



Seasonal Time Change Engagement

WHAT WE HEARD

Government of
Northwest Territories



If you would like this information in another official language, call us.

English

Si vous voulez ces informations dans une autre langue officielle, contactez-nous.

French

Kīspin ki nitawih̄tīn ē nīh̄yawih̄k ōma ācimōwin, tipwāsīnān.

Cree

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

Tłıchq̄

ʔerih̄tl'ıs Dēne Sųlıné yatı t'a huts'elkēr xa beyáyatı theʔą ʔat'e, nuwe ts'ēn yóltı.

Chipewyan

Edı gondı dehgáh got'ıe zhatıé k'éké edat'éh enahddhę nıde naxets'é edahıı.

South Slavey

K'áhshó got'ıne xədə k'é hederı ʔedıhtl'é yerıniwę nıde dúle.

North Slavey

Jii gwandak izhii ginjik vat'atr'ıjāhch'uu zhit yinothan jı', diits'āt ginohkhiı.

Gwich'in

Uvanittuaq ilitchurisukupku Inuvialuktun, ququaqluta.

Inuvialuktun

Ċ^bđĊ ħħ^{sb}đĊ^c ħĊĤĤĤ^c Δ^bħĊĊ^cĊ^{sb}ĤĤ^b, Đ^cĊ^cĊ^c Đ^{sb}Ċ^cĊ^cĊ^cĊ^c.

Inuktitut

Hapkaa titiqqat pijumagupkit Inuinnaqtun, uvaptinnut hivajarlutit.

Inuinnaqtun

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Throughout Canada there has been recent interest in ending seasonal time changes. The Yukon, Saskatchewan, and parts of Nunavut and Quebec have already ended seasonal time changes. Alberta held a referendum in 2021 where a narrow majority of voters rejected a proposal to do the same. In 2019 and 2020, British Columbia and Ontario passed laws to allow them to end seasonal time changes, and to move to permanent Daylight Saving Time. These laws have not yet gone into effect and both provinces continue to change their clocks twice a year.

Some Canadians say they find seasonal time changes disruptive. Many cite other concerns with time changes related to areas such as energy use, lack of daylight, health, wellness and safety. From early April 2022 to May 2022, the Department of Justice ran a public survey, available both online and in physical form, on the issue of seasonal time changes. This survey asked NWT residents a number of questions around the subject. These questions included, but were not limited to, whether or not residents support the NWT eliminating seasonal time changes; which permanent time option they prefer (Mountain Daylight Saving Time or Mountain Standard Time); and how important they think it is for the NWT to stay on the same time as Alberta.

A significant number of stakeholders and partners were contacted directly and invited to participate in the survey. Respondents were given the option to provide their responses by mail and email, in addition to completing the survey online.

The results of the survey, together with written feedback, will help inform whether the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) will proceed to end seasonal time changes and adopt a permanent time.

The survey concluded on May 16 with approximately 3,545 responses from self-identified NWT residents. The overall consensus was that respondents were in favour of ending seasonal time changes and switching to permanent Mountain Daylight Saving Time. Opinions were mostly influenced by the time of day for sunlight hours. Most respondents did not consider it very important to stay on the same time as Alberta.

The results of the survey, together with written feedback, will help inform whether the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) will proceed to end seasonal time changes and adopt a permanent time. If the NWT does decide to end seasonal time changes, it will be a lengthy and complex process that will require the NWT to ensure, to the greatest extent possible, that all of the devices, applications, and operating systems that NWT residents depend on in our daily lives receive the necessary software updates to reflect a new time. It will also take time to inform stakeholders, partners, and residents of the change to help them prepare. The results of this public engagement will help to inform the decision of Executive Council in terms of whether seasonal time changes should be eliminated and what permanent time standard should be adopted for the NWT.



INTRODUCTION

On March 31, 2021, Bill 13: An Act to *Amend the Interpretation Act* received assent. This Bill allows the NWT to end seasonal time changes and adopt a year-round time standard, as determined by the Executive Council. Bill 13 also requires that public engagement with NWT residents be undertaken on this topic before any decision to end seasonal time change can be made.

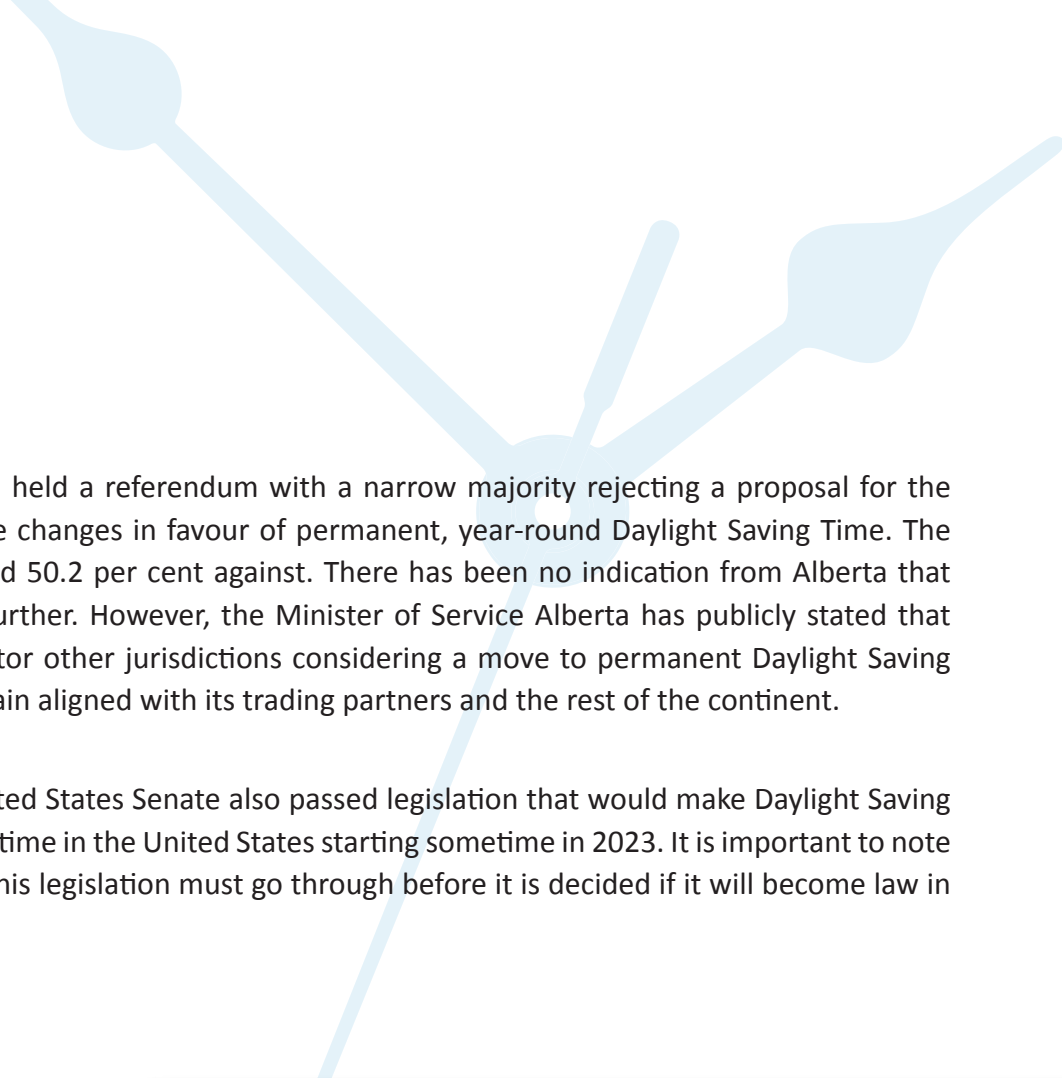
Currently, the NWT is located in the Mountain Time Zone along with Alberta, parts of British Columbia, and the Kitikmeot region of Nunavut. The NWT, like most of North America, has been observing seasonal time changes for many years. For the NWT, seasonal time changes occur twice a year when:

