



*Fair, safe and productive workplaces*

# Labour

## Workplace Bulletin

### Collective bargaining monthly update September 2015

#### Key negotiation activities

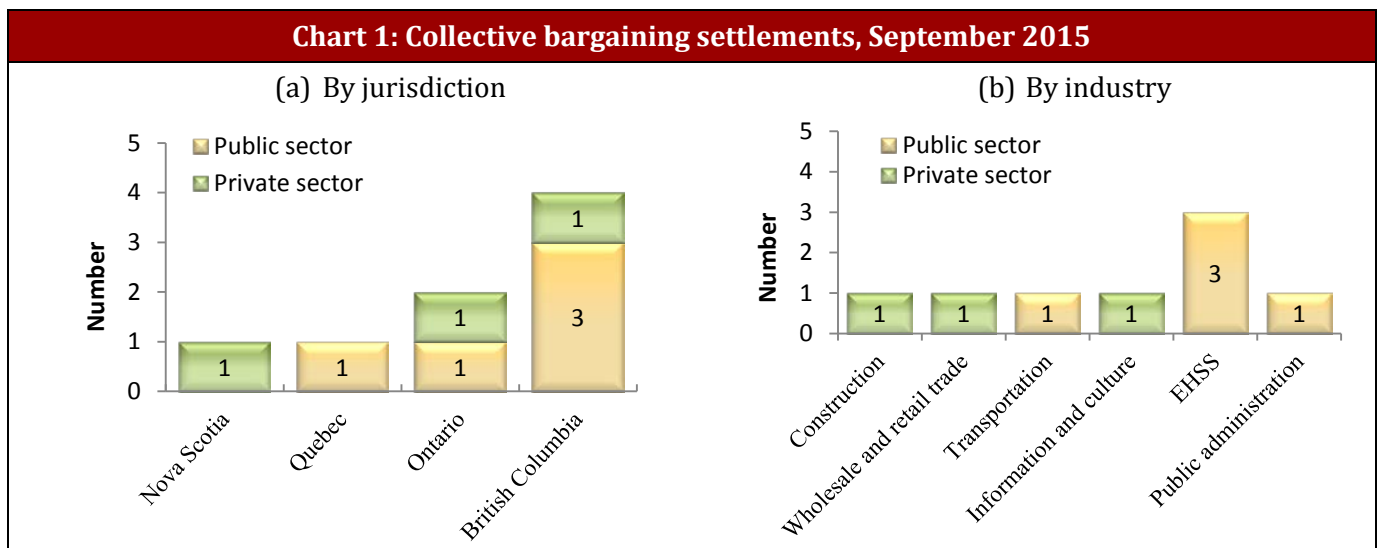
Several major<sup>1</sup> negotiations were ongoing in September, including the following:

- **Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA) and Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO):** Approximately 64,000 elementary teachers across Ontario have been without a contract since August 2014. Job action on the part of teachers escalated on the first day of the new school year in September 2015, when ETFO commenced its "Phase 2" work-to-rule strike action. Under Phase 2, teachers will not participate in such activities as field trips or fundraising. The conditions offered to ETFO by OPSBA were similar to the contract recently signed by secondary teachers. According to ETFO, elementary teachers have different concerns than secondary school teachers and these are not reflected in the most recent offer. In mid-September, bargaining was halted when OPSBA and the Government of Ontario walked away from the table. At the end of September the union filed an unfair Labour Practice complaint against OPSBA and the Government. However, bargaining resumed in October.
- **Government of Quebec and various unions:** After negotiations started in October 2014, approximately 400,000 employees of the Government of Quebec saw their contract expire at the end of March 2015. Among unions represented by the umbrella group the Common Front (Centrale des syndicats du Québec, La Fédération des travailleurs et travailleuses du Québec, The Confédération des syndicats nationaux, Syndicat de la fonction publique et parapublique du Québec, and Alliance du personnel professionnel et technique de la santé et des services sociaux) members have recently voted to support a 6-day strike mandate which can be enacted at a regional or provincial level at any time deemed appropriate. In addition, 34,000 teachers who are members of the Fédération autonome des enseignants (FAE), held a one-day strike on September 30, 2015. A second strike day was held on a rotational basis on October 26, 27, and 28.

