

THEMATIC FORUMS

**EN ROUTE
TO THE ROUTE
2015
MEMBERS'
CONVENTION**

CONSULTATION DOCUMENT



A MESSAGE FROM THE LEADER OF THE QLP AND PREMIER OF QUEBEC

Dear supporters,

Quebec is at the crossroads. Following six deficit budgets, we are finally on the eve of a balanced budget. As Quebecers, we can no longer accept that nearly 11 billion of our tax dollars are used each year to pay interest on our debt. Our goal is simple: free Quebecers from the burden of debt and find room to manoeuvre in order to reduce taxes and our debt. We have had the courage to take sometimes difficult, but very necessary action. We are also focused on re-launching our economy and on job creation in all regions of the province. We are doing so to provide ourselves with the means to realize our ambitions and to build a more just and more prosperous society.

In the coming weeks, we will be consulting supporters of the Quebec Liberal Party through nine thematic forums, to be held across Quebec. These consultations, on the themes of intergenerational equity, re-launching our regional economies, metropolitan centres and our communities, will form the basis of our discussions at the 32nd Members' Convention, co-chaired by Filomena Rotiroti, MNA for Jeanne-Mance-Viger, and by Mathieu Truchon, a loyal and engaged supporter.

Dear supporters, I ask you to attend our forums in great numbers. Share your thoughts with us and help develop a Quebec that is prosperous and free to make choices because we gave ourselves the means to do so.

I look forward to seeing you!

PHILIPPE COUILLARD

Leader of the Quebec Liberal Party
Premier of Quebec



3



A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE QLP

Dear Supporters,

The Quebec Liberal Party has always been at the forefront of change and the evolution of Quebec society. We are at the crossroads and aspire to create new momentum in Quebec. We must free future generations from the burden of debt and give ourselves the ability to invest. We need your involvement to realize this ambitious, but necessary objective.

In the coming weeks, you will be asked to share your thoughts at a series of thematic forums which will be held across Quebec. These consultations will lay the foundation for the Quebec Liberal Party's policy committee and the discussions we will have at our Members' Convention this spring.

As you are aware, these consultations are essential for the development of our Liberal government's policies. These meetings are important, and you can make a difference by expressing your ideas for, and your deepest beliefs about, Quebec.

Supporters of the Quebec Liberal Party, please join us as we prepare for the next Members' Convention and help us make Quebec a prosperous and fair society for our families and generations to come.

GILBERT GRIMARD

President, Quebec Liberal Party



5



A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE POLICY COMMITTEE

Dear friends,

It is with great pleasure that I invite you to participate in our thematic forums, part of our preparation for our Members' Convention which will take place in the spring. Liberals from across our beautiful province will soon meet to discuss and debate issues that will advance Quebec society. In order to prepare a convention platform that addresses your concerns, the policy committee and the convention organizing committee invite you to join us to reflect on the issues of intergenerational equity and the re-launching of our economy.

We will return to a balanced budget in 2015-2016. We would greatly appreciate it if you would share your ideas on how to make our society more prosperous for future generations, all the while considering our aging population and high public debt. To stimulate your reflection on these topics, I invite you to read the consultation document attached. This is the framework for the discussions we will have in the coming months and in which you can fully participate. To do so, simply send your suggestions or comments to colloques@plq.org before the beginning of April. We also invite you to join one of our nine thematic forums which will be held across Quebec in February and March. You will find all the information you need on these events at plq.org/consultation.

It is through listening to everyone's ideas that we will steer Quebec in the right direction. Please don't hesitate to join in and have your say. We are ready to listen!

JÉRÔME TURCOTTE,
President of the Policy Committee

THEMES AND SUB-THEMES

1. SUPPORTING INTERGENERATIONAL EQUITY

- a) Preserving sound public finances for future generations
- b) Taking care of an aging population
- c) Making sustainable development a reality in Quebec

2. ECONOMIC RECOVERY OF THE REGIONS, COMMUNITIES AND URBAN CENTRES

- a) Improve effectiveness of regional and municipal governance
- b) Promote regional economic development
- c) Encourage economic development of the Montreal metropolitan and Quebec City regions
- d) Highlight the added value of the social economy
- e) Invest in our cultural development
- f) Increase support for New Quebecers participation in our economy

NINE THEMATIC FORUMS THROUGHOUT QUEBEC

**21
FEBRUARY**

**14
MARCH**

**21
MARCH**

**29
MARCH**

8 am **MONTREAL**
Espace Réunion
6610, rue Hutchison,
Outremont
Sub-themes:
2. a) Improve effectiveness of regional and municipal governance
2. c) Encourage economic dev. in Metropolitan Montreal
2. f) Increase support for New Quebecers participation in our economy