- Clocks are turned ahead one hour to Mountain Daylight Saving Time on the second Sunday in March.
- Clocks are turned back one hour to Mountain Standard Time on the first Sunday in November.

If the NWT were to adopt a permanent time, the clocks would be changed one last time in either mid-March or early November, and then simply remain on whichever time is decided upon.

Some Canadians find seasonal time changes to be disruptive and question why they are still practiced. Others consider seasonal time changes to only be a minor inconvenience, and do not mind if the tradition continues.

The Yukon, Saskatchewan, and parts of Nunavut and Quebec are the only Canadian jurisdictions that do not observe seasonal time changes. In 2019 and 2020 respectively, British Columbia and Ontario passed legislation to end seasonal time changes and observe permanent Daylight Saving Time. The implementation of these changes has been delayed due to the pandemic and a desire to see what other jurisdictions might do with their own time zones. In 2020, the Yukon stopped observing seasonal time changes. The Yukon's switch to permanent Daylight Saving Time was made unilaterally, and did not occur in conjunction with any other jurisdiction.



On October 18, 2021, Alberta held a referendum with a narrow majority rejecting a proposal for the province to end seasonal time changes in favour of permanent, year-round Daylight Saving Time. The vote was 49.8 per cent for and 50.2 per cent against. There has been no indication from Alberta that it plans to pursue the issue further. However, the Minister of Service Alberta has publicly stated that Alberta will continue to monitor other jurisdictions considering a move to permanent Daylight Saving Time, so that Alberta can remain aligned with its trading partners and the rest of the continent.

In the winter of 2022, the United States Senate also passed legislation that would make Daylight Saving Time the permanent standard time in the United States starting sometime in 2023. It is important to note that there are still steps that this legislation must go through before it is decided if it will become law in that country.

If the NWT were to adopt a permanent time, the clocks would be changed one last time in either mid-March or early November, and then simply remain on whichever time is decided upon.

PUBLIC AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

The Department of Justice ran a six-week public engagement on ending seasonal time change from April 4, 2022, to May 16, 2022. This online survey was advertised via social media, local radio stations, newspaper ads, and posters were distributed to a number of communities. Physical versions of the survey could also be printed online, requested via email, or acquired from Single Window Service Centres in communities across the NWT. The survey was anonymous and took approximately 5 minutes to complete. Residents were also invited to provide written feedback on the subject via email or mail.

The objectives of the survey were to hear what NWT residents thought of seasonal time changes and which of the following three options they preferred:

- The NWT stays on year-round Mountain Daylight Saving Time.
- The NWT stays on year-round Mountain Standard Time.
- No change: NWT maintains the twice-annual seasonal time changes we currently observe.

A supporting document was available with the survey that contained useful information on the topic for residents to reference, including questions and answers, and detailed explanations and maps outlining the different options available for the NWT in terms of time observance.



In addition, several stakeholders and partners were also identified as possibly having a particular interest in this issue and were contacted directly to provide feedback. These stakeholders and partners included, but were not limited to:

- Indigenous governments and organizations.
- Community governments.
- GNWT departments.
- Divisional education councils, school boards and post-secondary institutions.
- The NWT Chamber of Commerce and local Chambers of Commerce organizations.
- The airline and transportation sectors.
- Construction and mining companies.
- Technology and telecommunications providers.
- Non-government organizations representing groups such as youth, seniors and elders, persons with disabilities, and the underhoused.
- Professional associations representing medical practitioners, teachers, etc.

The Department decided to make the survey as accessible as possible to encourage participation, not requiring users to log in or register to take the survey. This meant there was nothing to stop individuals from taking the survey multiple times, or non-NWT residents from identifying as NWT residents and taking the survey. Given tracking limitations and other factors, it is impossible to say for certain how many duplicate responses may have been received for the survey. However, based on the tracking information that is available to the Department, there is no indication that this was a significant issue.

When taking the survey, participants were also allowed to skip questions. For example, one could answer only the first question and not complete the rest of the survey. Therefore, the number of responses for different questions will not add up to the number of total respondents.

WHAT WE HEARD

To determine what NWT residents thought of seasonal time changes, the survey asked participants fourteen questions, with the three most pertinent being:

- Do you support the NWT eliminating Seasonal Time changes and adopting a permanent, year-round time standard?
- Which permanent time option do you prefer: Mountain Daylight Saving Time or Mountain Standard Time?
- How important is it for the NWT to stay on the same time as Alberta?

