

MANIFESTO

VOIR LOIN, VISER JUSTE



65th CSN Convention
Montreal – 2017

**VOIR
LOIN,
VISER
JUSTE**

4

We are living in hard times

6

**To ensure lifelong
income security**

12

**To develop the economy
and create good jobs**

18

To consolidate public services

24

To fight climate change

30

To strengthen democracy

34

Clear Vision, Sharp Focus

We are living in hard times.

Hard times for men and women in this country. Hard times for organizations that defend the rights and interests of ordinary people.

Hard times for citizens who have paid a heavy price so that an over-confident minister of finance can announce a balanced budget.

But at what cost has this balanced budget come? At the price of a ravaged health and social services system, reigned over by a minister who rules like an emperor from antiquity, calling all the shots and coldly watching on as the system disintegrates!

The budget's balancing has also been made possible by steadily scaling back the resources allocated to schools and teachers, leaving them with increasingly limited and inadequate means at their disposal.

What the Liberals are targeting is the model that has made Québec the most egalitarian society in the Americas.

Their plan is to break with civil society once and for all.

It's a myth that social justice and the fight against poverty and economic inequality are luxuries that we can no longer afford. There are choices we can make to build a better society. Even during periods of adversity, social movements have made important strides, such as the implementation of the Québec Parental Insurance Plan, the creation of early childhood centres and childcare spaces at standard reduced rates, and the adoption of the *Pay Equity Act*.

We want to breathe new life into Québec through social progress!

In response to the right-wing leaders who claim that the State has gotten too big, we propose that States and their governments still have a crucial role to play

in protecting the interests of their populations. And they have the means and resources to do it.

When it comes to energy policy, the federal Liberals sing a different tune depending on whether they're addressing the West or the East. Who will decide whether a pipeline will cross 868 waterways in Québec? Where will this crucial decision about our environment be made? Not here, of course not! Elsewhere! By others! In Ottawa!

We want to put hope back on the agenda.

What do we see? Disillusionment, cynicism, anger, indignation, all giving rise to dangerous feelings of powerlessness. It's time we take stock. Rather than denying reality, we have to do everything we can to transform it.

THERE ARE URGENT ISSUES!

We have to tackle financial insecurity.

We have to update the *Labour Standards Act*.

We have to establish a policy that fosters economic development and full employment.

We have to consolidate our public services.

We have to undertake immediate measures to fight climate change.

We have to strengthen democratic life by giving everyday people more power.

When an oligarchy hoards all the power in its own favour, the result can only be insecurity, poverty, meaninglessness, and anxiety.

Instead of resignation, this Manifesto proposes a vision—and corresponding set of demands—aimed at making new progress toward freedom, egalitarianism, social justice, and solidarity.

TO ENSURE LIFELONG INCOME SECURITY





A more egalitarian society, in which men and women are assured economic security throughout their lives: this is the crux of our syndicalist vision.

INSECURITY IS BECOMING WIDESPREAD

Times have changed.

Having a job is no longer a guarantee against insecurity. Pay stagnates, and even people who work can still be poor. Atypical jobs are proliferating, access to unionization is limited, and outsourcing and contracting-out are on the rise.

People's desire for economic security is thwarted in part by competition among businesses seeking to ensure their survival, chiefly by paying low wages and taking advantage of favourable tax regimes.

Collectively, we turn a blind eye to the fact that labour laws fail to protect thousands of people.

We refuse to reduce poverty by significantly raising the minimum wage.

We sit back and do nothing about the pressing need for family-work-study balance.

Women are still disproportionately burdened by these choices. This has to stop.

The fate of the jobless and pensioners is no better. The *Act to Combat Poverty and Social Exclusion* was passed fifteen years ago, yet social assistance still doesn't cover basic necessities.

It's not normal to be forced to live in unhealthily crowded housing!

It's not normal to have to rely on food banks because your job is so poorly paid!

Fewer than four out of ten people are eligible for unemployment benefits today. Women, who make up the majority of part-time workers, are the ones paying the steepest price.

Living with dignity is increasingly beyond the means of older people. Hundreds of thousands of workers don't have adequate income protection for their retirement years. Defined-benefit supplemental pension plans are under attack.

AN UNCERTAIN FUTURE

The rise of digital technologies, robotics, and artificial intelligence is causing radical changes in the quantity and quality of jobs. Existing legal and social protections are not enough.

Robotics poses a threat to jobs that help finance social security programs and job training. Progress must not come at the expense of the quality of life of thousands of people, nor the government's ability to ensure the services for which it is responsible.

