



March 2022 ■ Éric Gingras's Address

"Taking a step back and looking to the future"

As CSQ president Éric Gingras opened the General Council, he stressed the CSQ's undivided solidarity with the Ukrainian people. "We add our voices to those of hundreds of union organizations around the world and condemn the invasion of Ukraine by Russian armed forces. We reiterate our support to Ukraine's large Québec diaspora, understandably distraught over the fate of their homeland."

Speaking to our own challenges here at home, he said that the easing of public health measures does not mean that the pandemic is over. He took the time to thank everyone who spent months on end on the front line, wave after wave, as well as every worker who stepped up in spite of labour shortages and working conditions that were already challenging. "We saw, across Québec, an absolutely incredible and gargantuan amount of work being carried out, much too often without the recognition it rightly deserved."

"We need to prepare our future," he continued, adding that the CSQ will play an important role in the Québec of tomorrow, taking shape as we speak. "Our strength at the CSQ is that we can see the big picture of various

issues because we represent workers across all sectors".

As we prepare for Québec's economic recovery, Éric Gingras believes that women need to be front and centre: "Regardless of where they work—whether in the education, higher education, early childhood, health, cultural or community sector—women are at the very heart of the CSQ's DNA. And we know that they were particularly hard hit by the pandemic." He added that "now is the time for us to make feminist social choices, to make a social and economic choice and invest in female-dominated sectors."

Solutions will be needed to reduce the impact of labour shortages across our networks. "It is one thing to bring in more measures to attract and recruit employees, but quite another to retain them! The government can try to reinvent the wheel, but it won't change the fact that recognition for our networks' staff and better working conditions are absolutely unavoidable. And there's only one way to change these things: by negotiating!"

The CSQ is more than ready to help find solutions and social dialogue is



Éric Gingras

Photo François Beauregard

the first step: "The government cannot unilaterally impose its ideas, with decrees and administrative measures whenever they feel like it as they've done in the past two years, and then ask union organizations' help when everything goes up in flames!"

With the election campaign looming on the horizon, "we believe that it is time for Québec to take a new approach to public finances—fairer, more sustainable and supportive—that reflects the values we hold dear."

"This upcoming campaign will be a great opportunity to have an influence upstream on public opinion and see our issues and themes included in the political agenda. We will remain actively engaged so as to move our ideas forward and to ensure a more humane world in the future," he concluded.

Read the President's [complete address](#) [French only].

■ Emergency fund

CSQ stands with the people of Ukraine

As the conflict rages on in Ukraine, leading to the migration of millions of refugees and displaced persons, the General Council adopted a proposal inviting affiliated unions to show their solidarity with the Ukrainian people through a donation. The CSQ will accept your donations until the end of April and will double the total amount raised.

YOU WANT TO SHOW YOUR SUPPORT?

There's still time. Unions can send their donations to the CSQ's Direction générale (direction.generale@lacsq.org) by April 30, 2022, at the following address:



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Centrale des syndicats du Québec
Direction générale – Motion de solidarité
(situation en Ukraine)

9405, rue Sherbrooke Est
Montréal (Québec) H1L 6P3

Thank you for your generosity.

■ Internal cohesion at CSQ

Presentation of the work plan

The Steering Committee exploring the CSQ's internal cohesion presented its work plan. This will ultimately result in a recommendation report, set to be submitted at the winter 2023 General Council.

Through a series of 5 meetings begun in the fall of 2021, committee members compiled a comprehensive list of current issues to be explored, determined the order in which they should be addressed, identified consultation forums and set a work schedule.

CURRENT ISSUES

The Committee raised four issues to address:

- ✓ Understanding and passing on CSQ values
- ✓ Respect and goodwill
- ✓ Maintaining cohesion and preventing conflicts
- ✓ Issues under consideration by decision-making bodies

ITEMS TO ADDRESS

The Committee also raised several items to be addressed in consultation forums:

- ✓ Knowledge of the organization and sense of belonging
- ✓ Acknowledgement and promotion of complementarity among groups
- ✓ Reappropriation of collective action by grassroots unionists
- ✓ Fostering discussions among CSQ's components
- ✓ Understanding the decision process and impacts of said decisions on each group's issues
- ✓ Implementing collective action while respecting local autonomy
- ✓ Maintaining ethical standards during debates
- ✓ Concerns with respect to interactive decision-making bodies
- ✓ Action coordination and following-up on decisions
- ✓ Regional coordination issues

"Au coeur de mon métier" operationalization seminar



The CSQ invited its affiliates to take part in an exercise—held under the theme “Au coeur de mon métier”—to identify actions that would help refocus the daily work of their members on their core activities.