Other questions asked included, but were not limited to:

- If the participant was an NWT resident (if they were not, they were directed out of the survey).
- Where in the NWT the participant lived.
- If they represented a business, non-profit organization, or other interested party.
- What type of organization they represented.
- If their organization was located in the NWT.
- What factors influenced their opinion on seasonal time change.

The online survey concluded on May 16 and received approximately 3,545 responses from self-identified NWT residents. The Department also received a a number of written submissions via the survey, email, and mail. The high-level results of the survey are summarized at the end of this report.

WRITTEN FEEDBACK

The Department of Justice did receive written feedback through the engagement survey, as well as directly via email and mail.

- Several respondents noted they would like the NWT to adopt permanent Mountain Standard Time with several comments including reference to scientific studies (including sleep studies) that suggest that a permanent standard time has many positive health impacts.
- There was also a comment that if seasonal time changes are ended in favour of permanent time, the NWT may no longer be aligned with Alberta, which the NWT relies on for assistance in some cases from an emergency management perspective. Similarly there were comments that having a time zone different than Alberta might complicate flight coordination, as well as the NWT's wildfire relationships with Parks Canada, the Yukon, British Columbia, and Alberta.
- Responses also noted that student attendance at school may be impacted by seasonal time changes, due to confusion and interrupted sleep patterns, and suggested that an increased need for daylight outside of the common working hours of 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM, meant that permanent Daylight Saving Time made the most sense. There were multiple comments made about the overall negative impact that time changes have on elders, children (especially younger children and children with special needs), and even pets.
- Some respondents indicated the extra sunlight in the evening with permanent Mountain Daylight Saving Time would be beneficial for things such as trapping, snowshoeing, and after school sports. Some respondents noted that permanent Mountain Standard Time "aligns more closely with the sun" than Mountain Daylight Saving Time and should be adopted so noon equals mid-day, particularly for navigational purposes. Several respondents noted that they prefer a permanent time change that puts the NWT closer in time to provinces in eastern Canada, where they have family and friends (and connecting with these people is difficult with larger time gaps between jurisdictions).
- Several respondents noted they would like to see an end to time changes regardless of which permanent time option is chosen given the significant darkness in the winter months and daylight in the summer months. Overall, many respondents noted they do not care which permanent time standard is chosen, they just want time changes ended.

CONCLUSION

This What We Heard Report provides a high-level summary of the input received throughout the public engagement period. It has been compiled to provide an understanding of the areas of interest raised by NWT residents respecting seasonal time changes.

Notably, the majority of survey respondents were in favour of stopping seasonal time changes and switching to a permanent time standard, with a majority preferring Mountain Daylight Saving Time. The most common factor behind this preference was a desire for more sunlight hours in the day.

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NEXT STEPS

The results of this public engagement will help to inform the decision of Executive Council in terms of whether seasonal time changes should be eliminated and what permanent time standard should be adopted.

If the GNWT does decide to move to a permanent time, it will not happen immediately. An implementation plan will need to be developed by the GNWT that will identify the resources, timelines, and communications requirements needed to implement such a change. A significant transition period would also be needed to notify residents, organizations, businesses, industry, and technology and telecommunications providers in order for them to prepare for the change. As noted earlier in this report, it would be a lengthy and complex process that will require the NWT to ensure, to the greatest extent possible, that all of the devices, applications, and operating systems that NWT residents depend on in their daily lives receive the necessary software updates to reflect a new time.

The results of this public engagement will help to inform the decision of Executive Council in terms of whether seasonal time changes should be eliminated and what permanent time standard should be adopted.

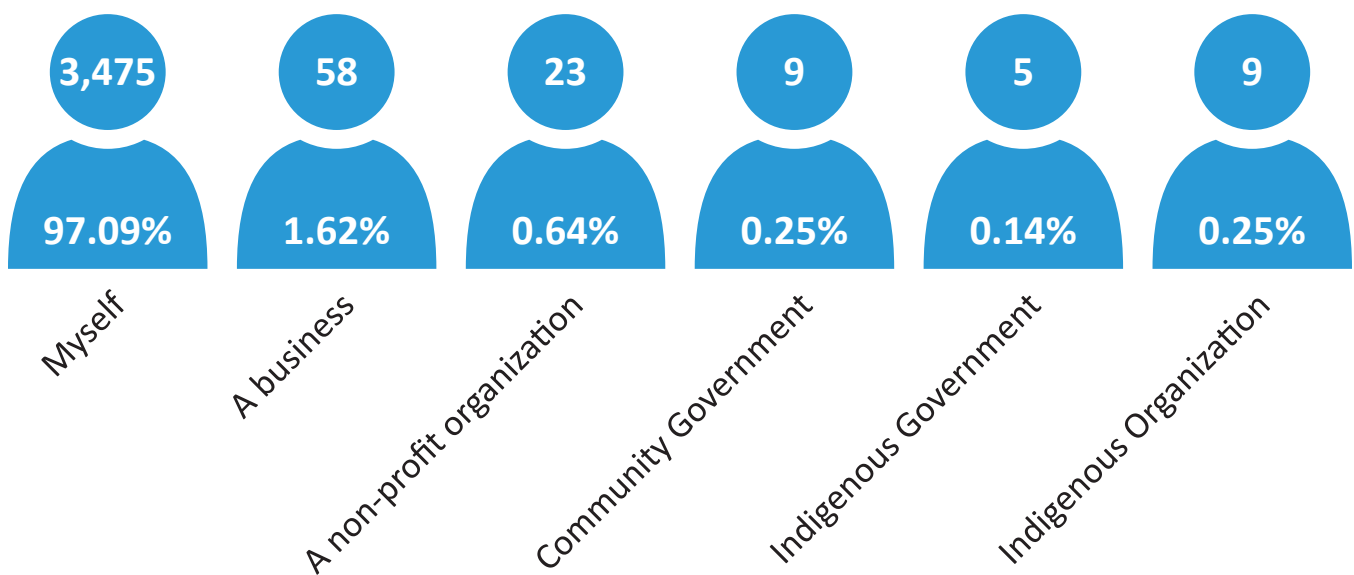
WHO WE HEARD FROM

Are you an NWT Resident?

