

PERSPECTIVES

ON LABOUR AND INCOME

Unionization

Unionization rates in first half of 2007 and 2008

Average paid employment (employees) during the first half of 2008 was 14.4 million, an increase of 317,000 over the same period a year earlier (Table 1). On the other hand, union membership increased by only 53,000 to 4.2 million. With union membership growing less rapidly than employment, the unionization rate declined slightly from 29.7% to 29.4%.

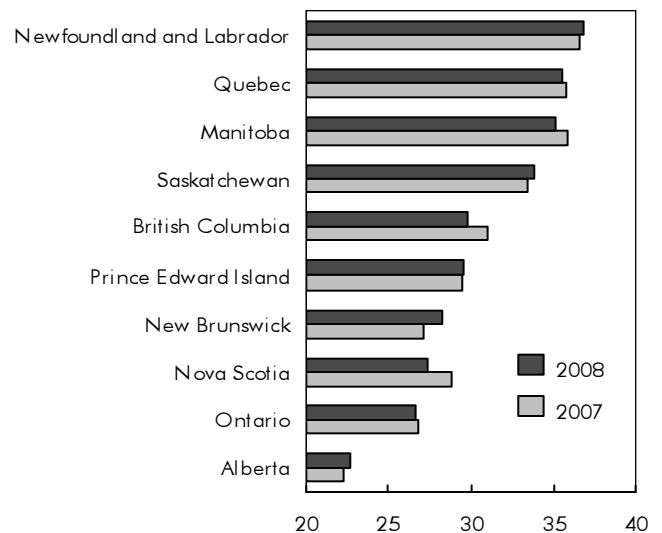
Unionization rates remained unchanged for women and declined slightly for men. At 30.0%, the women's rate in 2008 continued to exceed the rate for men (28.7%).

Unionization declined slightly in both the public and private sectors, to 71.0% and 16.3% respectively.

Five provinces recorded increases: Newfoundland and Labrador, Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick, Saskatchewan and Alberta. The five remaining provinces saw decreases (Chart A).

Unionization rates fell from 31.2% to 30.9% for full-time workers and from 22.9% to 22.7% for part-time workers.

Chart A Newfoundland and Labrador, the most unionized province; Alberta, the least



Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, January-to-June averages.

