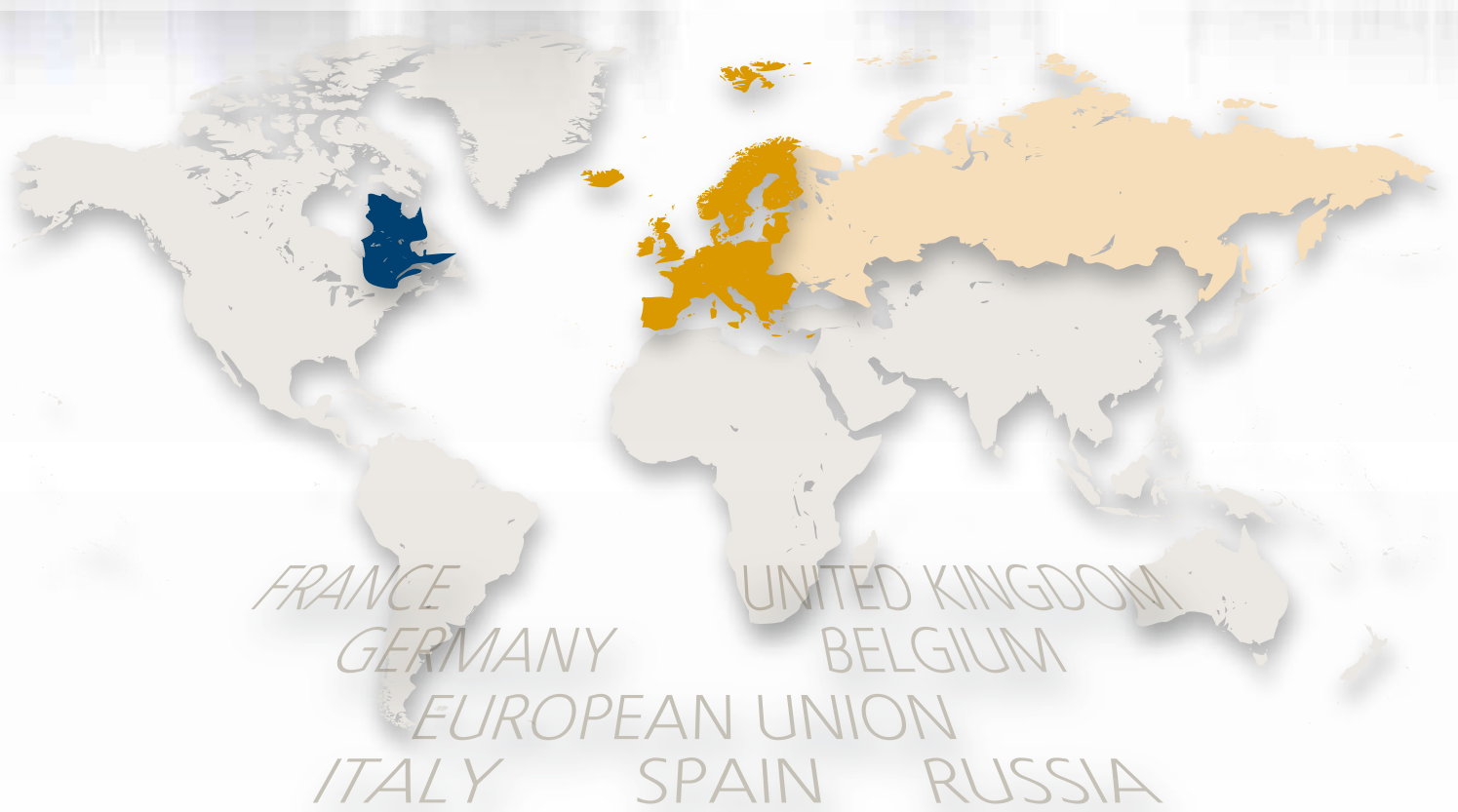


THE QUÉBEC GOVERNMENT'S EUROPEAN STRATEGY

2012-2015

SUMMARY



Ministère des Relations internationales
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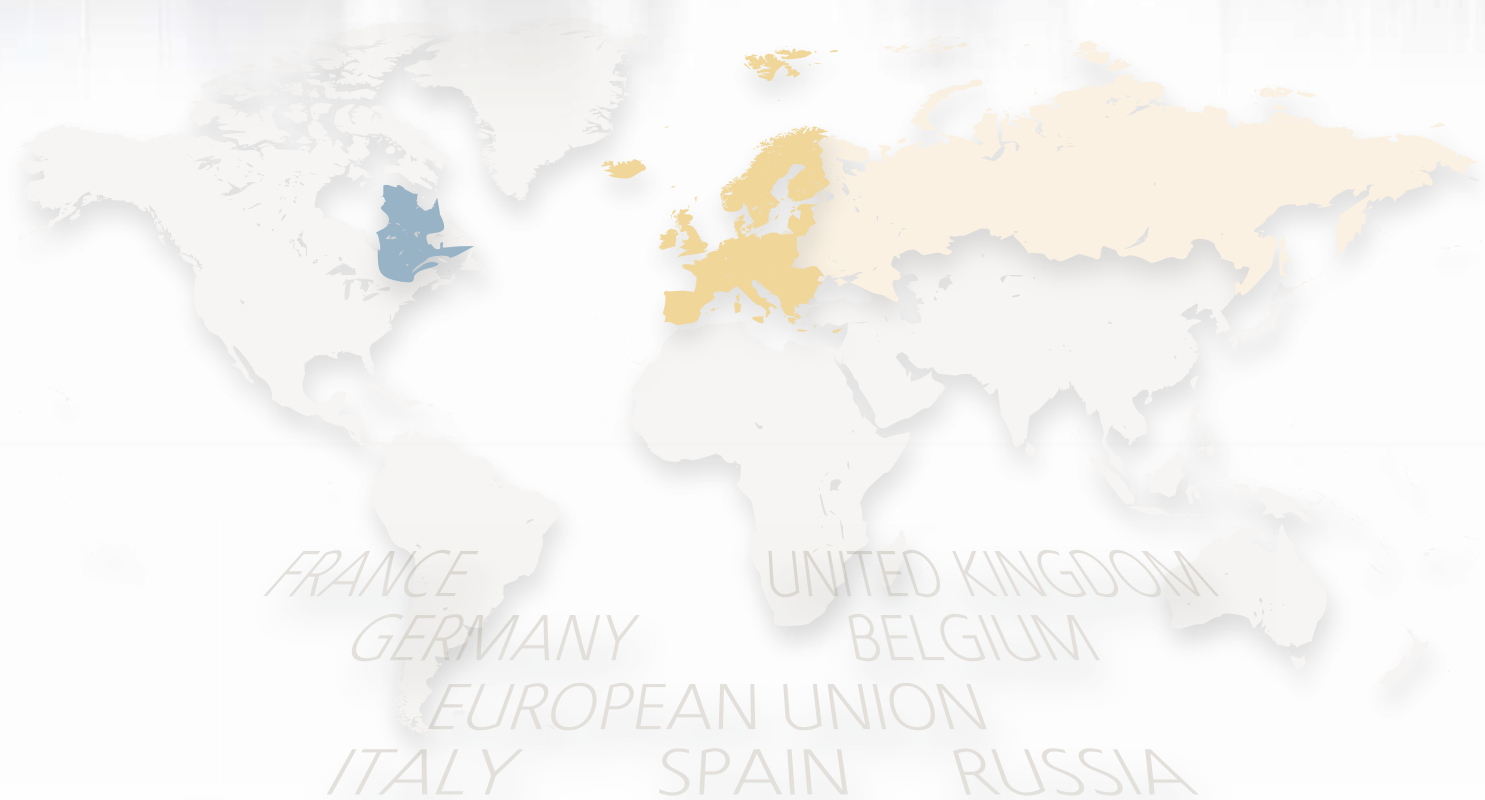
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SUMMARY





A WORD FROM THE MINISTER OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

For more than 50 years, Québec has relied on a network of offices in Europe to ensure its influence. The relations thus maintained with several countries in Europe have developed and sometimes changed direction, but always with an aim toward Québec's strategic need to be present and active in the European territory. Strengthened by the ties that bind us, Québec sees new challenges to overcome and opportunities to seize emerging from Europe.

A critical component of our international relations, Québec's International Policy, which I initiated in 2006, outlined territories and actions to be targeted as European priorities. This concerted effort laid the groundwork for the creation of a new economic space for the benefit of Québec's entire society.

All over the world, and particularly in Europe, Québec is looking to create ties and strategic alliances. One such example is the *Entente entre le Québec et la France en matière de reconnaissance mutuelle des qualifications professionnelles* (Québec-France Agreement on the Mutual Recognition of Professional Qualifications), which, in 2008, created a space for transatlantic mobility that has yet to be rivalled anywhere in the world. Thanks to the Québec government's initiative, these alliances lead to the negotiation of the *Canada-EU Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement*. In short, our strategic position on the international stage, and in Europe in particular, gives us a better understanding of the challenges coming from Europe as it redefines itself.