Isabelle Fortier, full professor at ENAP (École nationale d’administration publique), and Simon Viviers, associate professor in the Faculty of Education at Université Laval, were also present to share their insights.

Discussions led to a clear conclusion: members are increasingly unable to practise what they believe to be the core of their work activities. They are asked to carry out more and more tasks which are increasingly complex. There is also the staggering number of administrative tasks—tasks that have nothing to do with their occupation.

COURSES OF ACTION

Attendees identified certain courses of action within the workplace and at the political level to reverse this trend. Potential opportunities for alliances with certain civil society groups were also discussed.

Seminar participants will begin a consultation process among their members in the near future based on these courses of action.

National survey on younger members

What fuels younger CSQ members?

For a significant proportion of CSQ members under the age of 35, personal fulfilment is their driving motivation at work. Work-life-family balance is of greater importance than job security or autonomy.

Such were the findings of the national survey on younger members carried out by the CSQ among 2,500 individuals aged 35 and under. The survey’s goal was to better understand the guiding values of young CSQ members, their union involvement and their relationship with politics.

WHAT THE SURVEY REVEALED:

- ✓ Work organization, in the vast majority of workplaces, makes onboarding new union members challenging.



- ✓ In total, 74% of those surveyed state that their union recognizes the importance of the integration and participation of members under the age of 35.
- ✓ In total, 77% of those surveyed find local integration measures effective and acknowledge the great availability of local unions.
- ✓ In total, 30% of those not currently involved say they are open to taking on some role within the union.
- ✓ However, balancing personal and family responsibilities (75%) as well as those tied to their jobs (65%) are the main obstacles to their getting involved.

HOW CAN WE BEST ENCOURAGE THEM TO GET INVOLVED?

In light of these findings, the Youth Committee has decided to explore, within its 2021-2024 work plan, union involvement of younger members in order to identify potential solutions to foster their participation within the CSQ.

■ Regional coordination

Strengthen CSQ presence and foster a sense of belonging

The regional coordination pilot project, launched to foster and strengthen a sense of belonging within the CSQ thanks to actions designed to increase regional visibility, has led to findings such as the importance of continued efforts to build regional coordination and further exploration of different avenues. Here are a few that should be considered:

- ✓ Better training for new coordinators and their right-hand person
- ✓ Further use of technology to share information more efficiently
- ✓ Mentoring less structured regions calling for additional support
- ✓ Organization of an annual meeting of delegates from every union in the region (remains a preferred option)

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

- ✓ Regional coordination has been in place at the CSQ since 2001.
- ✓ The objectives of regional coordination are:
 - To help our members get to know one another and work together
 - To develop a better understanding of the realities of each region
 - To help promote networking with other regional stakeholders
 - To further CSQ's presence in regions
 - To share experiences and knowledge from all region
 - To support various actions

■ Launch of new web platform

Indigenous cultures and realities

A new web platform designed to raise awareness of Indigenous cultures and realities, available through the CSQ website, was presented to the General Council.

Through its five sections (History, Organizations, Resources, Scholarships and Coming events), this platform offers documents, videos and a variety of tools and resources to better understand the realities of Indigenous peoples.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

This platform will serve as a multi-sectoral tool for anyone interested in learning more about Indigenous cultures and realities. It can be used for awareness raising and training activities, whether with students or concerned staff members, regardless of the sector: in early childhood educational services, school and community settings, higher education, etc.

TO LEARN MORE

Visit the CSQ website: lacsq.org > Dossiers > Cultures et réalités autochtones > Sensibilisation aux cultures et réalités autochtones



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Pay equity campaign

Forging ahead

The CSQ will launch the second phase of its pay equity campaign later this spring. Under the theme “Pay equity – it’s time to walk the talk”, this campaign will highlight—in no uncertain terms—the wage gap between men and women.

Its goal is to secure strong commitments from political parties that pay equity will be addressed, particularly pay equity issues that have been dragging on for a long time.

