



# As we see it

A publication of the Construction Employers Coordinating Council of Ontario (CECCO)

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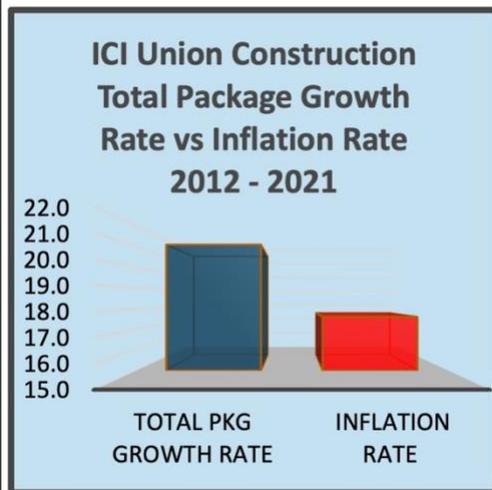
## A Complicated Affair

ICI Construction negotiations are a complicated affair. There are twenty-five individual trades negotiating to an April 30, 2022 deadline. The make-up of the trades span from a single provincial local with one agreement for the province to trades with twelve locals with an agreement master portion and twelve different appendices. Their negotiating committees cover a similar wide range, from two persons to fifty persons.

In comparison to past negotiation cycles, this round is off to a slow start – in many cases due to the pandemic and face-to-face meeting restrictions. The volatility in the construction market with supply chain issues and the pandemic-driven inflated material prices are adding another level of hesitation.

## Could promoting the real growth in wages entice people to join the construction trades?

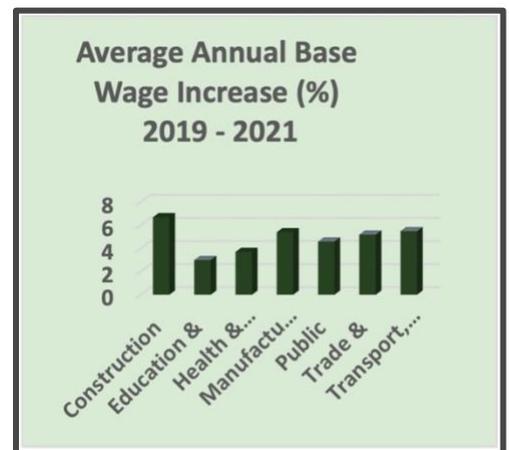
Real wage growth is wages adjusted for inflation. Achieving real wage growth enables workers to afford a larger basket of goods and services than they could previously. Over the past ten years, the average journeyperson’s



wages have outpaced the rate of inflation by 4%. This is a drastic increase when compared to other industries.

The construction industry is suffering from a severe shortage of skilled personnel. The provincial government has instituted a number of programs that will provide long term assistance. The Canadian Building Trades Unions and the Ontario Building Trades Unions are aggressively lobbying for tax breaks for worker travel as allowed in other professions.

The province’s unionized construction worker’s wage increases are well ahead of other industries in the province. With the industry’s labour shortages, should the real wage growth story have wider circulation?



## Ministry of Labour’s Dispute Resolution Services

It is common practice in ICI Construction negotiations for labour employee bargaining agencies to request a Ministry-appointed Conciliation Officer. The Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development appoints an individual to meet with the union and the employer to attempt to conclude a collective agreement. Participating at different stages, the Conciliation Officer tries to help the labour and employer bargaining agencies resolve their differences so they can reach a collective agreement. If the bargaining agencies don’t reach agreement during conciliation, it is reported back to the Minister who issues a ‘no-board’ notice which begins the countdown to the date on which either the employer or union could begin a legal work stoppage, but not before April 30<sup>th</sup>.

Questions or comments? Ideas for a future issue of **As we see it**? We want to hear from you! Email us anytime at [admin@cecco.org](mailto:admin@cecco.org).