Uber and other companies like it, misleadingly described as part of the new “sharing economy,” make headlines for the billions of dollars they generate, but also for the lousy working conditions they impose.

The majority of these businesses being heralded as cutting-edge in technological innovation bluntly refuse to abide by rules and regulations, and have no qualms when it comes to massively relying on tax evasion.

They use 21st-century technologies combined with appalling practices borrowed from the industrial revolution of the 19th century.

Placement agencies encourage companies to hire workers on-demand, temporarily, “so as to have access to the skills they need.”

In the Middle Ages, serfs were subjected to unlimited exploitation at their lord’s will. Too many workers today are similarly dependent.

It’s a real problem for our organizations. How can we reach out to these workers? Around what can we organize them? Isolated as they are, how can we guarantee them a level of minimal protection?

We aren’t turning our backs on technological change. But protecting all workers is our more pressing concern. Workers who are wrongly labelled “self-employed” or “independent” must be redefined as wage workers. We need legal and social provisions for workers in fields closely tied to these new technologies.

**WHAT WE WANT.
WHAT WE DEMAND.
WHAT WE WILL MOBILIZE FOR.**

FOR MAJOR CHANGES TO THE LABOUR STANDARDS ACT

The *Labour Standards Act* is a key tool for protecting workers. It’s the designated labour contract for non-unionized workers, but also has implications for many unionized workplaces.

The act covers two million people working in the private sector, whose fate (and its betterment!) remains our responsibility. This law—which covers wages as well as hours of work, statutory holidays, annual vacation leave, and layoff notices—needs reforming.

Urgently-needed changes include protection for atypical workers and those hired through placement agencies, as well as insurance, pension plans, and a ban on unequal treatment on the basis of employment status. The definition of “employee” needs to be expanded as well.

A growing need for family-work-study balance must be met. What justifies denying thousands of workers access to paid sick leave and leave for family responsibilities? Young parents are caught up in a whirlwind of school, childcare, work, and trips to the clinic. We must find lasting solutions.

FOR A MINIMUM WAGE THAT LIFTS PEOPLE ABOVE THE POVERTY LINE

The recent 50-cent increase in the minimum wage is not enough. At \$11.25 an hour, it remains impossible to escape poverty, even if you work full-time.

The minimum wage applied to 220,000 people in 2016. Of these, 58.5% were women. Raising the minimum wage to \$15 an hour would have repercussions for about one quarter of workers in Québec.

FOR IMPROVEMENTS TO THE QUÉBEC PENSION PLAN

Would it be too demagogic to point out that certain people don’t have to worry about their golden years? Need we mention the very generous pensions awarded to executives at Tourisme Montréal, Hydro-Québec, and Loto-Québec? Or the pay raises for top executives at Bombardier, a company that thrives off our taxes. But we wouldn’t want to be accused of demagoguery!

Note, however, that profitable arrangements and golden parachutes are part and parcel of life in upper circles. “We take care of our people,” as the saying goes.

Workers who have been subjected to forced changes in their pension funds, or whose benefits have been significantly reduced, find it hard to believe, hard to take.

While the federal government has launched a reform of the Canada Pension Plan, Québec has settled for comparatively less generous improvements to the QPP.

This government is indifferent to the fact that Québécois are poorer in retirement. For the sake of corporate competitiveness, it advocates less income protection, which amounts to a gap of hundreds of dollars a year between a pensioner here and a pensioner in another province who earned the same income during their working years.

The Liberal government is responsible for the fact that pension income is less generous here. It's unacceptable. Future pensioners deserve better, and we will fight for change!