It is in this context that *The Québec Government's European Strategy* was elaborated. In terms of economics, it suggests ways to develop our businesses in this vast market and, owing to the Plan Nord, attract European investment. It also emphasizes cooperation with the European Union in regard to research and innovation and solidifies the creation of a new economic space for Québec. It also contains recommendations on how to support our entertainers — Québec's frontline ambassadors for promoting its identity and culture. Finally, the strategy relies on its representatives in Europe and their tapping into their networks of political and economic decision makers to increase Québec's influence and derive inspiration from best practices for the benefit of Québec society as a whole.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Monique Gagnon-Tremblay', with a stylized flourish at the end.

MONIQUE GAGNON-TREMBLAY

Minister of International Relations and
Minister responsible for La Francophonie

EUROPE

A KEY PARTNER FOR QUÉBEC

Open to the world and active on the international stage, Québec has equipped itself with a network of offices and representatives in Europe¹ that contribute to its prosperity. Since the creation of the first Québec government offices in Paris and London, and as a result of the Quiet Revolution, Québec's presence in Europe has spread to other territories and is now reaching Germany, Belgium, Spain and Italy.

The present strategy will focus on increasing synergy and improving the coordination of these offices, which are currently evolving in a European political environment that is dominated by both the growing political importance of the European Union (EU) and national interests, which are expressed just as forcefully. To this end, the network will work toward further developing its relations with the authorities of member states responsible for European affairs. The Québec Government Office in Brussels will assist in coordinating these efforts in order to influence European decisions as they are being made — decisions that will have an effect on strategic issues for Québec.

