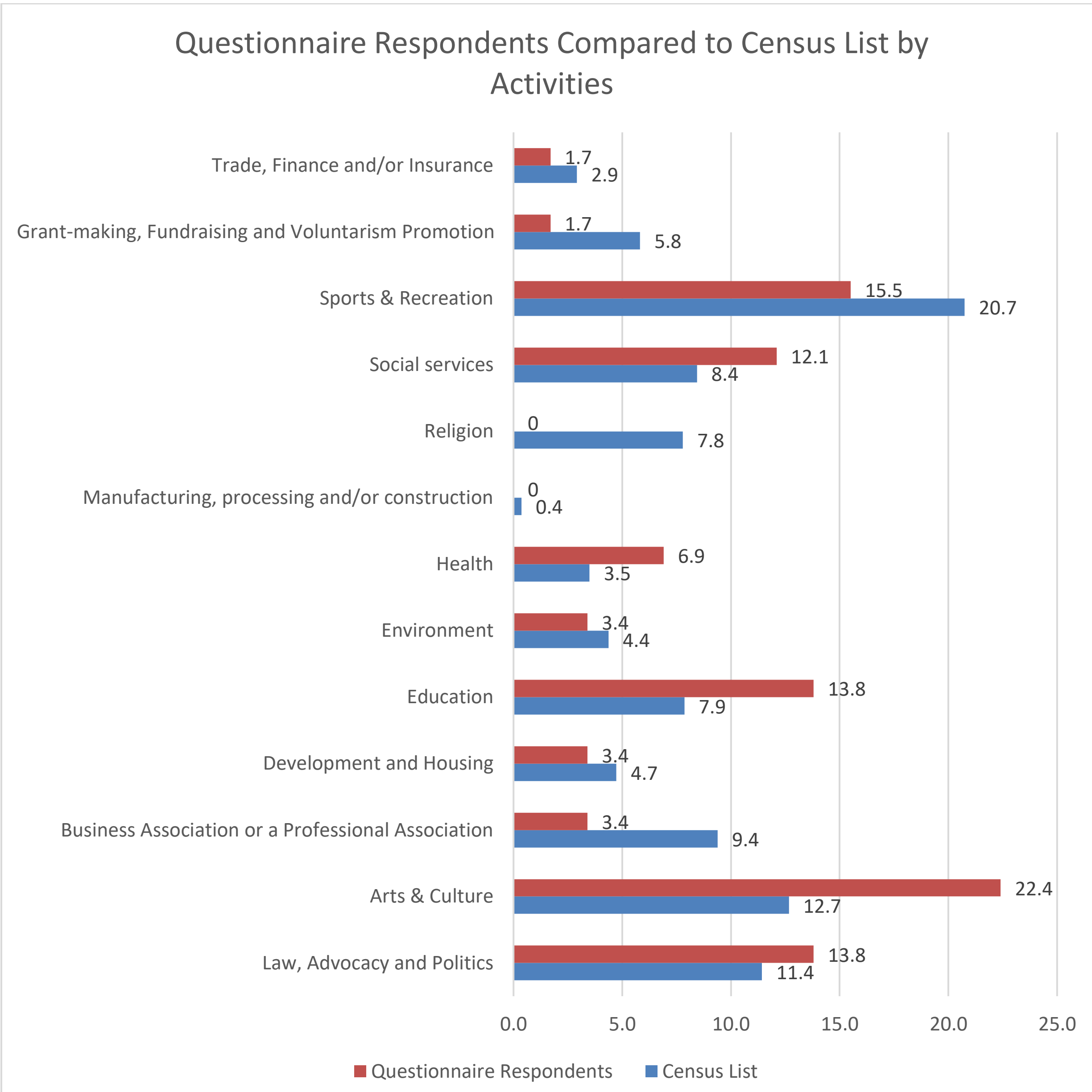

Figure 2.10

Findings: Type of Organization

While the sample of respondents is small, it appears to be relatively respresentative of social economy organizations in the Territorial North in general. Given this, there is value in analyzing the results of the questionnaire survey in order to gain insight into the nature of the northern social economy for certain areas of concern. These will be discussed in this section starting with the organizational structure of social economy organizations. This discussion will not include all findings but rather those that are most important to understand changes in the nature of social economy organizations in the Canadian North. Findings not mentioned in this analysis can be found in the tables listed in the SERNNoCa Data Tables Report.

Table 2.11 shows the type of organization for those that completed the questionnaire survey. None of the respondents were for profit organizations. Only 11 organizations were registered charities. This is an indication that an issue noted in earlier research, that few northern social economy organizations choose to register themselves as charities, continues to be an issue in the region.

