



Labour

Union Coverage in Canada – 2014

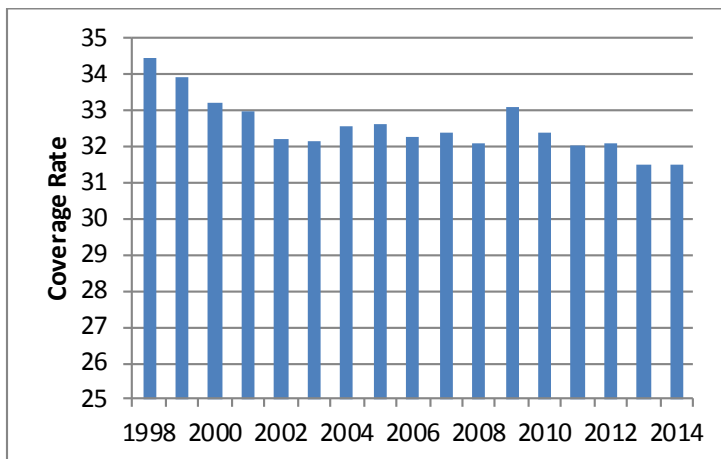
Introduction

The Workplace Information and Research Division (WIRD) of the Labour Program conducts an annual census of all labour organizations in Canada that represent bargaining units of 50 or more employees. This census provides information on employees covered by collective agreements by organization type, size, and affiliation.

Union coverage remains unchanged overall

Union coverage in Canada remained largely unchanged in 2014. The total number of employees covered by collective agreements reported by labour organizations is 4,753,232, an increase of 0.9% from 2013. However, the total number of employees rose by 0.8% leaving the union coverage rate unchanged from the previous year at 31.5%, after decreasing by 0.6 percentage points from 2012¹.

CHART 1: Union Coverage Rate in Canada (%), 1998-2014



¹ Statistics Canada reported the union coverage rate as 31.1% in 2013 and 30.4% in 2014. Statistics Canada coverage rate is based on Labour Force Survey (LFS) data collected monthly from a sample of working age individuals. Labour Program’s union coverage data is collected directly from labour organizations using a self-reporting survey.

Union coverage is highly concentrated

Unionized employees in Canada remain clustered in a few large unions and labour congresses.

There are four types of unions in Canada: 1) *National*; 2) *International*; 3) *Independent local organization*; and 4) *Directly chartered local*. Compared to 2013, there has been virtually no change in the distribution of unionized employees by union type in 2014. National unions continue to represent 69.6% of total unionized employees, followed by International unions (25%) (Chart 2-A). Independent local organizations represent almost 3.9% of unionized employees, and Directly chartered locals still retain the smallest share (1.6%).

CHART 2-A: Share of Covered Employees, by Organization Type, 2014

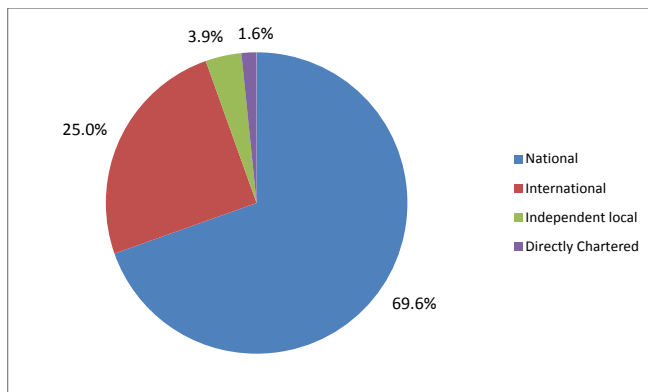
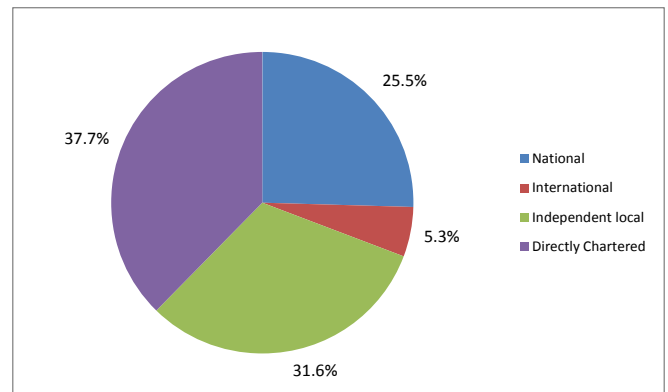


