



Workplace Bulletin

Collective bargaining update

April 2016

This issue provides an overview of major¹ collective bargaining negotiations in the month of April (section A), innovative clauses in collective agreements (section B) and a literature scan (section C).

A. April overview

Key negotiation activities

In April, ongoing negotiations included the following:

- **Via Rail Canada Inc. and UNIFOR:** The parties are negotiating the renewal of three collective agreements for approximately 1,900 workers, which expired as of December 31, 2015. Bargaining, which commenced in November 2015, has been ongoing; conciliators from Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service have been assisting since March 2016. The main issues are wages and benefits. If no agreement is reached by the end of the conciliation period in May, the union can obtain the legal right to strike.
- **Coast Mountain Bus Company and UNIFOR:** The collective agreement for approximately 4,700 workers expired at the end of March 2016. Bargaining talks broke off on April 6, 2016, with the main issues being benefits and wages. Union members voted in favour of a strike mandate on April 28, 2016. The last strike, in 2001, lasted more than four months and caused significant disruption to bus services throughout Vancouver. Negotiation talks are scheduled to restart in May.

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

Settlements reached

- In April, ten major collective agreements were reached, five in the public sector (covering 13,940 employees) and five in the private sector (covering 9,040 employees). Eight agreements were reached through direct bargaining; one through mediation; and one through arbitration.
- In the federal jurisdiction, one agreement was settled in the private sector, between NAV Canada and International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (covering 620 employees).
- Among provincial jurisdictions, three agreements were reached in each of Alberta (covering 7,450 employees) and British Columbia (covering 3,180 employees); and one in each of Quebec (covering 760 employees), Ontario (covering 970 employees) and Saskatchewan (covering 10,000 employees) (Chart 1).
- Half of employees who settled in April were in the education, health, and social service (EHSS) industry (11,530 employees). The second largest proportion was in primary industries (7,450 employees), followed by public administration (2,410 employees), wholesale and retail (970 employees) and transportation (620 employees).

Chart 1: Collective bargaining settlements, April 2016



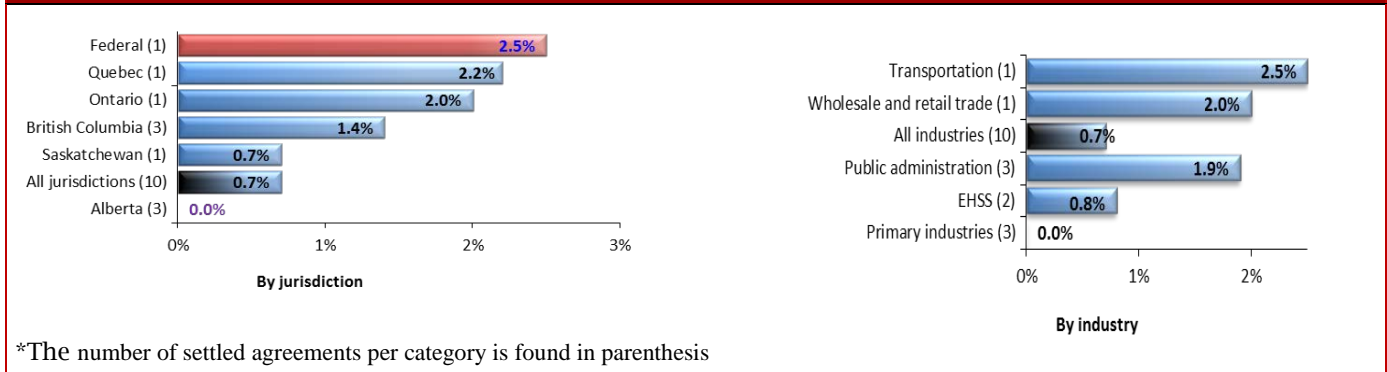
The texts of collective agreements can be accessed through the [Negotech](#), while the list of [Ratified settlements](#) can be accessed under the [Resources](#) tab on the Labour Program website.

Settlement outcomes

Wages

- The average annual base-rate² wage adjustment received by the 22,980 employees that settled in April over the duration of their contracts was 0.7%. This increase was just over half of what it had been in the previous round of negotiations between the same bargaining parties (1.3%) (Chart 2).
- The average wage increase negotiated in the private sector (0.4%) was lower than in the public sector (1%).
- Among the agreements reached in April, the collective agreement concluded in the federal jurisdiction had the highest wage increase (2.5%). In contrast, the agreements concluded in Alberta had a wage freeze over their two-year duration.
- Three agreements (covering 32% of employees settling in April) negotiated a wage freeze, each for a two year term. With an expected positive rate of inflation – the Bank of Canada is forecasting 1.6% in 2016 and 2.0% in 2017 – their real wage will decline over this period.