Every day, Québec representatives abroad work toward attaining tangible results for Québec society by helping to:

- promote Québec's visibility among political and economic decision makers, foreign opinion leaders and civil society;
- assist Québec companies in breaking into the European market;
- bring together researchers and scientists from Québec and Europe;
- promote Québec to potential immigrants;
- attract investment;
- market Québec cultural events and products;
- attract European students to Québec educational institutions.

I FRANCE

THE QUÉBEC GOVERNMENT OFFICE IN PARIS REPRESENTS QUÉBEC ACROSS FRANCE.

Québec's International Policy names France as one of its two strategic partners in the world, alongside the United States. This can be explained not only by our close historical and cultural ties but also by the fact that France possesses many assets in which Québec has a vested interest. The world's fifth largest economic power, France is an important and innovative player in highly specialized fields such as aeronautics, space, health, agri-food and digital technology. It is a pillar of European construction and holds considerable cultural influence.

¹ In this document, Europe refers to the continent, from Portugal to Russia, plus the United Kingdom, the Republic of Ireland and Iceland.

Political relations with France are unparalleled, and regular political discussions bear ample witness to this fact. France is an essential stakeholder in all issues that are of concern to Québec. France is Québec's third most important economic partner in the EU. There are approximately 400 French companies in Québec and over 160 Québec subsidiaries in France. In the research field, France is Québec's second most important partner in terms of joint publications. In the cultural industry, France is Québec's largest market. The flow of people between France and Québec is truly remarkable. Every year, 600,000 tourists from Québec and France travel across the Atlantic. Close to 4,000 French citizens are admitted annually to Québec as permanent immigrants, alongside 10,000 temporary workers. Approximately 8,000 French students are registered at Québec universities and over 1,000 Québécois study in France.

This close, privileged relationship was born of a common political will. It transcends all partisan allegiances within political classes in France and Québec. No intermediaries are used by the Consulate General of France in Québec and Québec Government Office in Paris, which coordinate communications between the two governments. The office benefits from privileges and immunities usually reserved for embassies. In 1965, Québec signed its first international agreement with France, laying the foundation for future cooperation. Today, bilateral agreements have reached such maturity that France and Québec carry out joint initiatives in third countries, forge alliances on multilateral issues and conclude agreements to facilitate the mobility and integration of workers.

Following the official visit of French prime minister Raymond Barre in 1977, the two governments instituted alternating meetings between the Québec premier and French prime minister, at which the direction and priorities of the bilateral relationship are formulated. Many visits and ministerial missions have since maintained a constant political dialogue regarding common concerns.

Every year, the Commission permanente de coopération franco-québécoise, created in 1965, and the Fonds franco-québécois de coopération décentralisée, established in 2005, support about 100 programs and projects involving researchers, academics, artists and entertainers, as well as representatives from public authorities, associations and the private sector. Six organizations strengthen this relationship, most notably the Office franco-québécois pour la jeunesse (OFQJ) (France-Québec Youth Office), the Groupe franco-québécois de coopération économique (France-Québec Economic Cooperation Group) and the Conseil franco-québécois de coopération universitaire (France-Québec Council for University Cooperation).

Over the past 20 years, the remarkable expansion of decentralized cooperation with French regions has given bilateral ties a strong territorial anchoring. In that time, the office in Paris has concluded action plans with six regional councils in France: Alsace, Aquitaine, Île-de-France, Midi-Pyrénées, Poitou-Charentes and Rhône-Alpes.

THE UNITED KINGDOM

THE QUÉBEC GOVERNMENT OFFICE IN LONDON REPRESENTS QUÉBEC IN THE UNITED KINGDOM, THE REPUBLIC OF IRELAND AND ALL NORDIC COUNTRIES.

The United Kingdom is a major player on both the European and international stage, a world economic and financial power, a public-policy innovator and an avant-garde cultural and scientific centre. It is one of Europe's leading economies, and the City of London is a world centre for financial services. In more than one respect, the United Kingdom is therefore a great source of opportunity for Québec. As an example, in 2010, Québec exports reached two billion dollars there. The United Kingdom is also an important foreign investor in Québec, where more than 100 British-controlled corporations are established.

As a major cultural centre, the United Kingdom — particularly London, its capital — constitutes a launching point for breaking into other markets.

Under the devolution process, which began in 1998, Scotland and Wales have been acquiring more and more powers, and their new fields of expertise often coincide with those of Québec, opening up new areas of collaboration. These regions also become potential partners in efforts geared toward the recognition of

the role played by federated states in the international arena. Finally, Nordic countries present interesting possibilities for public-policy partnerships, as they have set many initiatives in motion that could inspire Québec, particularly within the context of the Plan Nord and the fight against climate change.

I GERMANY

THE QUÉBEC GOVERNMENT OFFICES IN MUNICH AND BERLIN COVER GERMANY, AUSTRIA AND SWITZERLAND.

Germany is Europe's largest economic power, its most populated country and, along with France, the engine of European construction. Europe's leading exporter, due in large part to high-tech products, Germany distinguishes itself by its competitiveness, the quality of its products, its highly skilled workers and its constant concern for the environment. In the cultural sector, it boasts an international reputation in regard to both heritage, with its prestigious museums and classical culture, and contemporary sectors. What's more, Berlin is recognized as the world capital of visual arts.