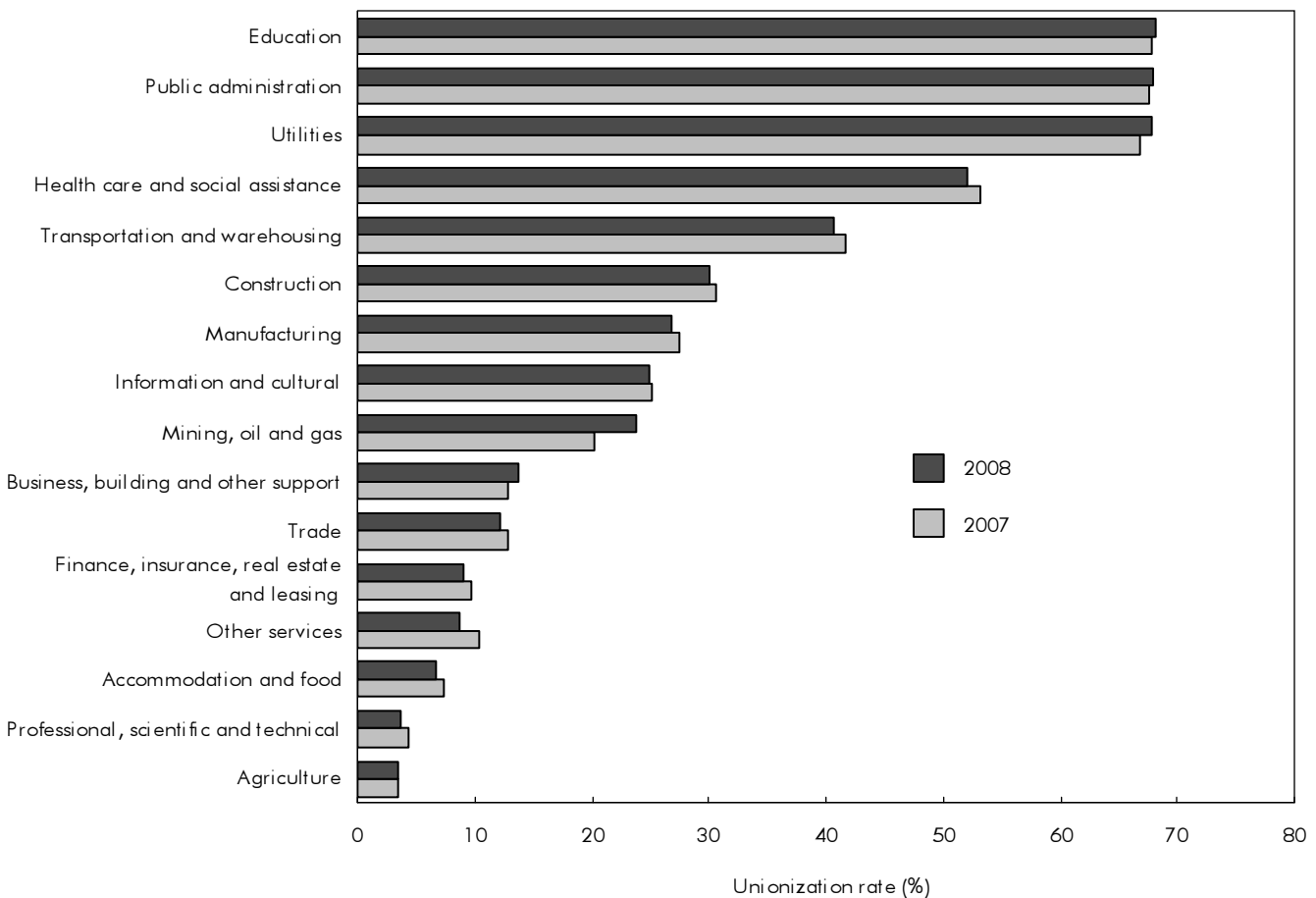


Unionization

The unionization rate for permanent employees declined to 29.7%, but increased to 26.8% for those in non-permanent jobs. The rate fell in workplaces with fewer than 20 employees, and in those with 100 to 500. On the other hand, it increased in those with more than 500 employees and those with 20 to 99 employees.

Unionization rose in 5 of the 16 major industry groups: mining, oil and gas; public support services; business, building and other services; educational services; and public administration. It remained stable for agriculture, while all other industry groups registered declines (Chart B).

Chart B The highest unionization rates were in public sector industries



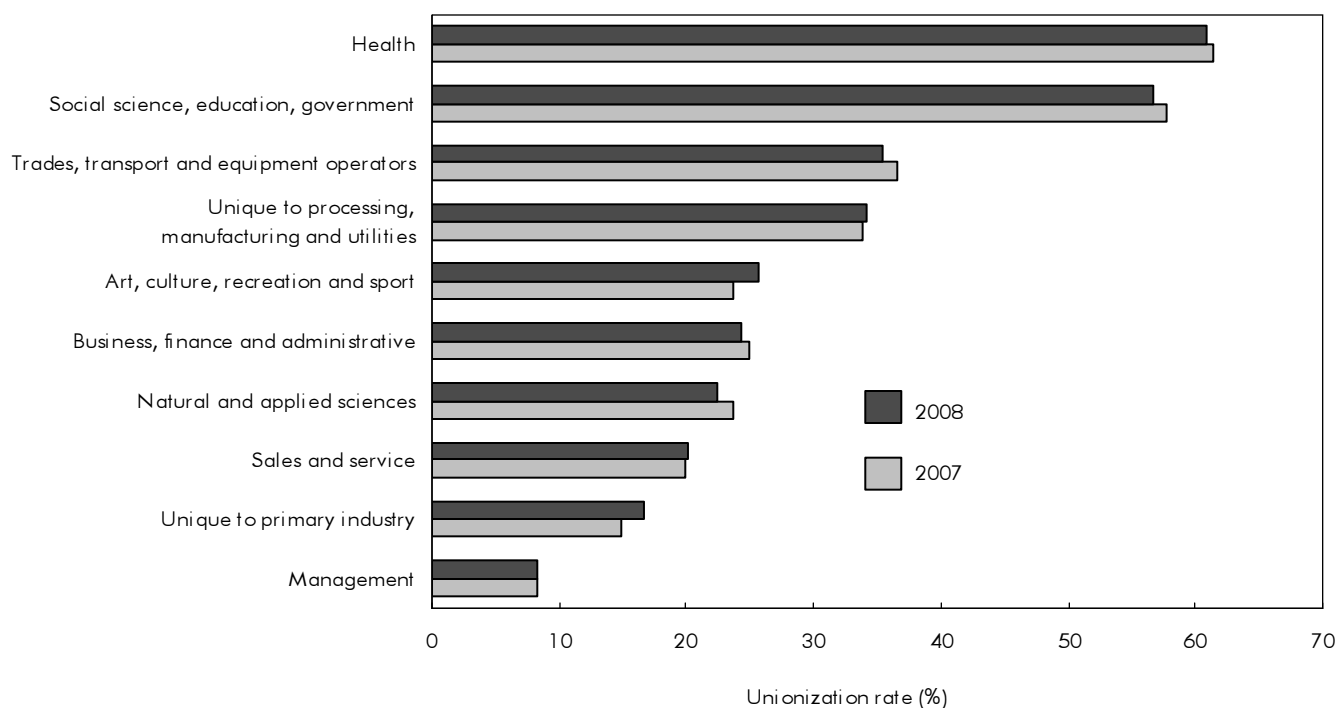
Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, January-to-June averages.