The CSQ wants to make pay equity an issue of the next election campaign.

CSQ IN ACTION

- ✓ The campaign’s first phase was launched in the fall of 2021, under the theme “25 years old but still lacking bite”.
- ✓ This second phase will be featured across various platforms (posters, radio, television, web).
- ✓ The campaign will run until mid-May.



- ✓ Regional coordination teams will be called on to reach out to local MNAs and candidates standing for office.

Inébranlables

An anthem to celebrate collective action

The CSQ launched the song *Inébranlables* and encourages delegates and members to take part in the *Inébranlables* challenge. A collaborative effort by the CSQ and feminist rapper MCM, *Inébranlables* is a true rallying cry that puts the CSQ front-and-centre, a burst of glorious energy equal to what our union members invest day in and day out.

Check out the anthem’s [lyrics](#) and enjoy the [clip](#), now available on YouTube.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Spread the word!

- ✓ Create your own reel on [Instagram](#).
- ✓ Use the song’s lyrics and make your own lip-syncing reel.
- ✓ Share it on social media.
- ✓ Use the [#relevecsq](#) hashtag.



TO LEARN MORE

Visit the *Semaine de la relève syndicale* website to see what we’ve got planned and see how you can participate in the *Inébranlables* challenge. releve.lacsq.org

Virtual or hybrid decision-making bodies

Committee work begins

General Council delegates were presented with the mandate and work plan of the committee tasked with identifying issues at play with virtual or hybrid proceedings of CSQ decision-making bodies.

The committee must determine if virtual and hybrid formats improve the political life of the CSQ and its affiliates and, where relevant, if certain statutes and by-laws should be amended. To do so, the committee must review CSQ decision-making bodies, committees and events and compare their operations in each format under three scenarios (in person, virtual and hybrid).

The committee must make its recommendations to the General Council by May 2023 at the latest.

■ Privatization and subcontracting

An ongoing struggle

Results of the first phase of the ongoing work on privatization and subcontracting were submitted to the General Council. Delegates also adopted the action plan to address these problems in collaboration with our federations.

This work, carried out across the early childhood, education, higher education, community as well as health and social services sectors, helped gather examples of privatization and subcontracting, brought into focus their concrete impact and identified potential courses of action.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Privatization and subcontracting have wide-ranging impacts on our society, population, workers and unions, including:

- ✓ The State's withdrawal through reduced funding
- ✓ Increased inequalities and the development of multi-tiered systems
- ✓ The deterioration of the general quality of public services
- ✓ Lack of staffing stability and failure to provide sustainable public services
- ✓ Increased precarity and, as a result, feelings of insecurity among the personnel
- ✓ Increased scarcity of personnel and the additional pressure on network workers
- ✓ A shifting balance of power, disadvantaging unions

CSQ IN ACTION

To fight against privatization and subcontracting, the focus of the action plan's three phases is to put in place a permanent operating and work structure.

- ✓ **Phase 1:** Creation of a permanent work committee to ensure sustainable action at the CSQ and develop an internal expertise available to federations and affiliated unions.
- ✓ **Phase 2:** Development of an action guide for local teams to help build their capacity to quickly identify any worrying trend and stop any attempts at privatization by employers in their workplaces.
- ✓ **Phase 3:** Implementation of a public campaign that will highlight and promote the tangible benefits and democratic values on which public services are based.

■ Maman va à l'école

Cross-country bike trip to raise funds

The "Maman va à l'école" organization will be touring Canada thanks to cyclist Jacques Tondreau, promoting its mission and encouraging single mothers to complete their high school education. Jacques will set off on a 8,500 kilometre bike ride from Whitehorse, Yukon, to St. John's, Newfoundland, to raise \$8,500, the equivalent of seventeen \$500 scholarships.

In 2021, the not-for-profit organization awarded \$60,000 in scholarships to 122 single mothers.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

You can contribute to the organization's mission by making a donation:

- ✓ Please visit CanadaHelps.org;
- ✓ Search for MVE (Maman va à l'école) and include this note in the message box: Voyage vélo-2022

TO LEARN MORE

You can follow Jacques Tondreau's journey on his Facebook page:

facebook.com/jacques.tondreau/

Visit the Maman va à l'école website at mamanvaalecole.lacsq.org/