Companies from Québec generate many jobs in Germany; for instance, Bombardier Transport's international head office is located in Berlin. Conversely, German companies, such as Siemens, create quality employment opportunities in Québec. Culturally, Québec puts on hundreds of cultural performances there every year. There are also currently six Québec academic centres in operation in Germany, on top of the many student mobility programs that exist and the 50 or so agreements between Québec and German universities.

In addition, Québec is also developing relations with several of the *länder* that make up the German federation, particularly Bavaria, with which close to 500 cooperative projects have been registered since 1989, and Saxony, which recognizes Québec as a privileged international partner. As for Austria, Québec accounts for close to half of the country's trade with Canada, in addition to having a special relationship with the Land of Upper Austria. Québec has also developed political ties with the Swiss canton of Jura.

I BELGIUM

THE QUÉBEC GOVERNMENT OFFICE IN BRUSSELS HAS A MANDATE TO PROMOTE QUÉBEC'S INTERESTS IN BELGIUM, LUXEMBURG, THE NETHERLANDS AND WITH EUROPEAN INSTITUTIONS.

Belgium is at the heart of Europe in more ways than one. Economically speaking, its central geographic location, between the most important countries of Western Europe, and excellent port infrastructure are commercially strategic. Politically, it is a nerve centre for international relations, with over 1,000 international organizations, both public and private, located in Brussels. Governments interested in having any influence over international decisions must therefore be present, especially since Brussels is also home to the institutions of the EU, which brings together 27 countries², making it the world's second largest economic power, with a market of half a billion inhabitants and a single currency used by 17 countries³.

The EU's institutions are constantly evolving, and Québec must take note. The Treaty of Lisbon, which came into effect in December 2009, reinforces the powers of the European Parliament: Euro-parliamentarians will now have to approve international accords negotiated by the EU, at a time when it is negotiating a free-trade agreement with Canada. Furthermore, the creation and filling of the post of High Representative of Foreign Affairs and Security Policy have significant implications on actions outside of the EU.

Entities in the federation of Belgium have full autonomy in their spheres of competence on the international scene. Québec has therefore developed fruitful institutional cooperation with the Communauté française de Belgique (CFB) (French Community of Belgium) and with Wallonia-Brussels and Flanders. The CFB is one of Québec's important partners within the Organisation internationale de la Francophonie (OIF) (International Organization of La Francophonie).

2 As of February 7, 2012. Other countries are likely to join the EU during the period covered by the present *Strategy*.

3 *Idem*.

Québécois artists are very active in Belgium. Promoters regularly book our performing arts companies as part of their regular seasons or for special events, and cultural cooperation with the CFB and Flanders supports many dance, music, film and literary projects. What's more, for the past 25 years, the Office Québec Wallonie Bruxelles pour la jeunesse (OQWBJ) (Québec–Wallonia-Brussels Youth Office) has supported exchange programs for 800 young francophones every year.

I ITALY

THE QUÉBEC GOVERNMENT OFFICE IN ROME COVERS ITALY AND THE VATICAN CITY STATE AND MONITORS THE MEDITERRANEAN BASIN. A TRADE BRANCH IS ALSO LOCATED IN MILAN.

The EU's fourth largest economy and one of its founding members, Italy is characterized by a system of innovative and dynamic small to medium-sized businesses, which often complement the activities of Québec companies. Bilateral cooperation is also expressed in the field of research and in science and technology. Italian investors' growing interest in Québec and vice versa have reinforced the already substantial economic contributions made by both territories in high-value-added sectors.

With its top-notch infrastructure and cultural events, Italy is an important market for the distribution of Québec's cultural products. Every year in Italy, hundreds of cultural activities create career opportunities in all forms of cultural expression. On the academic front, there are over 40 interuniversity cooperation agreements, allowing for an impressive exchange of both students and professors between Italy and Québec. Italy is also home to the Interuniversity Centre for Québec Studies, which links nine Italian universities and is the only such centre abroad.

Although most cooperative exchanges in the last 20 years have taken place within the scope of the Québec-Italy Joint Subcommittee, the cornerstone of bilateral relations, Québec has also developed strategic partnerships with certain regions of Italy. Such is the case of Lombardy — one of the Four Motors for Europe — with which Québec is taking part in an administrative partnership for industrial and technological cooperation (PAIT). Lombardy also plays host to the World Regions Forum, bringing together the world's 17 most innovative regions and federated states, Québec among them.

I SPAIN

THE QUÉBEC GOVERNMENT OFFICE IN BARCELONA COVERS SPAIN AND PORTUGAL.

Spain is the fifth largest economy in the EU and the twelfth largest in the world in terms of GDP. It is among Québec's most important commercial clients in Europe. Spain's geographic location makes it a bridgehead for Québec businesses, institutions and artists into other countries in Europe and on the south shore of the Mediterranean. Partnership opportunities for Québec abound in scientific research centres and networks, in the aeronautics industry and in the information and communications technology, transportation, health and science, green technology and agri-food sectors.