Unionization

Among the 10 major occupational groups, unionization rose in 4: art, culture, recreation and sport; primary sector occupations; those unique to processing, manufacturing and public utilities; and sales and service. Management remained stable, while the rest showed declines (Chart C).

The number of employees who were not union members but were covered by a collective agreement averaged 301,000 in the first half of 2008, down slightly from 308,000 a year earlier (data not shown—see Akyeamong 2000 for a description of this group).

Chart C Unionization in community service occupations far outpaced that in others



Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, January-to-June averages.

Data sources

Information on union membership, density and coverage by various socio-demographic characteristics, including earnings, are from the Labour Force Survey. Further details can be obtained from Marc Lévesque, Labour Statistics Division, Statistics Canada at 613-951-4090.

Data on strikes, lockouts and workdays lost, and those on major wage settlements were supplied by Human Resources and Social Development Canada (HRSDC). Further information on these statistics may be obtained from Client services, Workplace Information Directorate, HRSDC at 1-800-567-6866.

Table 1 Union membership and coverage by selected characteristics

	2007			2008		
	Total employees	Union density		Total employees	Union density	
		Members	Coverage ¹		Members	Coverage ¹
	'000	%	%	'000	%	%
Both sexes	14,087	29.7	31.8	14,404	29.4	31.5
Men	7,059	29.3	31.7	7,221	28.7	31.1
Women	7,027	30.0	32.0	7,183	30.0	31.9
Sector²						
Public	3,257	71.7	75.2	3,443	71.0	74.5
Private	10,830	17.0	18.8	10,962	16.3	17.9
Age						
15 to 24	2,418	13.3	15.0	2,464	13.5	15.2
25 to 54	9,911	32.7	35.0	10,032	32.3	34.5
25 to 44	6,592	29.8	32.1	6,614	29.4	31.8
45 to 54	3,319	38.3	40.7	3,418	37.7	39.7
55 and over	1,758	35.1	37.4	1,909	34.6	36.5
Education						
Less than Grade 9	323	25.9	27.7	316	24.7	26.0
Some high school	1,490	21.1	22.8	1,502	19.9	21.6
High school graduation	2,874	25.8	27.4	2,877	25.9	27.5
Some postsecondary	1,188	20.9	22.9	1,283	22.1	23.8
Postsecondary certificate or diploma	4,937	33.8	36.2	5,063	33.0	35.3
University degree	3,274	34.1	36.9	3,364	34.3	36.9
Province						
Atlantic	945	29.9	31.2	962	29.7	31.2
Newfoundland and Labrador	187	36.6	38.3	193	36.8	39.0
Prince Edward Island	58	29.5	30.7	60	29.6	31.1
Nova Scotia	386	28.9	30.0	390	27.4	28.2
New Brunswick	314	27.1	28.4	319	28.3	30.0
Quebec	3,259	35.8	39.4	3,299	35.5	39.2
Ontario	5,548	26.8	28.5	5,658	26.7	28.2
Prairies	2,516	26.8	28.7	2,592	26.9	28.8
Manitoba	505	35.9	37.7	517	35.1	37.1
Saskatchewan	405	33.4	35.3	415	33.8	35.3
Alberta	1,606	22.3	24.2	1,660	22.7	24.6
British Columbia	1,818	31.0	32.9	1,894	29.8	31.4
Work status						
Full-time	11,483	31.2	33.5	11,765	30.9	33.1
Part-time	2,604	22.9	24.6	2,639	22.7	24.3
Industry						
Goods-producing	3,209	28.2	30.5	3,214	28.4	30.4
Agriculture	122	3.5	5.1	116	3.5	4.2
Mining, oil and gas	285	20.2	22.1	285	23.7	25.6
Utilities	131	66.7	71.2	151	67.7	70.5
Construction	727	30.6	32.8	802	30.2	32.0
Manufacturing	1,944	27.5	29.7	1,861	26.8	28.8
