



Fair, safe and productive workplaces

# Labour

## Workplace Bulletin

### Collective bargaining update

### March 2016

The March issue provides an overview of major<sup>1</sup> collective bargaining negotiations in the month of March (section A) and in the first quarter of 2016 (section B). Innovative clauses in collective agreements (section C) and a literature scan (section D) are also provided.

#### **A. March overview**

##### **Key negotiation activities**

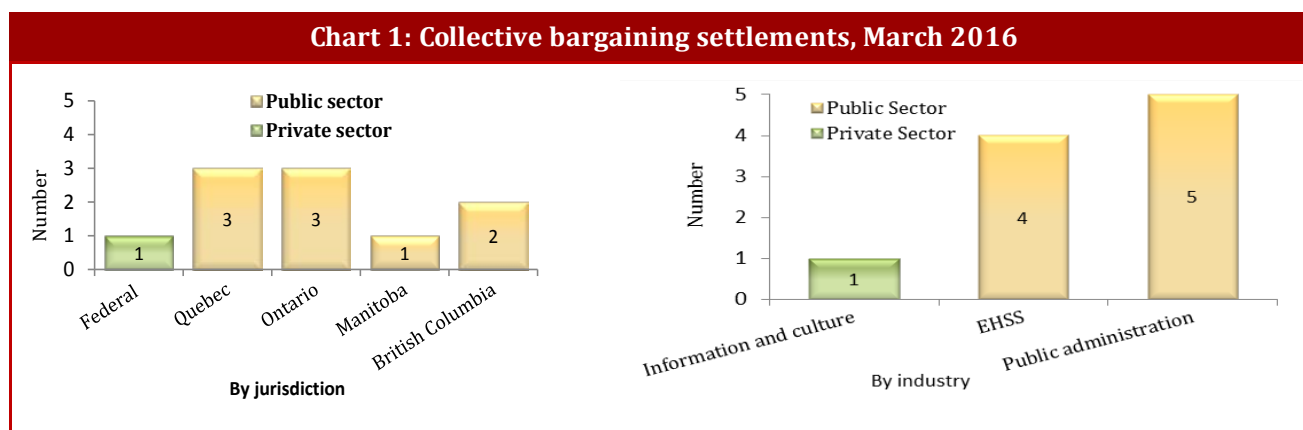
In March, ongoing negotiations included the following:

- **Air Transat and Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE):** Approximately 1,800 cabin crew members have been without a contract since November 2015. Bargaining has been ongoing between Air Transat and CUPE since September 2015. In March, the union filed for conciliation with the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service after rejecting an offer made by the employer. Conciliation talks will begin in April, with the main issues being in-flight staffing, work hours and wages. If no agreement is reached by the end of the conciliation period, the union can obtain the right to strike with 72 hours' notice.
- **Ontario Hospital Association and Ontario Nurses' Association (ONA):** The collective agreement for 58,000 registered nurses expired at the end of March 2016. Negotiations, which commenced in November 2015, have focused on non-monetary issues. Bargaining continued throughout the month of January, with outstanding issues going to mediation in February and then to arbitration in March. Arbitration hearings took place in March, with benefits and job security being top priorities. The arbitration award is expected to be released within the next few months.

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

## Settlements reached

- In March, ten major collective agreements were reached, nine in the public sector (covering 67,320 employees) and one in the private sector (covering 1,380 employees). Five agreements were reached through direct bargaining, three through mediation, and one each through conciliation and arbitration.
- The one private-sector agreement was in the federal jurisdiction. All public-sector agreements were in the provincial jurisdiction. There were three agreements in each of Quebec (covering 41,430 employees) and Ontario (covering 20,770 employees); two in British Columbia (covering 4,230 employees); and one in Manitoba (covering 890 employees) (Chart 1).
- The employees who settled in March were in the industries of information and culture (1,380 employees); education, health, and social service (EHSS) (32,120 employees); and public administration (35,200 employees).