CHART 2-B: Share of Unions, by Organization Type, 2014



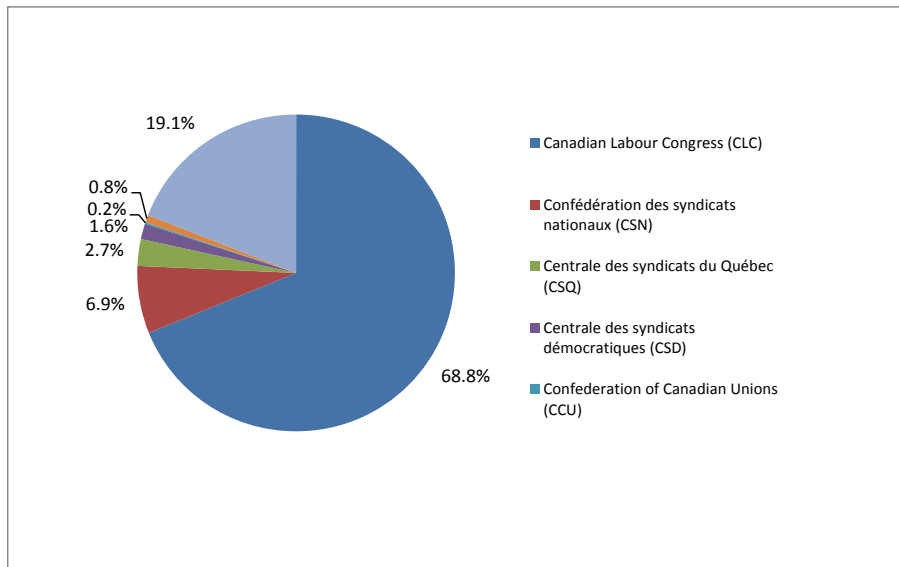
**Note: (Percentages do not sum to 100% due to rounding)*

Directly chartered locals and Independent local organizations continue to account for more than two thirds (69.3%) of all unions, followed by National (25.5%) and International (5.3%) unions (Chart 2-B).

In 2014, almost 45% of all unionized employees belonged to one of only eight large unions, each of which represents more than 100,000 employees. Of these, five were National and three International. On the other hand, 11.9% of unionized employees belonged to 418 unions (out of a total of 770 unions) representing less than 10,000 employees each. In addition, 1.9% of unionized employees belonged to 278 even smaller unions, with less than 1,000 employees each.

In 2014, most unions (80.9%) were affiliated with a labour congress. The Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) continued to represent the largest proportion of unionized employees (68.8%), followed by the Confédération des syndicats nationaux (CSN), which represented 6.9% of unionized employees (Appendix 7 and Chart 3). Just over 19% of all unionized employees were not affiliated with a labour congress.

CHART 3: Union Coverage Rate in Canada (%), 1998-2014



Labour Congress affiliation changes and union mergers

Four unions, which previously had no affiliation, became affiliated to a labour congress during 2014: the *Association des professeurs(es) du Campus Notre-Dame-de-Foy* (115 members) and the *Syndicat des professeures et professeurs de l'Université du Québec en Outaouais* (222 members) affiliated with the CSN; the *Syndicat des salariés de Vic Royal* (241 members) affiliated with the *Centrale des syndicats démocratique* (CSD); and the *Syndicat des employées et employés professionnels-les et de bureau-Québec-local 610* (432 members) affiliated with the CLC.

Only one merger between two unions was observed during 2014: The Wilfrid Laurier University Staff Association and its 583 members joined the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation.

Legislative and Regulatory Changes

A number of amendments were made to labour legislation in Canada in 2014 that will have an impact on union certification and decertification processes.

At the federal level, Bill C-525, the *Employees' Voting Rights Act*, received Royal Assent on December 16, 2014 and will come into force on June 16, 2015. The Bill modifies the union de/certification rules under the *Canada Labour Code*, the *Parliamentary Employment and Staff Relations Act* and the *Public Service Labour Relations Act* by moving from a card-check system (whereby a union is certified by demonstrating majority support) to a mandatory vote system (whereby a union is de/certified based on a secret ballot representation vote). Parties seeking the de/certification of a union will need the support of at least 40% of employees in the bargaining unit to hold a vote. Results of a representation vote are to be determined on the basis of the majority of ballots cast.

Changes to union certification rules also occurred in Newfoundland and Labrador in 2014. Bill 22, *An Act to Amend the Labour Relations Act*, came into force on June 5, 2014. It modified the *Labour Relations Act* to reintroduce the mandatory vote system for union certification, reversing legislative

amendments enacted in 2012 that allowed union certification with the support of at least 65% of employees in a bargaining unit. Under the new rules, the union may hold a representation vote if it has the support of at least 40% of employees in the bargaining unit. When 70% of eligible employees or more participate in the vote, a union can be certified if it obtains the support of a majority of those who cast a ballot. If fewer than 70% of eligible employees vote, union certification can be obtained only if a majority of employees in the bargaining unit have cast a ballot in favour.