Service-producing	10,877	30.1	32.2	11,190	29.6	31.8
Trade	2,355	12.9	14.5	2,392	12.2	13.8
Transportation and warehousing	673	41.7	43.8	700	40.6	42.5
Finance, insurance, real estate and leasing	877	9.7	11.2	894	9.0	10.6
Professional, scientific and technical	743	4.3	5.5	811	3.6	4.9
Business, building and other support	519	12.9	14.7	522	13.7	15.3
Education	1,175	67.8	71.5	1,187	68.1	71.7
Health care and social assistance	1,605	53.3	55.5	1,650	52.1	53.8
Information and cultural	642	25.1	26.8	632	24.9	26.9
Accommodation and food	961	7.4	8.3	964	6.7	7.6
Other	488	10.3	12.5	519	8.7	10.7
Public administration	839	67.6	72.6	918	67.9	73.6

Table 1 Union membership and coverage by selected characteristics (concluded)

	2007			2008		
	Total employees	Union density		Total employees	Union density	
		Members	Coverage ¹		Members	Coverage ¹
Occupation	'000	%	%	'000	%	%
Management	988	8.3	10.9	1,036	8.3	10.8
Business, finance and administrative	2,700	24.9	27.0	2,840	24.3	26.3
Professional	378	17.2	18.9	395	17.1	18.9
Financial and administrative	685	23.2	25.6	775	22.4	24.6
Clerical	1,637	27.3	29.4	1,670	26.9	28.8
Natural and applied sciences	1,030	23.7	25.8	1,074	22.5	24.8
Health	864	61.4	63.2	882	60.9	63.1
Professional	101	40.2	45.3	89	41.6	47.0
Nursing	266	81.2	82.9	275	77.2	79.1
Technical	229	56.5	58.0	208	56.4	58.5
Support staff	268	53.8	55.0	310	55.1	56.6
Social and public service	1,298	57.7	61.0	1,351	56.7	59.4
Legal, social and religious workers	589	36.8	40.0	640	37.1	39.4
Teachers and professors	710	75.1	78.4	711	74.3	77.4
Secondary and elementary	478	86.8	89.0	480	86.4	88.2
Other	232	50.8	56.6	231	49.0	54.8
Art, culture, recreation and sport	301	23.7	26.1	330	25.8	28.8
Sales and service	3,674	20.0	21.7	3,658	20.1	21.8
Wholesale	381	5.4	6.5	361	4.9	6.0
Retail	1,062	12.3	13.6	1,037	11.6	12.8
Food and beverage	561	7.8	8.6	533	9.1	10.0
Protective services	231	54.9	62.0	245	51.8	59.0
Child care and home support	190	45.6	48.7	185	47.3	49.6
Travel and accommodation	1,250	26.1	27.7	1,297	25.9	27.3
Trades, transport and equipment operators	2,007	36.5	38.8	2,094	35.5	37.5
Contractors and supervisors	111	32.3	34.9	134	28.6	30.6
Construction trades	256	37.7	39.9	274	37.5	39.6
Other trades	793	39.6	41.9	850	36.4	38.6
Transportation equipment operators	511	36.3	38.1	492	37.0	38.6
Helpers and labourers	337	29.8	33.2	343	32.3	34.4
Unique to primary industry	277	14.9	16.9	263	16.7	18.6
Unique to processing, manufacturing and utilities	946	33.9	36.2	876	34.2	36.4
Machine operators and assemblers	751	33.9	36.1	697	34.5	36.8
Labourers	196	33.6	36.5	178	33.0	34.9
Workplace size						
Under 20 employees	4,598	13.1	14.7	4,713	12.6	14.2
20 to 99 employees	4,638	30.0	32.3	4,708	30.3	32.4
100 to 500 employees	2,976	41.1	43.8	3,073	39.6	42.0
Over 500 employees	1,874	51.2	53.8	1,910	52.0	54.8
Job tenure						
1 to 12 months	3,341	14.9	17.3	3,432	15.9	18.2
Over 1 year to 5 years	4,448	23.1	25.1	4,584	22.8	24.6
Over 5 years to 9 years	2,206	32.9	35.1	2,135	33.4	35.6
Over 9 years to 14 years	1,308	36.6	38.7	1,434	35.3	37.0
Over 14 years	2,784	51.9	54.4	2,819	50.4	52.8
Job status						
Permanent	12,310	30.2	32.3	12,728	29.7	31.7
Non-permanent	1,777	25.8	28.5	1,676	26.8	29.6

