

Media

Sector Profile

Sector Facts and Figures

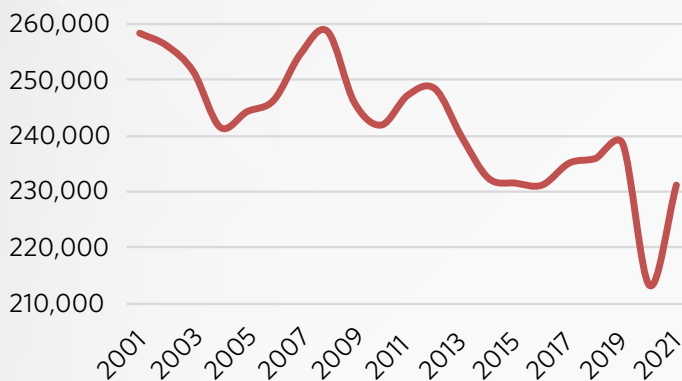
Total GDP <i>Share of Canadian GDP</i>	\$25.2 billion 1.27%
Exports	\$1.2 billion
Imports	\$3.3 billion
Foreign Trade Balance <i>5-year change</i>	-\$2.1 billion -22.6%
Total Employment (2021) <i>Change since 2011</i>	231,200 -6.5%
Real wage growth (2011-2019)	+10.1%
Labour Productivity (2019)	\$51.3/hr
Average Work Hours/Week (2019)	32.6
Greenhouse Gas Emissions (2019) <i>Change since 2009</i> <i>Share of Canadian industry total</i>	840kt +2.2% 0.13%
Union Coverage Rate	20%
Unifor Members in the Industry	12,600
Share of Total Unifor Membership	4%
Number of Unifor Bargaining Units	201
Average Bargaining Unit Size	60

Current Conditions

The newspaper and broadcast TV and radio segments of Canada’s media sector continue to face significant challenges. For both print journalism and broadcast media, the funding and financial models that drove the sector for decades have broken down. The rise of digital media – including online news, video streaming, and social media platforms – has completely altered the media landscape, and advertising revenue that supported traditional media is drying up.

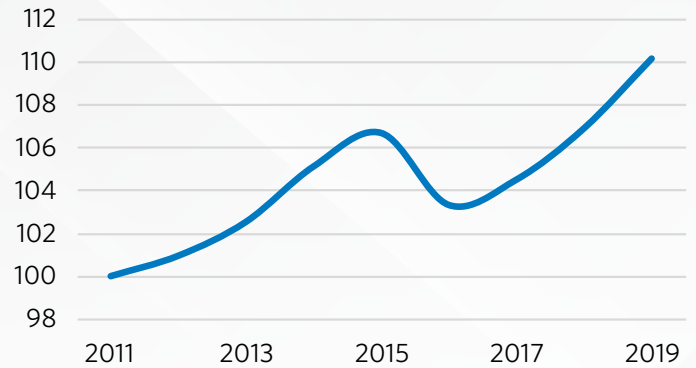
Between 2011 and 2020, advertising revenue for community newspapers dropped from \$1.21 billion to \$411 million, and in that time, almost 300 papers either disappeared or merged with other publications.

Media employment, 2001 - 2021



This period of painful disruption has been a rollercoaster ride in terms of employment levels in the sector. The overall sector employed 231,200 people in 2021, a 6.5% decrease since 2011. However, those sector-wide numbers don’t tell the whole story, and some segments have seen disastrous job

Media: Real wages (2011=100)



losses in the last decade. For example, since 2009, employment in “private conventional television” has decreased by more than 30%.

The media sector contributes \$25.2 billion to Canada’s GDP, which represents almost 1.3% of the country’s total economic production. Revenues for newspaper publishing decreased by 8.8% between 2016 and 2021. For radio broadcasting, revenues decreased by 5.4% between 2015 and 2020, and profits decreased by almost 23% in that time. In the TV broadcasting segment, revenues decreased by 4.1% between 2016 and 2021, while profits increased by 7.4%.

When the COVID-19 pandemic struck, advertising revenue for the broadcast segment dropped even further, as public health measures halted almost all the public sports and entertainment events that generated ad dollars. Film and television production temporarily halted. However, employment in the overall sector rebounded as film and television productions re-started, and live sports and entertainment events returned as public health measures eased.

Unifor in the Media Industry

Select Unifor Employers	Approx. # Members
Bell Media	2,100
Canadian Media Producers Association	1,125
Shaw	1,000
Torstar	900
Rogers	770
Winnipeg Free Press	570

Unifor members work in a wide array of occupations, including roles in broadcasting (television and radio), film, newspapers, magazines, periodicals, print (including graphic design, pre-press and production) as well as online services.

Approximately one in 25 Unifor members work in the media sector. Unifor's 12,600 media members are distributed across 200 bargaining units in nine Canadian provinces, though nearly 60% work in Ontario. This sector of the Canadian economy has above-average levels of union representation, with one-in-five workers covered by a collective agreement (the private sector average is one-in-six).

One out of every six Unifor media members is employed by Bell Media, which is the largest Unifor employer in this sector. Together with the members at NABET (Local 700-A), Torstar, Rogers and the Winnipeg Free Press, the six largest employers in Unifor's media sector account for more than 40 percent of the sector's membership.

Moving Forward: Developing the Media Industry

While the newspaper, print and broadcast TV and radio segments of Canada's media sector have experienced a long period of disruption and struggle, there are reasons to be optimistic. The federal government is finally undertaking once-in-a-generation updates to the Broadcast Act, as well as other legislative changes that will create new, fairer, and more sustainable revenue streams to support the creation of Canadian media content and local news.

The federal government must modernize the Broadcast Act and pass legislation that brings foreign digital streamers into the Canadian regulatory system. This legislation should require foreign digital streaming companies to contribute funds to domestic news producers, to support "boots on the ground" local news.

In addition, the federal government must pass legislation that requires mostly foreign-based digital platforms to compensate domestic news producers for the news content shared on the platforms. These important legislative updates reflect the critical role that local news plays

in strengthening our democracy, and protecting and promoting Canadian identities and stories.

The last few years have seen a drastic and troubling increase in the harassment and abuse of journalists and media workers, and much of this abuse is sexist, racist and Islamophobic in nature. Recognizing there is no single solution to this growing problem, Unifor will work through a variety of means to prevent this abuse and support victims. Various next steps will include: lobbying for new legislation to enhance protections against online harassment and abuse; exploring better ways to use existing laws and enforcement measures to protect journalists from harm, supporting digital security to help prevent abuse from happening in the first place, and holding abusers accountable where possible; providing direct, practical supports to victims; and bargaining contract language and benefits that protect and support workers, and that hold employers accountable for protecting their employees from harm.

Within the film production segment, too many workers experience precarity and job instability due to their status as freelancers and independent contractors. We will continue to fight for collective agreement language, as well as employment and labour law reforms, that will provide increased job security and financial stability for film workers facing these challenges.

Major Sector Development Issues

- We must support policies as well as employment and labour law changes that provide increased job security and financial stability for freelance workers and independent contractors in the film production segment.
- The federal government must modernize the Broadcast Act, and pass legislation that requires foreign digital streaming companies to contribute funds to domestic news producers, to support “boots on the ground” local news.
- The federal government must pass legislation that requires mostly foreign-based digital platforms to compensate domestic news producers for the news content shared on the platforms.
- Recognizing there is no single solution to the growing problem of the harassment and abuse of journalists and media workers, Unifor will work through a variety of means to prevent this abuse and support victims.