

NATIONAL YOUTH COMMITTEE

REPORT 2017-2020

The mandate of the National Youth Committee is to advise the CSN and its affiliated organizations about the various issues that in any way affect the living and working conditions of young people. The Committee seeks to advance the interests and concerns of young people within the CSN.



NOTE REGARDING COVID-19

The confederal committee reports were produced in March 2020 for the convention that was to be held in May 2020. These reports include committee actions that were planned for the period between March and May 2020. Please note that said reports have not been modified and that the period from May 2020 to January 2021 will be covered in the next committee reports, which will be presented at the 67th CSN Convention.

Moreover, members of the Committee are CSN ambassadors within various youth organizations in Québec.

Some of the subjects the Committee addresses through its work are union training activities, new union member integration, union life, promoting collective action, and preparing the next generation of union leaders. Throughout this mandate, the Committee decided to pay special attention to welcoming new union members in order to support the next generation of union leaders.

Orientation guide

Following the spike in retirement in recent years, there has been a greater number of youth in unionized workplaces. The CSN estimates that about 27% of its members are young people. In 2005, one in five union members were under the age of 30, whereas in 1997, young people made up only 16.5% of union membership.

To address this new reality, the Committee has prepared a new member orientation guide for union executive committees. The brochure, which is divided into the following four sections, outlines concrete actions that will help meet the challenges of fostering a future union leadership that will enrich union life, by:

Reaching out to new members.

Using effective means of communication.

Preparing new members for general assemblies.

Adapting the collective agreement.

The École de la relève syndicale program for new union activists

For over 15 years, the CSN has been hosting a summer orientation activity on unionism for about 50 union members under the age of 35. The École de la relève syndicale is offered in August by the National Youth Committee in order to address the concerns of young members with little or no experience within their unions. Mornings are set aside for union training, while afternoons are open, meaning participants can spend time with their families, play sports, or continue discussions with other members of the CSN. The training takes place at the enchanting Centre de villégiature Jouvence in the Eastern Townships. The École's evening forums, where we're joined by special guests, allow us to discuss certain topics related to unionism in more detail.

We go over all the following subjects during this training: the history of the CSN movement, democracy, union decision-making, negotiating working conditions, advocacy, the environment, occupational health and safety, mobilization, and collective and social struggles. Over the course of this mandate, the Committee has reviewed the content of the École de la relève syndicale in order to update it.

The 7th Rassemblement des jeunes youth assembly

The 7th CSN Rassemblement des jeunes was held on February 12 and 13, 2020. The assembly's theme was "Retour vers le futur" ("back to the future"), and provided an opportunity for nearly sixty young attendees to discuss concerns related to technological changes in the workplace and the repercussions on work and union life.

The following subjects were discussed in plenary sessions and workshops:

Digital transformation and the changing workplace.

Technological transformation in Jean Coutu warehouses and their impacts on the union.

The integration of digital technology within labour organizations.

The transformation of journalism as a profession.

The use of social media for union action, mobilization, and democracy.

The Rassemblement ended with a call to action that will guide the CSN in its future representations.

Inter-union actions

Members of this Committee participated in inter-union meetings with the Fédération des travailleurs et travailleuses du Québec (FTQ) and the Syndicat de la fonction publique du Québec (SFPQ).

During the provincial election campaign in fall 2018, we produced a video in collaboration with the youth committees of the Centrale des syndicats du Québec (CSQ) and the FTQ to raise awareness among young people about the importance of voting and making their generation's voices heard.

A member of this Committee also sits on the Comité consultatif Jeunes youth advisory committee to the Commission des partenaires du marché du travail. This advisory committee is responsible for advising the Commission des partenaires du marché du travail and the Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale on various labour issues that affect young people in Québec. The Comité consultatif is made up of 18 representative and recognized national youth organizations with a shared mission of promoting and supporting the development of young people aged 18 to 35. In recent years, it has most notably put out two advisories about work placements.

Study

A study conducted in partnership with the Service aux collectivités de l'UQAM, and the Observatoire des diasporas of the Centre de recherche interdisciplinaire sur la diversité et la démocratie (CRIDAQ) allowed us to carry out a survey of unions via a form distributed at federation conventions in 2018 on the presence of young people, women, members of the LGBT+ community, immigrants and racialized people among union members.

An analysis of the responses found that about half of CSN members are women (51%), about a quarter are young people (27%), a fifth are immigrants or racialized people (20%), and fewer than one in ten members are part of the LGBT+ community (7%). If study participants' perceptions are correct, our movement's membership is an accurate reflection of the makeup of Québec society.

Participants mentioned that even in unions where there are more young people, young people do not seem to actively participate in union life. Fear of reprisal is seen as an obstacle that can affect the involvement of young people in union structures.

It should be noted, however, that the answers provided are based on perceptions and not on available data.

Tabling

The members of the Committee did tabling at most central council and federation conventions. This allowed us to raise awareness among members on the importance of preparing a new generation of union leaders, as well as to meet with activists, and get a chance to see members who participated in the École de la relève syndicale and the Rassemblement des jeunes in past years.

Labour standards

The Au bas de l'échelle organization provided the Committee with training on amendments to labour standards. This training session allowed Committee members to update the *Mes droits au travail* brochure, which will be used during the next mandate, particularly when tabling in CEGEPs.

Information

Committee members have a Facebook page and moderate several private groups from previous editions of the École de la relève syndicale. We have also contributed to articles published in *Le Point syndical*.

Outlook

Support affiliated organizations in preparing a new generation of union leaders by:

Continuing to organize the annual École de la relève syndicale.

Holding the 8th Rassemblement des jeunes.

Meeting with and regularly communicating with those responsible for youth in federations and central councils.

Continuing to work to welcome new union members.

Bolster work done in collaboration with other groups (mainly with youth committees in other central labour organizations).

Continue representation activities.

Collaborate with the FTQ and the CSQ on a study about privacy protection and the use of data.

Organize tabling to meet students and discuss their rights at work.



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