9 am **LOWER ST-LAWRENCE, GASPÉ, ÎLES-DE-LA-MADELINE**
Institut Maritime du Québec
53, rue St-Germain Ouest, Rimouski
Sub-themes:
2. b) Promote regional economic development
2. e) Invest in our cultural development

9 am **ABITIBI-TÉMISCAMINGUE AND NORTHERN QUEBEC**
Hôtel Forestel
1001, 3e Avenue Est, Val-d'Or
Sub-themes:
1. c) Making sustainable development a reality in Quebec
2. b) Promote regional economic development

9 am **MONTÉRÉGIE**
Académie Marie Laurier
1555, Avenue Stravinski, Brossard
Sub-themes:
1. a) Taking care of an aging population
1. b) Preserve sound public financing for future generations

9 am **LAVAL, LAURENTIAN AND LANAUDIÈRE**
Château Royal
3500, boul. du Souvenir, Laval
Sub-themes:
1. b) Preserve sound public financing for future generations
1. c) Making sustainable development a reality in Quebec

13 pm **QUÉBEC, MAURICIE, CHAUDIÈRE-APPALACHES AND CENTRAL QUEBEC**
Le Montmartre
1679, chemin St-Louis, Québec
Sub-themes:
2. c) Encourage economic development in Quebec City and regions
2. e) Invest in our cultural development

13 pm **SAGUENAY – LAC-ST-JEAN AND NORTH SHORE**
Hôtel Universel
1000, boul. des Cascades, Alma
Sub-themes:
1. b) Preserve sound public financing for future generations
2. b) Promote regional economic development
2. a) Improve effectiveness of regional and municipal governance

13 pm **TOWNSHIPS AND CENTRAL QUEBEC**
Club de golf de Sherbrooke
1000, rue Musset, Sherbrooke
Sub-themes:
1. c) Making sustainable development a reality in Quebec
2. d) Highlight the added value of the social economy
2. f) Increase support for New Quebecers participation in our economy

13 pm **OUTAOUAIS**
Centre des aînés de Gatineau
196, rue Notre-Dame, Gatineau
Sub-themes:
1. a) Taking care of an aging population
2. a) Improve effectiveness of regional and municipal governance
2. d) Highlight the added value of the social economy

1

SUPPORTING INTERGENERATIONAL EQUITY

The 2015-2016 Quebec budget will be a return to a balanced budget. However, Quebec is facing a decrease in its active population as the Baby Boom generation is slowly leaving the labour market. The aging of our population will be a challenge for the health care system, for the economy and for the government. The goal of this section of the document, which covers the theme of intergenerational equity, is to develop a long-term vision for our social model and for our public finances, so that we can guarantee freedom of choice and a competitive economic environment for future generations. Inevitably, the protection of the environment and sustainable development must continue to be priorities at all times.

In detail, this key topic addresses the following sub-themes:

13

1. A)

PRESERVE SOUND PUBLIC FINANCES FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

The Liberal Government has made the commitment to have a balanced budget by 2015-2016. To this day, the government has identified 85% of the measures which are necessary to reorganize public finances and reinforce the government's efficiency. Had we continued to go down the same path, the problem would not have been resolved. Interest payments on debt cost Quebec taxpayers \$30 million per day, and this situation will only get worse. The generational imbalance will gradually increase pressure on public finances, especially when it comes to retirement funds and expenses related to health care. How is it possible to ensure the survival of public finances so that future generations have the same freedom of choice as those of previous generations?

How do we ensure that government revenues do not diminish while the labour force is decreasing?

How can we promote immigration and encourage a higher birth rate in order to reduce demographic decline and the resulting pressure on public finances?

How can the government continue to invest in economic development in Quebec given the current state of public finances?

How can Quebec be reimagined and creative new policies developed in order to prevent government from living beyond its means?

Can the total cost to society of an aging population be accurately predicted, and if so, how do we account for that cost in long-term fiscal planning?

How can we encourage seniors to remain active in the labour market?

Since individuals now live longer than ever before, should we review the retirement age?

The goal of these questions is to make participants think and encourage active discussion during our forums. Until then, feel free to email us your ideas at colloques@plq.org.

Please do not hesitate to share your ideas, we are listening!

1. B) TAKING CARE OF AN AGING POPULATION

Year after year, Quebec's generational imbalance puts more pressure on our social model. In fact, the number of retired citizens, as compared to those who are in the labour force, is continually increasing; we estimate that the ratio of retirees/ active workers will more than double between 2006 and 2041. Since the demand for health care increases with the age of the individual, an aging population leads to an increased demand for long-term care and home care, as well as more frequent hospitalization. We expect public health expenses to increase by \$29.8 billion between 2013 and 2030, jumping from 8.4% to 13.5% GDP and from 42.9% to 68.9% of total government revenue. Roughly half this increase can be explained by factors related to demographic decline.

