



# Labour

## Workplace Bulletin

### Collective bargaining monthly update

### April 2014

#### Key negotiation activities

In April, some of the major<sup>1</sup> negotiations occurred between:

- The British Columbia Public School Employers' Association and the British Columbia Teachers' Federation (BCTF): Little progress has been made in negotiations between the parties since the expiry of the collective agreement in June 2013. Since April 23, the 39,000 public-school teachers in the province stopped administrative and extracurricular duties to push negotiations forward. In mid-May, the BCTF announced a week of rotating strikes from May 26 to May 30.
- The Health Employers Association of British Columbia (HEABC) and the Facilities Bargaining Association in British Columbia (FBABC): Negotiations are ongoing between the HEABC and 85,100 health care employees after the expiry of several collective agreements in March 2014. In the last week of April, 47,000 workers, represented by the FBABC, voted 96% in favour of strike action. Major issues between the parties include contracting out, employment options, and pay scales.
- The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador and the Newfoundland and Labrador Nurses' Union (NLNU): In December 2012, the parties exchanged opening negotiation packages following the expiration of the collective agreement in June 2012. After prolonged negotiations a tentative settlement was announced in April 2014. The NLNU membership, representing 5,200 nurses, held votes on the settlement throughout the month of May. The vote result was uncertain at the time of this publication.

An updated monthly list of [Key negotiations](#) is available under the [Resources](#) tab on the Labour Program website.

## Settlements reached

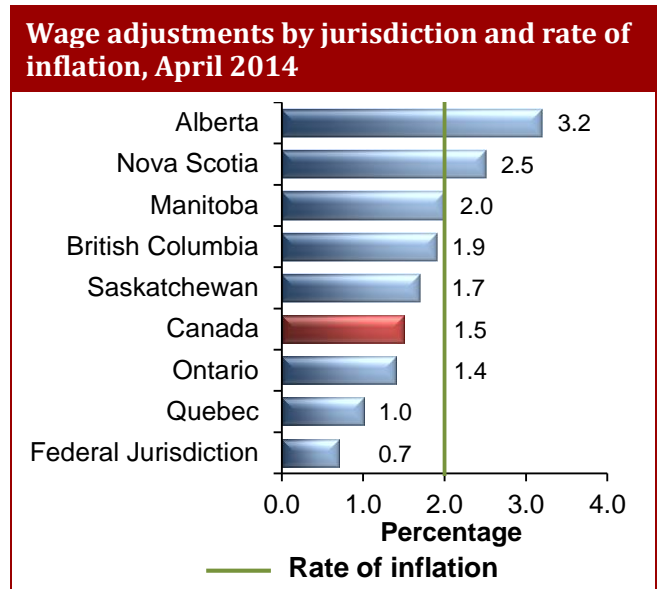
- In April, 13 major collective bargaining agreements were ratified, covering a total of 76,430 employees. All of these agreements were settled in the public sector.
- Seven of these negotiations were settled through direct bargaining, four through mediation, one through conciliation, and the remaining one required arbitration.
- Only one was ratified in the federal jurisdiction (1,640 employees).
- Of all the employees who ratified their agreements in April, 92.3% worked in the Education, health, and social services industry.
- Ontario had the highest concentration (61.9%) of employees who ratified their agreements in April; followed by Manitoba (14.4%) and Saskatchewan (13.8%).

The texts of collective agreements can be accessed through the [Negotech](#) while the list of [Ratified settlements in 2014](#) can be accessed under the [Resources](#) tab on the Labour Program website.

## Settlement outcomes

### Wages

- Major collective bargaining settlements in April provided base-rate<sup>2</sup> wage adjustments averaging 1.5%<sup>3</sup> annually, lower than the increase recorded in March (1.9%).
- In the previous round of negotiations between these same parties, the annual wage adjustment averaged 1.3%.
- The average increase in wage (1.5%) was lower than the inflation rate (2.0%)<sup>4</sup> that prevailed in April.
- The agreement between the Canada Post Corporation and its 1,640 employees was the only one ratified in the federal jurisdiction, and recorded a wage increase of 0.7%, the lowest amongst all jurisdictions.
- Alberta recorded the highest wage adjustment (3.2%) amongst all jurisdictions in two agreements covering 1,410 employees.



More information on [Wage settlements](#) can be accessed under the [Resources](#) tab on the Labour Program website.

### Duration

- Major negotiations settled in April recorded an average contract duration of 35.1 months. The last time these same parties negotiated, the duration averaged 38.3 months.
- The agreement with the longest term (60 months) was settled between the Saskatchewan Association of Health Organizations and its 9,870 healthcare workers.

## Working Conditions

- The government of Saskatchewan and the Canadian Union of Public Employees agreed on a new clause related to medical donor leave. Employees who donate bone marrow or an organ, with physician approval, will now be granted paid time-off for the operation and recuperation.
- The Regional Health Authorities and the Manitoba Nurses' Union negotiated clauses which will enable the nurses to take paid leave for both *escort duty* and *witness duty*. The two new clauses capture situations where nurses would have previously needed to take unpaid leave as a consequence of workplace responsibilities.

## Major work stoppages

- There were no major<sup>5</sup> work stoppages recorded in April.
- So far this year, work stoppages have resulted in 10,130 person-days-not-worked (PDNW), which is much higher than the 3,680 PDNW recorded over the same period last year. The year-to-date figure reflects two major work stoppages which occurred in January, 2014.

More information on [Work stoppages](#) in Canada can be accessed under the [Resources](#) tab on the Labour Program website.

## Features

### Literature Scan

- The Canadian Labour Market and Skills Researcher Network released the April-edition of [Labour Market Matters](#). This edition discusses the relative importance of lower-skill jobs during economic downturns, and how that results in over-qualification among workers who were educated to do more cognitive-based jobs.
- The Canadian Centre for Policy Alternative released a new essay, titled [Unions and Demography](#). The essay argues that the work of unions extends beyond the workplace and that unions provide both a unique opportunity for democratic participation and a collective voice for working people.
- The Conference Board of Canada issued a new report titled [Skills for Business Innovation Success](#). The report looks at firm-level innovation and offers recommendations for businesses, governments, post-secondary institutions, and individuals.

## Contact

For more information, please contact the [Workplace Information and Research Division](#) or call us at 1-877-259-8828.

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**Note:** This bulletin is based on April data/information, which is collected as of May 15, 2014.

- 1 All data reported in this bulletin relates to major collective agreements covering 500 or more employees across Canada.
- 2 The base wage rate is the lowest paid classification used for qualified employees in the bargaining unit.
- 3 The wage adjustment averages are employee-weighted.
- 4 Statistics Canada, [The Daily](#).
- 5 Major work stoppages involve 500 employees or more.