

# Marine Transport Sector Profile

## Sector Facts and Figures

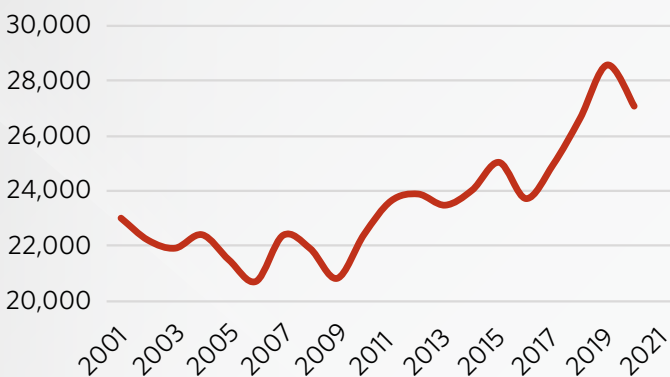
Total GDP <i>Share of Canadian GDP</i>	\$1.9 billion 0.09%
Total Employment (2020) <i>Change since 2011</i>	27,100 +14.6%
Real wage growth (2011-2019)	+6.7%
Labour Productivity (2019)	\$59.0/hr
Average Work Hours/Week (2019)	36.5
Greenhouse Gas Emissions (2019) <i>Change since 2009</i> <i>Share of Canadian industry total</i>	3,523kt -40.6% 0.56%
Union Coverage Rate	58%
Unifor Members in the Industry	2,300
Share of Total Unifor Membership	1%
Number of Unifor Bargaining Units	24
Average Bargaining Unit Size	95

## Current Conditions

Canada's ports, harbours and terminals are key gateways for international trade, the fishing and seafood industry, travel and tourism and for ensuring that coastal communities stay connected.

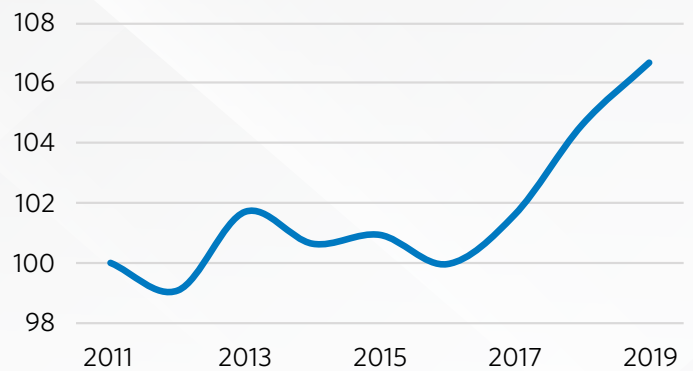
The country's marine transportation infrastructure consists of over 560 port facilities, 880 fishing harbours and 125 recreational harbours. In total, they contribute \$1.9 billion to Canada's GDP. Canadian Port Authorities independently manage 17 ports on behalf of the federal government, while 34 are managed by Transport Canada.

### Marine transport employment, 2001 - 2020



Nearly half (47%) of Canada's international trade outside of the U.S. is conducted via marine transport. In 2019, over \$206.4 billion worth of goods were traded internationally by cargo ships. The Port of Vancouver, the country's largest port, handles most of the country's cargo (144 million tonnes in 2019), followed by the Port of Montreal (41 million tonnes). The Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence Seaway systems are also critical economic corridors for Canadian trade, moving approximately \$20 billion worth of goods.

### Marine transport: Real wages (2011=100)



Canada's passenger ferry system transports approximately 55 million people and 22 million vehicles along over 180 ferry routes, every year. In 2020, nearly 9,000 ferry transit trips were completed. Ferries are managed and operated by a mix of both public and private companies. Ferries were not immune to the economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, seeing drastic drops in passenger volumes and revenues due to lockdowns, capacity restrictions and travel bans, resulting in temporary layoffs for many workers.

Between 2009 and 2019, employment in the sector saw rapid growth. In 2020, employment reached just over 27,000 - an increase of nearly 15% since 2011. Wage growth was higher than the national average, at 6.7%, due partly to the high union density in the sector at 64%. Overall, wage gains corresponded closely to labour productivity.

Marine transport is considered one of the safest and most environmentally friendly options compared to road, rail and air transport - consuming less energy and emitting lower amounts of greenhouse gases. In 2019, the marine transport sector emission levels were just over 3,500 kt - a decrease of nearly 41% compared to 2009.

## Unifor in the Marine Transport Industry

Select Unifor Employers	Approx. # Members
Marine Atlantic	725
St. Lawrence Seaway Management	420
Coast Guard Marine Communication	345
Algoma Central Corporation	200

Unifor represents 2,300 workers in the marine transportation sector, spread across 24 bargaining units, representing 1% of total Unifor membership. Members are primarily concentrated in Atlantic Canada, Ontario and Quebec.

The majority of members, approximately 43%, work on passenger ferries, the largest being Marine Atlantic. An additional 500 members work for the St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corp., which maintains and manages operations along the St. Lawrence. The union also represents over 340 communications officers working for the Canadian Coast Guard.

Altogether, Unifor represents 8% of marine transportation workers in Canada.

## Moving Forward: Developing the Marine Transport Industry

One of the pressing challenges facing the sector for workers involves address job quality and job security. Deteriorating and unhealthy working conditions, including increased workloads, is contributing to high worker turnover. Workers are also concerned about the increased sub-contracting of work by employers, as well as the adoption of programs that aim to re-organize workplaces (e.g. Maintenance Excellence Programs) to reduce jobs and erode wages. An aging labour force and lack of trained and skilled workers is also contributing to growing labour shortages, which could lead to further disruptions in passenger ferry

service and cargo shipments. It is estimated that Canada will be in need of 19,000 seafarers alone over the next 10 years. Industry must work with labour and government to enhance overall working conditions in the sector while encouraging diverse equity-seeking groups to enter the sector.

There are also continued calls to enhance and maximize short-sea shipping opportunities in the Great Lakes and along the St. Lawrence Seaway. Currently only about 5% of Canada-U.S. trade takes place using marine transport. With 110 commercial ports in this region, there is potential to increase this share by better utilizing these key waterways. Currently, a seaway cargo ship can transport the same amount of goods as 301 rail cars and 963 trucks.

In addition, the federal government is continuing work around its Transport 2030 Strategic Plan. Among its several goals, the plan aims to invest in Canada's waterways, coasts and trade corridors and support green and innovative transportation. For example, over \$416 million was allocated to Marine Atlantic for the acquisition of a new vessel, as well as \$186 million to support ferry service between Newfoundland and the mainland. The 2030 plan also included conducting a St. Lawrence Seaway review and a Port Modernization Review. The union will continue to monitor the funding and policy announcements surrounding the plan to ensure that projects and initiatives support and enhance conditions for marine transportation workers.

## Major Sector Development Issues

- Deteriorating work quality, increasing job insecurity, employer sub-contracting and high turnover are highlighted as key challenges faced by workers in the sector.
- The impact of labour shortages in the sector could have a negative and disruptive effect on supply chains, cargo and passenger transport.
- There must be renewed efforts to maximize the potential of short-sea shipping along the St. Lawrence Seaway and the Great Lakes.
- Unions must monitor developments regarding the Federal Transport 2030 Strategic Plan, including funding and policy announcements, to ensure they are in the best interest of marine transport workers.