

Industrial Relations Outlook Round Table 2010

Conference Board of Canada



www.cpq.qc.ca

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Pour avoir l'assurance d'être entendu et défendu

The Conseil du patronat du Québec (CPQ)

- **Founded in 1969**
- **Most important employers' association in Quebec**
 - **Fifty-five (55) sector associations (mines, forests, aluminium, banking, retailers, etc.)**
 - **Hundreds of large enterprises**

CPQ priority intervention areas

- 1) Availability of quality labour (education, training, immigration, etc.)**
 - 2) Cost of labour (payroll taxes, labour standards, etc.)**
 - 3) Smart regulation**
 - 4) Public finances (corporate and personal taxes, debt burden, etc.)**
- 1 + 2 = main factors affecting our members (annual poll results)**

The labour relations climate in 2010

- **Main issue affecting Quebec employers:**
labour shortage
→ **700,000 jobs to fill in Quebec by 2011**
- **Two elements to reduce the negative impact**
 - **Education: More emphasis needed on vocational/technical level**
 - **Foreign credentials recognition by professional bodies**

Main labour issues facing Quebec unions and employers in 2010

- **Economic recovery: Unions demanding benefits that are no longer viable?**
- **Collective agreements: No real normative change over the past 15 years**
 - Minimum labour standards not easily exceeded
 - Core elements open to negotiation: Wages & social benefits
- **Labour costs & foreign outsourcing**
- **Quebec Labour Code: Need for a better employer-employee balance, especially in the construction sector**

Pension plans

Negotiating the terms of registered pension plans

- **Europe vs. Canada**
- **One component of benefit plan and total compensation**

Government intervention to make registered pension plans more accessible?

- **Simplification and relaxation of current government restrictions?**
 - **Interprovincial harmonization?**

Government intervention to make registered pension plans more accessible? (continued)

- **Government support for new types of pension plans, more accessible to SMEs?**
 - **Income-funded plans**
 - **Simplified pension plans**
- **Role of government: financial education & savings awareness programs**

Should the government guarantee employer pension plans?

- **Amendments to the Bankruptcy Act**
→ Negative effect on credit costs
- **Setting up a guarantee fund (ex.: Ontario)**
→ Transfers from companies that make the best decisions to finance those that make bad ones?

In both cases, a disincentive for businesses to keep their defined benefit plans

Should the government guarantee employer pension plans? (continued)

- **Government grants for retirees who lose their rights in the wake of a company bankruptcy**
 - **Taxpayers (not all of whom are enrolled in a private pension plan) should not finance people benefiting from an extremely generous pension plan**

Labour-management dialogue?

- **Pension benefits conditional upon the business's survival**
- **Pension fund investments: Agreement on guidelines?**