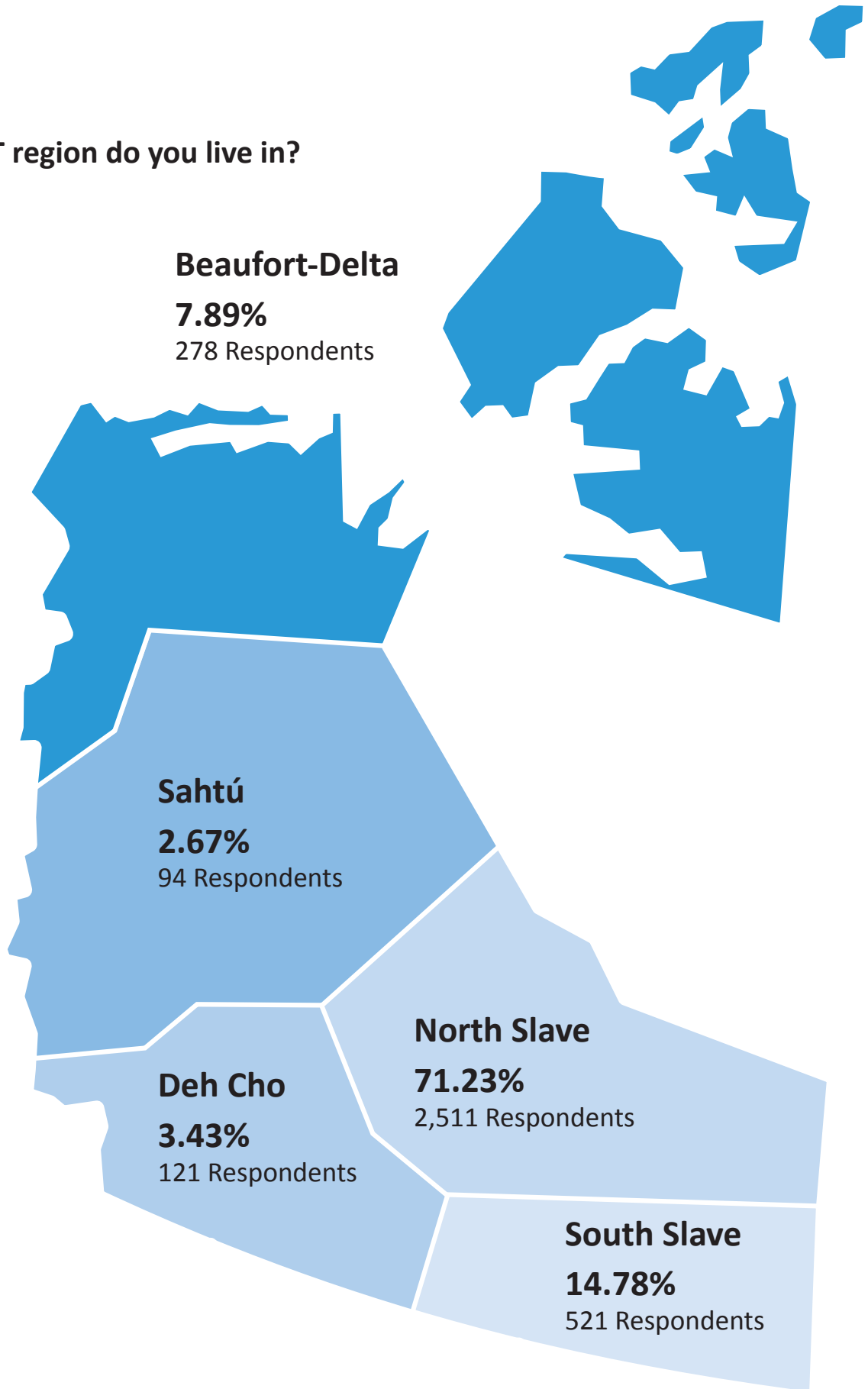


A total of 3,604 people responded to the survey, of which 3,545 were from the NWT

Are you completing this survey on behalf of yourself, a business, a non-profit organization, or another interested party?

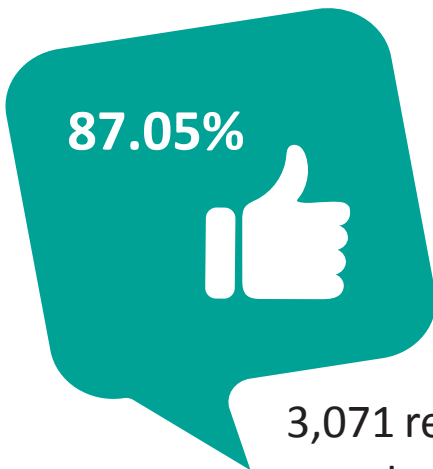


Which NWT region do you live in?



Do you support the NWT eliminating Seasonal Time changes and adopting a permanent, year-round time standard?

7 out of 8 people are in favour of eliminating seasonal time change.



3,071 respondents voted yes



346 respondents voted no



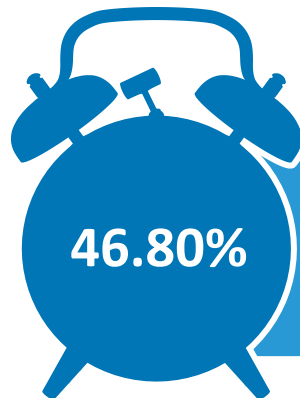
111 respondents didn't know, or didn't have a preference

3,528 Total votes cast

Which permanent time option do you prefer?