Québec constitutes the hub of economic relations between Canada and Spain, which have been on a rising trend over the past decade. The number of Spanish investors in Québec has been steadily increasing for a number of years now, and in terms of tourism, travel between Spain and Québec has grown considerably since the establishment of direct flights. Spain is also an essential market for Québec's performing artists and artistic productions. Whether large (like Cirque du Soleil) or small, every year they meet with tremendous success in the Spanish market.

In addition, Catalonia, which has expressed a desire to be recognized as an important player among federated states and regions, constitutes a strategic partner for Québec, particularly in international forums regarding such fundamental issues as climate change. Since 1996, the government of Québec has had a framework cooperation agreement with the government of Catalonia, the Spanish autonomous community with the highest GDP.

I RUSSIA, AN EMERGING ECONOMIC POWER

Québec must also look beyond the EU to Russia, the meeting point of Europe and Asia. Commercial trade between Québec and Russia is growing. Russia's immense needs in terms of infrastructure and technology, combined with the country's modernization plan and its internal market of 140 million consumers, offer promising business prospects for Québec in many of the sectors in which Québec companies have a strong expertise: construction and infrastructure, agricultural machinery and equipment, logging equipment and forestry, consumer goods and fashion.

The present Strategy will therefore be implemented on a priority basis in the following territories and with the following partners:

- territories covered by the network of Québec government offices in Europe;
- European institutions, particularly the European Commission and the European Parliament;
- Russia, as an emerging economic power.

It will concentrate on the following objectives:

- 1) Boost Québec's economic prosperity;
- 2) Bolster cooperation in the areas of research and innovation;
- 3) Foster individual mobility;
- 4) Promote Québec culture;
- 5) Increase Québec's capacity to take action and develop its expertise.

1. BOOST ECONOMIC PROSPERITY

Europe constitutes Québec's second largest trading partner after the United States. In the context of a still-fragile economic recovery and the importance for Québec companies to diversify their export territories and business partnerships, the European continent presents Québec with many interesting prospects. Europe's economic weight, its technological prowess, its geographic proximity and its business approach represent a strong growth potential for Québec.

For this reason, the Québec government will continue to provide Québec companies with services that are adapted both to their business projects and to European requirements, primarily through Export Québec. The agency has a mandate to support businesses in developing, strengthening and diversifying their markets outside of Québec by offering services that are adapted to the businesses' needs and which complement the services offered by the agency's governmental, regional, associative and sectoral partners. Export Québec also intends to support the establishment of Québec companies in Europe, mainly through the creation of a network of incubators in collaboration with the Entreprises Rhône-Alpes International organization. Sending trade missions to Europe, which permits Québec businesses to take part in important trade shows and fairs, and welcoming European buyers to Québec are other preferred strategies.

Québec's priority territories in Europe are targeted to maximise economic results for businesses in certain sectors:

- France (green technology, ICT, aeronautics, textile techniques and life sciences);
- United Kingdom (aeronautics, life sciences and green technology);
- Germany (ICT, life sciences, transportation equipment and green technology);
- Italy (life sciences, aeronautics and agri-food technology);
- Spain (aeronautics, ICT and biotechnology);
- Belgium (life sciences, aeronautics and green technology);
- Russia (construction and infrastructure, agricultural machinery and equipment, logging equipment and forestry, consumer goods and fashion).

Québec will also strengthen economic cooperation with European regions in order to bring together Québec and European areas of excellence. Particular attention will be devoted to developing the European market for Québec wood products and promoting Québec as a travel destination for Europeans. Finally, new projects such as the Plan Nord and *Canada-EU Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement* point to the increased development of Québec-Europe economic relations.

THE PLAN NORD

Québec boasts many assets with which to entice European investors to participate in the Plan Nord: an economy that is developed and diversified, an abundance of natural resources, a rapidly growing mining sector and the world's fourth largest production of hydroelectricity. This is why the Québec government is working to generate business opportunities in the territory covered by the Plan Nord by soliciting future European investors with the support of Québec's network of government offices abroad.

CANADA-EU COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC AND TRADE AGREEMENT

Through this agreement, Québec hopes to:

- eliminate tariffs and non-tariff barriers that impede our companies' access to the European market;
- reduce administrative burdens, thereby facilitating access to Europe's markets;
- simplify customs procedures;
- increase Québec's presence in EU markets and vice versa;
- boost foreign direct investment, job creation and the introduction of new technologies;
- facilitate workforce mobility and expand the supply of skilled workers;
- agree on environmental commitments;
- facilitate product-certification processes;
- increase cooperation in the areas of research and innovation.

2. BOLSTER COOPERATION IN THE AREAS OF RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

More than ever, Québec's economic prosperity and social well-being depend on its ability to actively participate in the new economy. This is why the Québec government has made innovation one of the top priorities of its strategy, so as to foster growth in sectors that will generate jobs in the future and sustain its prosperity. The European Union has also made a priority of research and innovation — a priority that has been translated into its *Innovation Union* initiative launched in October 2010. The mutual advantages of strong partnerships between Québec and the EU in this field are obvious, especially given that many of the EU's priority research sectors overlap with those of Québec, most notably aerospace, life sciences, information and communications technology, green technology and social innovation.

