



Fair, safe and productive workplaces

Labour

Workplace Bulletin

Collective bargaining monthly update

February 2014

Key negotiation activities

Amongst the major¹ negotiations in February, the most notable occurred between:

- The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) and Syndicat des communications de Radio-Canada (SCRC): Bargaining started in November 2012 after the expiry of the previous agreement in October. Negotiations between the CBC and its 1,650 employees in Quebec and New Brunswick are still ongoing, although federal mediators met with both parties on several occasions in early 2014. Wage harmonization between French- and English-broadcasting staff has been a major sticking point, and the SCRC has proposed arbitration. The parties are currently waiting for a decision from the Canadian Industrial Relations Board.
- The Ontario Hospital Association (OHA) and Ontario Nurses Association (ONA): The OHA started bargaining with the ONA, representing 45,000 nurses, in November 2013. The parties entered a mediation process in February 2014, and proceeded to arbitration on March 15th and 16th to address outstanding issues. The ONA has stated that concessions demanded by OHA would result in a “nursing crisis” with inadequate compensation levels to attract prospective nurses to the province.
- The British Columbia Public School Employers’ Association (PSEA) and British Columbia Teachers’ Federation (BCTF): After the expiration of the previous agreement in June 2013, negotiations continue between the PSEA and its 39,000 teachers. Outstanding issues include wages, class sizes, and class composition. Teachers voted 89% in favour of potential job action on March 6, 2014. The BCTF has threatened work-to-rule job action if a negotiated settlement cannot be reached.

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

Settlements reached

- In February, 12 major collective bargaining agreements were ratified, covering a total of 38,685 employees. Eleven of these agreements were concluded in the public sector and only one in the private sector.
- Ten settlements were reached through direct bargaining, one through mediation, and the remaining one through conciliation.
- Two major agreements were ratified in the federal jurisdiction (2,150 employees).
- Almost 80% of all employees covered by agreements ratified in February were from British Columbia. Over the last three months, 56.8% of all employees covered by major new agreements were from this province.
- Education, health, and social services employees represented 86.0% of all employees who ratified in February.

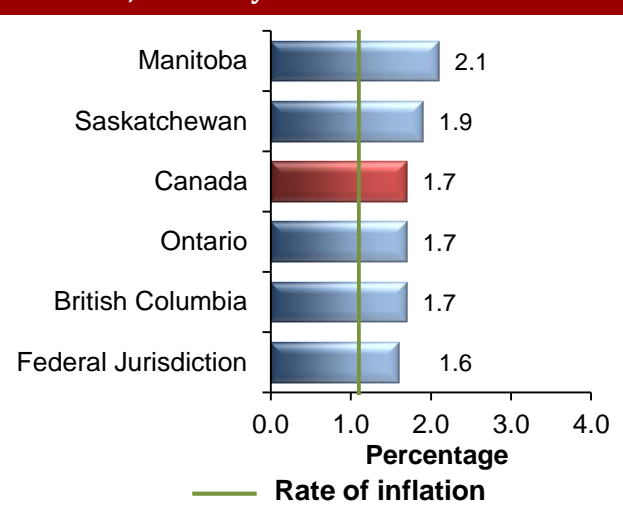
The texts of collective agreements can be accessed through the [Negotech](#) while the list of [Ratified settlements](#) in 2014 can be accessed under the [Resources](#) tab on the Labour Program website.

Settlement outcomes

Wages

- Major collective bargaining settlements in February provided base-rate² wage adjustments averaging 1.7%³ annually, an increase from 1.3% in January.
- When these same parties last negotiated their agreements, the average wage adjustment was 1.9%.
- The average increase in wage (1.7%) was higher than the inflation rate (1.1%)⁴ that prevailed in February.
- Two agreements, covering 2,150 employees, were ratified in the federal jurisdiction and recorded the lowest average wage increase (1.6%) amongst all jurisdictions. The Canadian Food Inspection Agency and its 1,080 employees negotiated a wage increase of 1.7%, whereas the negotiation between Groupe TVA Inc. and its 1,070 employees was settled with a 1.4% wage increase.
- When compared to employees in other jurisdictions, Manitobans obtained the highest wage gains. Two agreements, covering 2,160 employees, were settled in this province with wage increases averaging 2.1%.

Wage adjustments by jurisdiction and rate of inflation, February 2014



- The average wage adjustment in the public sector (1.7%) exceeded the increase recorded by the only private-sector agreement (1.4%).
- Six agreements, representing 86.0% of all covered employees, were concluded in the education, health, and social services industry and they averaged a wage increase of 1.6%. Public administration (three agreements, 2,990 employees) recorded the highest average wage adjustment (2.1%), whereas information and culture (one agreement, 1,070 employees) recorded the lowest (1.4%).

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

Duration

- The average duration of agreements ratified in February was 56.3 months, the longest in over three years.
- Average agreement duration effectively doubled for these parties in the most recent round of negotiations. When they last negotiated their agreements, the average duration was 28.1 months.

Working conditions

- The Government of Nova Scotia and its volunteer firefighters have added a new clause to their collective agreement to make it easier for employees to attend international firefighting competitions. Under this new provision, every consideration will be given, subject to operational requirements, to grant a leave of absence to employees participating as athletes or officials.

Major work stoppages

- There were no major⁵ work stoppages recorded in February.

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

Features

Literature Scan

- The Institute for Research on Public Policy recently released the March-April issue of *Policy Options*. The article, titled [The new realities of maternity leave](#), discusses the practical limitations of maternity leave for many working mothers. The article suggests that maternity leave was primarily designed for office environments, and a changing economic context should facilitate new policy that reconsiders the needs of parents.
- The Institute for the Study of Labour released a discussion paper, titled [A Contribution to the Empirics of Reservation Wages](#). The paper suggests that the reservation wage, representing the lowest wage for which an individual will work, was found to have more predictive power than a worker's pre-displacement wage when trying to determine if an individual will accept a job offer.
- The Conference Board of Canada hosted two webinars on the state and future of the Canadian labour market. Titled [15 Years of a Tight Labor Market Are Around the Corner](#) and [Evolving Skill Shortages in the Canadian Economy](#), the two webinars discuss current trends in the labour market and how these trends are anticipated to unfold over the next several years.

Contact

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

Note: This bulletin is based on February data/information, which is collected as of March 15, 2014.

- 1 All data reported in this bulletin relate 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.