1,620 respondents voted
for year-round **Mountain
Daylight Saving Time**



1,425 respondents voted
for year-round **Mountain
Standard Time**

Respondents were split nearly 50/50 on
which permanent time zone to adopt

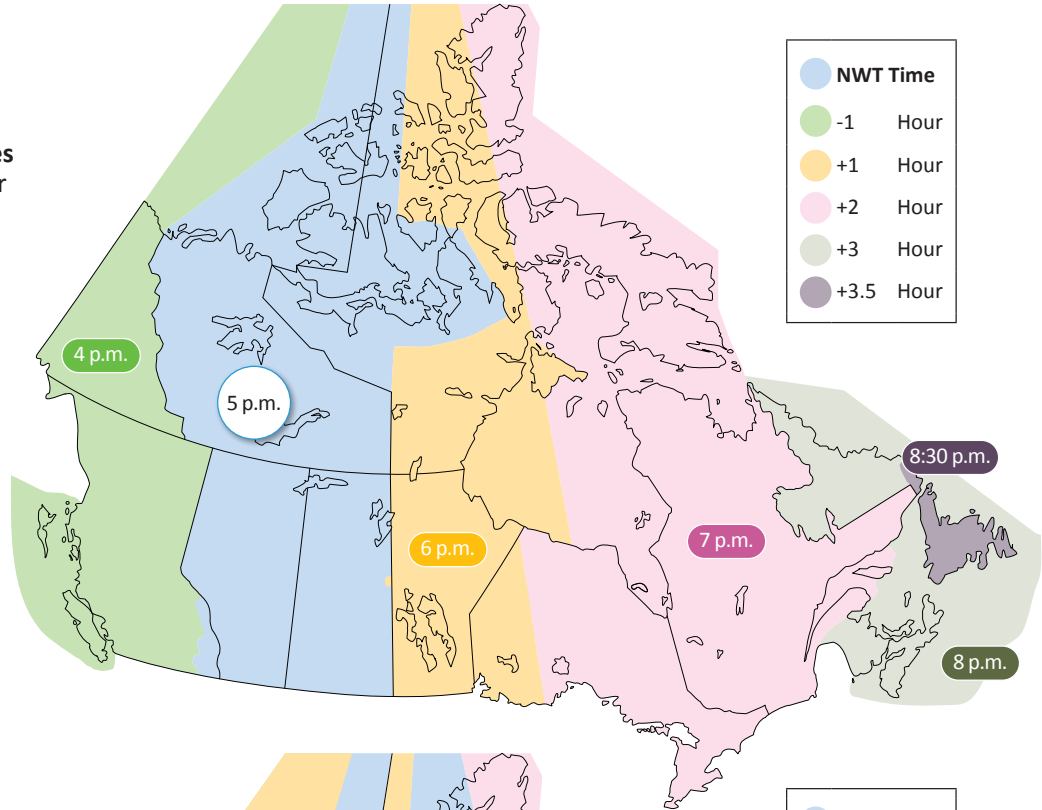
**OPTION
A**

NWT moves to permanent Mountain Daylight Saving Time

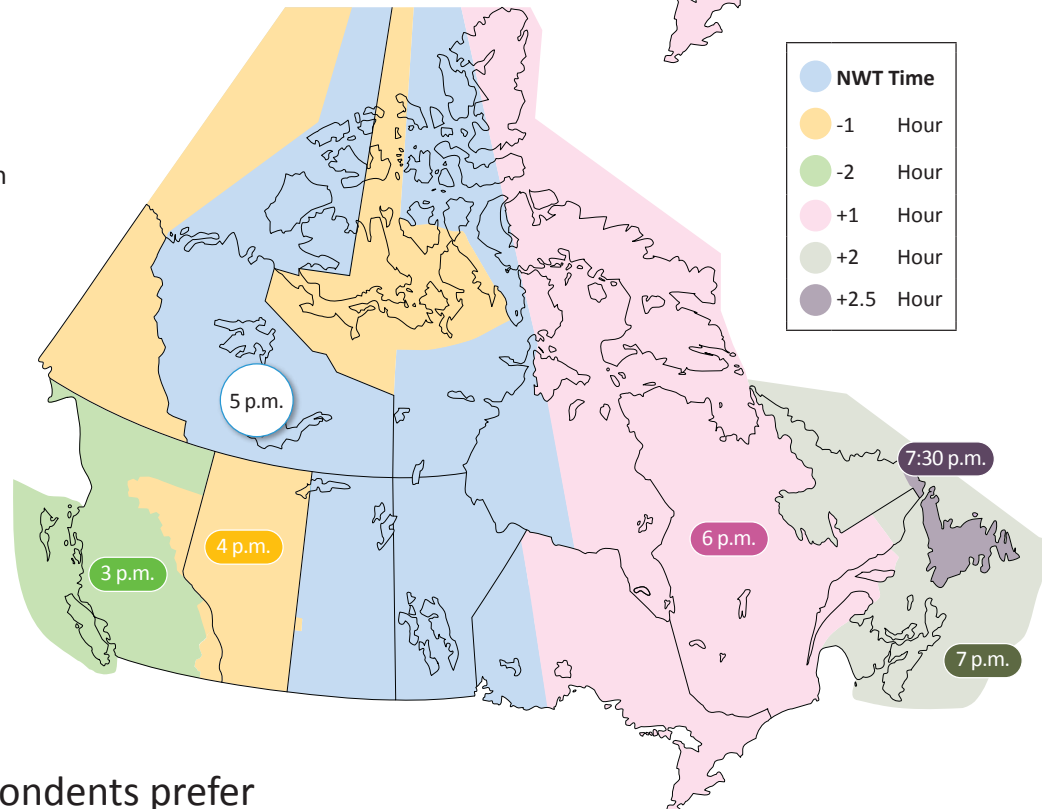
The 2 maps below compare NWT's time to the rest of Canada in summer and winter.