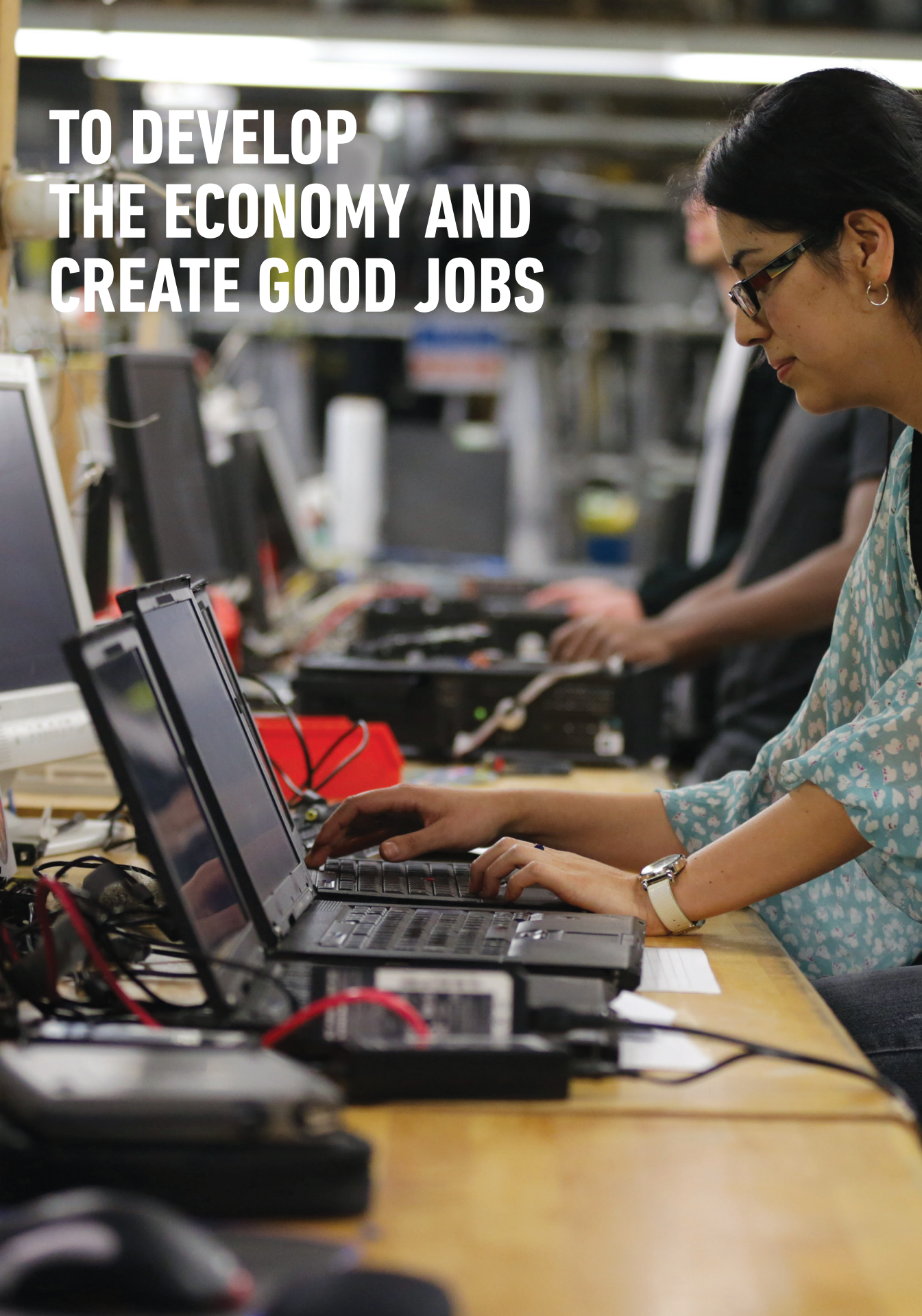
**TO ENSURE LIFELONG INCOME SECURITY,
THE CSN COMMITS TO WORKING AND MOBILIZING:**

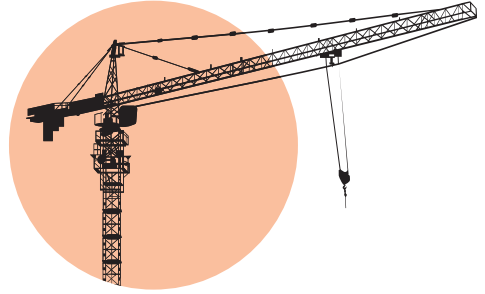
For a major reform of the *Labour Standards Act*.

**For a minimum wage of \$15 an hour as quickly
as possible.**

**For better protection of pension income through
improvements to the Québec Pension Plan that are
comparable to the changes made in the Canada
Pension Plan.**

**TO DEVELOP
THE ECONOMY AND
CREATE GOOD JOBS**





Since the rise of neoliberal ideology in the 1980s, the economy has monopolized public space and attention. Invoked as mantras, economic reasons and justifications are presented as gospel truth.

Neo-liberal propaganda has persuaded governments that the economy is in command, that it has to be left to its own devices, and that politics is just there to oversee it free of interference.

It has to be left to the market, they say.

We see what the consequences are. Their short-term interests are in contradiction with the long-term interests of businesses and their employees. Their appetite for quickly boosting the value of their investment drives them to sell off businesses piece by piece, or to move factories away without taking into account the interests of workers and regions.