Family life has changed considerably as social mores have evolved. How can we offer support to vulnerable seniors in the light of these changes?

We can no longer assume that family members will be able to care for their elders, or that seniors will be able to remain in their own homes indefinitely. How can we encourage young people to choose professions that provide the services the next generation of seniors will require?

How can we promote the development of healthy lifestyles so that the seniors of tomorrow can be happy and healthy in later years?

How can we ensure that infrastructure, housing and resources can be made available to meet seniors' needs?

What new resources must be developed in order to allow seniors to remain in their homes if they wish, or to facilitate the transition of individuals with diminishing autonomy to long-term care centres and seniors' residences?

On a long-term basis, is it possible for taxpayers to continue to fund all the services Quebecers currently enjoy?

To what extent can new medical technologies help Quebec to achieve productivity gains in the health care system?

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15

1. C)

MAKING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT A REALITY IN QUEBEC

Protecting the environment and the principle of sustainable development are issues which are of great concern to the majority of Quebecers. Even if the situation has improved since the 1990's, especially with regard to the recycling of waste and the introduction of streamlined industrial production methods, the transportation sector is still a leading cause of greenhouse gas emissions. The government has introduced many successful environmental initiatives - for example, the funds generated by the carbon market are used for the Green Fund which finances measures to promote sustainable development. Economic development and the protection of the environment are not mutually exclusive, but it is important to develop better ways to sustain prosperity in Quebec and preserve it for subsequent generations without endangering our natural environment.

How should we balance economic and environmental considerations when developing new policies?

How can we adapt Quebec's legislative and institutional framework so that it supports sustainable development?

How can we apply these changes to every level of government (municipal, regional, provincial and national)?

Should we introduce new forms of taxation to fund environmental initiatives?

How can we support agricultural development so that it is even more sustainable?

How can we promote socially responsible investment (SRI)?

How can we encourage citizens and businesses to show respect for the environment?

How can we reduce the pollution that arises from greenhouse gas emissions, particularly those caused by the transportation sector?

How can we further our natural resources and simultaneously protect the environment?

How extensively should we apply the "polluter pays" principle?

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2

ECONOMIC RECOVERY OF THE REGIONS, COMMUNITY AND URBAN CENTRES

Within the current context of the reorganization of government affairs, the objective of which is to have a greater control over expenses, it seems more pertinent than ever to think about how each person in our society can contribute towards economic recovery and the means of the government to sustain this growth. Whether it be in a city or in a region, in the social economy sector or the traditional economy; whether one is new to Quebec or with roots in the province that span generations, we must find a way to combine all our strengths for Quebec's benefit. This approach will enable us to identify ways of stimulating the economic development of the regions, major urban centres and our communities, while furthering opportunities outside of Quebec.

This key topic addresses the following sub-themes:

17

2. A) IMPROVE EFFECTIVENESS OF REGIONAL AND MUNICIPAL GOVERNANCE

The government is currently redefining regional and municipal governance. In fact, several administrative structures overlap, and in many cases offer the same services for the same clientele. It is important to develop an effective governance structure that will reinforce efficient regional and municipal governance and support community development. Within this context, how do we redefine the partnership between the government and local communities so that community leaders are at the centre of decisions and being adequately supported by the state?

How should coordination and consultation with community leaders be structured?

How can we unite community leaders and promote a shared, action-oriented approach with the goal of strengthening economic development?

How can we adapt governance structures to the realities of each region?

How can we balance the distribution of power between the cities and the MRC in the rural regions?

Should property taxes remain municipalities' primary source of revenue or should they have access to other sources of revenue?

How can we respect the autonomy of Aboriginal governance while encouraging greater involvement in regional economic coordination?

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18

2. B)

PROMOTE REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The regions each represent different geographic, historical and cultural aspects of Quebec. However, because of this heterogeneity, the regions have not all experienced the same level of economic development. Some benefit from the proximity of the American border, others rely on the exploitation of resources, and many turn to the larger city centres that surround them, to develop. As a percentage of the GDP, resource regions represent a little less than 10% of Quebec's overall GDP, the manufacturing regions around 40% and urban regions 50%. While it is commonplace to suggest that the regions are focused on the agricultural sector, some have quite a different reality as they grow a knowledge-based economy which we can support by strengthening the ties between government, entrepreneurs and scientists. In a context where innovation and globalization strive to bring people closer together and eliminate geographical constraints, how can we promote economic growth in our regions and communities?

