



# NEWS RELEASE

## Quebec's public-sector employees were paid 9.2 per cent higher wages than comparable private-sector workers in 2018

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For Immediate Release

**MONTREAL**—Government employees in Quebec received 9.2 per cent higher wages on average than comparable workers in the private sector in 2018, and enjoyed much more generous non-wage benefits, too, finds a new study by the Fraser Institute, an independent, non-partisan Canadian public policy think-tank.

“Bringing government-sector compensation in line with the private sector would not only help governments in Quebec control spending without reducing services, it would also maintain fairness for taxpayers,” said Vincent Geloso, a senior fellow with the Fraser Institute and associate professor of economics at King’s University College.

The study, *Comparing Government and Private Sector Compensation in Quebec*, finds that government employees in Quebec—including federal, provincial and municipal workers—received 9.2 per cent higher wages, on average, than comparable workers in the private sector in 2018. And that wage gap accounts for differences between workers in the two sectors such as age, gender, education, tenure and type of work.

But wages are only part of overall compensation. Government workers in Quebec enjoy much more generous benefits, too.

- **Pensions:** Almost 9-in-10 government workers in Quebec (90.8 per cent) have a defined benefit pension plan—which offers a guaranteed level of benefits in retirement—compared to 1-in-10 workers in the private sector (11.8 per cent).
- **Early retirement:** Government workers in Quebec retire 3.0 years earlier, on average, than private-sector workers.
- **Personal leave:** Government workers in Quebec are absent from their jobs for personal reasons 65.7 per cent more often than private-sector workers—16.9 days compared to 10.2 days.
- **Job security:** Government workers were 10 times less likely to experience job loss than private-sector workers—0.2 per cent compared to 2.3 per cent.

“Of course, governments in Quebec should provide competitive compensation to attract qualified employees, but clearly wages and benefits in the government sector are out of step with the private sector,” Geloso said.

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