In Quebec, legislation (Bill 8, *An Act to amend the Labour Code with respect to certain employees of farming business*) came into force on October 22, 2014 to replace a provision in the provincial *Labour Code* that excluded farm workers from the right to unionize and bargain collectively unless at least three such employees were ordinarily and continuously employed in a farm business. In 2013, the Superior Court of Quebec ruled that the exclusion violated the right to freedom of association guaranteed by the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* and Quebec's *Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms*. The amended *Labour Code* now provides for limited associational rights and protections for workers in farming businesses where fewer than three employees are ordinarily and continuously employed

Appendix 1: Union coverage in Canada, 1998-2014			
Year	Covered Employees (000s)	Employees (000s)	Union Coverage Rate (%)
1998	4,010	11,633	34.5
1999	4,058	11,961	33.9
2000	4,111	12,379	33.2
2001	4,174	12,654	33.0
2002	4,178	12,967	32.2
2003	4,261	13,249	32.2
2004	4,381	13,459	32.5
2005	4,441	13,607	32.6
2006	4,480	13,892	32.2
2007	4,592	14,171	32.4
2008	4,605	14,360	32.1
2009	4,645	14,035	33.1
2010	4,626	14,283	32.4
2011	4,664	14,559	32.0
2012	4,735	14,760	32.1
2013	4,710	14,961	31.5
2014	4,753	15,077	31.5

Source: Labour Program, ESDC

Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey

Appendix 2:
Labour organizations with 30,000 or more covered employees, 2014

Name	Affiliation	Number
Canadian Union of Public Employees	CLC	630,050
National Union of Public and General Employees	CLC	340,000
UNIFOR	CLC	300,152
United Food and Commercial Workers Canada	AFL-CIO/CLC	245,592
United Steel, Paper and Forestry, Rubber, Manufacturing, Energy, Allied Industrial and Service Workers International Union	AFL-CIO/CLC	190,452
Public Service Alliance of Canada	CLC	178,093
Fédération de la santé et des services sociaux	CSN	126,932
Service Employees International Union	CtW/CLC	118,991
Teamsters Canada	CtW/CLC	93,351
Laborers' International Union of North America	AFL-CIO/CLC	90,000
Alberta Union of Provincial Employees	Independent national	87,843
Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario	CLC	77,927
FTQ Construction	CLC	69,914
Christian Labour Association of Canada	Independent national	65,986
Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation	CLC	65,690
Fédération interprofessionnelle de la santé du Québec	Independent national	65,038
Fédération des employées et employés de services publics inc.	CSN	60,700
Ontario Nurses' Association	CLC	60,000
Fédération des syndicats de l'enseignement	CSQ	60,000

Professional Institute of the Public Service of Canada	Independent national	58,703
International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers	AFL-CIO/CLC	57,130
United Association of Journeymen and Apprentices of the Plumbing and Pipe Fitting Industry of the United States and Canada	AFL-CIO/CLC	54,600
Canadian Union of Postal Workers	CLC	54,470
International Union of Operating Engineers	AFL-CIO/CLC	52,789
United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America	CLC	50,000
International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers	AFL-CIO/CLC	50,000
Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association	CLC	49,811
Alberta Teachers' Association	Independent national	44,102
British Columbia Teachers' Federation	CLC	43,563
British Columbia Nurses' Union	Independent national	41,000
Amalgamated Transit Union	AFL-CIO/CLC	38,000
Canadian Office and Professional Employees Union	CLC	36,287
Syndicat de la fonction publique du Québec et parapublique du Québec	Independent national	34,904
Fédération nationale des enseignantes et des enseignants du Québec	CSN	34,000
Fédération autonome de l'enseignement	Independent national	32,500

Affiliations Legend:

