



**International day
of women's rights
MARCH 8TH 2020**



**FEMINIST
WITH ALL
OUR MIGHT**

LA PASSERELLE

Editorial



Jacques Landry,
President FPPE(CSQ)

***"Feminist with all our might"* is a motto that will remain relevant for many years to come. Great strides have been made, but many more are to come.**

Working conditions in public service jobs in Quebec and pay equity processes are, unfortunately, clear examples of battles that have yet to be fought.

Concerning the composition of the public service workforce, it can be observed that, with 72%, women make up a significant proportion of it (81% in health and social services, 69% in education, and 59% in other public services). Nowhere else, in any other sector of activity, is such a high percentage

observed. Within the FPPE, the percentage is even higher, with 83%.

Not surprisingly, according to Statistics Canada, there is a gap of 23.2% between the average annual remuneration of employees of the Government of Quebec and that of employees working for government enterprises (academia, public corporations, as well as federal and municipal governments) in Quebec. In Quebec again, women earn \$23.58 an hour on average compared to \$26.25 for men. In addition, women's weekly wages are 20% lower than that of men due to the number of hours worked (men work an additional 3.9 hours).

It is also safe to argue that working conditions in the Quebec public sector have been deteriorating for several years now, which you are aware of more than anyone else; years of austerity and neo-liberal values have taken their toll.

An attempt was made to apply Toyota's "Lean" method, which is commonly used in industrial sectors, but that turned out to be a failure. On paper, the goal is to make the organization customer-centric and performance-oriented. The aim is to increase performance by eliminating unnecessary tasks and standardizing work.

This approach, however, ignores what is at the core of our function: humans. It is unimaginable to think that emotionally-charged

issues, such as health care and education, can be addressed with strategies that focus solely on performance. The two are just incompatible. No wonder why anxiety is running rampant. This way of considering work and wielding power has undermined the working conditions of thousands of women, who are rightfully complaining about the burdensome nature of an approach that dehumanizes work and offers little recognition.

As for pay equity, how can we not be discouraged at the thought that the 2010 and 2015 pay audits have not been resolved yet? We can wait no longer. Professionals deserve more recognition. Despite our repeated interventions, the government is not taking us seriously and is speaking out of both sides of its mouth. It is high time that this show be brought to an end.

More than ever, let us be **FEMINIST WITH ALL OUR MIGHT!**

Jacques Landry,
President FPPE(CSQ)

International day of Women's rights



Sophie Massé,
Vice-President FPPE(CSQ)

International day of Women's rights will be celebrated on March 8. It is an opportunity to take stock of the struggles that have been fought and those yet to be fought. This year's theme is: **Feminist with All Our Might**.

The hands and victory gesture are symbolic of our struggles that connect. This image refers to the notion of sharing and to a liberation that can only be achieved in a plural and collective way. The poster, through a bright colour palette, exudes an exuberant atmosphere and celebrates the international and intersectional aspect of our experiences in this year of international action of the World March of Women (WMW). *FFQ, 2020*

I would like to remind you that the World March of Women, which was initiated by the Fédération des femmes du Québec (FFQ), takes place every five years and will be held on Saturday, October 17, 2020, in Lanaudière. In addition, the themes of the WMW 2020 are: poverty, violence, environment, and migrants.

We must still keep up the fight for a number of struggles for women's rights. Within the union sector—particularly in education—questions with respect to the next generation of female workers still remain. However, in recent years, despite a significant workload and family responsibilities, a new generation of women longing to get involved has emerged. They increasingly play key roles within unions and take on positions as presidents and delegates. They are confident and, to rise within the ranks, they are challenging the way things are done and questioning as well as redefining roles and structures.

Because they are looking for solutions, they are contributing to modernizing the labour movement; they are very inspiring role models for their colleagues in the education sector, who are mostly women. For the FPPE, listening to these new union leaders and supporting them while allowing them to redefine our organization is an important part of the process that can only advance the entire labour movement.

Happy International Day of Women's Rights!

Sophie Massé,
Vice-President FPPE(CSQ)

Securing the Future of the SCGCIS



Marie-Eve Quirion,
Action
Professionnelle Counsellor

Last December, we surveyed SCGCIA's to find out about their working conditions and validate certain courses of action. With an impressive participation rate of 69%, we are now equipped to present a picture of the situation to the Ministry.