1. Union members and persons who are not union members but covered by collective agreements (for example, some religious group members).

2. Public sector employees are those working for government departments or agencies; Crown corporations; or publicly funded schools, hospitals or other institutions. Private sector employees are all other wage and salary earners.

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, January-to-June averages.

2007 annual averages

Approximately 4.2 million employees (29.3%) (Table 2) belonged to a union in 2007 and some 316,000 (2.2%) were covered by a collective agreement.

Those in the public sector—government, Crown corporations, and publicly funded schools or hospitals—were over four times more likely than their private-sector counterparts to belong to a union (71.0% versus 16.8%).

Almost one in three full-time employees belonged to a union, compared with about one in four part-time. Also, almost one in three permanent employees were union members, compared with one in four non-permanent.

High unionization rates were found among employees aged 45 to 54 (38.2%); among those with a university degree (33.6%) or a postsecondary certificate or diploma (33.5%); in Newfoundland and Labrador (36.0%) and in Quebec (35.9%); as well as in educational services (66.9%), public administration (67.5%), and utilities (65.7%); and in health care occupations (61.9%). Low unionization rates were recorded among 15 to 24 year-olds (13.2%); in Alberta (21.8%); in agriculture (4.0%) and professional, scientific and technical services (4.3%); and in management occupations (8.3%).

Table 2 Union membership, 2007

	Total employees	Union member ¹	
		Total	Density
	'000	'000	%
Both sexes	14,251	4,175	29.3
Men	7,186	2,070	28.8
Women	7,066	2,105	29.8
Sector²			
Public	3,283	2,331	71.0
Private	10,969	1,845	16.8
Age			
15 to 24	2,500	330	13.2
25 to 54	9,959	3,226	32.4
25 to 44	6,607	1,944	29.4
45 to 54	3,353	1,282	38.2
55 and over	1,792	620	34.6
Education			
Less than Grade 9	325	80	24.7
Some high school	1,496	306	20.5
High school graduation	2,932	754	25.7
Some postsecondary	1,220	257	21.1
Postsecondary certificate or diploma	5,003	1,677	33.5
University degree	3,276	1,101	33.6
Province			
Atlantic	964	282	29.2
Newfoundland and Labrador	193	70	36.0
Prince Edward Island	60	17	28.3
Nova Scotia	391	111	28.4
New Brunswick	321	85	26.5
Quebec	3,300	1,183	35.9
Ontario	5,607	1,486	26.5
Prairies	2,540	667	26.3
Manitoba	508	178	35.0
Saskatchewan	409	135	33.1
Alberta	1,623	354	21.8
British Columbia	1,841	557	30.3
Work status			
Full-time	11,716	3,599	30.7
Part-time	2,535	577	22.7
Industry			
Goods-producing	3,278	928	28.3
Agriculture	127	5	4.0
Mining, oil and gas	288	60	20.8
Utilities	138	91	65.7
Construction	780	238	30.5
Manufacturing	1,944	534	27.5
Service-producing	10,974	3,248	29.6
Trade	2,380	303	12.7
Transportation and warehousing	680	277	40.7
Finance, insurance, real estate and leasing	877	84	9.6
Professional, scientific and technical	757	32	4.3
Business, building and other support	542	69	12.7
Education	1,130	756	66.9
Health care and social assistance	1,621	862	53.2
Information and cultural	661	165	25.0
Accommodation and food	970	71	7.3
Other	492	45	9.1
Public administration	864	583	67.5

