



PUBLIC SECTOR'S NEGOTIATIONS WHERE DO WE STAND?

With the summer and holidays upon us, the Centrale des syndicats du Québec (CSQ) wants to remind you of the various actions taken in the last few weeks and take stock of the situation regarding the public sector's negotiations.

Intersectoral negotiations

Since the last General negotiation council (CGN) on May 27, 2020, the negotiation team has had three meetings with Treasury Board (CT) representatives. During those meetings, the team reported the discontent reactions generated by the written statement from the government to the different CSQ bodies on May 21.

Furthermore, on June 16, the negotiation team provided in a written statement the CSQ's counter-offer that had been made on May 6, reiterating that it was an answer to the latest government proposal.

During those discussions, the Centrale denounced the fact that the government's initial position has remained unchanged since the beginning of the negotiations, whereas significant steps had been made in order to reach a settlement while taking the current context into account. Presentations have been made about the national job evaluation committee, a demand the Centrale decided to bring to the intersectoral table, as well as about elements of the offer for which the employer hasn't given an answer through its proposals.

The CSQ always requests reactions from the employer on all its demands and asks to be able to undertake real negotiations on its issues.

A traditional negotiation pace

One meeting per week is estimated, for now, to be sufficiently intensive by the CT. Work having just recently started again at the sectoral tables, the CT says it wants to see how discussions progress before getting more actively involved at the intersectoral table.

The negotiation pace at the central table is thus more traditional. It is guided by the sectoral negotiation's evolution, even though the employer still claims to want to come to an agreement as fast as possible.

Consequently, according to what is planned at the time of writing, the next meetings will be dedicated to continuing the presentations of our demands and supporting argumentation. The next central table meeting is planned on June 22, 2020.



Sectoral negotiations

Right now, negotiations at the sectoral tables are happening at a regular to rapid pace. The various parties explain and defend their respective position. While we cannot describe the pace of the negotiations as intensive, the discussions are going forward.

The federative bodies meet regularly to seek mandates and advance the talks at the negotiation tables. However, the many recovery demands from the employer lead us to the conclusion, at the present time, that we are still far from coming to agreements.

The government must invest

To achieve sectoral settlements, it's vital that the Legault government invest more in the working conditions of members. The current situation, combined with the austerity policies of the past years, had major consequences for our networks.

It's crucial that we improve the employment, practice and working conditions of the school, college, university and health networks' workers. From the beginning of the negotiations, members have issued a distress call, and the situation is far from having improved since. On the contrary, tasks are increasing and getting more complex. In that way, it's more than time to find solutions and that goes through major reinvestments in the public networks we represent.

Sadly, we don't foresee a settlement before the holidays. Nevertheless, teams are working tirelessly to get the negotiations moving forward with the goal of getting as close as possible to an agreement and giving some oxygen to each working environment in order to relieve the current suffering.



Members who wish to know more about the ministerial decrees and opinions and about the chronology of events related to the pandemic can consult the update of the **A1920-CGN-023** document on the CSQ extranet.

Summary of visibility actions

During May 27, 2020's CGN, CSQ members adopted a resolution demanding that the Centrale, among other things, publicly condemn the government's agreement-in-principle proposal, deemed contemptuous towards public services' workers, and reaffirm the importance to quickly invest in the different networks the CSQ represents.

Since then, many visibility actions have been conducted:

May 28, 2020: The CSQ approached the CSN and FTQ to suggest a joint intervention to condemn the government's tentative agreement proposal.

May 29, 2020: The CSN refused the CSQ's offer for a joint intervention in the immediate future, but was open to collaborate soon for a joint position statement with the other unions.

May 29, 2020: The CSQ sent out a [press release](#) about the government's monologue. In it, the Centrale denounced the questionable move of the Treasury Board president, Christian Dubé, to bring the negotiation in the public discourse by broadcasting a copy and paste of its April 27, 2020, government offer.

May 29, 2020: CSQ president Sonia Ethier reacted to the Legault government's monologue in [a video](#) published on social media. This video has been shared almost 140 times and watched by about 17,000 viewers to date.

June 3, 2020: The Centrale sent out a [press release](#) "correcting" the offer made public by the government. In it, the CSQ denounced the false information conveyed by the government. The [image of the poster corrected](#) like an exam was shared almost 375 times. An [article in L'actualité magazine](#) also mentions it.

June 4, 2020: The CSQ shared on social media [a second video](#) by Sonia Ethier, reiterating that the Centrale won't give up. In it, the president breaks down the Treasury Board's recycled offer.

June 6, 2020: As part of a massive ad campaign, the CSQ published the "reviewed and corrected" government offer in all written francophone national media.

June 10, 2020: The CSQ, CSN and FTQ published an [open letter](#) recalling that massive investments in public services are more relevant than ever.

June 16, 2020: The CSQ held a [Facebook live discussion](#) on the state of public finances and the economic situation of Québec.

June 18, 2020: In an [open letter](#), the CSQ, CSN, FTQ and CSD responded to the minister of finance regarding a return to a balanced budget and the importance of public services. The unions also presented a [proposal document](#) about the post-pandemic economic recovery.

In conclusion...

At the time of writing, all the negotiation teams are hard at work. They carry loud and clear the message that they expect the same from their government counterparts.

"Our claims are fair and in them the government must see potential solutions to the many attraction, retention, overload and insecurity problems. We will take advantage of the coming weeks to move the discussions forward in our members' interest and continue our reflections in regard to updating the action and mobilization plans," concludes Sonia Ethier.

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du Québec