Summer Time Zones
March to November



Winter Time Zones
November to March



53.20% of respondents prefer moving to permanent Mountain Daylight Savings Time

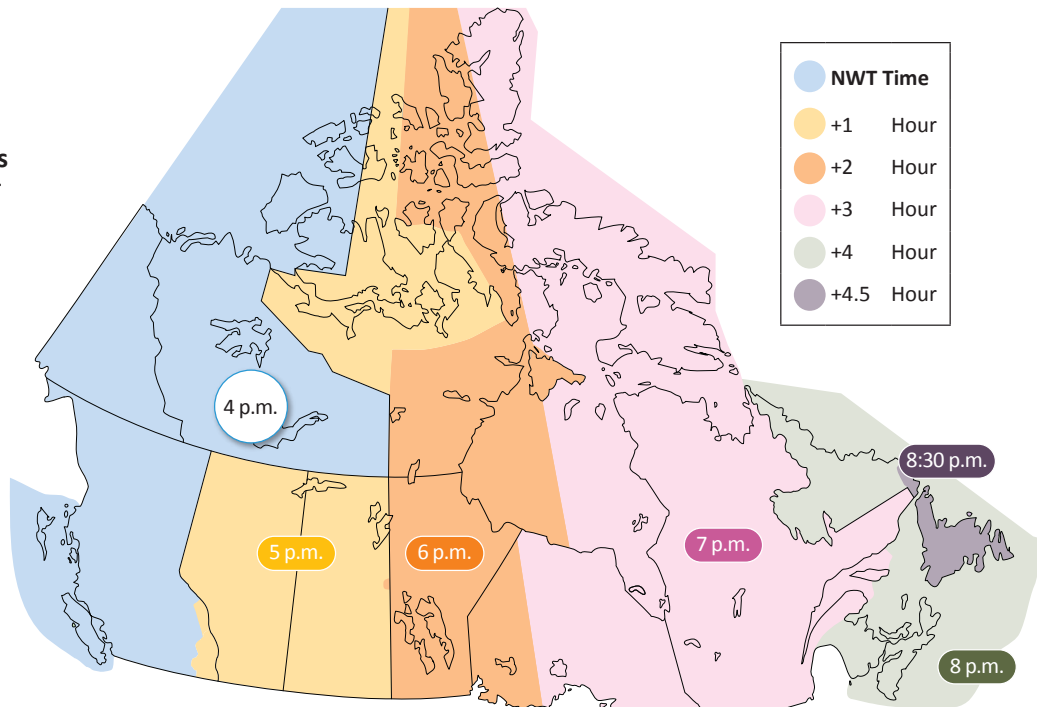
**OPTION
B**

NWT moves to permanent Mountain Standard Time

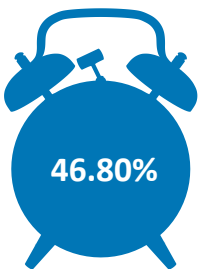
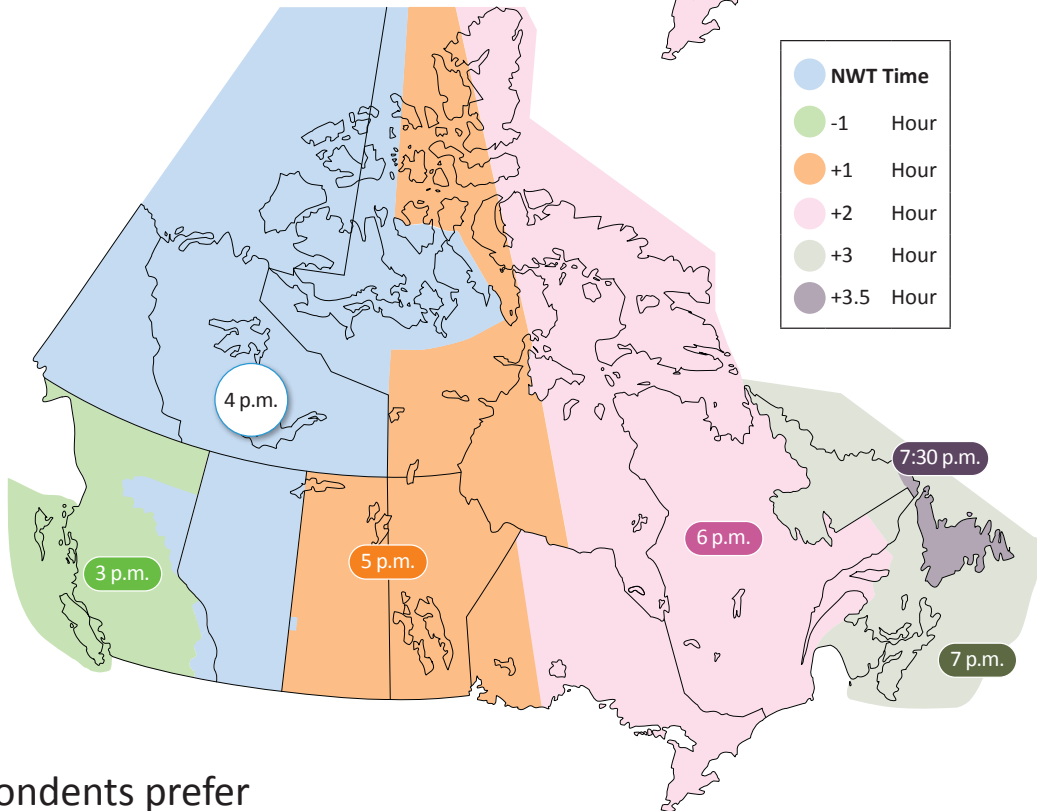
The 2 maps below compare NWT's time to the rest of Canada in summer and winter.