Differences between the sexes

For the fourth year in a row, the unionization rate for women in 2007 surpassed that of men (29.8% versus 28.8%).

Among men, part-time employees had a much lower rate than full-time employees (18.0% versus 30.1%). Among women, the gap was narrower (24.8% versus 31.5%) (data not shown). The unionization rate for women in the public sector (72.8%) exceeded that of men (68.2%), reflecting women's presence in public administration, and in teaching and health positions. However, in the private sector, only 12.5% were unionized, compared with 20.9% of men. The lower rate among women reflected their predominance in sales and several service occupations.

A higher-than-average rate was recorded among men with a post-secondary certificate or diploma (33.9%). For women, the highest rate was among those with a university degree (40.0%), reflecting unionization in occupations like health care and teaching.

Among those in permanent positions, the rate for men (29.6%) was similar to that for women (30.2%). Among those in non-permanent positions, women were more unionized than men (27.2% versus 23.2%).

Table 2 Union membership, 2007 (concluded)

Occupation	Total employees '000	Union member	
		Total '000	Density %
Occupation			
Management	1,006	84	8.3
Business, finance and administrative	2,753	677	24.6
Professional	376	64	17.1
Financial and administrative	712	163	23.0
Clerical	1,666	449	27.0
Natural and applied sciences	1,051	243	23.2
Health	864	535	61.9
Professional	98	41	41.6
Nursing	273	218	79.7
Technical	217	125	57.8
Support staff	276	151	54.7
Social and public service	1,276	716	56.1
Legal, social and religious workers	600	217	36.2
Teachers and professors	676	499	73.8
Secondary and elementary	447	385	86.1
Other	229	114	49.8
Art, culture, recreation and sport	324	79	24.3
Sales and service	3,687	726	19.7
Wholesale	384	20	5.1
Retail	1,069	127	11.9
Food and beverage	556	44	7.9
Protective services	235	129	54.8
Child care and home support	178	82	46.3
Travel and accommodation	1,265	324	25.6
Trades, transport and equipment operators	2,066	753	36.4
Contractors and supervisors	114	36	31.7
Construction trades	275	110	39.8
Other trades	811	318	39.2
Transportation equipment operators	519	184	35.5
Helpers and labourers	347	105	30.2
Unique to primary industries	293	44	15.1
Unique to processing, manufacturing and utilities	930	320	34.4
Machine operators and assemblers	737	252	34.3
Labourers	194	67	34.7
Workplace size			
Under 20 employees	4,684	607	13.0
20 to 99 employees	4,670	1,375	29.5
100 to 500 employees	2,994	1,207	40.3
Over 500 employees	1,904	985	51.7
Job tenure			
1 to 12 months	3,425	509	14.8
Over 1 year to 5 years	4,494	1,031	22.9
Over 5 years to 9 years	2,209	722	32.7
Over 9 years to 14 years	1,321	478	36.2
Over 14 years	2,802	1,436	51.2
Job status			
Permanent	12,409	3,710	29.9
Non-permanent	1,843	465	25.3

1. Excludes non-members covered by a collective agreement.

2. Public sector employees are those working for government departments or agencies; Crown corporations; or publicly funded schools, hospitals or other institutions. Private sector employees are all other wage and salary earners.

