

CONFEDERAL YOUTH COMMITTEE

2020-2023 REPORT



POUVOIR



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THE COMMITTEE MEMBERS DURING THE LAST TERM OF OFFICE:

THE CONFEDERAL YOUTH COMMITTEE IS COMPOSED OF SIX MEMBERS REPRESENTING THE CENTRAL COUNCILS AND FEDERATIONS. FOR THE PAST THREE YEARS, ITS MEMBERS HAVE BEEN:

ARIANNE CARMEL-PELOSSE

(Syndicat des employées et employés du Centre hospitalier de l'Université de Montréal–CSN)

GUSTAVO MONTEIRO DA SILVA CARLOS

(Syndicat du CIUSSS du NÎM–CSN)

SÉBASTIEN JOBIN

(Syndicat des travailleuses et travailleurs de Canam Ponts–CSN)

FRANÇOIS-GUY SAVARIA-RAYMOND

(Syndicat des travailleuses et travailleurs de PJC-Entrepôt–CSN) and

MARIE-PIER THIBEAULT

(Syndicat du personnel de bureau, des techniciens et des professionnels de l'administration de la santé et des services sociaux du CIUSSS du Saguenay–Lac-Saint-Jean–CSN)

For the last three-year term,

GUILLAUME CLAVETTE

(Syndicat des travailleuses et travailleurs du Centre intégré universitaire de santé et de services sociaux de la Capitale-Nationale–CSN) and

JADE CHAREST

(Syndicat du personnel de soutien scolaire de Lanaudière–CSN) also served on the Committee.

The Committee's work was supported by

JULIE MARQUIS (2020–21),

GILLES BÉGIN (2021–22),

and ALEXANDRA MATHIEU (2022–23)

of the Research and

Status of Women Service, as well as

MIREILLE BÉNARD (2020–22) and

NANCY POIRIER, political advisors to the Executive Committee.

KATIA LELIÈVRE

Third Vice-President of the CSN and responsible for the Committee.

SUMMARY

The mandate of the Confederal Youth Committee is to advise the CSN and its affiliated organizations on all issues that affect, directly or indirectly, the living and working conditions of young people. The Committee promotes the interests and addresses the concerns of young people within the Confederation.

DURING THE 2020–23 PERIOD, despite the slowdown caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Committee carried out a variety of activities and considered various issues related to youth and unionism in the context of post-pandemic recovery.

FOR EXAMPLE, AFTER A TWO-YEAR ABSENCE, the Committee organized and facilitated a training seminar for the next generation of union leaders (École de la relève syndicale) in the fall of 2021 and summer of 2022. A youth gathering was organized in April 2023. As soon as health measures permitted, the Committee set up stands at CSN meetings to promote its activities and reconnect with activists. The Committee's members were also present to support unions involved in labour disputes.

REPORT

With this report, the Confederal Youth Committee presents a summary of the activities it has carried out since the 66th CSN Convention as well as its plans for the next three years (2023–26).

COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

ÉCOLE DE LA RELÈVE SYNDICALE

In the fall of 2021 and summer of 2022, the Confederal Youth Committee organized a school for the next generation of union leaders (École de la relève syndicale). Following a two-year hiatus due to the pandemic, a session was held for a small group, from November 28 to December 1, 2021, in compliance with public health guidelines. Then, in the summer of 2022, training resumed in near-standard format, with two two-and-a-half day sessions, each with a dozen participants.

The school's purpose is to promote union awareness among young workers (35 and under) with little or no union experience. It also aims to provide them with knowledge and skills to enable them to begin or continue activism within the CSN. The school is intended primarily for those who do not yet hold union positions but are interested in union activism. It also affords an opportunity to share and network in a pleasant, informal environment. While the mornings are devoted to union education, the afternoons are spent in groups or with family (as children and spouses are welcome). In the evenings, participants discuss unionism with special guests. For example, in the summer of 2022, we had the pleasure of welcoming Claudette Carbonneau, the CSN's first woman president (2002–11), for an evening conversation.

These training sessions enable participants to form discussion and support networks. They have produced strong results, with many past participants having since become union activists.

The school was set up by the CSN Confederal Youth Committee. Training sessions are planned, organized, and facilitated by the Committee's members.

After each session, the Committee reviews and refines the content to ensure that it meets the objectives described above as fully as possible. This review also provides an opportunity to reflect on ways to increase the number of participants and make the groups as diverse as possible in terms of region and sector as well as of diversity, in the broadest sense.

