

Canada – France
Interparliamentary Association



Association interparlementaire
Canada – France

Report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation respecting its Mission to France

Canada-France Interparliamentary Association

**Paris
July 11 to 14, 2016**

INTRODUCTION

From July 11 to 14, 2016, three Canadian parliamentarians were in France, specifically in Paris, to explore how the *Chèque emploi service universel* (CESU) program works, to learn more about the French agricultural sector's views on the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) between Canada and the European Union, and to discuss the interparliamentary work program.

The visit was also an opportunity to engage in dialogue with several French parliamentarians who are members of the French delegation of the Interparliamentary Association during a dinner hosted by Ambassador Cannon.

Mr. Denis Paradis, M.P., Chair of the Canada-France Interparliamentary Association, led the Canadian delegation, which also included Mr. Jean Rioux, M.P. and Mr. Steven Blaney, M.P. The delegation was accompanied by Line Gravel, Executive Secretary, and Marc Berthiaume, Political Advisor to the Embassy of Canada in France.

This report provides a summary of the Canadian delegation's meetings and activities during the Mission.

CHÈQUE EMPLOI SERVICE UNIVERSEL PROGRAM

The *Chèque emploi service universel* (CESU) program¹ was created in France by the *Loi Quinquennale sur l'emploi* on December 20, 1993, to better protect employees who work in private homes, and to combat work performed under the table. It deals with individuals who employ workers in their homes, within the scope of family employment tax cuts. The various meetings held with the officials responsible for this measure, the *Union de recouvrement des cotisations de sécurité sociale et d'allocations familiales* (URSSAF) [social security and family allowance dues collection agency], and its users from the *Fédération des particuliers employeurs* (FEPEM) [federation of private employers]² gave the delegation a better appreciation of the measure's popularity and the results it is achieving.

A. *Union de recouvrement des cotisations de sécurité sociale et d'allocations familiales* [social security and family allowance dues collection agency]

The delegation met with two URSSAF representatives and learned that the URSSAF network is the body that collects the premiums and social contributions that fund France's general social security plan. A growing number of institutions and organizations have given URSSAF the task of collecting and controlling dues. Such organizations include the *Union nationale interprofessionnelle pour l'emploi dans l'industrie et le commerce* (Unédic) [national professional union for employment in industry and trade], the *Régime social des indépendants* (RSI) [social security system for self-employed workers], the *Fonds de solidarité vieillesse* (FSV) [old age solidarity fund], the *Caisse nationale de solidarité pour l'autonomie* (CNSA) [independent living

¹ Union de recouvrement des cotisations de sécurité sociale et d'allocations familiales, [Chèque emploi service universel](#). [French only – social security and family allowance dues collection agency website]

² Fédération des particuliers employeurs, [Accueil](#). [French only – federation of private employers website]

solidarity fund], the *Fonds de la Couverture maladie universelle* (CMU) [universal health care fund] and the *Autorités organisatrices de transport* (AOT) [transit operating authorities]. It has 900 partners in total.

The URSSAF network has developed the quality of relationships with and service to its 9.5 million contributors by embracing the digital economy. It proposes specific bids for private employers, associations and small businesses. It is worth noting that 10% of French households use the CESU program.

The program and how it works

The delegates learned that the CESU program is responding to today's lifestyle. France is seeing a dramatic increase in the number of single-parent families and older households that use private, in-home services. In-home employment is also linked to the pursuit of greater work-life balance.

There are two kinds of CESUs: "declarative" and "pre-funded".

The "pre-funded" CESU, as its name suggests, is paid by a third-party organization. This could include a works council, a mutual company or any other business that pays for in-home services.

The "declarative" CESU facilitates the formalities linked to the employment of an in-home worker. Private employers simply need to declare the remuneration paid to their employees and will then enjoy the tax benefits associated with the employment. The employer does not have to manage paid leave, and pay slips are no longer required, because the national CESU centre will take care of that. For the employees, their employment is seen as having greater value and they benefit from all the usual government benefits (annual leave, insurance, pension, etc.).

In-home services include:

- Property maintenance and housekeeping;
- Yard work and odd jobs;
- Academic support and in-home tutoring;
- In-home meal preparation, grocery shopping and running errands;
- Accompanying children, seniors or people with disabilities in their movements (whether for recreation or daily activities).

In order to understand how the CESU program operates, URSSAF representatives provided the following example to illustrate the benefits of the program:

For one hour declared with a net salary of 10 euros:

The employer must add:

Employer contribution:	+5.43 euros
Employee contribution:	+3.09 euros
Fixed deduction per hour declared:	-2.00 euros

Net salary + premiums = 16.52 euros

Open tax benefit: 50% or 8.26 euros

Real cost to employer: 8.26 euros

Following a question-and-answer exchange, all delegates said they were impressed by the CESU program and its simplicity.

B. *La Fédération des particuliers employeurs de France* [federation of private employers]

The delegates then met with officials from the *Fédération des particuliers employeurs de France* (FEPEM), which is the socio-professional organization that protects and represents private employers. Its objective is to provide a legal framework for the relationship between private employers and their employees. The FEPEM was created in 1948 following an initiative led by the employers themselves in order to encourage the use of family employment in France.

