

8.7 Organized labour

8.7.1 Union membership

At January 1, 1972, labour unions reported a total of 2.4 million members in Canada, an increase of 7.2% over 1971 (Table 8.28). Union membership comprised 34.4% of non-agricultural paid workers and 27.6% of the total civilian labour force in 1972. Membership, by type of union and affiliation, is presented in Table 8.29. Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) affiliates, with 1.7 million members in 1972, accounted for 72.8% of total union membership in Canada, compared with 74.8% in 1971. Of the total in CLC affiliates in 1972, 1.2 million members belonged to unions that were also affiliated with the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO) in the United States; membership of unions affiliated with the CLC but not holding affiliation with the AFL-CIO totalled 529,559 or 22.3% of the total. Federations affiliated with the Quebec-based Confederation of National Trade Unions (CNTU) had 218,621 members or 9.2% of total union membership in Canada; the Canadian Council of Unions (CCU) represented 10,511 members or 0.5%; and the remaining 17.5% belonged to various unaffiliated international and national unions and independent local organizations.

International unions with headquarters in the United States accounted for 59.6% of the 1972 membership, compared with 62.0% in 1971; national and regional unions, which charter locals in Canada only, made up 37.7% (34.9% in 1971). Independent local organizations and local unions chartered by the CLC and the CNTU accounted for the remaining 2.7%.

In 1972, 20 unions reported membership of 30,000 or more. Ten unions reported 50,000 or more members, accounting for 39% of the total membership. The ten, listed with their affiliation, ranked as follows in 1972 (1971 rank in parentheses):

- 1 (1) United Steelworkers of America (AFL-CIO/CLC), 165,055
- 2 (2) Canadian Union of Public Employees (CLC), 157,919
- 3 (3) Public Service Alliance of Canada (CLC), 129,652
- 4 (4) International Union, United Automobile, Aerospace and Agricultural Implement Workers of America (CLC), 102,933
- 5 (5) United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America (AFL-CIO/CLC), 74,362
- 6 (not included) Quebec Teachers' Corporation (Ind.), 70,000
- 7 (6) International Brotherhood of Teamsters, Chauffeurs, Warehousemen and Helpers of America (Ind.), 60,560
- 8 (8) Service Employees' National Federation, Inc. (CNTU), 56,603
- 9 (7) International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (AFL-CIO/CLC), 56,026
- 10 (fewer than 50,000) International Woodworkers of America (AFL-CIO/CLC), 53,158.

8.7.2 Wages and collective agreements 1971

The Canada Department of Labour publishes wage settlements data for collective agreements on a quarterly basis. The agreements covered are limited to negotiating units of 500 or more employees in all industries, except construction. The base rate for a negotiating unit is defined as the lowest rate of pay, expressed in hourly terms, for the lowest paid classification used for qualified workers in the bargaining unit. In most cases, the base rate represents pay for an unskilled or semi-skilled classification of workers. However, this is not so in contracts covering only skilled and/or professional workers. The wage data, therefore, are not necessarily representative of the average increases enjoyed by the workers in the negotiating unit as a whole. Nevertheless, the data on numbers of agreements and workers refer to all occupational groups in the negotiating unit.

Wage rate data given in Tables 8.30 and 8.31 indicate that approximately 1.5 million workers were covered by 715 collective agreements at December 31, 1971. The average base rate rose 22.3 cents, or 8.1% during the 12-month period ended December 31, 1971, compared with an increase of 19.1 cents or 7.4% during the preceding 12-month period. On a year-over-year basis, the consumer price index rose by 5.0% during the 12-month period ended December 31, 1971, and by 1.5% during the preceding 12-month period. When the wage increases are deflated by the consumer price index increase, the average base rate increased, in real terms, 3.0% in 1971 and 5.8% in 1970.

Additional data are available from the Canada Department of Labour on wage settlements during quarterly periods, including number of agreements settled, number of employees covered and duration of contracts. The agreements covered are again limited to