Summer Time Zones
March to November

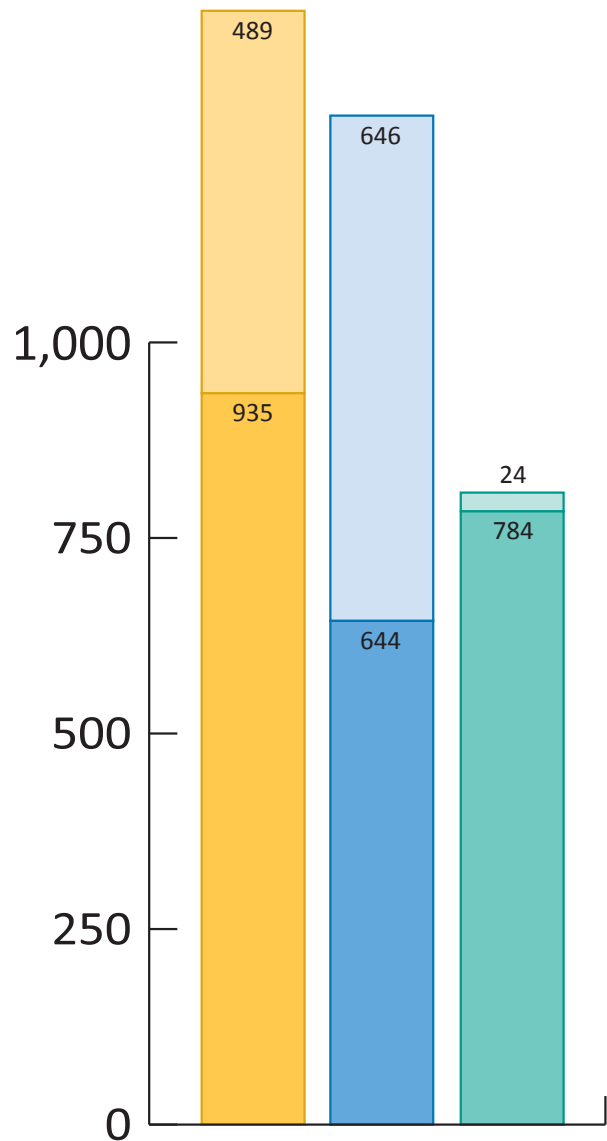
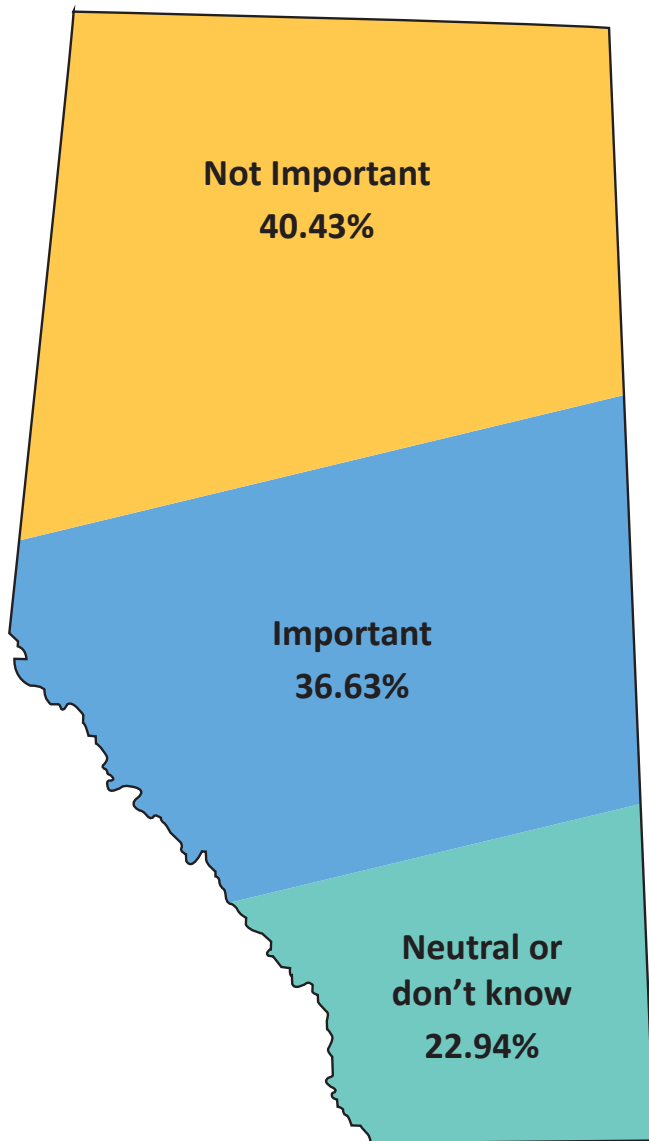


Winter Time Zones
November to March



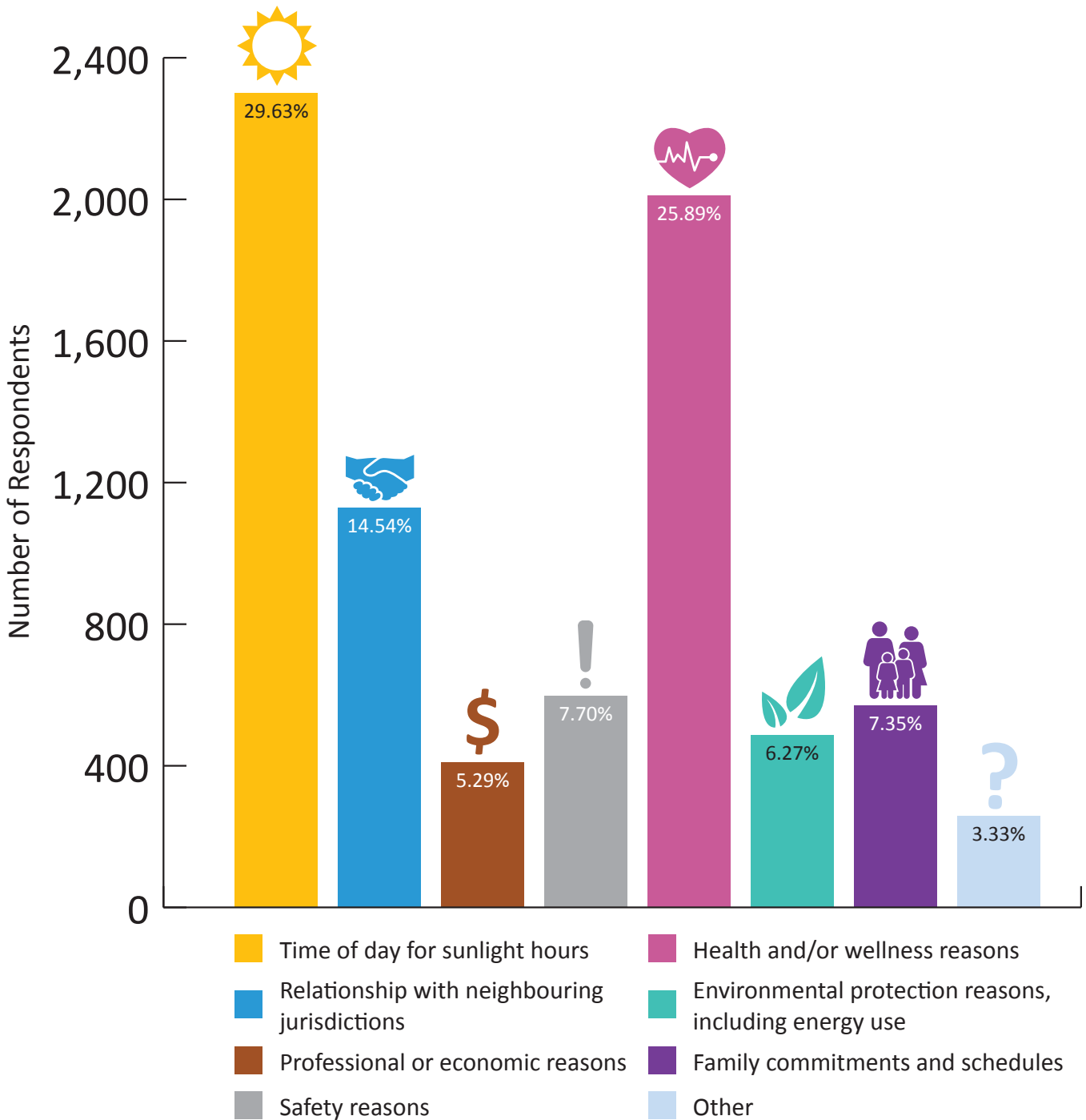
46.80% of respondents prefer moving to permanent Mountain Standard Time