PROGRESS

Good jobs are not an outdated demand. And it's not true that we will sit back wordlessly and watch jobs deteriorate, a phenomenon orchestrated at the highest levels to satisfy the appetites of those in the finance and business world.

However, despite adversity, some gains have been made in recent years, as evidenced by women's access to the labour market and the reduction of wage gaps. But there remains much to be done.

The drop in Québec's unemployment rate is good news, too. But we mustn't forget that more than 300,000 people are still actively looking for work, and that unemployment affects people unevenly depending on gender, age, race, origin, level of education, and region.

Remember the Liberal Party's slogan in the last election campaign: we were promised a "Liberal effect" that would create 50,000 jobs a year through some kind of divine intervention. In fact, though, only half as many jobs have been created annually over the last three years.

The declining manufacturing sector has been hit particularly hard. In 14 years, 156,000 good jobs have been lost. The CSN has repeatedly demanded the establishment of an industrial policy with a structural approach that would offer a plan for the future.

But what do we see? Short-sighted decisions, dictated by short-term interests, without any genuine promise of a real political impact.

FAVOURABLE BIAS TOWARD BUSINESS

We are on a dangerous track. Far from hiding its bias toward business interests, the government adopts the language of business, then amplifies it. All it takes is for businesses, chambers of commerce, and employer associations to make demands, and the government picks them up and transforms them into policy.

In a Québec at the mercy of financial interests, businesses sure are pampered!

From one budget to the next, governments reduce corporate taxes in the hope that businesses will invest and create more jobs. What do the budgets contain? A gradual reduction of the general corporate tax rate; a reduction in corporate contributions to the health services fund; lower employer contributions for labour standards and the Québec Parental Insurance Plan; and reduced job training requirements.

But that's not all.

The reality is that despite this favourable treatment, businesses don't do their fair share. Private investment just isn't there.

Should we be surprised? Hardly, given that it's been proven that shrinking the role of the State and reducing the corporate tax burden are not winning economic development strategies.

The Couillard government has slashed financial resources for regional development. By abolishing the regional conferences of elected officials and closing local development centres, it did away with a model of regional and economic development that had a demonstrable history of positive change

More blatantly ideological than any former government, Couillard and company have chosen to rely on employers and entrust them with Québec's future. Advisory committees composed solely of bosses are charged with determining future outcomes. Removing civil society, including unions, from the forefront of all political discussion and decision-making is part of its overall strategy.

**WHAT WE WANT.
WHAT WE DEMAND.
WHAT WE WILL MOBILIZE FOR.**

FOR THE RIGHT TO LIFELONG TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Nobody can predict the number and kind of jobs that will exist tomorrow.

In a context marked by uncertainty, access to lifelong education, ongoing training, and professional development become essential. We must ensure high-quality education for new generations. Access to higher education in more

remote regions along with solid financial support must be made available. We are aware of the important role played by CEGEPs as pillars of development in rural Québec

These requirements are incompatible with the instrumentalization of the education system and higher learning. Again, although striking the right balance between training and employment should be one among several concerns, it is singled out as the ultimate objective. Education is thus subordinated to the needs of employers.

Author Yvon Rivard has denounced labour-force training that is subject to the vagaries of the market, insisting that “the only debt we cannot reimburse is a deficit of thought and consciousness.”

Education and ongoing training must meet the needs of individual persons, equipping them with recognized transferable skills and qualifications. Special attention must be placed on basic competencies and knowledge of French. The most vulnerable are those who have trouble with reading, writing, and arithmetic, or who struggle with new technologies.

Businesses must live up to their responsibilities. They are not accountable to shareholders alone. They must offer training and professional development to staff members at every tier

TO REVIVE THE MANUFACTURING SECTOR

Saying that it is possible to have a strong, diverse national economy in which the manufacturing sector lives up to its full potential—with ripple effects throughout all regions of Québec—doesn’t mean living in the past.

Since 2012, the CSN has called for an industrial policy whereby the government would play a more proactive role: a policy that would focus on stable, long-lasting jobs and sustainable development.

We have to let go of the stubborn idea that Québec’s economy should be confined to the extraction of natural resources. Tools for research and development must translate into job creation in Québec. Other countries have been able to establish economies that promote secondary and even tertiary processing. Why can’t we?

We further contend that reviving the manufacturing sector is not incompatible with environmental protection. This kind of revival should be an opportunity to promote the emergence of clean technologies, technologies useful in matters of transportation, or energy production. Better management of residual materials, the adoption of measures favouring energy efficiency, and investment in technologies that give rise to less pollution are all ways of protecting the planet while simultaneously consolidating and creating jobs.