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey.

Average earnings and usual hours

Unionized jobs generally provide higher earnings than non-unionized jobs (Table 3). However, factors other than collective bargaining provisions also play a role. These include varying distributions of unionized employees by age, sex, job tenure, industry, occupation, firm size, and geographical location.

Although the effects of these factors have not been examined, it is clear that unionized workers and jobs tend to have certain characteristics that are associated with higher earnings. For example, the unionization rate is higher among older workers, those with higher education, those with long tenure, and those in larger workplaces. Although differences in earnings and non-wage benefits cannot be attributed solely to union status (Akyeampong 2002), the union wage premium (after adjusting for employee and workplace characteristics) has been estimated at 7.7% (Fang and Verma 2002).

In 2007, the average hourly earnings of unionized workers were higher than those of non-unionized workers. This held true for both full-time (\$24.15 versus \$20.55) and part-time (\$19.99 versus \$12.56) employees.

In addition to having higher hourly earnings, unionized part-time employees generally worked more hours per

Table 3 Average earnings and usual hours by union and job status, 2007

	Hourly earnings			Usual weekly hours, main job		
	All employees	Full-time	Part-time	All employees	Full-time	Part-time
		\$				
Both sexes	20.41	21.73	14.33	35.6	39.5	17.4
Union member	23.58	24.15	19.99	36.0	38.7	19.3
Union coverage ¹	23.51	24.11	19.81	36.0	38.7	19.1
Not a union member ²	18.98	20.55	12.56	35.4	39.9	16.9
Men	22.17	23.24	13.25	38.1	40.7	16.5
Union member	24.38	24.83	18.10	38.4	39.8	18.2
Union coverage ¹	24.32	24.79	17.94	38.4	39.9	18.0
Not a union member ²	21.20	22.50	12.07	38.0	41.1	16.2
Women	18.62	19.89	14.80	33.0	38.0	17.8
Union member	22.79	23.36	20.59	33.6	37.3	19.6
Union coverage ¹	22.71	23.31	20.43	33.6	37.3	19.5
Not a union member ²	16.71	18.16	12.78	32.6	38.3	17.2
Atlantic	17.22	18.19	12.22	36.7	40.4	17.5
Union member	21.98	22.22	19.76	37.6	39.5	20.0
Union coverage ¹	21.90	22.16	19.54	37.6	39.6	19.8
Not a union member ²	15.15	16.24	10.50	36.3	40.8	17.0
Quebec	19.35	20.52	14.15	34.5	38.2	18.0
Union member	22.10	22.52	19.41	35.2	37.6	20.0
Union coverage ¹	21.92	22.39	18.98	35.3	37.7	19.8
Not a union member ²	17.66	19.17	12.14	34.0	38.6	17.2
Ontario	21.27	22.83	14.01	35.6	39.6	17.0
Union member	24.86	25.70	19.48	36.1	38.9	18.6
Union coverage ¹	24.85	25.70	19.41	36.2	38.9	18.5
Not a union member ²	19.86	21.62	12.53	35.3	39.8	16.7
Prairies	21.06	22.24	15.04	36.7	40.5	17.4
Union member	23.71	24.23	20.59	36.4	39.3	19.3
Union coverage ¹	23.81	24.34	20.60	36.5	39.4	19.2
Not a union member ²	19.97	21.39	13.24	36.8	40.9	16.8
British Columbia	20.49	21.67	15.62	35.3	39.6	17.5
Union member	23.94	24.39	21.61	35.8	39.0	19.3
Union coverage ¹	23.93	24.41	21.49	35.8	39.1	19.1
Not a union member ²	18.86	20.29	13.47	35.0	39.9	16.9

1. Union members and persons who are not union members but covered by collective agreements (for example, some religious group members).

2. Workers who are neither union members nor covered by collective agreements.

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey.

week than their non-unionized counterparts (19.3 versus 16.9). As a result, their average weekly earnings were much higher (\$391.14 versus \$216.43) (data not shown).

On average, unionized women working full time received about 94% as much in hourly earnings as their male counterparts. In contrast, unionized women working part time earned 14% more.