How important is it for the NWT to stay on the same time as Alberta?



- Not very important
- Not at all important
- Very important
- Somewhat important
- Don't know
- Neutral

Which of the following reasons influence your opinion on seasonal time changes?



APPENDIX: SUMMARY OF SURVEY RESPONSES

TOTAL SURVEY RESPONDENTS	COUNT	%
	3,604	
Are you an NWT Resident?		
Yes	3,545	98.36%
No	59	1.64%
TOTAL	3,604	100.00%
Are you completing this survey on behalf of yourself, a business, a non-profit organization, or another interested party?		
Myself	3,475	97.09%
A business	58	1.62%
A non-profit organization	23	0.64%
Community Government	9	0.25%
Indigenous Government	5	0.14%
Indigenous Organization	9	0.25%
TOTAL	3,579	100.00%
Is the business you represent based in the NWT?		
Yes	57	98.28%
No	1	1.72%
TOTAL	58	100.00%
What type of business do you represent? [Select one]		
Agriculture, Fishing and Forestry	5	9.09%
Airline and Transportation	7	12.73%
Arts, Culture and Entertainment	3	5.45%
Childcare	3	5.45%
Computers and Telecommunications	5	9.09%
Construction	11	20.00%
Education and Training	5	9.09%
Health and Wellness	6	10.91%
Mining	1	1.82%
Restaurants, Food and Beverages	3	5.45%
Shopping and Retail	3	5.45%
Sports and Recreation	1	1.82%
Travel and Tourism	2	3.64%
TOTAL	55	100.00%

Is the non-profit organization you represent based in the NWT?		
Yes	21	91.30%
No	2	8.70%
TOTAL	23	100.00%
What type of non-profit organization do you represent?		
Arts and Culture	1	4.76%
Children and Youth	7	33.33%
Education and Training	3	14.29%
Environmental	0	0.00%
Gender	1	4.76%
Health and Wellness	2	9.52%
Language	0	0.00%
Professional Organization	1	4.76%
Underhoused (shelter, emergency housing, etc.)	2	9.52%
Religious	2	9.52%
Seniors and Elders	0	0.00%
Sports and Recreation	1	4.76%
Travel and Tourism	1	4.76%
TOTAL	21	100.00%
Is the Indigenous Organization you represent based in the NWT?		
Yes	9	100.00%
No	0	0.00%
TOTAL	9	100.00%
Is the Community Government you represent based in the NWT?		
Yes	8	88.89%
No	1	11.11%
TOTAL	9	100.00%
Is the Indigenous Government you represent based in the NWT?		
Yes	4	100.00%
No	0	0.00%
TOTAL	4	100.00%

Do you support the NWT eliminating seasonal time changes and adopting a permanent, year-round time?		
Yes	3,071	87.05%
No	346	9.81%
Don't know/no preference	111	3.15%
TOTAL	3,528	100.00%
Which permanent time option do you prefer?		
Option A: NWT moves to year-round Mountain Daylight Saving Time	1,620	53.20%
Option B: NWT moves to year-round Mountain Standard Time	1,425	46.80%
TOTAL	3,045	100.00%
Which of the following reasons influence your opinion on seasonal time changes?		
Time of day for sunlight hours	2,301	29.63%
Relationship with neighbouring jurisdictions	1,129	14.54%
Professional or economic reasons	411	5.29%
Safety reasons	598	7.70%
Health and/or wellness reasons	2,011	25.89%
Environmental protection reasons, including energy use	487	6.27%
Family commitments and schedules	571	7.35%
Other (please specify)	259	3.33%
TOTAL	7,767	100.00%
How important is it for the NWT to stay on the same time as Alberta?		
Not at all important	935	26.55%
Not very important	489	13.88%
Neutral	784	22.26%
Somewhat important	644	18.29%
Very important	646	18.34%
Don't know	24	0.68%
TOTAL	3,522	100.00%
Which NWT region do you live in?		
North Slave – Behchokò, Gamètì, Wekweètì, Whatì, Dettah, Yellowknife	2,511	71.23%
South Slave – Enterprise, Fort Resolution, Fort Smith, Hay River, Kakisa, Łutsel K'e	521	14.78%
Deh Cho – Fort Liard, Fort Providence, Fort Simpson, Hay River, Jean Marie River, K'atl'odeeche, Nahanni Butte, Sambaa K'e, Wrigley	121	3.43%
Sahtú – Colville Lake, Déljine, Fort Good Hope, Norman Wells, Tulita	94	2.67%
Beaufort-Delta – Aklavik, Fort McPherson, Inuvik, Paulatuk, Sachs Harbour, Tsiigehtchic, Tuktoyaktuk, Ulukhaktok	278	7.89%
TOTAL	3,525	100.00%

