

# WITH NEGOTIATIONS, EVERYBODY WINS!



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## A satisfactory agreement in principle!

On June 24, the representatives of the four CSN federations agreed to recommend that their affiliated unions adopt an agreement in principle reached that evening at the central table. Concluding this agreement just a few months after the decrees expired was a real feat, achieved thanks to our determination, our mobilization and our solidarity in the Common Front. A vast round of consultations is now beginning in all CSN public-sector unions, since sectoral agreements were also reached by all the federations in recent weeks.

The central table agreement, negotiated by the Common Front, meets several of our original objectives: winning back our right to free collective bargaining, protecting public services and improving our working conditions. What you have here is a brief overview of the main points in the agreement. For more details, consult our web site, at [www.secteurpublic.info](http://www.secteurpublic.info), in the *Boîte à outils* section under the *English* tab.

### Our purchasing power is maintained

The agreement we reached on pay should allow us to protect our purchasing power satisfactorily. This 5 year agreement goes beyond the time frame set by the government to reach a balanced budget at all costs. Raises in pay will be at least 7% and may reach up to 10.5%, depending on Québec's economic growth rate. This 3.5% raise will be tied to increases in Québec's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), if it grows faster than predicted by the government's conservative estimates used in its plan to achieve a balanced budget. The idea, included in the government's initial offer, was greatly improved in bargaining, and the new parameters make it much more realistic to think

that the formula will result in actual increases in pay.

### A more stable pension plan

We wanted to use this round of bargaining to protect our pension plan and stabilize contributions. Without changes, the rate of contributions to the RREGOP was expected to jump by at least 3% in 2011, mainly due to poor yields on investments in 2008. The agreement on pensions means that future fluctuations in the contribution rate will be modulated, making them more gradual and more predictable. Until now, adjustments were made once every three years; from now on, they will be made annually. So we already know that the next annual increase in the contribution rate will be limited to a maximum of 0.5%, instead of 3%.

We also came to an agreement that allows us to eventually reintroduce indexing for years worked between 1982 and 1999, once the surpluses in the participants' fund are large enough. Other changes make the plan more equitable for all participants: for instance, we reduced the exemption threshold to 25% of Maximum Pensionable Earnings (MPE) without this having an impact on employees who earn less. Finally, the Common Front was able to persuade the government to withdraw a number of its demands for rollbacks.

Regarding parental rights, the agreement in principle brings the collective agreements into line with the various laws bearing on this issue. This means tangible gains for many people. As well, the agreement in principle paves the way for lasting solutions for skilled workers. A joint working group will assess the situation that characterizes dozens of job titles in our public systems.

Finally, salary relativity was not discussed by the Common Front, since it is not an issue that affects



everyone. That said, an inter-union coalition was created at the CSN's behest and is currently in discussions with the Conseil du trésor to begin practical work on this issue.

### A Common Front victory

These gains at the central table, like the gains made at the sectoral tables, would not have been possible without tremendous solidarity within the CSN and the Common Front. As these lines are written, there are only two CSN unions in government agencies that have not

reached an agreement in principles yet, and the CSN is working unrelentingly to ensure that they too achieve their objectives. Elsewhere in the Common Front, the FIQ is the only organization that has not reached a sectoral agreement so far. The Common Front continues to stand in solidarity with the unions still negotiating and will pursue its objectives of defending and promoting public services!

## Parameters for raises in pay

	Fixed pay parameters	Potential increases tied to the nominal GDP <sup>1</sup>	Potential increase tied to inflation <sup>2</sup>	Maximum potential increases
01-04-2010	0.5 %			0.5 %
01-04-2011	0.75 %			0.75 %
01-04-2012	1.0 %	0.5 %		1.5 %
01-04-2013	1.75 %	1.5 %		3.25 %
01-04-2014	2.0 %	1.5 %		3.5 %
31-03-2015			1 %	1.0 %
<b>Total</b>	<b>6 %</b>	<b>3.5 %</b>	<b>1 %</b>	<b>10.5 %</b>

1- Additional increases to be paid if growth in the GDP exceeds the government's predictions

2- Increase of up to 1% on the last day of the collective agreement if inflation exceeds the raises paid.

## A word from Louis Roy, vice-president of the CSN

*We began this round of bargaining in a difficult political and economic context. Prevailing conditions led us to*



*create the largest inter-union common front ever around the slogan « Together for public services! » Our objectives were clear: win back our right to free collective bargaining after the 2005 decree; prevent the introduction into collective agreements of clauses that*

*would favour privatization, the trend towards precarious, contingent jobs and rollbacks in union rights; improve the retention of personnel and reduce labour shortages; improve pay; and protect the pension plan.*

*Although we did not achieve all our goals, we are convinced that the Common Front proved its worth and enabled us to reach a satisfactory agreement on a number of points: the rollbacks in non-monetary clauses were avoided, the attacks on public services were thwarted, working conditions were improved, the pension plan was improved and consolidated, real wages will be protected and we have won back our right to free collective bargaining.*

*Signing this collective agreement won't mean the end of our defence of public services. Faced with adversity, we must defend the gains made in this round of bargaining vigilantly and continue our struggle for a fairer, more just society, in which the economy serves the people, not vice versa!*