The FEPEM is active in areas such as family employment, childcare assistance and in-home childcare. It represents 3.6 million private employers. In-home, direct employment covers a broad range of personal services: childcare, support for seniors, housekeeping, home maintenance, and so on. The FEPEM is a social partner of unions representing some 1.6 million workers and childcare assistants employed by private individuals, and is a key contact for government officials when it comes to in-home employment.

The FEPEM facilitates the creation and professionalization of in-home employment with a focus on the legislative and regulatory changes that affect the legal and economic status of private employers and in-home employees. The FEPEM is the single point of contact for many national and local stakeholders.

The FEPEM provides private individuals who employ in-home workers, or who want to become private employers, with practical advice and personalized support on a daily basis, whether by phone, email, online, or through *Relais Particulier Emploi* [in-home employment support network] all across France. The FEPEM has offices all over France.

The delegates learned that the CESU program could not function if the URSSAF and the FEPEM did not work together. Those two organizations form a unified whole that allows French citizens to make the most of the CESU program. When it was first created in 1993, the name given to the program was "*Chèque Emploi*" [employment cheque] because the employers paid the URSSAF by cheque and the URSSAF then paid the employees by cheque. However, the program has since gone digital: the URSSAF prefers electronic bank withdrawals from employers and direct deposit payments to employees.

In addition, employers can now log employees' hours of work electronically from a computer. The entire system has improved over time, and everything has become very easy to use.

FRENCH AGRICULTURAL SECTOR'S VIEW OF THE COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC AND TRADE AGREEMENT BETWEEN CANADA AND THE EUROPEAN UNION

To carry out its fact-finding mission on the views of the French agricultural sector regarding the CETA between Canada and the European Union, the delegates met with two organizations. The first meeting was with an advisory organization that is part of the French agriculture department, the *Conseil général de l'alimentation, de l'agriculture et des espaces ruraux* (CGAAER)³[council on food, agriculture and rural areas] and the second meeting was with the *Fédération des syndicats d'exploitants agricoles* (FNSEA)⁴[national federation of farm workers' unions], which represents the country's farmers.

A. *Le Conseil général de l'alimentation, de l'agriculture et des espaces ruraux* [council on food, agriculture and rural areas] and the *Fédération Nationale des syndicats d'exploitant agricoles* [national federation of farm workers' unions]

The meeting with two CGAAER senior officials gave the delegation a better understanding of the challenges currently facing the agricultural sector in France and in Europe. That meeting was followed by a discussion with the president of the FNSEA. The second group painted a more complete picture for the delegates.

The parliamentarians and their French counterparts also discussed supply management in the Canadian agriculture industry and the end of dairy quotas in France. MP Paradis also used these meetings as an opportunity to discuss whether agriculture-related topics should be discussed, as culture-related topics are, in a specific framework outside the World Trade Organization.

B. Meeting with French Deputies

The meetings with two deputies who are agricultural specialists, Hervé Pellois (*Parti socialiste*) and Marc Le Fur (*Les Républicains*), also generated some discussions on CETA. In particular, they were an opportunity for the embassy's representative to correct some of the myths and misunderstandings surrounding the agreement.

PARLIAMENTARY DIPLOMACY

A dinner including the Canadian delegation and members of the French delegation of the Canada-France Interparliamentary Association, hosted by the Ambassador of Canada to France, Lawrence Cannon, reinforced the already strong ties and warm relationship between the Canadian and French parliamentarians. They also briefly discussed the themes of the upcoming annual meeting of the Association planned for September 11 to 18, 2016, in the area of Vancouver, Victoria and Nanaimo, British Columbia.

³ Government of the Republic of France – Ministère de l'Agriculture, de l'Agroalimentaire et de la Forêt, [Conseil général de l'alimentation, de l'agriculture et des espaces ruraux](#). [French only – council on food, agriculture and rural areas website]

⁴ [Fédération des syndicats d'exploitants agricoles](#) [French only – federation of farm workers' union website]

The final event attended by the delegates was the Bastille Day Parade. The Élysée invited the delegates to sit in the President's seating area to watch the military parade and take part in the July 14th Bastille Day celebrations in Paris.

Respectfully submitted,

The Hon. Denis Paradis, M.P.
Chair, Canada-France Interparliamentary Association

Travel Costs

ASSOCIATION	Canada-France Interparliamentary Association
ACTIVITY	Mission to France
DESTINATION	Paris, France
DATES	July 11 to 14, 2016
DELEGATION	
HOUSE OF COMMONS	Denis Paradis, M.P. Jean Rioux, M.P. Steven Blaney, M.P.
STAFF	Line Gravel, Executive Secretary
TRANSPORTATION	\$ 6 469.87
ACCOMMODATION	\$ 4 222.28
HOSPITALITY	\$ 560.77
PER DIEMS	\$ 2 538.44
OFFICIAL GIFTS	\$ 173.18
MISCELLANEOUS/REGISTRATION FEES	\$ 0
TOTAL	\$ 13 964.54