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

## Settlements reached

- Eight major collective agreements were settled during September, covering 16,880 employees. Five were settled through direct bargaining and one each was settled through conciliation, mediation, and post-arbitration bargaining.
- Five agreements were reached in the public sector, covering 7,100 employees. Although only three agreements were reached in the private sector, these agreements covered a larger number of employees (9,780). [Chart 1, (a)].
- No agreements were reached in the federal jurisdiction. Among all jurisdictions, British Columbia had the most settlements reached (4), which covered three quarters (74.9%) of all employees who settled an agreement during September.
- Among industries, education, health, and social services (EHSS) had more settlements reached (3) than any other but the largest proportion of employees was in information and culture (47.4%). [Chart 1, (b)].



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

- In September, the average annual base-rate<sup>2</sup> wage adjustment (over the duration of the contracts) among major collective bargaining settlements was 1.8%.
- The average wage increase negotiated in the previous round of negotiations between the same parties was slightly higher (1.9%) than the average increase negotiated in September (1.8%).
- In the last quarter of 2015 and throughout 2016, the Bank of Canada predicts that inflation will range between 1.4% and 1.6% before rising to 2.0% in 2017.<sup>3</sup> Depending on when pay increases are applicable, the wage adjustment of many employees who settled in September may outpace inflation in the short term.

- The average wage increase in the private sector (2.0%) was higher than the average recorded in the public sector (1.5%).
- Among all contracts, the highest wage increase (3.6%) was negotiated between McGill University and the Fédération nationale des enseignantes et des enseignants du Québec. The lowest increase (0.9%) was received by 1,150 administrative services employees of Queen's University in Ontario.

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

## **Duration**

- The average duration of agreements settled in September was 44.5 months. This was longer than the duration reached in the previous round of negotiations between the same bargaining parties (34.5 months).
- Agreements finalized in the public sector had a longer average duration (55.2 months) than those in the private sector (36.7 months).
- Among the jurisdictions, the longest average duration (48 months) was in Ontario. The shortest duration (36 months) was negotiated in a single contract between the Nova Scotia Construction Labour Relations Association Limited and the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America.
- Among industries, both construction and information and culture recorded the shortest contract duration (36 months). The longest duration (60 months) was negotiated in single contracts in the transportation and public administration industries.

## **Major work stoppages**

- In September, nine major<sup>4</sup> work stoppages were reported, involving 26,090 employees and resulting in 32,160 person days not worked (PDNW).
- All of the work stoppages occurred in the public sector. Of these, eight took place in Quebec in the EHSS industry between the Fédération autonome de l'enseignement and various school boards. The remaining stoppage occurred in the entertainment and hospitality industry between the OLG (Brantford Casino) and Unifor and involved 800 employees, resulting in 6,860 PDNW.
- Between January and September 2015, a total of 21 stoppages were reported. These stoppages involved 49,292 employees and resulted in 257,981 PDNW. In the same nine-month time period last year, nine stoppages occurred, involving a similar number of employees (49,716) but resulting in significantly higher PDNW (1,220,540).

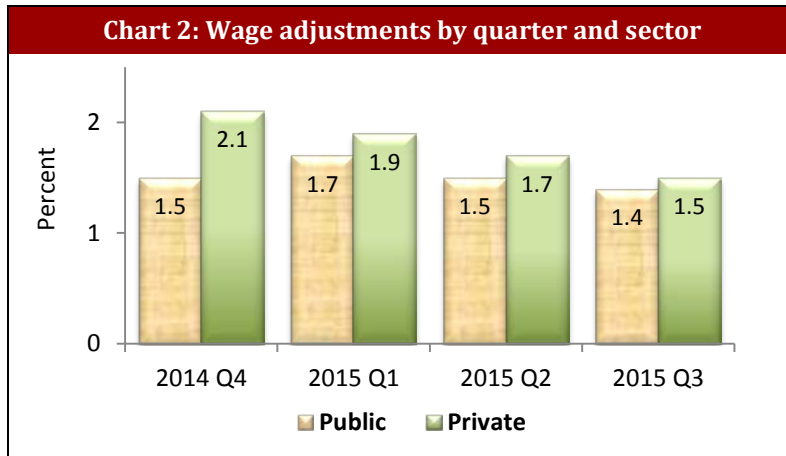
*More information on [Work stoppages in Canada](#) can be accessed under the [Resources](#) tab on the Labour Program website.*

