



Labour

Workplace Bulletin

Collective bargaining monthly update December 2015

The December issue presents an overview of the collective bargaining environment during the month of December as well as during the last quarter of 2015.

December overview

Key negotiation activities

In December, major¹ ongoing negotiations included the following:

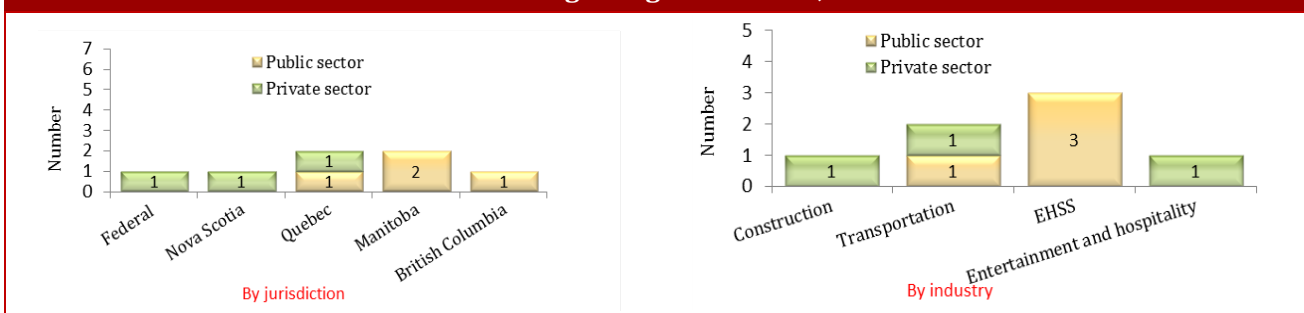
- **Canada Post and the Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW):** The collective agreements for almost 6,000 rural and urban mail carriers expired on December 31, 2015. First negotiation meetings were held at the beginning of December, the main issues being working conditions and workload. According to the union, a complaint was filed with the Canadian Industrial Relations Board (CIRB) at the end of December regarding a decision by the employer that could alter the compensation of up to 1,000 employees without changes in workload. The negotiations continue while the parties wait for the CIRB decision.
- **City of Toronto and Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE):** Negotiations, which commenced in October 2015, continued past the December expiry date of the contract. A conciliation officer has been appointed by the province to help the parties reach a settlement. The impasse stemmed from differences over sick leave and benefits, work hours, and job security.
- **Government of Nova Scotia and Nova Scotia Teachers Union:** The collective agreement expired on July 31, 2015. Bargaining began in September between the Government and its 9,000 teachers, with a tentative agreement reached in November. On December 1, teachers voted to reject the tentative agreement, unsatisfied with class size limits and other working conditions. The parties have since met to discuss next steps and bargaining options.

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

Settlements reached

- In December, seven major collective agreements were reached, three in the private sector (covering 5,800 employees) and four in the public sector (covering 12,750 employees).
- The federal jurisdiction had one agreement, concluded for 3,800 employees. Two agreements, covering 3,000 employees in total, were settled in Quebec. Manitoba also had two agreements, which covered 7,400 employees in total. Nova Scotia and British Columbia each had one agreement covering 800 and 3,550 employees.
- By industry, the employees who settled in December were in construction (800 employees), entertainment and hospitality (1,200 employees), education, health, and social service (6,600 employees) and transportation (7,350 employees).

Chart 1: Collective bargaining settlements, December 2015



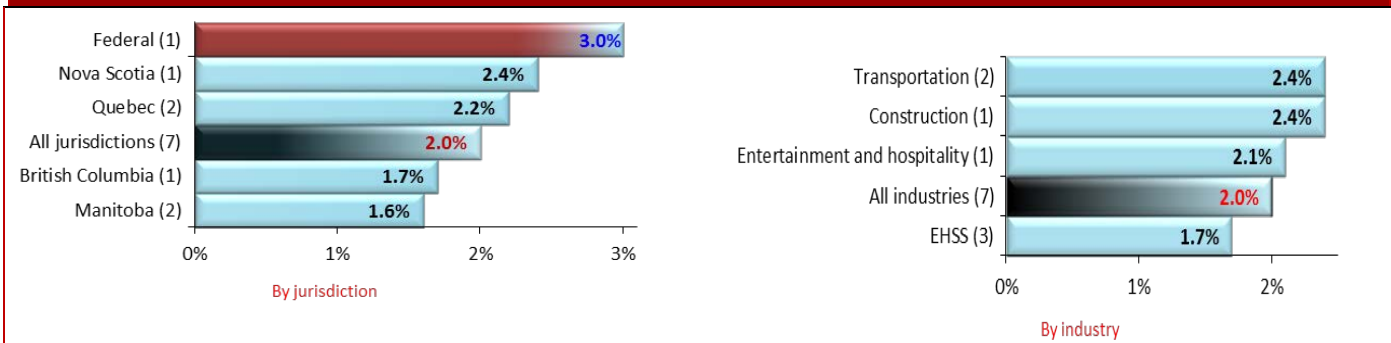
The texts of collective agreements can be accessed through the [Negotech](#), while the list of [Ratified settlements in 2015](#) can be accessed under the [Resources](#) tab on the Labour Program website.