Fondaction, the CSN's fund for cooperation and employment, is committed to heading in this direction, which is to say, in the direction of the future.

FOR THE PARTICIPATION OF CIVIL SOCIETY ACROSS ALL REGIONS

We think that in order to support economic and social development in regions, representative social entities must be included as an integral part of the process. These are genuinely democratic bodies that deserve access to adequate financial resources.

We call on the Liberal government to halt its systematic elimination of the few remaining popular powers. Instead, it must strengthen regional democracy by creating fora for discussion and collective decision-making.

TO SUPPORT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND THE CREATION OF GOOD JOBS, THE CSN COMMITS TO WORKING:

**For the right to lifelong ongoing training and
professional development.**

**For an industrial policy that supports businesses and
industrial sectors, with requirements for creating and
maintaining good jobs here in Québec—especially in
secondary and tertiary processing—all while respecting
the environment.**

**For stronger participation on the part of major social
and economic players in rural development.**

TO CONSOLIDATE PUBLIC SERVICES





Since the Quiet Revolution, Québec has developed an array of public services that is unparalleled in North America.

Founded on the principles of universality, equity, accessibility, and quality, said services support economic and social development and ensure equality of opportunity.

Some choices are unique to our province. This is true of our educational childcare services at standard reduced rates, as well as the CEGEP system.

Healthcare and social services, education, and childcare are the first to spring to mind. But public services cover a lot more.

Who could do without a steady supply of water and electricity? What would happen if our streets were unlit, or weren't cleared seasonally? Public transit, public libraries, museums, national parks, and sports facilities are also a big part of people's daily lives—something we too often forget. The importance of their contribution to regional vitality is not to be underestimated.

PUBLIC SERVICES AND AUSTERITY DON'T GO WELL TOGETHER

For years now public services and the quality thereof have suffered under austerity policies imposed without any thought for the consequences. We have steadily denounced these policies at every step. But never before has there been such an attack on the model so patiently constructed by the people of Québec. This kind of austerity, imposed at such a fast pace by the Liberals over the past three years, has done serious damage, some of it perhaps irreversible.

These attacks, in the form of billions of dollars of cuts and rollbacks in government spending, have caused drastic reductions in (and even outright loss of) services for citizens.

For workers in the public sector, austerity has without fail spawned widespread uncertainty and overly-demanding workloads. No public service has gone unaffected.

Education, in turn, has suffered cut after cut at every level. Hundreds of schools are extremely run-down, invaded by mould. Children in difficulty are deprived of the appropriate professional resources.

And what about the fate of educational childcare services at standard reduced rates? In addition to imposing cuts, the government has done away with the universal rate, and imposed graduated fees based on family income. Combined with tax credits for childcare costs, these are choices that work in favour of commercial childcare centres charging full fees, for a quality of service that is often inferior.

The situation in health and social services is equally disturbing. Resources simply can't keep up with growing needs, and privatization continues. The minister persists in disrupting the system without any serious assessment of the changes already made, remains impervious to the effects of these changes on the quality of life of patients and personnel, and uses incomplete or inaccurate data to manipulate public opinion. He even abolished the position of healthcare

commissioner, formerly a bulwark against arbitrary decisions. Mr. Minister can't stand the idea of independent analyses.

This intolerable situation is made worse yet by the federal government's arrogance in unilaterally slashing billions of dollars in transfers for healthcare.

Even the last report from Québec's ombudsperson balanced budget was achieved at the price of a reduction in direct services to the population. Unreasonable wait times, inadequate service provision, problems in access to home-care support services, deterioration in care owing to a lack of resources (particularly in CHSLDs), scandalous increases in remuneration for doctors, and lack of control over the price of medication—to name a few examples. The privatization of healthcare services, particularly in residential care for the elderly, has also been sped up. Specialized care is being transferred from hospitals to private clinics.

Women are once again the most affected by these cuts. They are burdened as workers, because they are overrepresented in service jobs. And they are also affected as users, because they rely disproportionately on public services for various reasons.

We are also moved to denounce the lack of resources for essential services like public transit, the integration of immigrants, environmental inspections, social housing, and the fight against poverty.

A TRUNCATED VISION OF PUBLIC FINANCES

Over the years, the CSN has strongly opposed cuts and rollbacks in public services stemming from the Liberal government's austerity policy.

