

EDUCATION & BROADER PUBLIC SERVICES

Sector Profile



Sector Facts and Figures, 2016

Total GDP (2007 \$CAD) <i>Share of Canadian GDP</i>	\$51 billion 3%
Total Employment <i>Change since 2007</i>	751,000 +22%
Average Hourly Wage (Excluding overtime) <i>Inflation-adjusted change since 2007</i>	\$22.56 +2%
Productivity Growth 2007-2016	-7%
Average Work Hours/Week (Excluding overtime)	30
Average Overtime Hours/Year	3
Greenhouse Gas Emissions (Kilotons, 2014) <i>Share of Canada's total industrial emissions</i>	2,278 0.4%
Union Coverage Rate	47%
Unifor Members in the Industry	8,500
Share of Total Unifor Membership	3%
Number of Unifor Bargaining Units	28
Average Bargaining Unit Size	186

Source: Cansim; Unifor Research Department.

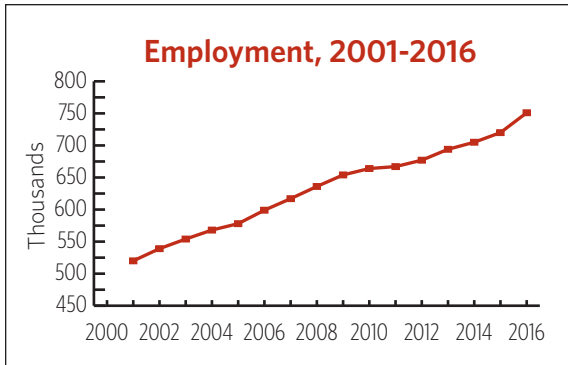


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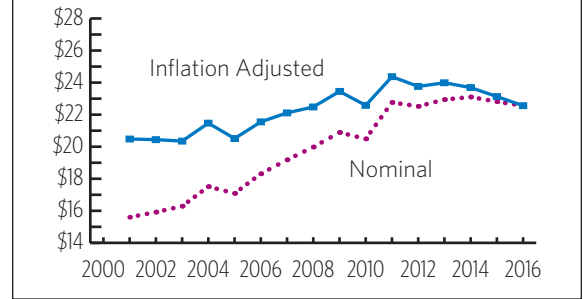
Current Conditions

The Education and Broader Public Services sector is comprised of many different types of workplaces. This group includes members who work for school boards, universities, child care providers, social service agencies and government-owned operations or bodies. Unifor does not have a large membership base in any specific area, but the overall size of this broad category is approximately 8,500 members.



Collectively, this growing sector employs some 750,000 people and adds \$50 billion to Canadian GDP. Employment growth in this sector has been strong and steady, and is up by more than a fifth over the past decade. However, because this sector is entirely public, the fiscal position and political orientation of governments shape compensation trends.

Average Hourly Wage, 2001-2016



Average hourly wages hovered around \$23 dollars in 2016, which was one dollar less than the Canadian average. Most employers are public entities and, if not, they receive the bulk of their funding from government sources. Thus, the financial position of employers is highly dependent on government policies and the political priorities of those in power. In the decade leading up to the Great Recession of 2008-09, inflation-adjusted wage gains amounted to 14 per cent, which was nearly twice as high as the Canadian average. However, after a short period of stimulus, provincial governments began to dial back on public spending, including and especially around labour compensation.

As a partial consequence, inflation-adjusted wages in Unifor's education and social services sector contracted by four per cent between 2009 and 2016. Reversing the trend of austerity-driven wage losses is a crucial issue in this sector.

Unifor in Education and Public Services

Select Unifor Employers	Approx. # Members
McMaster University	2,200
Edmonton Catholic Support Staff	1,450
Ontario Catholic School Board	550
University of Windsor	350
University of New Brunswick	300

Unifor's 8,500 education and public services members make up nearly three per cent of overall membership and are geographically concentrated in Ontario, Alberta and Nova Scotia, with a large cluster employed by school boards in Alberta and a handful in Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Quebec and New Brunswick. While union density in this sector is high, bargaining agents are ultimately at the mercy of the employer, who is often the government, and thus, has the power to dictate matters around compensation.

More than half of the members in this sector work for the five largest employers. McMaster University is the largest single employer, accounting for roughly one-quarter of sectoral membership, while another 30 per cent work for the Edmonton Catholic School Board, various Ontario Catholic School Boards, the University of Windsor and the University of New Brunswick.

Moving Forward: Developing the Education and Public Services Industry

The Education and Broader Public Services is significantly affected by government policy, both fiscal and social, at both levels of government. With employment growth of 22 per cent since 2007, Education and Public Services is the fastest growing Unifor industry, matched only by health care. Unfortunately, the explosion in employment has not been mirrored by compensation.

After a brief period of Keynesian stimulus, governments across Canada began a program of retrenchment in the aftermath of the Great Recession of 2008-09. Deteriorating labour compensation was one of the negative consequences of this policy reorientation. While the average Canadian wage increased by four per cent (after adjusting for inflation) between 2009 and 2016, in the Education and Public Services Industry the average worker took a four per cent wage cut over the same period. When we factor in the reduction in working time, the average worker in this industry has, between 2013 and 2016, seen a near 10 per cent reduction in their weekly earnings. Not only has the shift to austerity undermined our members' living standards, but it also undermines economic growth (by reducing household purchasing power) and exacerbates income inequality.

In the aftermath of the Harper government, the Trudeau Liberals initiated new spending commitments on social programs. For example, additional funding was earmarked to create more childcare spaces across the country, but the National Framework for Early Learning and Child Care is inadequately funded and will not go far enough in the creation of a truly national childcare program.

Provincially, government support for social programs is highly dependent on the party in power, too. In Ontario, the government has strayed from its previous austerity approach and has made steps to create additional regulated child care spaces, though again, the program falls well short of need.

In Nova Scotia, the McNeil Liberals shifted to austerity governance in their last term. This included cuts to health care and social programs and an aggressive approach to controlling wages for public sector workers. This led to a number of work stoppages and, eventually, back-to-work legislation. The Nova Scotia Liberals were re-elected in May of 2017, which may compound the difficulties for our membership in this sector.

Major Sector Development Issues

- Reverse the wage retrenchment/stagnation witnessed across the public sector, which is largely a consequence of governments attempting to balance their budgets through cuts.
- After years of operating budget freezes, hospitals, nursing homes and other social services must be made a public policy priority.
- A national childcare plan, in partnership with the provinces, with appropriate funding levels to meet service delivery needs and a commitment to creating good, unionized jobs.
- Ensuring that free collective bargaining rights are respected by public sector employers, including governments.



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