



Fair, safe and productive workplaces

Labour

Workplace Bulletin

Collective bargaining monthly update

October 2015

Key negotiation activities

In October, major¹ ongoing negotiations included the following:

- **Council of Trustees' Associations (CTA) and Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE):** The contract covering 55,000 education workers (e.g., educational assistants, custodians, office administrators) in Ontario expired on August 31, 2014. Negotiations between the CTA (representing the school boards in all four of Ontario's education systems) and CUPE failed to result in an agreement on the main issues of job security, wages, and preparation time. On September 10, 2015 CUPE members began province-wide job action, including refusing to attend unpaid meetings or assist in fundraising activities. On October 23, Premier Kathleen Wynne announced that school boards had been granted permission to reduce the pay of workers participating in strike activities. However, no penalties would be authorized if an agreement was reached by November 1. Bargaining continued and a tentative agreement was announced on November 2.
- **Government of Manitoba and Manitoba Government and General Employees Union (MGEU):** The collective agreement covering 14,800 public service employees of the Manitoba government expired in March 2014. After months of negotiations, the MGEU's bargaining committee decided to file for arbitration in July 2015. According to the MGEU, the wage increase offered to their members is lower than those recently negotiated by other public sector employees. Arbitration dates have been set for May 2016, and both parties will submit their positions by April 15, 2016. The Civil Service Bargaining Committee travelled throughout Manitoba in the last week of October to meet with MGEU members and Ministers of the Legislative Assembly to discuss the bargaining situation.

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

Settlements reached

- In October, six major collective agreements were reached, covering 42,050 employees. Three were settled through direct bargaining, two through conciliation, and one through mediation after a work stoppage.
- Two agreements were concluded in the public sector, covering the majority of employees who settled during the month (31,650). Four agreements were reached in the private sector, covering 10,400 employees.
- In the federal jurisdiction, two agreements were reached for 8,900 employees. Among all jurisdictions, Ontario had the largest proportion of all employees (31,650, 75.3%) who settled an agreement during October.
- Among industries, public administration had the largest share of employees (73.7%) who settled an agreement in October.

The texts of collective agreements can be accessed through the [Negotech](#), while the list of [Ratified settlements in 2015](#) can be accessed under the [Resources](#) tab on the Labour Program website.

Settlement outcomes

Wages

- The average annual base-rate² wage adjustment (over the duration of the contracts) in October among major collective bargaining settlements was 1.0%.
- The average wage increase negotiated in October (1.0%) was higher than the average increase obtained in the previous round of negotiations between the same parties (0.5%).
- The average wage increase in the private sector (2.7%) was higher than the average recorded in the public sector (0.5%).
- Among all contracts, the highest wage increase (2.8%) was settled between the United Parcel Service Canada Ltd. and Teamsters Canada, covering 7,000 employees. The lowest increase (0.5%) was received by 31,000 employees of the Government of Ontario.
- The Bank of Canada predicts that in the last quarter of 2015 and throughout 2016, inflation will range between 1.4% and 1.6% before rising to 2.0% in 2017.³
- A total of 10,400 employees received a wage increase above the predicted inflation, representing real wage gains (depending on when pay increases are applicable). However, the remaining 31,650 employees who settled during the month received an average wage increase of 0.6% or below, meaning that inflation will likely outpace wage growth for this group of employees.

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

Duration

- In October, the average duration of agreements settled was 38.9 months. This was longer than the duration reached in the previous round of negotiations between the same bargaining parties (29.9 months).
- The average duration of agreements was longer in the private sector (47.8 months) than in the public sector (36.0 months).

- Among all contracts, both the longest and shortest durations were settled in the federal jurisdiction. The longest contract duration (60 months) was negotiated between the United Parcel Service Canada Ltd. and Teamsters Canada, covering 7,000 employees. The shortest (12 months) was settled between NAV CANADA and Unifor, covering 1,900 air traffic controllers. The remaining four contracts all had durations of 36 months.