Wage settlements, inflation and labour disputes

Wage gains of 3.3% in 2007 significantly surpassed the rate of inflation (1.9%) (Table 4). This reflects the third consecutive year in which wage increases were greater than the rate of inflation, although the differences in the two preceding years were not significant. The 2007 trend continued during the first four months of 2008, with wage gains averaging 3.4%, while inflation stood at 1.8%.

Wage gains in the public sector in 2007 (3.4%) surpassed those in the private sector (3.1%). The gap reversed and widened in the first four months of 2008. The corresponding gains were 3.2% and 4.0%.

Annual statistics on strikes, lockouts and person-days lost are affected by several factors, including collective bargaining timetables, size of the unions involved, strike or lockout duration, and state of the economy. The number of collective agreements up for renewal in a year determines the potential for industrial disputes. Union size and strike or lockout duration determine

Table 4 Major wage settlements, inflation and labour disputes

Year	Average annual increase in base wage rates ¹			Annual change in consumer price index ¹	Labour disputes and time lost ³			
	Public sector employees ²	Private sector employees ²	Total employees		Strikes and lockouts ⁴	Workers involved	Person-days not worked	Proportion of estimated working time
			%			'000	'000	%
1980	10.9	11.7	11.1	10.1	1,028	452	9,130	0.37
1981	13.1	12.6	13.0	12.4	1,049	342	8,850	0.35
1982	10.4	9.5	10.2	10.9	679	464	5,702	0.23
1983	4.6	5.5	4.8	5.8	645	330	4,441	0.18
1984	3.9	3.2	3.6	4.3	716	187	3,883	0.15
1985	3.8	3.3	3.7	4.0	829	164	3,126	0.12
1986	3.6	3.0	3.4	4.1	748	486	7,151	0.27
1987	4.1	3.8	4.0	4.4	668	582	3,810	0.14
1988	4.0	5.0	4.4	4.0	548	207	4,901	0.17
1989	5.2	5.2	5.2	5.0	627	445	3,701	0.13
1990	5.6	5.7	5.6	4.8	579	271	5,079	0.17
1991	3.4	4.4	3.6	5.6	463	254	2,516	0.09
1992	2.0	2.6	2.1	1.5	404	152	2,110	0.07
1993	0.6	0.8	0.7	1.8	381	102	1,517	0.05
1994	0.0	1.2	0.3	0.2	374	81	1,607	0.06
1995	0.6	1.4	0.9	2.2	328	149	1,583	0.05
1996	0.5	1.7	0.9	1.6	330	276	3,269	0.11
1997	1.1	1.8	1.5	1.6	284	258	3,608	0.12
1998	1.6	1.8	1.7	0.9	381	244	2,444	0.08
1999	2.0	2.7	2.2	1.7	413	160	2,443	0.08
2000	2.5	2.4	2.5	2.7	379	144	1,657	0.05
2001	3.4	3.0	3.3	2.6	381	221	2,199	0.07
2002	2.9	2.6	2.8	2.2	294	168	3,033	0.09
2003	2.9	1.2	2.5	2.8	266	81	1,736	0.05
2004	1.4	2.3	1.8	1.9	297	260	3,209	0.09
2005	2.2	2.5	2.3	2.2	260	199	4,150	0.12
2006	2.6	2.2	2.5	2.4	151	42	791	0.02
2007	3.4	3.1	3.3	1.9	207	67	1,791	0.05
2008 ⁵	3.2	4.0	3.4	1.8				

1. Involving 500 or more employees.

2. Public sector employees are those working for government departments or agencies; Crown corporations; or publicly funded schools, hospitals or other institutions. Private sector employees are all other wage and salary earners.

3. Involving 1 worker or more.

4. Ten person-days not worked.

5. 2008 data refer to January to April only.

Sources: Statistics Canada, Prices Division; Human Resources and Social Development Canada, Workplace Information Directorate .

the number of person-days lost. The state of the economy influences the likelihood of an industrial dispute, given that one is legally possible. The estimated number of person-days lost through strikes and lock-outs dropped to less than a fifth, from 4.1 million in 2005 to 791,000 in 2006. In 2007, however, it rebounded sharply, reaching 1.8 million.

Perspectives

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