Québec also means to develop strategic initiatives in research and innovation through both the EU's programs and in accordance with bilateral initiatives with European countries. To do so, it intends to create a team within its government office in Brussels to keep abreast of developments and ensure an ongoing presence in European circles with ties to research and innovation, as well as establish the mechanisms needed to increase the number of research and innovation projects with Europe. Furthermore, regular meetings of an innovation forum bringing together Québec and European partners from the public and private research sectors will create an opportunity to follow up on these joint projects. Finally, the Plan Nord represents a new channel of cooperation in which Québec and European researchers are invited to collaborate with the goal of improving their common knowledge of northern environments.

3. FOSTER INDIVIDUAL MOBILITY

Over the course of the next 10 years, the Québec labour market will need 1.4 million people to meet employment growth and to replace those who will be retiring. The Plan Nord, alone, will lead to an increased demand for several categories of skilled workers. Québec will need to count on immigration, among other things, to meet these needs. Labour shortages can already be observed in certain specific areas of activity, and more and more companies are turning to international recruitment to fill their short-term needs, most often through temporary immigration. These companies can count on the support of the Québec government in this immense undertaking.

Québec must immediately find a way to position itself within this new context of growing mobility and equip itself with the modern means to attract students and skilled workers who potentially want to settle in Québec, and then facilitate their social and professional integration. Many innovative tools have been created to help Québec achieve this goal, namely, the *Entente entre le Québec et la France en matière de reconnaissance mutuelle des qualifications professionnelles* (Québec-France Agreement on the Mutual Recognition of Professional Qualifications) and the *Entente entre le gouvernement du Québec et le gouvernement de la République française relative à la mobilité professionnelle et à l'intégration des migrants* (Agreement Between the Government of Québec and the Government of the French Republic with Regard to Professional Mobility and the Integration of Migrants). The implementation of these agreements encourages the development of a large mobility zone with France, which Québec hopes will soon spread to all of Europe. Finally, agreements related to social security, the promotion of Québec educational activities in Europe, internships for young people and the exchange of best practices also contribute to favouring individual mobility between Québec and Europe.

4. PROMOTE QUÉBEC CULTURE

The French language and culture are the most powerful vectors in the affirmation of Québec's identity. In this respect, creators and artists have made an inestimable contribution to the reputation Québec has made for itself the world over. The significant presence of Québécois artists, organizations and producers on the European scene is impressive and a testimony to the vibrancy of Québec culture. The European continent is the number one cultural market for Québec and offers many important advantages: a network of programming executives capable of bolstering the broadcast of works from Québec and encouraging joint productions; competitive salaries; stimulating working conditions; and many artistic affinities. These are in addition to a network of advisers and cultural attachés working at Québec's government offices in Europe. In this increasingly competitive environment, these advisers must network with colleagues that are already present in Europe's cultural capitals, so as to innovate, circulate strategic information among stakeholders in cultural circles and give rise to opportunities for Québec creators.

The government supports Québec creators in their efforts to develop the European market, doing so notably through the Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec (Québec Council for the Arts and Literature) and the Société de développement des entreprises culturelles (Québec Society for the Development of Cultural Enterprises). In this competitive context, in which access to foreign markets is shrinking, the need for targeted marketing strategies is greater than ever. Québec will therefore continue to promote its artists and creators in Europe and develop ties with European broadcasters and partners, while supporting the presence of Québécois artists within European creative and cultural networks.

5. INCREASE QUÉBEC'S CAPACITY TO TAKE ACTION AND DEVELOP ITS EXPERTISE

Québec can rely on its many partners, particularly the countries in which its government offices are located, to defend its interests and develop its capacity to take action on European soil. Québec also maintains relationships with Europe's federated states and regions, which, like it, demand greater involvement in global governance and are often responsible for the effective implementation of decisions made in major international forums. The diplomatic network made possible by Québec's member status in the Francophonie, its participation in the work of UNESCO and parliamentary diplomacy as a whole give Québec direct access to many European decision makers, making it easier to form coalitions on issues that are of interest to Québec.

Québec will also count on exchanging expertise with the public administrations of Europe, especially in regard to the fight against climate change. It will look to European states and regions that boast innovative policies and dynamic international actions on the matter. Immigration, public security and justice also look to be promising sectors for increased cooperation between Québec and Europe.

Lastly, the government intends to expand its network of representation by opening an office in Moscow, so as to take advantage of economic opportunities in Russia.

CONCLUSION

Within the framework of *The Québec Government's European Strategy*, Québec's ties to Europe will continue to increase over the next three years. The Québec-Europe relationship is anchored in a long-term vision based on converging views of a modern, democratic, peaceful society that is founded on cultural diversity, sustainable development, good governance and social progress. From this convergence stems fruitful bilateral and multilateral cooperation between societies, which strengthens the political dialogue and meets Québec's priority issues in terms of economic prosperity, individual mobility and culture.

Within this favourable context, the importance of the ties that have been forged and fostered over the past 50 years take on a whole new meaning as they find continuation in the next three years in new tools for developing the Québec-Europe relationship.

Visits to Europe by the premier of Québec in June and October 2011 to promote the Plan Nord have shown great promise for European investment in Québec.

Implementation of the Québec-France Agreement on the Mutual Recognition of Professional Qualifications will solidify the creation of a genuine zone for transatlantic mobility, which Québec hopes will spread to other European countries.