While the government pats itself on the back for balancing the budget and regaining a measure of financial leeway, we have to redouble our efforts to force a change in direction.

The government is also diverting larger and larger amounts of revenue to pay off the province's debts. In addition to increasing year after year, the revenue allocated to the Generations Fund seriously limits funding for public services while having little impact on the ratio between the public debt and GDP.

If the liberals continue to lower taxes, especially corporate taxes, and chip away at provincial debt, Québec will remain in permanent austerity. There will be more privatization of public services, increased service fees, and greater reliance on the user-payer principle. Québec's model will thenceforth be aligned with the rest of Canada.

This is all the more unacceptable given that the government has deliberately exaggerated the problem of its public debt. Québec is not Greece. On the contrary, international comparisons show that Québec's debt level is lower than the average of OECD countries with the least debt.

In a telling analysis showing how the pathological pursuit of a zero deficit has been catastrophic for economic development, Pierre Fortin—an economist hardly renowned for his sympathy toward the labour movement—came to the same conclusions as us. If the government had prioritized support for the economy instead of implementing austerity measures, Québec would be better off and 30,000 more jobs could have been created.

At a time when the need for reinvestment in public services is glaring, the government must revise its budget policies. The figures announced in the last budget are inadequate justification for the cuts in recent years.

**WHAT WE WANT.
WHAT WE DEMAND.
WHAT WE WILL MOBILIZE FOR.**

The only way to balance public finances while maintaining accessible, high-quality services is to speed up the growth of government revenue. To do so, the government has to rely on policies that stimulate sustainable economic growth. It must also increase its own revenue by raising certain tax rates so as to provide public services with the necessary funding

The State has the means at its disposal to fund public services. It has the tools it needs to step up the fight against tax evasion and avoidance. It can introduce a minimum tax for businesses. It can add tax brackets for the wealthiest.

**IN ORDER TO ENSURE THE UNIVERSALITY,
ACCESSIBILITY, AND QUALITY OF PUBLIC SERVICES,
THE CSN COMMITS TO WORKING FOR REINVESTMENT
FUNDED BY AN INCREASE IN GOVERNMENT REVENUE
BASED IN PART ON:**

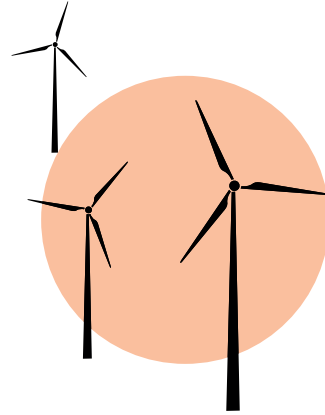
The fight against tax avoidance and tax havens.

The introduction of a minimum tax for businesses.

Additional tax brackets for the wealthiest individuals.

TO FIGHT CLIMATE CHANGE



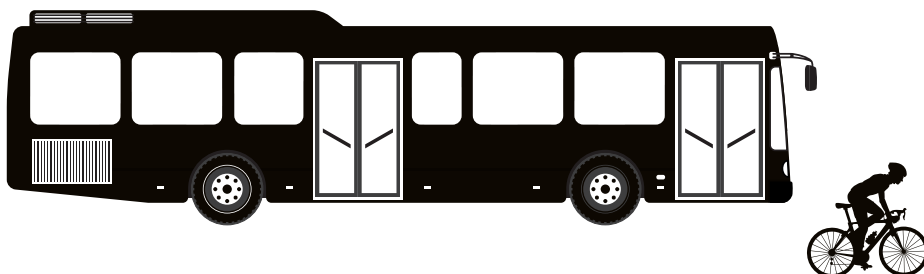


Global warming is the biggest threat of our lifetime.

Scientists, environmentalists, and even big capitalist organizations like the International Monetary Fund or the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development all share the same message: we have to act now to avoid the worst.

The diagnosis is clear, despite what climate sceptics say or think.

If we don't make radical changes in the ways we produce and consume, we will cause irreparable damage to the planet that will jeopardize future generations.



In 2015, Philippe Couillard's government adopted a target of 37.5% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030.

This target will no doubt prove to be little more than smoke and mirrors.

The last review cast serious doubt on whether this target would be achieved. Far from improving, the rate of emissions reduction seems to be stagnating.

The situation is hardly more promising at the federal level. On April 17th, *The Guardian*, a British newspaper, published an all-out attack on Canadian prime minister Justin Trudeau, arguing that “the man is a disaster for the planet,” and adding that “Donald Trump is a creep and unpleasant to look at, but at least he’s not a stunning hypocrite.”