YOUTH GATHERING

The 8th Rassemblement des Jeunes was held in April 2023 at the Manoir du Lac Delage, and was attended by nearly 100 members aged 35 and under. The gathering was an opportunity for the Committee:

- to get to know and connect with young people in the movement
- to discuss measures that promote youth involvement in the union
- to mobilize young people and encourage their involvement in the union movement
- to encourage the creation of youth committees at the central councils, federations, and unions
- to bring participants' ideas to the rest of the CSN

The themes of the 8th Rassemblement des Jeunes were evolution and revolution in the labour market and the impact of the societal context on our power structures. Attendees discussed a range of issues such as mobilizing in the teleworking age, the challenges of unionizing workplaces with a high proportion of young people, and work-life balance in a time of labour shortage and scarcity. The gathering's central theme was the place of young people in the union movement. On this front, the event enabled the Committee to move forward with its work on union renewal.

PARTICIPATION AND INTERVENTIONS

CPMT YOUTH ADVISORY COMMITTEE

One member of the Committee sits on the Youth Advisory Committee of the Commission des partenaires du marché du travail (CPMT).

This member is responsible for informing the CPMT and the Ministry of Employment and Social Solidarity about employment issues affecting young people in Quebec. The Youth Advisory Committee is made up of eighteen members, of which seventeen come from representative, recognized provincial youth organizations. Its mission is to promote and support the development of young people aged 18 to 35.

The Youth Advisory Committee is responsible for identifying problems experienced by young people in their efforts to enter, re-enter, and remain in the labour market. It participates in monitoring and evaluating Emploi-Québec's intervention methods and setting action priorities. The Youth Advisory Committee's opinions and recommendations, which are based on discussions and consultations among its many member groups, are public and accessible.

INFORMATION STANDS

As soon as health measures permitted, the Committee set up information stands at meetings of various CSN organizations to promote its activities and reconnect with activists.

The Committee worked to raise its profile among young workers and the officers of the central councils, federations, and local unions.

However, the Committee has found that simply setting up an information stand has limited impact in terms of raising awareness of the issues such as union renewal, and addressing the specific problems experienced by young people in the workplace. Nor has this been particularly useful for publicizing the École de la relève syndicale, since the registration period is practically over by the time conventions are held.

In the next three-year term, the Committee intends to consider a new approach for the upcoming conventions of the central councils.

OUTLOOK

With an aging population and increasing labour shortages, younger generations face numerous challenges. The Committee wishes not only to afford young people a larger place in the union movement and thereby energize the life of the union, but also to improve living and working conditions for all young workers, union members or not.

During its next mandate, the Committee will therefore have some major issues to tackle: climate change and a green, just transition; the changing labour market; a growing demographic imbalance that threatens to exacerbate the problem of excessive workloads; issues related to the reception, inclusion, equality, and defence of the rights of newcomers; the ever-accelerating pace of technological change; and urgent new mental health issues—to name but a few.

Strengthening our political interventions

To intelligently address these new challenges and issues together, we want to reinforce our political actions, both within the CSN and in the public arena.

The Committee will continue to monitor the activities, positions, and public statements of the political parties and their youth wings, as well as the activities and interventions of civil society groups with regard to youth issues. This will enable the Committee to identify common ground, and potential alliances, with these groups.

Rebuilding relationships

YOUTH COORDINATION AT THE CSN

During its last mandate, the Committee did not maintain as many links as it would have liked with the people responsible for youth issues at CSN organizations.

In the next three years, therefore, the Committee aims to rebuild its links within the movement by holding at least one coordination meeting with representatives of youth committees within the CSN, with young members of CSN organizations, and with persons responsible for youth issues.

Further, the Committee wants to forge more links with the other confederal committees.

Finally, the Committee wishes to rebuild its relationships with youth organizations from other labour groups, at home and abroad.

EXPANDING THE ROLE OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE CSN

With each new year, the Committee aims to maintain and expand the place of young people in the movement as a whole.

To accomplish this, various means will have to be considered, including efforts to fortify the Committee's links with youth committees in the federations and central councils, as mentioned above. We will need to resume, and advance, our work with the unions on welcoming new members and young people, in particular by distributing and publicizing a guide that the Committee has produced on the subject. The Committee will also reflect on ways to create and maintain closer links to the rank and file.

UNIONIZING YOUNG PEOPLE

The unionization of young people is a constant concern for the Committee. This is a crucial issue if the CSN, and the labour movement as a whole, are to remain dynamic, be representative of all workers, and enjoy legitimacy with the general public.

Accordingly, in the next three years, we aim:

- to continue to develop best practices for integrating new members
- to reflect on ways to strengthen intergenerational alliances and struggles
- to continue to reflect on provisions for union activists (such as union leave for activists who work part-time or on rotating shifts)
- to set up information stands to reach out to students to discuss their labour rights

REVISED COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

Finally, to support all these ambitions, we intend to revise our communications plan.

With an aging population and increasing labour shortages, younger generations face numerous challenges. The Committee wishes not only to afford young people a larger place in the union movement and thereby energize the life of the union, but also to improve living and working conditions for all young workers, union members or not.