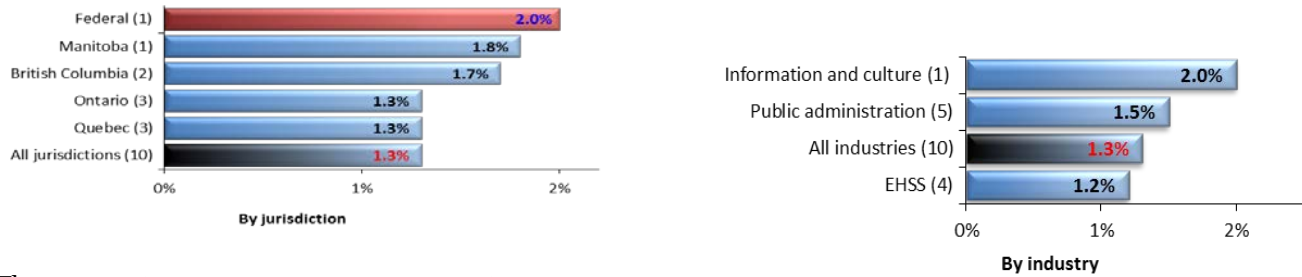
The texts of collective agreements can be accessed through the [Negotech](#), while the list of [Ratified settlements](#) can be accessed under the [Resources](#) tab on the Labour Program website.

## Settlement outcomes

### Wages

- The 68,700 employees settling in March received an average annual base-rate<sup>2</sup> wage adjustment of 1.3% over the duration of their contracts. The average wage increase among these employees was very similar to the average increase received in the previous round of negotiations between the same bargaining parties (1.3%) (Chart 2).
- The average wage increase negotiated in the private sector (2.0%)<sup>3</sup> was higher than in the public sector (1.3%).
- Among the agreements reached in March, a City of Montréal collective agreement covering 8,000 employees had the highest wage increase (2.1%). The lowest increase (1.0%) was received by the 27,000 employees of the Quebec French-Language School Boards.

**Chart 2: Wage adjustments, March 2016\***



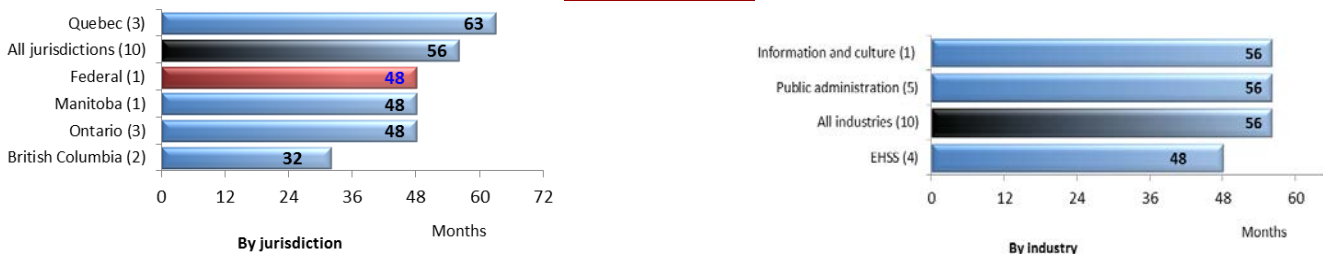
\*The number of settled agreements per category is found in parenthesis

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

### Duration of collective agreements

- In March, the average duration of agreements settled was very similar to their duration in the previous round of negotiation between the same bargaining parties (56 months) (Chart 3).
- The agreements concluded in the public sector (56 months) had a longer average duration than the agreement reached in the private sector (48 months).<sup>4</sup>
- The single contract settled in the federal jurisdiction, between Expertech Network Installation Inc. and Unifor, had 48 months duration.
- The City of Montreal and the Canadian Union of Public Employees negotiated the longest contract duration (84 months).
- The shortest contract duration (24 months) was negotiated between the University of British Columbia and Faculty Association of the University of British Columbia.

**Chart 3: Duration of agreements, March 2016\***



\*The number of settled agreements per category is found in parenthesis

### Major work stoppages<sup>5</sup>

- In March, 2,774 members of Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC) at the Université du Québec à Montréal were still on work stoppage, which began December 7, 2015. Detailed information on the strike was not available at the time of publication.
- 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.

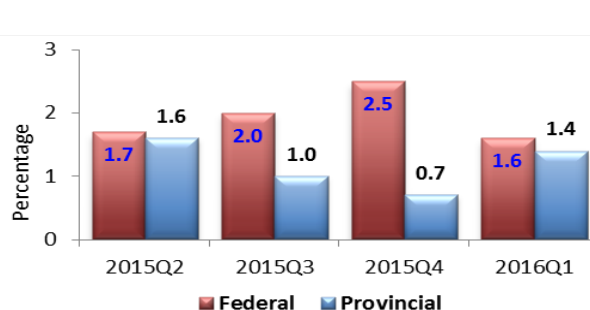
## B. First Quarter overview

- Thirty-two major settlements, covering a total of 113,170 employees, were concluded during the first quarter of 2016 (2016Q1). The average annual base-rate wage adjustment for these agreements was 1.5%, a notable increase compared to the last quarter of 2015 (0.8%).
- Three-quarters of negotiations (24 agreements) were settled through direct bargaining. Out of the remaining eight, five were settled through mediation, two through conciliation, and one through arbitration.