How can we address the challenges in remote regions: far from the markets, sparsely populated and dependant on resources?

How can we make the regions more attractive?

How can we better connect community leaders for increased development (ex: competitiveness clusters)?

How can we better support economic development of native communities?

How can we increase social acceptance of natural resource development projects?

How can we utilize the Internet and new technologies to benefit regional development?

How can the economic realities of the regions situated on the outskirts of the urban centres, benefit from the latter's economic boom?

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2. C) ENCOURAGE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE MONTREAL METROPOLITAN AND QUEBEC CITY REGIONS

Quebec City and Montreal are the main economic centres of Quebec; in 2012 Quebec City represented 9.8% of GDP and Montreal 34.6%. If we accept the link between the growth in major urban centres and that of the rest of Quebec, we can also claim that the economic growth of the Montreal metropolitan and Quebec City regions could have been better supported. As compared to other Canadian cities, economic growth reached 1.5% in Montreal and 1.4% in Quebec City (annual variation compared to the first quarter in 2012), compared to cities such as Calgary and Edmonton that have shown respective growth rates of 3.1 & and 4, 2%.

How can we ensure more efficient global marketing of the Montreal metropolitan and Quebec City regions?

How can we meet the labour needs of the Quebec City region?

How can the Montreal metropolitan and Quebec City regions benefit from their assets especially in terms of infrastructure?

How can we mitigate the effects of major, simultaneous infrastructure projects in Montreal and Quebec City (Turcot/Bonaventure/ Champlain Bridge/ Sainte-Catherine St./ Notre-Dame St.)?

How can we prepare for the aftermath of these large projects?

Is greater fiscal independence necessary for the metropolitan regions in order to revitalize the economy?

Which projects would contribute to quality of life, maximize tourism and support economic diversification in the Quebec City region?

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20

2. D) HIGHLIGHT THE ADDED VALUE OF THE SOCIAL ECONOMY

The social economy is characterized by businesses known as collectives and cooperatives, as well as associations which have a goal of combining economic activity and community projects. Participants are motivated by the desire to serve the community rather than generate profits, the objective is social well-being. The social economy represents more than 7000 collective-type businesses, approximately 150,000 jobs and \$17 billion dollars, or 8% of GDP. The sectors of activity where social economy participants can be found vary greatly, and range from agri-food, arts and culture, to the finance and health sectors. Socially-owned businesses bring efficiency as well as flexibility in their response to problems in our society. How do we further strengthen this sector of activity, so often complementary to public services?

How can we sustain financing dedicated to the social economy?

How can the social economy play a partnership role with the state in the pursuit of its objectives?

How can we support the start-up of collective businesses?

How can we encourage volunteering and philanthropy within the Quebec population?

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2. E) INVEST IN OUR CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

The Quebec government, regardless of party in power, has been committed to the important contribution of culture in Quebec society ever since the creation of the Ministry of Culture and Communications (MICC) in 1961. Multiple legislative and policy tools, programs, and institutions have been set up, promoted cultural development and supported Quebec artists. Today's climate entails certain challenges for culture in Quebec; increased competition than that experienced in the past; the effects of globalization and the impact of the Internet on the distribution and consumption of cultural products, and the cultural diversity of Quebec citizens. This current reality forces us to think about the future of culture in Quebec.

What place does culture have in the regions and how do we support it?

How can we promote the export of Quebec's cultural content?

How can digital innovation support cultural development?

How can we find the balance between the profitability and the creative contribution of projects?

What role must schools play in promoting culture? Do we need more measures to protect our cultural industry against the effects of globalization?

How can the Francophonie serve as a launch point for the export of our cultural products?

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22

2. F) INCREASE SUPPORT FOR NEW QUEBECERS PARTICIPATION IN OUR ECONOMY

Quebec attracts more and more immigrants each year, the majority of who are motivated to immigrate for economic reasons. When it comes to economic immigration, almost 40,000 people were admitted to Quebec in 2012, which is more than 60% of the total landed immigrants (permanent residents). Thanks to these new arrivals, the generational imbalance has been eased, and through integration into the workplace, these newcomers have a positive effect on the economic development of Quebec. However, we do note that some new immigrants work at jobs for which they are overqualified, and that the majority live in urban centres without considering regional opportunities. This implies that it is possible to improve new Quebecers participation in our economy and better support the development of the province.

How can we improve the recognition foreign credentials as well as the process involved?

How can we increase the immigration of qualified workers who meet the needs of the labour market?

How can we better welcome and integrate new arrivals into Quebec's regions?

What place do affirmative action policies have in the economic integration of the new arrivals ?

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