AFL-CIO - American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations

CLC - Canadian Labour Congress

CSN - Confédération des syndicats nationaux

CSQ - Centrale des syndicats du Québec

CtW - Change to Win

Ind. - Independent National Organization

Source: Labour Program, ESDC

Appendix 3: Union coverage, by type of union and affiliation, 2013 and 2014								
	2013 Unions	2013 Locals	2013 Covered Employees		2014 Unions	2014 Locals	2014 Covered Employees	
			Number	Distribution (%)			Number	Distribution (%)
National	197	10,724	3,289,674	69.8	196	10,661	3,305,983	69.6
Canadian Labour Congress (CLC)	52	7,109	2,122,599	45.1	51	7,102	2,122,332	44.7
Independent national	108	1,308	702,158	14.9	108	1,303	720,817	15.2
Confédération des syndicats nationaux (CSN)	17	1,811	323,384	6.9	17	1,762	320,836	6.7
Centrale des syndicats du Québec (CSQ)	14	420	128,648	2.7	14	422	129,486	2.7
Confederation of Canadian Unions (CCU)	4	23	7,924	0.2	4	23	7,566	0.2
Centrale des syndicats démocratiques (CSD)	2	53	4,961	0.1	2	49	4,946	0.1
International	40	1,240	1,162,571	24.7	41	1,263	1,187,365	25.0
American Federation of Labour and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO) / Canadian Labour Congress (CLC)	30	1,133	902,719	19.2	31	1,156	927,396	19.5
Change to Win (CtW) / Canadian Labour Congress (CLC)	3	27	222,342	4.7	3	27	222,342	4.7
American Federation of Labour and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO) only	4	72	35,518	0.8	4	72	35,635	0.7
Independent international	3	8	1,992	0.0	3	8	1,992	0.0
Directly Chartered	290	-	76,455	1.6	290	-	76,455	1.6
Centrale des syndicats démocratiques (CSD)	287	-	70,400	1.5	287	-	70,400	1.5
Confédération des syndicats nationaux (CSN)	1	-	6,000	0.1	1	-	6,000	0.1

Canadian Labour Congress (CLC)	2	-	55	0.0	2	-	55	0.0
Independent local	245	263	181,758	3.9	243	265	183,429	3.9
Total	772	12,227	4,710,458	100.0	770	12,189	4,753,232	100.0

Source: Labour Program, ESDC

Appendix 4: Canadian Labour Congress coverage, by affiliation, 2013 and 2014				
	2013 Covered Employees		2014 Covered Employees	
	Number	Distribution (%)	Number	Distribution (%)
National unions	2,122,599	65.4	2,122,332	64.9
Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) only	2,122,599	65.4	2,122,332	64.9
International unions	1,125,061	34.6	1,149,738	35.1
AFL-CIO/CLC	902,719	27.8	927,396	28.3
CtW/CLC	222,342	6.8	222,342	6.8
Directly Chartered	55	0.0	55	0.0
Total	3,247,715	100.0	3,272,125	100.0

Source: Labour Program, ESDC

Appendix 5: Composition of unions in Canada, by type of organization, 2013 and 2014								
	2013 Unions		2013 Covered Employees		2014 Unions		2014 Covered Employees	
	Number	Distribution (%)	Number	Distribution (%)	Number	Distribution (%)	Number	Distribution (%)
National	196	25.4	3,282,898	69.7	196	25.5	3,305,983	69.6
International	41	5.3	1,169,347	24.8	41	5.3	1,187,365	25.0
Independent local	245	31.7	181,758	3.9	243	31.6	183,429	3.9
Directly Chartered	290	37.6	76,455	1.6	290	37.7	76,455	1.6
Total	772	100.0	4,710,458	100.0	770	100.0	4,753,232	100.0

Source: Labour Program, ESDC

Percentages do not sum to 100% due to rounding

Appendix 6: Composition of unions in Canada, by size, 2013										
	National		International		Independent Local		Directly Chartered*		Total	
	Unions	Employees	Unions	Employees	Unions	Employees	Unions	Employees	Unions	Employees
under 1,000	81	29,281	7	2,976	193	59,705	N/A	N/A	281	91,962
1,000-9,999	72	270,149	16	66,713	51	112,053	N/A	N/A	139	448,915
10,000-29,999	17	304,650	8	125,598	1	10,000	N/A	N/A	26	440,248
30,000-49,999	9	342,403	1	37,000			N/A	N/A	10	379,403
50,000-99,999	12	763,300	6	390,395			N/A	N/A	18	1,153,695
100,000 and over	5	1,573,115	3	546,665			N/A	N/A	8	2,119,780
Grand Total	196	3,282,898	41	1,169,347	245	181,758	290	76,455	772	4,710,458

Appendix 6: Composition of unions in Canada, by size, 2014										
	National		International		Independent Local		Directly Chartered*		Total	
	Unions	Workers	Unions	Workers	Unions	Workers	Unions	Workers	Unions	Workers
under 1,000	82	29,892	8	3,775	188	57,388	N/A	N/A	278	91,055
1,000-9,999	71	270,295	15	65,565	54	116,041	N/A	N/A	140	451,901
10,000-29,999	18	338,131	8	127,120	1	10,000	N/A	N/A	27	475,251
30,000-49,999	8	316,167	1	38,000			N/A	N/A	9	354,167
50,000-99,999	12	776,271	6	397,870			N/A	N/A	18	1,174,141
100,000 and over	5	1,575,227	3	555,035			N/A	N/A	8	2,130,262
Grand Total	196	3,305,983	41	1,187,365	243	183,429	290	76,455	770	4,753,232

*Only aggregate data is available for Directly Chartered Unions.