Settlement outcomes

Wages

- The average annual base-rate² wage adjustment, over the duration of their contracts, received by the 18,550 employees under the major contracts in Canada settling in December was 2.0%. This average rate was slightly higher than the average increase obtained in the previous round of negotiations between the same parties (1.9%).
- The average wage increase negotiated in the private sector (2.7%) was higher than what was negotiated in the public sector (1.7%).
- Among the agreements reached in December, the Canadian Pacific Railway (federal jurisdiction) collective agreement covering 3,800 employees had the highest wage increase (3.0%). The lowest increase (1.5%) was received by 2,600 employees at the University of Manitoba (provincial jurisdiction).

Chart 2: Wage adjustments, December 2015*



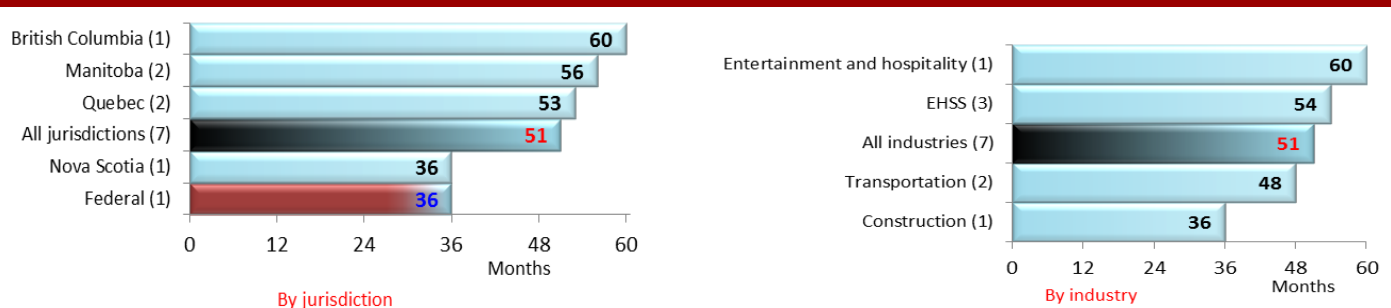
*Number of settled agreements per category is found in parenthesis

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

Duration

- In December, the average duration of the agreements settled was 51 months. This was longer than the average duration negotiated in the previous round of negotiations between the same bargaining parties (42 months).
- The agreements concluded in the public sector (56 months) had a longer average duration than the agreements reached in the private sector (41 months).
- The single contract in the federal jurisdiction, between Canadian Pacific Railway and Teamsters Canada, had 36 months duration.
- The longest duration was 60 months, negotiated for three of the provincial agreements settling in December.

Chart 3: Duration of agreements, December 2015*



*Number of settled agreements per category is found in parenthesis

Working Conditions

New working conditions clauses allow employers and unions to innovatively adapt to changing economic, working and social environments. In December, the following clauses were reported:

- *Moncton Northeast Construction Association and the Labourers' International Union of North America:* Under the “productivity clause,” if an employee is referred back to the union by three separate employers for unsatisfactory performance, then the union has to ensure that the employee is given the earliest opportunity to participate in appropriate retraining or upgrading.
- *Dalhousie University and Nova Scotia Government and General Employees Union:* A labour-management committee will be established to look at the challenges and opportunities related to diversity and inclusion. An effort will be made to have one committee member from each side that is a “racially visible person, an aboriginal person, a person with a disability, or a member of an underrepresented group.”

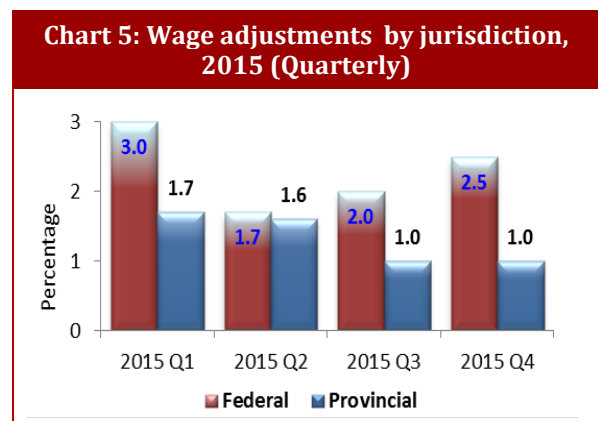
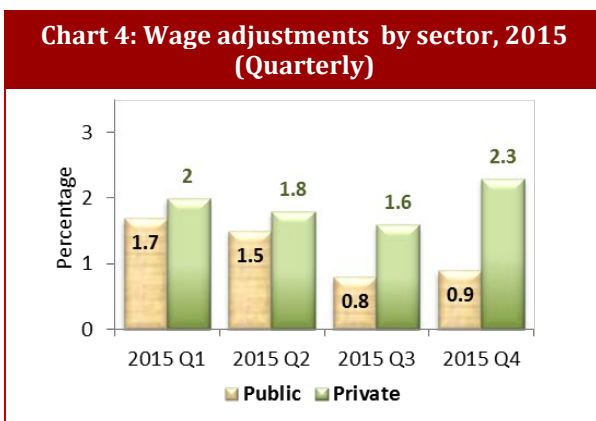
Major work stoppages³

- In December, Common Front Unions continued their rotating strikes, with just one day of strike action, on December 9. Members of the Federation autonome de l’enseignement were also on strike from December 9 to 11. Detailed information on these strikes was not available at the time of publication. The information will be included in subsequent issues when it becomes available.

