



Labour

Workplace Bulletin

Collective bargaining monthly update February 2016

Key negotiation activities

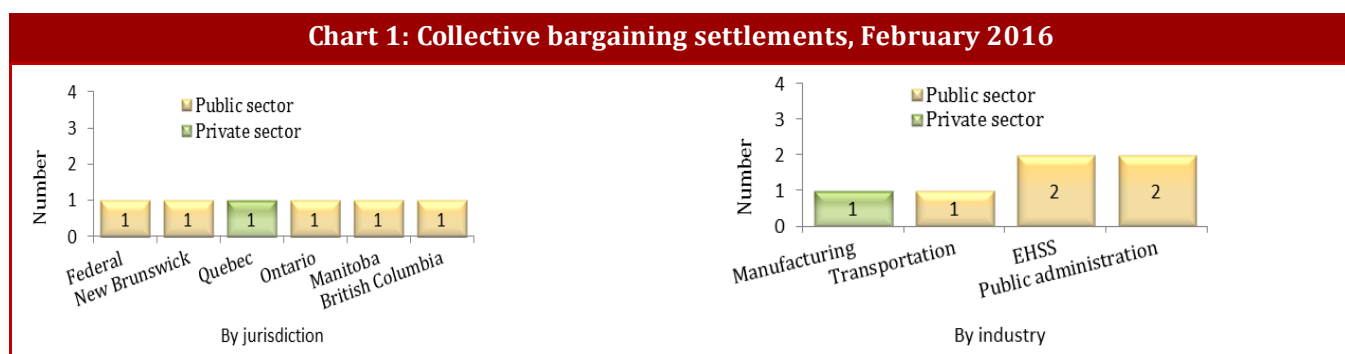
In February, major¹ ongoing negotiations included the following:

- **Brewers Retail Inc., operating as The Beer Store and United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW):** The collective agreement covering almost 6,000 workers expired on December 31, 2015. Negotiations to renew the agreement commenced in November 2015, with parties agreeing to discuss non-monetary issues first and pension and wage considerations last. Talks continued in February with the assistance of a provincial conciliator and progress was made in addressing most of the non-monetary issues. The parties also discussed some of the wages and pension concerns but were unable to reach an agreement. According to the union, both parties decided to step back and take some time to re-evaluate the process, while remaining committed towards achieving a settlement.
- **Saskatchewan Telecommunications and UNIFOR:** The collective agreement covering 3,800 employees was to expire in early March 2016. The parties exchanged the first proposals in November 2015 and met several times over the next three months. From February 8 to February 19, the union held several information meetings and strike voting sessions across the province. Dissatisfied with progress at the bargaining table, the union decided to apply to the federal government for conciliation. Outstanding issues include benefits and wages.

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

Settlements reached

- In February, six major collective agreements were reached; five agreements (covering 12,050 employees) were in the public sector, and one (covering 560 employees) in the private sector. Two agreements were reached through mediation, and four through direct bargaining.
- In the federal jurisdiction, one agreement (covering 2,400 employees) was concluded between the City of Ottawa and the Amalgamated Transit Union. Across provincial jurisdictions, one agreement was reached in each of: New Brunswick (covering 1,200 employees), Quebec (covering 560 employees), Ontario (covering 4,240 employees), Manitoba (covering 3,560 employees) and British Columbia (covering 650 employees) [Chart 1].
- At the industry level, the employees who settled in February were in manufacturing (560 employees), transportation (2,400 employees), education, health, and social services (4,210 employees), and public administration (5,440 employees).



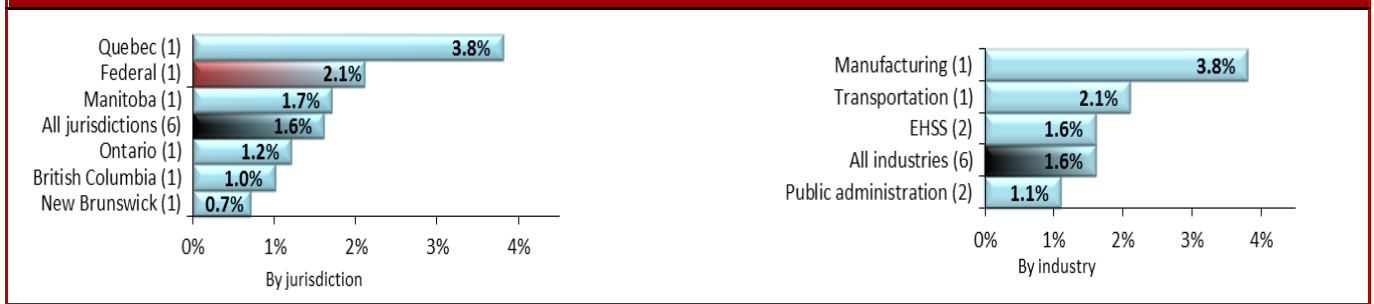
The texts of collective agreements can be accessed through the [Negotech](#), and the list of [Ratified settlements](#) under the [Resources](#) tab on the Labour Program website.

