

The government sets the stage

Since the Liberals came to power, a wind of austerity has continued to blow throughout Québec. Using every resource at its disposal, the government is aiming for a balanced budget by April 2015, which coincides with the first year of renewals for public and parapublic sector collective agreements.

To reach its goal, the government has begun a review of its programs to identify savings in several ministries. It intends on merging services, modifying structures, and implementing freezes and decreases through attrition. Inevitably, these measures will impact the quality and accessibility of public services.

Clearly, the austerity plan to achieve a balanced budget so quickly is an ideological one: its main intention is to decrease the social role of the State. This is evidenced by the government's refusal to stagger the return to a balanced budget over a wider scale and by dodging the question of its lack of revenues. It's also taking out of the equation the fact that public services and those who work in them contribute to the economic, cultural and social development of Québec.

The unions organize

Member organizations of the Common Front, including the CSQ, are well aware of the current situation. They are getting ready to do everything they can to thwart management's efforts in order to protect public services available to the population and to improve the working conditions of their members.

The CSQ's General Council of Negotiations met on October 9 and 17 to review the situation. Delegates approved union demands with respect to salary increases and regional disparities. Courses of action were also adopted and will be carried out, as a Common Front, during the coming weeks. The following is a preview:

- One national activity and several local actions on October 30, 2014, when union demands are tabled.
- A Québec-wide tour of Common Front representatives from November to mid-December.
- Action during the first day of negotiations.

It's going to be a warm fall!

How do we negotiate with the government?

Want to better understand the inner workings of public sector negotiations? The online course, *La négociation nationale à la CSQ*, is only a few minutes long and will help you familiarize yourself with the process that effects more than 500,000 state employees, a majority of whom are CSQ members, Don't hesitate to share on social media!



+ JUST, a theme to discover

You've undoubtedly noticed the + **JUST** theme on the header of this first Négo CSQ 2015 newsletter. It is the visual signature used to identify the CSQ's communications tools throughout the negotiation process. The theme refers to the importance of public services for a + **JUST** society. Versatile, it can be used in multiple ways, such as:

+ education, is **JUST**

+ health services, is **JUST**

+ social services, is **JUST**

better working conditions, is **JUST!**