Table 2.11 Territorial SEOs by Type of Organization

Type	Yes	No	NA
For-Profit	0	51	7
Registered Charity	11	40	7
Not-for-Profit	46	5	7

The survey also provided information on other organizational aspects of Northern SEOs. Thirty years is the average age of existence for the organizations responding to the survey. This confirms earlier research that social economy organizations in the north tend to exist for long periods of time. Only 33 percent of respondent organizations have a listed business number with Revenue Canada. This is an indication that social economy organizations in the north tend to be less formalized than elsewhere.

Findings: Board of Directors

The results of the survey indicate that the average size of the boards of social economy organizations in the region was 6.3 people. Women continue to be overrepresented on boards as 59 percent of people on the boards of respondent organizations are women. Indigenous communities are underrepresented as they only make up 18 percent of board membership despite being over 50 percent of the population. In terms of the gender of the manager/director/coordinator of respondent organization, 65 percent were female.

Findings: Nature of Clientele

It is important to understand the type of clientele that social economy organizations serve. Doing so gives us a better idea of the nature of these organizations and their needs. Table 2.12 lists the social groups served by the organizations that completed the questionnaire survey. It is evident that marginalized groups remain the primary clientele of many of these organizations. Of all social groups served by these organizations, Indigenous people remain the specific groups cited most often.

Table 2.12 Territorial SEOs by Clientele

What social groups do you serve?	Yes	No	NA
2SLGBTQIA+	18	33	7
Children	21	30	7
Refugees and Newcomers	18	33	7
Indigenous Peoples	31	20	7
Lone-parent Families	14	37	7
Northern Canadian Communities	34	17	7
Official Language Minority Communities	12	39	7
Other Racialized People	11	40	7
People Experiencing Homelessness or Housing Insecurities	8	42	7
People Living on Low Income	18	33	7
People of Advanced Age (65+)	13	38	7
People living with physical, sensory or pain related, mental or cognitive disabilities	9	42	7
Survivors of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault	6	45	7
General Population	41	10	7
Women	21	30	7
Youth	20	31	7

Findings: Workload, Membership, and Revenue

Data was also gathered on workload, membership and revenue. Table 2.13 shows the changes in workloads for organizations which responded to the questionnaire survey. It is notable that only 3.4 percent of organizations saw a decrease in the number of users over the past three years. This compares to 29.3 percent which saw increases in users.

Table 2.13 Changes in Workloads

Over the past three years, has the number of USERS of your organization (select one)	Number	Percent
No Answer	14	24.1
Decreased	2	3.4
Don't know	5	8.6
Increased	17	29.3
Stayed about the same	20	34.5

Despite the increase in the number of users, membership numbers tend to be stable with 20.7 percent of organizations indicating that their membership has decreased over the past three years and 19 percent indicating that it had increased.

Table 2.14 Changes in Membership

Over the past three years, has the number of MEMBERS of your organization (select one)	Number	Percent
No Answer	14	24.1
Decreased	12	20.7
Don't know	2	3.4
Increased	11	19
Stayed about the same	19	32.8

In terms of revenues, most organizations indicated that their funding had been relatively stable over the past three years. Slightly more than 41 percent indicated that their revenue had stayed about the same while 5.1 percent indicated that revenues had decreased and 12 percent indicated that they had increased.

Table 12.15 Changes in Revenue

How would you describe the change of your organization's revenues/funding in the last three years?	Frequency	Percent
No Answer	24	41.4
Fast Growth	2	3.4
Fast Negative Growth	1	1.7
Growth	5	8.6
Negative Growth	2	3.4
Stable	24	41.4

Findings: Challenges

Previous research had indicated that three of the most important challenges facing social economy organizations in the north concerned training, getting volunteers, and find funding. The survey listed questions relating to all three of these issues. Results are found in Table 12.16. The findings indicate that these three issues remain important challenges for social economy organizations in the region. Of the three, training seems to be the least serious with 10.3 percent indicating it was not a problem and only 5.2 percent indicating is was a serious problem. Getting volunteers was seen as a serious problem by 17.2 percent of respondents while another 15.5 percent stated it was a moderate problem. Finding funding now appears to be the most serious challenge for social economy organizations as it was listed as a problem by 46.5 percent of all respondents. If you exclude those organizations that did not respond to the question, this rises to 82 percent. Once again however, the small numbers involved in the survey limit are ability to be certain.