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

Fourth Quarter overview

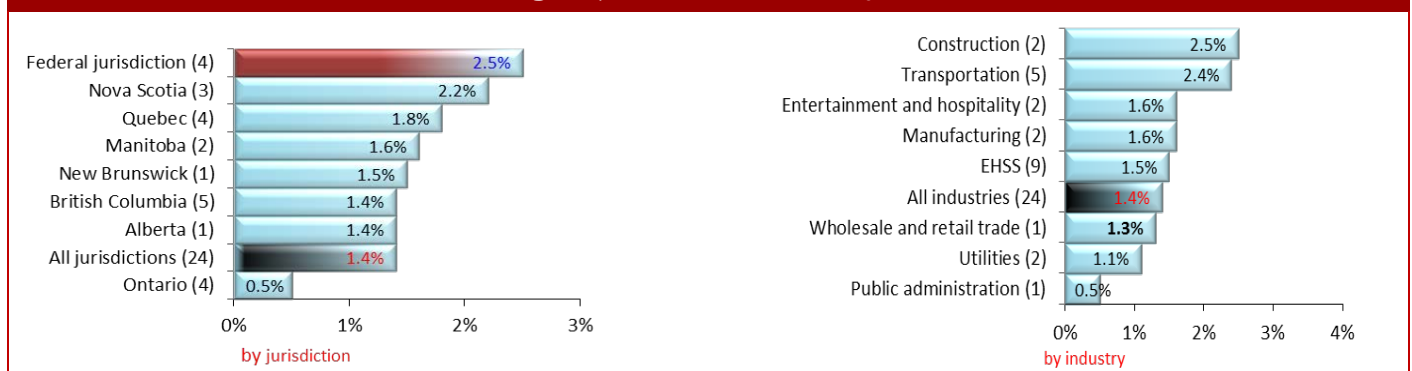
- Twenty-four major settlements, covering a total of 83,805 employees, were concluded during the last quarter of 2015. The average annual base-rate wage adjustment for these agreements was 1.4%, slightly lower than the average recorded in the third quarter (1.6%).
- Nineteen negotiations were settled through direct bargaining. Out of the remaining negotiations, two were settled through conciliation, one through arbitration, one through mediation after a work stoppage, and finally one through bargaining after a work stoppage.



- In the public sector, fourteen agreements were settled with an average wage increase of 0.9% compared to 0.8% in the third quarter. The ten agreements settled in the private sector had an average wage increase of 2.3%, higher than in the third quarter (1.6%).

- In the federal jurisdiction, four agreements (covering 19,850 employees) were settled for an average wage increase of 2.5%. This is more than double the increase for the twenty agreements settled in the provincial jurisdiction (1%), which covered 63,955 employees.
- Among all provincial jurisdictions, Nova Scotia had the highest wage adjustment (2.2%). In contrast, the lowest (0.5%) was recorded in Ontario.
- Out of all employees settling during the fourth quarter, 43% were in Ontario (36,120 employees). The agreement between the Government of Ontario and Ontario Public Service Employees Union covered most of these employees and received the lowest wage increase (0.5%).
- Among all industries, construction recorded the highest average wage gains (2.5%). In contrast, employees in public administration received the lowest wage gain (0.5%).
- Agreements concluded in the fourth quarter had an average duration of 50 months, higher than the average recorded in the third quarter (44 months).

Chart 6: Wage adjustments in the 4th Quarter, 2015



Features

Literature scan

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

- The Ontario Institute for Work & Health's [At Work \(Issue 82\)](#) publication discusses the results of an occupational health and safety vulnerability survey in the Ontario construction sector. The survey found that, relative to non-union firms, unionized firms have more work-related injury claims with no lost time from work, and fewer claims that result in lost time. Among other possible explanatory factors, the authors suggest that consistent injury reporting is more common in unionized workplaces.
- The Institute for Research on Public Policy's (IRPP) [Leaving Some Behind: What Happens When Workers Get Sick](#) report is based on a roundtable discussion held by IRPP on June 17, 2015 in Ottawa. The focus of the report is on what happens to individuals who are employed and become sick or disabled from a health condition acquired outside of the workplace. The authors summarize the key points of the roundtable discussion, and examine the current employment protection and income support systems available in Canada, including private insurance. The authors make recommendations to extend sickness and disability coverage to all working Canadians.

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 December 2015 data/information, which was collected up to January 16, 2016. Work stoppage data was collected up to January 23, 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 Major work stoppages involve 500 employees or more