## **Third Quarter 2015**

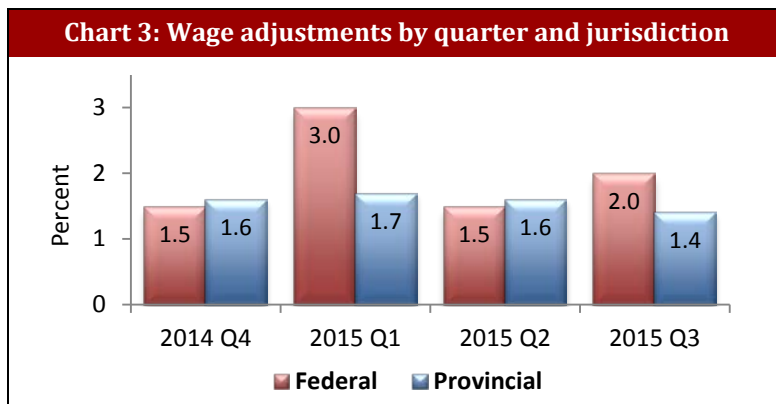
- In the third quarter of 2015, 33 major settlements were reached, covering a total of 82,640 employees. The average annual base-rate wage adjustment was 1.4%, slightly lower than the average in the second quarter (1.6%) of the year.
- The largest proportion of negotiations was settled through direct bargaining (18 agreements). The remaining agreements were settled in the following manner: mediation (4), arbitration (4), mediation

after a work stoppage (3), bargaining after a work stoppage (1), conciliation (1), post-mediation bargaining (1), and post-arbitration bargaining (1).

- Nearly two-thirds of the settlements were reached in the public sector (21 agreements). Following trends seen over the last three quarters, in the third quarter of 2015 the average wage increase in the private sector (1.5%) remained higher than in the public sector (1.4%) [Chart 2].

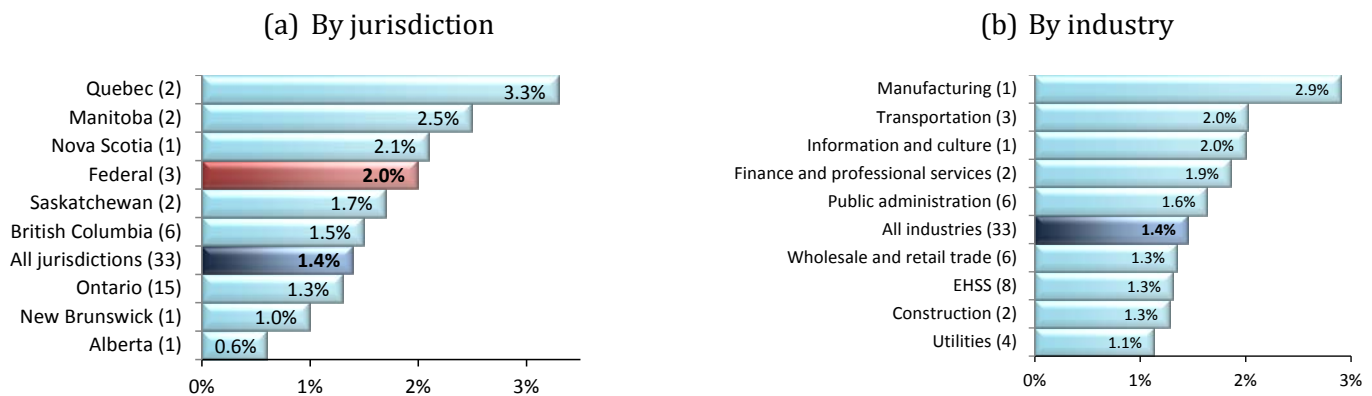


- In the federal jurisdiction, three agreements were settled, covering 2,630 employees with an average wage increase of 2.0%. In the provincial jurisdictions, the average wage gain was 1.4%, covering 80,010 employees. [Chart 3].