THE STATUS QUO IS NOT AN OPTION

The question of environmental policy is inextricably bound up with the issue of employment. A hands-off, laissez-faire approach is no solution, and it is certainly no way to protect our jobs.



Postponing matters until tomorrow is not an option, either. Doing so would likely worsen the effects, and further limit choices. We shouldn't lie to ourselves: even if we succeed in reducing our greenhouse gas emissions and achieving the target Couillard has set, we are already feeling the impact of decades of high emissions, and will continue to do so for a long time to come.

The transformations linked to technological changes are having profound effects on the world of work, and have a number of points in common with the question of energy transition. But one thing is clear: whatever the case, we have to take the lead now if we want to succeed in the long run.

**WHAT WE WANT.
WHAT WE DEMAND.
WHAT WE WILL MOBILIZE FOR.**

A VIABLE ACTION PLAN TO ELIMINATE OUR DEPENDENCE ON FOSSIL FUELS

The international community has agreed to limit global warming. Many scientists consider that eliminating our dependence on oil requires leaving some fossil fuel deposits in the ground. Fortunately, we in Québec are advantaged by the availability of clean, renewable energy sources.

But there's no denying that reducing our oil consumption is no easy task, neither in terms of economic activity nor at the individual or community level.

A JUST TRANSITION

Despite its importance, the issue of how climate change impacts employment remains relatively invisible in the context of this crucial debate.

The energy transition requires the adoption of new technologies and new procedures that will inevitably have repercussions for employment. Although this shift is indispensable and may create new kinds of jobs, we know that, unfortunately, it will also affect existing sectors. Yet in this debate, like in so many others, decision-makers fail to properly take into account the impact on workers, and the voice of labour organizations goes largely unheard.

We maintain that government intervention is absolutely necessary for this transition to proceed acceptably, without excluding even more people. Businesses must recognize the right to information about upcoming changes and support the involvement of those with the most at stake.

A GOVERNMENT STRATEGY TO SUPPORT THESE TRANSFORMATIONS

Québec has the capacity to be a leader in the fight against climate change. Combined with an ambitious industrial policy, respect for environmental policies, appropriate certification, and clean technologies can be motors of sustainable development rather than costly constraints.

Blindly leaving everything to the private sector is the worst imaginable solution. Governments must put pressure on businesses to develop and employ clean technologies and abide by green standards.

A viable action plan for attaining the established targets for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions must be implemented. Such a plan should require employers to shoulder responsibility, and to support workers and their communities.

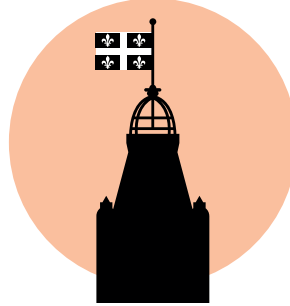
**TO FIGHT CLIMATE CHANGE,
THE CSN COMMITS TO WORKING:**

**For a viable action plan aimed at eliminating
our dependence on fossil fuels with a view to a just
and harmonious transition.**

**For a government strategy that leads businesses
to develop and use clean technologies and abide
by environmental certifications.**

TO STRENGTHEN DEMOCRACY





Far from waning, the population's disillusionment with politicians is gaining ground. Election after election, more and more people are simply not voting, and seem increasingly convinced that "if voting changed anything, they would have made it illegal."

It's possible that one of the reasons for this tendency to abstain from voting is people's conviction that their preferred candidate has no chance of winning in their riding.

Our first-past-the-post (FPTP) system results in discrepancies between the popular vote and the number of seats won. Although it wouldn't solve every problem, the introduction of a system with a proportional component would offset these disparities. Even though it's not a guarantee against the rise of right-wing populism, this kind of voting system would better represent the popular will.

Of course, the health of a democracy can't be measured solely in terms of electoral participation. For example, we have already denounced the Liberals' circumscription of spaces for discussion and concerted action in rural regions as well as in the context of the healthcare system.

Access to a diverse range of quality information is essential for ensuring enlightened, informed debates and positions on various issues affecting our collective life. Yet there is less and less regional information, as local publications disappear one after another. The same is happening to local radio stations.

Media companies are not commercial businesses like any other. In the digital era, Internet giants like Facebook and Google are capturing a steadily growing share of advertising revenue.

These companies don't create jobs in Québec and don't pay taxes here. Furthermore, they content themselves with transmitting information created by others. Even when traditional media, especially print dailies, get involved in the digital universe, they face declining advertising revenue that weakens their development and in some cases threatens their very survival. The hard facts of this decline? Dailies' share of advertising revenue has dropped from 31% to 10% in ten years.