Lastly, not only will the *Canada-EU Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement* stimulate trade between Canada, Québec and Europe but it will also foster cooperation in many key sectors. Empowered by this *Strategy* and the concerted efforts of government departments and the government offices in Europe to implement it, Québec has everything it needs to be optimistic about the development of its relationship with Europe over the next few years.

Through the coordination of the Ministère des Relations internationales (Department of International Relations), several Québec government departments and agencies participated in developing The Québec Government's European Strategy and will carry out its implementation:

Ministère de la Culture, des Communications et de la Condition féminine (MCCCF - Department of Culture, Communications and the Status of Women);

Ministère du Développement durable, de l'Environnement et des Parcs (MDDEP - Department of Sustainable Development, Environment and Parks);

Ministère du Développement économique, de l'Innovation et de l'Exportation (MDEIE - Department of Economic Development, Innovation and Export Trade);

Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport (MELS - Ministry of Education, Sports and Leisure);

Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale (MESS - Ministry of Employment and Social Solidarity);

Ministère de l'Immigration et des Communautés culturelles (MICC - Ministry of Immigration and Cultural Communities);

Ministère des Ressources naturelles et de la Faune (MRNF - Department of Natural Resources and Wildlife);

Ministère de la Sécurité publique (MSP - Ministry of Public Safety);

Ministère du Tourisme (MTO - Ministry of Tourism);

Ministère du Travail du Québec (Québec Ministry of Labour);

Directeur des poursuites criminelles et pénales (DPCP - Director of Criminal and Penal Prosecutions);

Investissement Québec (IQ - Invest Québec);

Office des professions du Québec (OPQ - Office of the Professions of Québec);

Office Québec-Monde pour la jeunesse (Québec-World Youth Office), Office franco-québécois pour la jeunesse (France-Québec Youth Office), Office Québec Wallonie Bruxelles pour la jeunesse (Québec Wallonia Brussels Youth Office).

Similarly, the Québec Government Offices in Europe are also closely involved in the entire process:

Délégation générale du Québec à Bruxelles (Québec Government Office in Brussels);

Délégation générale du Québec à Londres (Québec Government Office in London);

Délégation générale du Québec à Munich (Québec Government Office in Munich);

Délégation générale du Québec à Paris (Québec Government Office in Paris);

Délégation du Québec à Rome (Québec Government Office in Rome);

Bureau du Québec à Barcelone (Québec Government Office in Barcelona);

Bureau du Québec à Berlin (Québec Government Office in Berlin).

This Strategy is fully consistent with *Québec's International Policy*.

MINISTÈRE DES RELATIONS INTERNATIONALES DU QUÉBEC

In accordance with its constituting legislation and acting as coordinator for the international activities of the government and its departments and agencies, the department has a mandate to promote and defend Québec's interests internationally while ensuring respect for its authority and the consistency of government actions. The exercise of this mission involves close consultation with all governmental partners concerned with international issues.