- The largest proportion of employees covered by the agreements settled in the third quarter was in Ontario (56.7%, 46,880 employees). Among all industries, wholesale and retail trade had the largest share of employees (34.9%, 28,860 employees).
- The highest average wage increase (3.3%) was in Quebec. The lowest wage increase (0.6%) was negotiated in a single contract in Alberta between PCL Energy and the Christian Labour Association of Canada, covering 1,440 employees. [Chart 4 (a)].
- Among all industries, the highest average wage increase (2.9%) was negotiated for 550 employees in a single contract in manufacturing between Motor Coach Industries Limited and the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers. The lowest average increase was recorded in the utilities industry (1.1%) for 8,430 employees [Chart 4 (b)].

**Chart 4: Wage adjustments in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter, 2015\***



\*Number of settled agreements per category is found in parenthesis.

- In the third quarter of 2015, the average duration of settled agreements was 52.4 months, higher than the average duration in the second quarter (46.2 months). The duration of agreements was higher in the private sector (58.1 months) than in the public sector (46.5 months).
- Eleven major work stoppages were reported in the third quarter of 2015. These stoppages involved 28,413 employees and resulted in a total of 54,651 PDNW. In comparison, in the second quarter of 2015, five stoppages took place involving 8,865 and resulting in 112,130 PDNW.

### Working Conditions

Developing new working conditions clauses allows employers and unions to innovatively adapt to changing working and social environments. The following sample of working condition clauses was reported in the third quarter of 2015:

- *BC Transit and Unifor (Local 333, BC)*: The employer agreed to implement a Women’s Advocate. This position will provide female employees in need of assistance with a trained advocate to help them with both workplace and non-workplace issues.
- *University of British Columbia and CUPE 2950*: The parties agreed upon a new “pre-placement adoption leave” clause. Employees are eligible for leave with pay up to 20 days for each adoption. The leave may be taken intermittently for the purpose of adoption courses, adoption suitability evaluations, and completion of legal processes.
- *York University and CUPE Local 3903 Units 1, 2 and 3*: Within the three months following the ratification of the collective agreement, the Employment Equity Committee will meet to develop a plan for including Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Questioning (LGBTQ) as an employment equity group in the collective agreement.

## Features

### Literature scan

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

- The Institute for Research on Public Policy examines the issue of adult education and training in its study [\*If At First You Don't Succeed: Toward an Adult Education and Training Strategy for Canada\*](#). The authors note that the education and training of adults will become increasingly important as the Canadian population ages and labour force growth slows. According to the authors, adult education is challenged in three ways: learning opportunities are not distributed equally among workers; demand is increasing from workers who cannot afford to take time away from work; and the apprenticeship training model is inefficient. To address these challenges, the study proposes a pan-Canadian adult education and training strategy which includes improved labour market information, income-contingent loans, and a modernized apprenticeship training model.
- A different assessment of adult education is provided by the C.D. Howe Institute in its report [\*Underperforming Adults? The Paradox of Skills Development in Canada\*](#). According to data from the Organisation for Co-operation and Development (OECD), Canada's performance in the areas of adult literacy, numeracy, and problem solving on computers is "average" when ranked among 23 other countries. After comparing the performance of Canadian-born adults with those who are foreign-born, the author found that Canada's relatively lower score was influenced by the large proportion of immigrants who, on average, scored lower in literacy performance. The report includes recommendations for education policy including improving performance for those Canadians most likely to have skill deficits, such as those with lower levels of education (particularly older workers), immigrants whose first language is neither French nor English, and Aboriginal Canadians.
- The OECD analyses global migration patterns in its [\*International Migration Outlook 2015\*](#). Divided into four chapters, the report provides an overview of international migration trends and policies, describes labour market trends relating to immigrants, examines the migration patterns of doctors and nurses, and includes country-specific migration statistics. The report notes that labour market outcomes for both foreign- and native-born have stabilized or improved in OECD countries in recent years although in countries such as Greece, Italy, and Slovenia, migrants have been disproportionately affected by the 2008-2009 economic crisis.

## 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 either federally registered (with 100 or more employees) or provincially registered (with 500 or more employees) and a collective bargaining agreement is reached.

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Note: This bulletin is based on September 2015 data/information, which was collected up to October 16, 2015. Work stoppage data was collected up to October 22, 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.