Settlement outcomes

Wages

- The average annual base-rate² wage adjustment (over the duration of the contract) received by the 12,610 employees who settled in February was 1.6%, which was higher than the average increase obtained in the previous round of negotiations between the same parties (1.4%) [Chart 2].
- The average wage increase negotiated in the private sector (3.8%) was much higher than the average increase in the public sector (1.5%).
- Among all agreements reached in February, the highest wage increase (3.8%) was received by the 560 employees of ArcelorMittal Montreal Inc, while the lowest (0.7%) by the 1,200 employees of the Government of New Brunswick.

Chart 2: Wage adjustments, February 2016

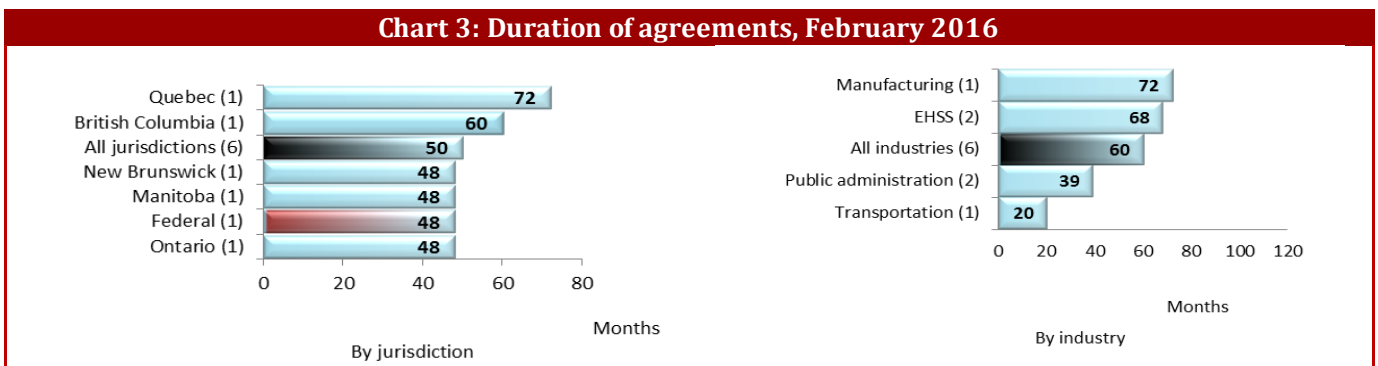


More information on [Wage settlements](#) can be accessed under the [Resources](#) tab on the [Labour Program website](#).

Duration

- In February, the average duration of the agreements settled was 50 months. This was slightly longer than the average duration reached in the previous round of negotiations between the same bargaining parties (48 months) [Chart 3].
- The duration of the agreement settled in the private sector (72 months) was higher than the average duration of the five agreements concluded in the public sector (48.6 months).
- Among the six contracts settled, the longest contract duration (72 months) was in the provincial jurisdiction for ArcelorMittal Montreal Inc., covering 560 employees. The shortest contract duration for the agreements concluded in February was 48 months.

Chart 3: Duration of agreements, February 2016



Working Conditions

New working conditions clauses allow employers and unions to innovatively adapt to changing economic, working and social environments. In February, the following clause was reported:

- *Government of Manitoba and the Manitoba Government and General Employees' Union:* The reimbursement rates for the usage of private vehicles were directly linked to the price of gasoline. "The kilometer rates would be adjusted based on the following ratio: for every full 10.0¢ increase/decrease in the price per litre of regular gasoline, there would be a 1.0¢/km increase/decrease in the private vehicle kilometer reimbursement rates."

Major work stoppages³

- In February, two major work stoppages were recorded in the provincial public sector. At the end of February, Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC) had 2,774 members at the Université du Québec à Montréal on work stoppage since December 7, 2015. On February 22, Hydro Quebec had 500 Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) members walk off their job for one day.
- No major work stoppages occurred in the federal jurisdiction.

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

Features

Literature scan

The following studies relating to industrial relations and the labour market were recently published:

- The Conference Board of Canada report [Healthy Brains at Work: Employer-Sponsored Mental Health Benefits and Programs](#), based on a national survey of Canadian employers, provides insights into how Canadian organizations are addressing mental health, including the guidelines and standards employers use to implement their mental health strategy. It also discusses the challenges and barriers that employers are facing when implementing a mental health strategy or policy, by way of providing three case studies.
- The IZA World of Labour article [Do skills matter for wage inequality?](#) addresses the relevance of skills to wage inequality. The report discusses the role of skills inequality between workers versus the role of how skills are remunerated in explaining cross-country differences in wage inequality. According to the author, wage setting institutions such as, legal minimum wages and collective bargaining have a large influence on how skills are rewarded. The article is part of a series of short articles on the economics of labour around the world published and available on [IZA World of Labour](#) website.

Contact

For more information, please contact the [Workplace Information and Research Division](#) or call 1-877-259-8828. Please use the above link to send us the memorandum of understanding or other documentation if you have a business unit that is either federally registered (with 100 or more employees) or provincially registered (with 500 or more employees) and a collective bargaining agreement is reached.

Note: This bulletin is based on February 2016 data/information, which was collected up to February 16, 2016. Work stoppage data was collected up to February 25, 2016.

- 1 All data reported in this bulletin relates to major collective agreements covering 500 or more employees across Canada.
- 2 The base-rate wage is the lowest paid classification used for qualified employees in the bargaining unit.
- 3 Major work stoppages involve 500 employees or more. Because of differences between the province of Ontario and the federal government's reporting cycles, monthly work stoppage data from Ontario may be incomplete.