Table 2.16 Main Challenges Faced by SEOs

For your Organization is:	Training		Getting volunteers		Finding Funding	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
No answer	25	43.1	25	43.1	25	43.1
A moderate problem	9	15.5	9	15.5	13	22.4
A serious problem	3	5.2	10	17.2	6	10.3
A small problem	10	17.2	4	6.9	8	13.8
Does not apply	5	8.6	5	8.6	1	1.7
Not a problem	6	10.3	5	8.6	5	8.6
Total	58	100	58	100	58	100

In addition to the questions about challenges listed above, survey respondents were given the opportunity to list challenges not included elsewhere. These responses are listed in Table 2.17. Funding related issues seem to dominate these responses as things such as staff turnover due to uncompetitive wages, along with lack of housing, and inability to ensure long-term planning due to funding insecurity.

Table 2.17 Other Challenges

Annual proposals for funding revenue always has us at risk.
Difficulty finding board of directors.
Director fatigue
Finding and keeping staff. Our wages cannot compete and we have had jobs posted with no applicants for 6 months or more.
high turnover of staff, high workload for board members
Infrastructure, time and capacity, lack of people. The governance requirements on an overly taxed organization.
Lack of available/affordable real estate out of which to operate our organization.
Lack of housing. Uncompetitive salaries compared to Government employment.
lack of infrastructure in outlying communities, lack of reliable communication and internet services, high travel costs, high operational costs, lack of human resources
Lack of reasonable applicants for open positions.
Lack of revenue diversity, especially self-generated revenue Attracting diverse board members
Leadership may be an issue in the future, once present instructor retires
Members not paying their fees in a timely manner, ie. members are not being responsible and accountable. Members expect volunteers to remind them to do simple things like take care of equipment such as pinnies and balls. There is a lack of facility availability and there are hoops that volunteers need to be jumped through to book space with the city facility. Roadblocks, lack of respect and cooperation by all involved to help facilitate an organized Futsal League.
Parent issues, finding usuable land for training equipement, the ski hilll only open 3 days a week.
Recruiting and retaining board directors Planning for long-term stability
Recruitment and retention of staff and cost of goods.

Rising costs of payroll are reducing our margins, resulting in our first reported seasonal loss in over 8 years, despite large revenue growth. This was the result of minimum wage increases and wage increases necessary to retain staff.
The Government of Yukon administers our funding agreement not like they do for Self Governing First Nations (more restrictive), which has caused some issues for us.
The numbers of vulnerable people are rising dramatically, while fincial supportis staying where it was, or dropping off in some areas.
Unstable funding, small membership base, replication of other assocations, volunteer burnout
Volunteer burn out
Volunteer burn-out is an issue. Only a few people carry a very heavy load.
we are unable to hire anyone or take advantage of any funding due to our inability to manage payroll requirements. We have no Corporate Services.
We have been in operation since 1997 and do not have any problems or issues.
Year-to-year funding limits the stability of the organization and the ability to attract employees. We desperately need multi-year funding.

Summary of Research Results

Overall, the number of social economy organizations increased by 40% from 2013 to 2023 but this growth was not the same in all regions of the north. Comparing the Territories, the Yukon saw the largest growth at 47% followed by Nunavut at 12%. Both Labrador and Nunavik also saw growth during this period. The Northwest Territories saw a decline in the number of social economy organizations during from 2013 to 2023. The activities that saw the largest increases in relative importance during this period were those involved in education, increasing from 5.6% of all SEOs in 2013 to 7.4% of social economy organizations in the region in 2023, and organizations involved in sports and recreation, which increased from 18.8% in 2013 to 20.3% in 2023. The largest declines came in the number of organizations engaged in religious activities. Activities that saw growth varied however from region to region. The Yukon saw the largest relative growth in organizations involved in law, advocacy, and politics and those involved in sports and recreation. For Nunavut, it was groups involved in education, and in particular day care centres, that increased the most, followed by social service-oriented organizations such as those involved in poverty reduction and affordable housing. Results for Nunavik mirror those of Nunavut while those for Labrador are similar to changes in the Yukon. The overall structure of the social economy in the NWT was stable.

A questionnaire survey was undertaken to find more detail about the characteristics of northern social economy organizations in 2023 and the challenges they face. While responses were low, they do appear to be relatively representative of the larger social economy. Some of the findings of the survey were that few social economy organizations in the region were registered charities, they tend to have relatively long life spans, most leaders of social economy organizations are women, Indigenous communities as a social group are the largest single clientele for northern social economy organization, and close to 30% of organizations saw an increase in users over the past three years compared to only 3% who saw a decrease. In terms of challenges, training staff and getting volunteers remain important issues but finding funding has become the most important problem for these organizations. This was confirmed in additional comments made by respondents who highlighted staff turnover due to uncompetitive wages, along with lack of housing, and inability to ensure long-term planning due to funding insecurity.

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