Major work stoppages

- One major⁴ work stoppage was reported in October, involving 800 employees and resulting in 8,570 person days not worked (PDNW).⁵ It occurred in Ontario in the entertainment and hospitality industry and was a continuation of the stoppage that started in September between the OLG (Brantford Casino) and Unifor.

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

Working Conditions

The creation of new working conditions clauses allows employers and unions to innovatively adapt to changing working and social environments. The following are some of the innovative clauses that were reported in October:

- *Queen's University and Queen's University Faculty Association*: The parties agreed upon a new employment equity clause. When making appointments, “diverse experiences” and “the many forms that scholarship can take” should also be recognized. Appointment criteria must not systemically discriminate against equity-seeking groups. In addition, candidates shall not be disadvantaged by minor career interruptions due to family responsibilities or disability.

The University and the Faculty Association also added a new clause requiring that the Appointment Committee members must have successfully completed equity training within the previous ten years. The requirement takes effect within three years from the date of the contract ratification. Students on the Appointment Committee are exempt from the requirement.

- *Loblaws Supermarkets Limited and United Food and Commercial Workers Canada*: The parties created a new policy on harassment, stating that there will be “zero tolerance” for customer rudeness, impropriety, and abuse. Under this policy, no employee shall be required to continue to serve a customer who has engaged in any of these behaviours and management shall take proactive steps to discourage improper customer behaviour.
- *Workers' Compensation Board of British Columbia and British Columbia Government and Service Employees' Union (BCGSEU)*: In British Columbia, the provincial government—through the Public Sector Employers' Council (PSEC)—implemented a salary increase mandate for all public service employees. Partially in response to this mandate, the parties agreed to a “me-too agreement” should British Columbia Nurses' Union exceed the PSEC salary increase mandate. In such a scenario, BCGSEU members would receive the same wage increases as those received by the nurses' union.

Features

Literature scan

The following sample of studies relating to industrial relations and the labour market were recently published.

- The Conference Board of Canada released its [Employers' Toolkit: Making Ontario Workplaces Accessible to People With Disabilities, 2nd Edition](#) in October. Developed in partnership with the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario's EnAbling Change program, the guide provides advice on improving the labour market outcomes of people with disabilities and how employers can comply with standards under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*. Topics covered in the toolkit include: creating an inclusive workplace; recruitment and selection; workplace accommodation; the return-to-work process; and retention. Case studies demonstrating how organizations have implemented best practices are also included.
- In [Global Employment Trends for Youth 2015: Scaling up investments in decent jobs for youth](#), the International Labour Organization (ILO) provides an analysis of youth employment. The report includes statistics on global youth labour market trends; regional trends in youth unemployment, labour market participation, and inactivity; policy implications; and strategies for investment in youth employment. The report notes that youth unemployment is highest in the Middle East and North Africa and lowest in South Asia and East Asia.
- IZA World of Labor explores the impact of sexual harassment in its report [Sexual harassment in the workplace](#). The report provides a working definition of sexual harassment and, using data from the U.S., describes the prevalence of harassment. Also included is a summary of global sexual harassment legislation, the estimated financial cost, and policy advice. Sexual harassment not only has negative impacts for victims (lower job satisfaction, poor psychological and physical health) but also for organizations (lower productivity and increased absenteeism and turnover).

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 October 2015 data/information, which was collected up to November 16, 2015. Work stoppage data was collected up to November 23, 2015.

- 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 [Monetary Policy Report](#), Bank of Canada, October 2015, pp. 14.
- 4 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.
- 5 Between October 26 and October 29, rotating strikes were also held in Quebec by public sector workers. The striking workers included teachers and members of unions represented by the umbrella group the Common Front. However, due to the high volume of activity in Quebec, work stoppage information could not be finalized for the province prior to publication. Work stoppage information from Quebec will be included in a subsequent publication when it becomes available.