**WHAT WE WANT.
WHAT WE DEMAND.
WHAT WE WILL MOBILIZE FOR.**

A MIXED-MEMBER PROPORTIONAL SYSTEM FOR QUÉBEC

For years now, the CSN has called for the establishment of a proportional voting system that would better ensure regional representation and equal representation for women. This kind of major reform cannot be made without genuine public debate and wide-reaching consultation with the population. We think that Québec is ready for such a change.

PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR TRADITIONAL MEDIA

A number of countries have taken steps to consolidate their public broadcasting corporations so that they can offer quality content. Canada and Québec lag far behind on this front. In 2011, the federal government allocated \$34 per capita to CBC/Radio-Canada, and Québec gave Télé-Québec even less. There's no comparison with funding in other countries like Norway (\$180 per capita), Germany (\$124), or France (\$68).

Against this backdrop, it's the government's duty to take appropriate steps to guarantee access to quality information. It must assume this role through funding or regulation. In its last budget, the Liberal government began to recognize the problems facing the print press, but its proposed solutions are still too modest. Hundreds of jobs are in jeopardy due to the media crisis. More important, though, is the fact that it threatens to drain our democratic life of its energy.

In an era of so-called fake news, with opinion given free rein at the expense of facts, we need media and journalists playing the role of watchdogs for democracy now more than ever.

TO STRENGTHEN DEMOCRACY, THE CSN COMMITS TO WORKING TO:

Promote the adoption of a mixed-member proportional electoral system.

**Call for adequate public financial assistance
and regulatory measures to ensure the production
of diverse, quality information in Québec.**

CLEAR VISION, SHARP FOCUS

We know that times are hard. Times like these could lead to withdrawal, to a turning inward. But we must resist the temptation, both as individuals and as organizations. Giving in would amount to leaving the path clear for the very forces that we oppose, who are after one thing: making us go away. They would like nothing more than for us to shut up. All their actions revolve around their desire to reduce us to insignificance!

But we at the CSN have known for a long time that solidarity is a powerful force for change. We have it in us, as do other progressive forces, to continue the struggle, to put a stop to their attempts to destroy the tools we have given ourselves collectively.

We live solidarity on a daily basis in our workplaces. This conviction has provided the basis for our union organizing and social and political action for almost 100 years. The democratization of workplaces has long been one of our goals. We have to continue to strive toward this ideal.

We are fighting for a just, egalitarian, fair society based on solidarity. We support all struggles for a democratic State in dialogue with civil society in order to ensure quality public services and a tax system capable of redistributing wealth.

People's quality of life can be improved. It's possible to act in such a way that no one is left out. We can make other choices. We can do things differently.

Our public services and social programs helped us weather the 2008 crisis much better than other societies. There is a fairer distribution of wealth in Québec than in many other places. But we must do more. We have to consolidate our

public services. In fact, the attacks are so brutal, especially on healthcare and social services, that it is hardly an exaggeration to talk about the need to save our services.

If there are still activists who think that everything we have built since the Quiet Revolution could survive another four years of Liberal government, we invite them to give it a serious second thought. There are limits beyond which what has been destroyed cannot be rebuilt.

Meanwhile, a number of disturbing factors demand our attention. The rise of precarious employment, accelerated cuts in public services, and the loss of progressive taxation are all fundamental underlying trends that we need to resist with everything we have.

Support for the creation of good jobs and the establishment of social protection programs that ensure lifelong income security depends on collective political decisions. We must not make the mistake of trading environmental protection in exchange for ephemeral growth.

Neoliberal ideology is at the root of a simplistic vision that values shrinking the State. This business-oriented Right is certainly not generous, has no compassion for the weaker members of society, doesn't give a damn about the fate of the less well-off, and its ideas are taking root in Québec too. As the next provincial election approaches, it is ever more important to attack and demystify right-wing discourse.

**So this is what we will do, together, united in struggle
to save Québec society from the dangerous lethargy into
which it is sinking!**

It's up to us to propose viable alternatives. It's up to us, in our unions, to share a collective vision of society with our members. It's up to us, allied with other progressive forces, to build an opposition, to forge strong bonds that can put hope for a better society back on the agenda in Québec.

For a hundred years, the CSN, our members and activists, and our affiliated organizations have been responsive at every great turning point in Québec's history. The CSN, our members and activists, and affiliated organizations will still be there for all the battles that are yet to come!

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