

Wage trends in major collective agreements

7.3.2

Labour Canada publishes base rate settlement 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. The wage data are not necessarily representative of the average increases received by the workers in the whole negotiating unit. Nevertheless, the data are aggregated using the total number of employees in the negotiating unit.

In 1978, some 656 collective agreements covering 1,283,880 workers were settled. As shown in Table 7.26, the average annual percentage increase in base rates in these settlements was 6.9% compound over the term of the agreements. The comparable percentage for 1977 was 7.8% compound.

The 1978 settlements of one-year duration produced increases averaging 7.0%; those of two-year duration 7.4% and 6.9% for the first and second years, respectively; and those of three-year duration, 7.0%, 5.1% and 4.8% for the first, second and third years of the contracts.

A further breakdown reveals that of the 656 settlements in 1978, 147 covering 285,265 employees included a cost of living allowance (COLA). These 147 settlements produced an average increase, prior to the calculation of COLA, of 6.0% over the life of the agreements, whereas the remaining 509 agreements (998,615 employees) without a COLA clause produced an average increase of 7.2%.

Strikes and lockouts

7.3.3

Statistical information on strikes and lockouts in Canada is compiled by Labour Canada on the basis of reports from employment centres, provincial labour departments and other sources. Table 7.27 presents a breakdown by industry and jurisdiction of strikes and lockouts in 1977 and 1978 involving three or more workers and amounting to 10 or more man-days. The 803 work stoppages reported in 1977 involved 217,557 workers and 3.3 million man-days. Corresponding figures for 1978 were 1,058 stoppages, 401,688 workers and 7.4 million man-days.

Time loss, in relation to total estimated working time of non-agricultural paid workers, was equivalent to 15 man-days per 10,000 man-days worked in 1977 and 34 man-days per 10,000 in 1978.

The number of workers involved includes all reported on strike or locked out, whether or not they belonged to the unions directly involved in the disputes leading to work stoppages. Workers indirectly affected, such as those laid off as a result of a work stoppage, are not included. Duration of strikes and lockouts in terms of man-days is calculated by multiplying the number of workers involved in each work stoppage by the number of working days the stoppage was in progress.

The labour force

7.4

Monthly labour force surveys

7.4.1

Since 1946, statistics relating to employment and unemployment at the national level, and since 1966 at the provincial level, have been provided through a Statistics Canada labour force survey. From 1945 until 1952 it was conducted quarterly, and since November 1952 it has been carried out monthly. In 1976, after three years of developmental work, substantial revisions to the survey were made to enhance the quality and increase the range of data collected, particularly information relating to the dynamics of the labour market.

The survey sample was designed to represent all persons in the population 15 years of age and over residing in Canada with the exception of the following: residents of Northwest Territories and Yukon, persons living on Indian reserves, inmates of institutions and full-time members of the armed forces. Interviews are carried out in approximately 55,000 households chosen by area sampling methods across the country.