2012-2015 **ACTION PLAN**
OF THE QUÉBEC GOVERNMENT'S
EUROPEAN STRATEGY



2012-2015 ACTION PLAN OF THE QUÉBEC GOVERNMENT'S EUROPEAN STRATEGY

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

BOOST ECONOMIC PROSPERITY	BOLSTER COOPERATION IN THE AREAS OF RESEARCH AND INNOVATION	FOSTER INDIVIDUAL MOBILITY	PROMOTE QUÉBEC CULTURE	INCREASE QUÉBEC'S CAPACITY TO TAKE ACTION AND DEVELOP ITS EXPERTISE
<p>1. Support the conclusion, implementation and follow-up of the Canada-EU Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> complete the negotiation of the agreement, with Québec's full participation in each round of negotiations; promote the agreement and maximize its spin-offs once it comes into effect; guarantee Québec's participation in the follow-up and management of the agreement. <p style="text-align: right;">MDEIE, MRI</p> <p>2. Every year, provide personalized support to a minimum of 200 Québec companies that wish to do business in the European market, particularly in the priority sectors of information technology, life sciences, green technology, transportation equipment and new materials. Also, every year, welcome a minimum of 20 European buyers interested in products from Québec's sectors of excellence.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">MDEIE, CRIQ</p> <p>3. Strengthen ties with investors by meeting every year with the management of at least 200 European companies, including 50 head offices located in Québec and at least 150 European subsidiaries in Québec, to entice them to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> invest in Québec; reinvest in their subsidiaries or create new subsidiaries in other sectors. <p style="text-align: right;">IQ</p> <p>4. Within the framework of the Plan Nord, boost investment-development efforts in the following sectors: energy, mining, forestry, wildlife, bio-food, tourism, infrastructure and the primary and secondary transformation of metals and wood products.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">IQ, MDEIE, MRNF, MRI</p> <p>5. Support the internationalization of areas of excellence and industrial clusters toward Québec's priority territories in Europe.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">MDEIE, MRI</p> <p>6. Support the development of the European market for Québec wood products by developing an Export Diversification Strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> support market development by hiring a wood-product industry codes and standards specialist in Brussels to expand Québec's knowledge of European standards; promote, within the EU, Québec's use of forestry practices aimed at ensuring sustainable forest management. <p style="text-align: right;">MRNF, MRI</p> <p>7. Increase the number of European tourists in Québec:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> expand tourist services in Québec by learning from the experiences of successful European destinations — France, the United Kingdom and Nordic countries, in particular; use a brand image for Québec tourism that is attractive to Europeans; increase promotional efforts in European tourism markets; through joint promotional projects with Ontario, encourage the development of Québec travel packages by European tour operators; every year, invite 300 European tour operators and journalists to Québec within the framework of travel grants and press and familiarization tours. <p style="text-align: right;">MTO</p>	<p>8. Foster the development of strategic initiatives in terms of research and innovation, notably through the creation of a team within the Québec Government Office in Brussels dedicated to research and innovation.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">MRI, MDEIE</p> <p>9. Within the framework of the Plan Nord, facilitate the development and exchange of scientific knowledge between Québec and European researchers studying northern environments in the subject areas of natural resources and land development, community wellness, infrastructure, northern biodiversity, the protection of ecosystems and climate change.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">MRI, MRNF, MDDEP, MDEIE</p> <p>10. Periodically organize a forum on innovation to bring together Québec and European partners from the public and private research sectors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> establish priorities for action; follow up on joint projects; exchange expertise and best practices. <p style="text-align: right;">MDEIE, MRI</p>	<p>11. Implement the Mutual Recognition Arrangements that stem from the Québec-France Agreement on the Mutual Recognition of Professional Qualifications and the Agreement Between the Government of Québec and the Government of the French Republic with Regard to Professional Mobility and the Integration of Migrants; as such:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> promote the many advantages of settling and working in Québec to French workers; make it easier to obtain the legal right to exercise a regulated profession, occupation or trade and to gain access to compensation measures required by professional bodies, such as bridging programs and internships; facilitate the process of obtaining or maintaining entry, residency and work visas; give access to socio-occupational integration services; assist companies with the hiring of workers or the mobility of their personnel in the other party's jurisdiction; exchange information, share best practices and implement specific cooperation measures between the two governments. <p style="text-align: right;">MRI, MICC, MESS, OPQ, MELS, Ministère du Travail</p> <p>12. Facilitate the mutual recognition of professional qualifications and workforce mobility between Québec and European countries.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">MRI, MDEIE</p> <p>13. Foster professional mobility, as well as cooperation in matters related to the integration of migrants, between Québec and Catalonia.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">MRI, MICC, MESS</p> <p>14. Support Québec companies and public organizations in their efforts to recruit and explore new pools of skilled labour elsewhere in Europe.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">MRI, MICC, MESS</p> <p>15. Conclude or renew social-security agreements with European countries.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">MRI</p> <p>16. Increase the exchange of young adults between Québec and Europe and further support their integration into the workforce:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> support youth exchanges between Québec, France and Wallonia-Brussels; negotiate partnership agreements between the OQMJ and other European regions; encourage young Québec artists to train in Europe and promote the distribution of their works there. <p style="text-align: right;">OQMJ, OFQJ, OQWBJ</p> <p>17. Further promote Québec's educational opportunities to Europe, in order to attract a greater number of European students to Québec.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">RI, MELS</p>	<p>18. Support Québec's artists, creators and companies in their efforts to develop the European market:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> every year, organize 15 missions for broadcasters, programming executives and publishers in Québec and in Europe to attend important cultural events at which Québec is present; encourage Québec's annual participation in 10 significant European cultural markets or events, especially those that feature Québec. <p style="text-align: right;">MCCCF, CALQ, SODEC, MRI</p> <p>19. Through cooperative agreements with European countries and regions, carry out 55 cultural projects aimed at collaborations, co-productions or the exchange of expertise.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">MCCCF, CALQ, SODEC, Musées nationaux, BAnQ, MRI</p> <p>20. Assist 15 Québécois artists in gaining access to studios and residencies in Europe, and in return welcome 15 European artists to studios and residencies in Québec, to enrich their experience with the process and develop professional contacts.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">MCCCF, CALQ, MRI</p>	<p>21. Develop long-term political, economic and institutional relations with Russia by opening a Québec Government Office in Moscow.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">MRI</p> <p>22. Utilize networks accessible to Québec by virtue of its membership in the Francophonie to advance the interests of Québec in Europe:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> initiate meetings and activities with diplomats from European member and observer countries of the Francophonie on issues that are of concern to Québec; take part in the activities of francophone ambassador groups in capital cities and international organizations in order to promote the French language and Québec culture; foster the development and furthering of francophone networks of expertise. <p style="text-align: right;">MRI</p> <p>23. Strengthen cooperation with European regions in the areas of climate change and sustainable development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> promote the role of federated states and regions in the implementation of international commitments touching on their areas of expertise; foster exchanges of expertise between Québec and Europe in the areas of climate change and sustainable development. <p style="text-align: right;">MRI, MDDEP</p> <p>24. Develop cooperation and exchange expertise with Europe on immigration — in particular, with the Council of Europe and the European Commission on questions regarding the integration of migrants, diversity management, intercultural dialogue, interculturalism and the fight against discrimination, as well as the specific issues of integration and social-cohesion indicators.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">MICC, MRI</p> <p>25. Pursue and develop cooperation between Québec and European countries in the areas of public security and justice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> through Francopol, participate in the exchange of expertise related to internal security; encourage the conclusion of agreements and exchange of expertise with firefighter training academies and police forces across Europe; establish a program for exchanging expertise with European prosecution services. <p style="text-align: right;">MSP, DPCP</p>