Source: Labour Program, ESDC

Appendix 7: Union coverage, by congress affiliation, 2013 and 2014				
	2013 Covered Employees		2014 Covered Employees	
	Number	Distribution (%)	Number	Distribution (%)
Canadian Labour Congress (CLC)				
American Federation of Labour and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO) / Canadian Labour Congress (CLC)	909,495	19.3	927,396	19.5
Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) only	2,115,823	44.9	2,122,332	44.6
Change to Win (CtW) / Canadian Labour Congress (CLC)	222,342	4.7	222,342	4.7
Directly Chartered	55	0.0	55	0.0
Total	3,247,715	68.9	3,272,125	68.8
Confédération des syndicats nationaux (CSN)				
Federation	323,384	6.9	320,836	6.7
Directly Chartered	6,000	0.1	6,000	0.1
Total	329,384	7.0	326,836	6.9
Centrale des syndicats du Québec (CSQ)				
Total	128,648	2.7	129,486	2.7
Centrale des syndicats démocratiques (CSD)				
Federation	4,961	0.1	4,946	0.1
Directly Chartered	70,400	1.5	70,400	1.5
Total	75,361	1.6	75,346	1.6
Confederation of Canadian Unions (CCU)				
Total	7,924	0.2	7,566	0.2
American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO) only				
Total	35,518	0.8	35,635	0.8
Unaffiliated unions				
Independent international	1,992	0.0	1,992	0.0
Independent local	181,758	3.9	183,429	3.9

Independent national	702,158	14.9	720,817	15.2
Total	885,908	18.8	906,238	19.1
Total	4,710,458	100.0	4,753,232	100.0

Source: Labour Program, ESDC

Methodology

In 2014, the Labour Program reviewed the methodology used to collect information from labour organizations as well as the calculation of the union coverage rate.

Prior to 2014, organizations were asked to provide an estimate of the number of unionized employees they represent as of the beginning of the year (January 1st). Those estimates were considered to be representative of that calendar year. However, the review determined that the January 1st data point was better thought of as reflecting the previous calendar year. Consequently, the previously published series was shifted back one year – for example, the union coverage statistic that was previously given for 2013 is now reported as 2012. For this year’s census, organizations were asked to estimate union coverage for December 31st. To avoid data breaks, respondents were asked for the coverage estimate for 2013 as well as for 2014.

The collection period was also assessed in this review. Prior to 2014, data was collected from organizations during May and June of the current year. It was determined that the collection period should be moved closer to the reference date, December 31st. Letters and emails requesting data were therefore sent out to organizations in December 2014 and they were asked to respond by the end of January 2015. This practice will continue for future years.

The review also evaluated the calculation of the union coverage rate in Canada. The coverage rate had been calculated as a proportion of all “non-agricultural paid workers” (NAPW). NAPW is derived from Statistics Canada’s *Labour Force Survey* (LFS). Given that NAPW includes the self-employed, a group that is largely unable to take part in collective bargaining, the review determined that NAPW should be replaced by a count of only employees. Going forward, the union coverage rate in Canada will be calculated as a proportion of all employees in Canada, as derived from the LFS. The union coverage time series has also been recalculated accordingly.

If the requested information is not provided by the labour organization, the latest reported figures are used.

Definitions

Union coverage – All persons, whether union members or not, who are covered by a collective agreement.

Local – The basic unit of labour organizations formed in a particular plant or establishment. The members participate directly in the affairs of their local including the election of officers, financial and other business matters, and relations between their organization and employer, and they pay dues to the local.

Union – The unit of labour organizations that organizes and charters locals, sets general policy for its locals, assists them in the conduct of their affairs, and is the medium for co-ordinating their activities.

National Union – A union that charters locals in Canada only.

International Union – A union that charters locals in Canada and the United States. For the purpose of this survey only workers in Canada are reported.

Independent Local Organization – A local that is not formally affiliated with any other labour organization.

Directly Chartered Local – A local that is organized and receives its charter from a labour congress. It pays per capita dues to the congress and receives services from the congress

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