Chart 2: Wage adjustments, April 2016*

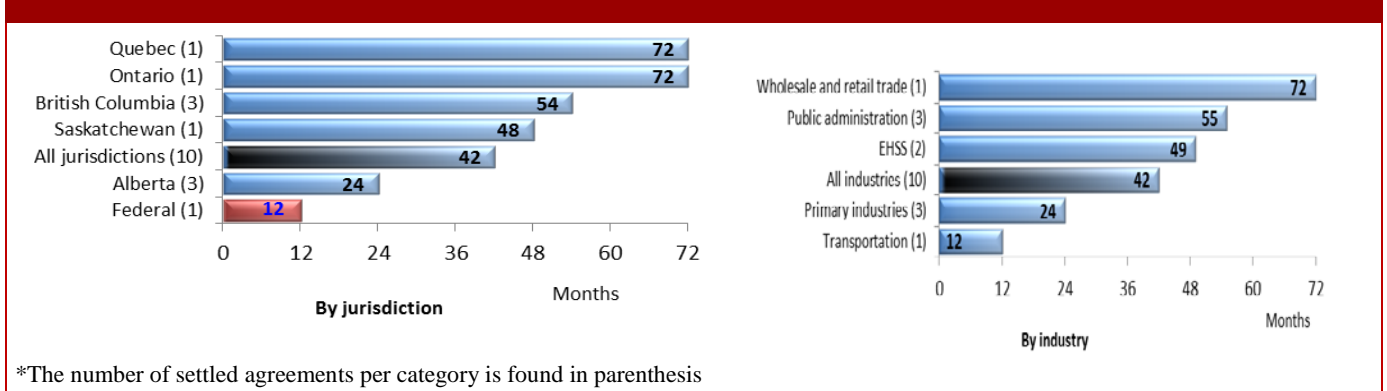


More information on [Wage settlements](#) can be accessed under the [Resources](#) tab on the Labour Program website.

Duration of collective agreements

- The average duration of agreements settled in April was 52 months. This was longer than the average duration reached in the previous round of negotiations between the same bargaining parties (39 months) (Chart 3).
- The agreements concluded in the public sector (50 months) had a longer average duration than the agreements reached in the private sector (28 months).
- The single contract settled in the federal jurisdiction, between NAV Canada and International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, had the shortest duration (12 months).
- The longest contract duration for the agreements concluded in April was 72 months.

Chart 3: Duration of agreements, April 2016*



Major work stoppages³

- In April, two major work stoppages involving two bargaining units (3,412 employees) at the Université du Québec à Montréal resulted in 3,412 person days not worked (PDNW).
- For the first four months of 2016, three work stoppages were reported, including the two mentioned above, resulting in a total of 179,680 PDNW (involving 4,412 employees). Over the same period the previous year, there were 12 work stoppages for a total of 119,410 PDNW (involving 18,141 employees).
- No major work stoppages occurred in the federal jurisdiction in April.

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

B. Innovative clauses in collective agreements

New clauses in collective agreements allow employers and unions to innovatively adapt to changing economic, working and social environments. The following clause was reported:

- *City of Vancouver and Canadian Union of Public Employees*: To recognize the importance of Aboriginal culture, “employees seeking unpaid leave of absence for the purpose of participating as a candidate in elections for Federal, Provincial or Municipal office, or elections to any federally recognized Aboriginal governing bodies, including but not limited to First Nations Band Councils, Aboriginal Governments or Self-governments will be granted an unpaid leave of absence.”

C. Literature scan

The following study related to labour and industrial relations was recently published:

- A Eurofound report, [Regulation of labour market intermediaries and the role of social partners in preventing trafficking of labour](#), examines how legislation and regulation and social partner activities in EU Member States and Norway can prevent the involvement of labour market intermediaries, such as temporary work agencies, in trafficking that exploits labour. The report also provides examples of joint initiatives between the state and social partners to combat trafficking for labour exploitation.

Did you know?

Duration of compassionate care leave extended

Compassionate care leave has been extended for Canadians working in the federal jurisdiction who provide care or support for a family member who has a serious medical condition with a significant risk of death within 26 weeks as certified by a qualified medical practitioner.

Specifically, the maximum duration of unpaid compassionate care leave has been extended to 28 weeks, from the previous 8-week period. Further, the period during which benefits can be taken has increased to 52 weeks (from 26 weeks).

The employee’s job is protected while taking this leave. Individuals may be eligible to receive compassionate care benefits under the Employment Insurance Program.

Contact

For previous issues of the Workplace Bulletin or 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 a copy of your collective agreement or 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).

Note: This bulletin is based on April 2015 data/information, which was collected up to May 16, 2016. Work stoppage data was collected up to May 24, 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.
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