**Chart 4: Wage adjustments by sector, 2016 (Quarterly)**

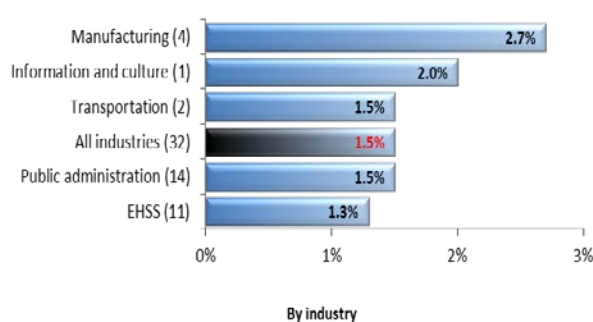
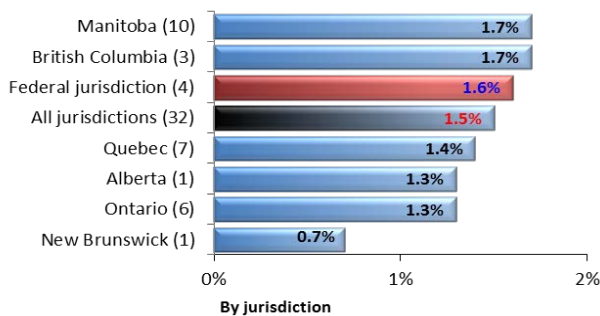


**Chart 5: Wage adjustments by jurisdiction, 2016 (Quarterly)**



- The majority of agreements (27 agreements) were settled in the public sector, with an average wage increase of 1.4% compared to 0.6% in the previous quarter (2015Q4). The five agreements settled in the private sector had an average wage increase of 1.7%, a decrease from the previous quarter (2.2%) (Chart 4).
- In the federal jurisdiction, four agreements (covering 12,900 employees) were settled, for an average wage increase of 1.6%. This is slightly higher than the average increase for the twenty-eight agreements settled in the provincial jurisdiction (1.4%), which covered 100,270 employees [Chart 5].
- Among all provincial jurisdictions, Manitoba and British Columbia had the highest wage adjustment (1.7%). The lowest wage adjustment (0.7%) was recorded in New Brunswick (Chart 6).

**Chart 6: Wage adjustments in 2016Q1**



\*The number of settled agreements per category is found in parenthesis

- Out of all employees settling during the first quarter of 2016, 40% were in Quebec (45,340 employees). The agreement between the French Language School Boards and Fédération autonome de l'enseignement covered more than half of these employees (27,000 employees).
- Among all industries, manufacturing recorded the highest average wage gains (2.7%). In contrast, employees in EHSS received the lowest wage gain (1.3%).
- Agreements concluded in the first quarter of 2016 had an average duration of 59 months, higher than the average recorded in the last quarter of 2015 (40 months). The duration of agreements was much higher in the private sector (95 months) compared to the public sector (54 months).
- In the first quarter of 2016, major work stoppages occurred in Quebec. Detailed information on these strikes was not available at the time of publication.

### **C. Innovative clauses in collective agreements**

New clauses in collective agreements allow employers and unions to innovatively adapt to changing economic, working and social environments. The following clause was reported:

- Prairie South School Division No. 210 and Canadian Union of Public Employees: To recognize the importance of the Aboriginal tradition, the Aboriginal elder is included in the definition of immediate family for compassionate leave.

### **D. Literature scan**

The following study related to industrial relations was recently published:

- A Eurofound report, [\*Working time developments in the 21st century: Work duration and its regulation in the EU\*](#), examines the role of legislation and collective negotiation in determining working time. Developments and trends from 1999 to 2014 for all EU Member States and Norway are discussed. One of its findings is that where sector-level collective agreements have an important role in the definition of working time regulations, average normal weekly working hours tend to be shorter.

## **Contact**

For previous issues of the Workplace Bulletin or 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 a copy of your collective agreement or 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).

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Note: This bulletin is based on March 2015 data/information, which was collected up to March 15, 2016. Work stoppage data was collected up to March 24, 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 One agreement covering 1,380 employees over 48 months duration.
- 4 See note 3.
- 5 Major work stoppages involve 500 employees or more.