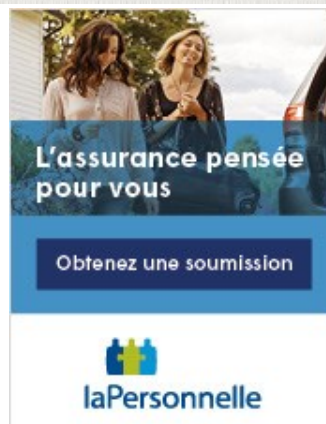
All the results will be presented in a soon-to-be-released FPPE report, but here are some of the figures that stand out:

- ⇒ 78.9% of the SCGCIA's find that recognition for the service they offer is first and foremost related to the personality of each SCGCIA;
- ⇒ 46.3% of the SCGCIA's feel that their superiors do not have a good understanding of their work;
- ⇒ 75.8% of the SCGCIA's want the ministerial framework to be updated;
- ⇒ 70.0% of the SCGCIA's feel that the job title should be changed (but there is no consensus on the name to be used).

SCGCI has been under huge pressure for several years: the number of SCGCIA's is in constant decline, and not only is the budget allocated to the service declining, it is decentralized and transferable to other uses at the discretion of local education authority. With the adoption of Bill 40 under a gag order, any reference to "spiritual care services" has been removed from the *Education Act*. As part of the overhaul of the ethics and religious culture course, Minister Roberge is no longer shy about removing all references to religion—including, wrongly, spiritual life—from school. In fact, he has suggested in the media that the job title of SCGCIA's could be changed to "personal development and civic engagement animator."

It is in this context that the FPPE, together with the APAVECCQ and the SPPLRN, asked the Ministry to set up a ministerial committee to conduct an evaluation of the SCGCIS, increase funding, update the ministerial framework, ensure access to adequate training, and assess the possibility of changing the job title.

We will keep you informed of our progress on this important matter.



Domestic violence: What are the employer's duties ?

SUMMARY

COX, Rachel, in collaboration with Marie-Eve DESMARAIS and Shanie ROY. (2019). *La reconnaissance d'une obligation explicite de l'employeur en matière de violence conjugale au Québec : rapport de recherche*. Montréal: Service aux collectivités of Université du Québec à Montréal.

The report is available on the website of UQAM's Service aux collectivités at the following address: sac.uqam.ca/liste-de-publications.html

©UQAM, CAVAC Côte-Nord, Maison l'Amie d'Elle, Maison des femmes de Baie-Comeau, Centre femmes aux 4 vents, 2019.



In Quebec, domestic violence is still an evil that must be fought. To better prevent it and provide equal protection under the law to female workers who have the potential to be victims of domestic violence in the workplace, the law must recognize the employers' explicit duty to prevent and halt acts of domestic violence. The recognition of such a duty would reflect the fact that it is in the interests of society as a whole to put an end to domestic violence, thereby going beyond the idea that domestic violence is private matter.

The *Rapport québécois sur la violence et la santé* of the INSPQ (2018) calls for a diversification of strategies to prevent domestic violence. Workplaces in Quebec emerge as areas to be mobilized to this end.

As a matter of fact, maintaining the employment and protecting the income of those who are victims of domestic violence significantly strengthens the victims' ability to escape the abuse. However, it is often easy for the abuser to locate the victim at work, which makes the victim particularly vulnerable in the workplace and exposes the entire workplace to the harmful effects of domestic violence. The high prevalence rate of domestic violence in regions such as Côte Nord shows that there is urgent need to better and equally protect women—including Indigenous women—who live in these areas.

Two rather predictable murders of women in the workplace by their former spouses—one in 2009 in Ontario and another in Alberta in 2017—were the catalyst for the adoption of legal provisions recognizing the employers' duty to prevent domestic violence in the workplace. New Brunswick (2018) and Newfoundland and Labrador (2019) have also adopted regulations recognizing that their occupational health and safety regimes must include the employer's duties with respect to domestic violence, as is already the case in Manitoba (2011) and British Columbia (2012). However, to date in Quebec, the occupational health and safety regime does not provide protection to women who are potential victims of domestic violence in or near their workplace.

It's about time for Quebec to tighten the screws and recognize employers' explicit duties, in its occupational health and safety regime, to prevent and put an end to acts of domestic violence in the workplace.



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