

Unions Struggling to Negotiate Wage Increases on Par With 2016

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A collection of 590 union contracts negotiated in September and October reveals that on average, unions have been unable to obtain pay hikes at the levels they did last year. In 2016, the average first-year increase negotiated by unions was 2.8 percent. However, the most recent contracts from this year reveal an average first-year increase of only 2.5 percent. The data on these recent contracts show that private sector non-manufacturing unions have struggled more than other industries to obtain pay increases higher than what they had before.

Any employer negotiating a labor contract should consider keeping abreast of the agreements other employers and unions are working out. Wage increases are sure to be a hot button issue in just about any contract negotiation, and a knowledge of recent averages in the employer's sector – especially when that average is falling – should provide that employer with good background industry information with which to back its proposals.

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