



National Policy on

Rurality

A vision for the future

Québec 

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National Policy on

Rurality

INNOVATIVE RURAL COMMUNITIES
MAKING FOR A VIBRANT QUÉBEC

Québec 



Message from the Prime Minister

It is with great pleasure that I present the *National Policy on Rurality*, the first such policy to have been adopted by a Québec government, placing Québec in the ranks of the avant-garde.

Through this policy, the Government of Québec sends a clear message that it recognizes rural life and rural communities as being an essential and strategic component of Québec society and part and parcel of its identity. A vibrant and prosperous rural Québec is essential to social cohesiveness and to the sound economic well-being of all Québec.

The history, economy and social fabric of Québec are intricately woven with its territory and in particular with the rural communities that forged, inspired and developed it. Our fellow citizens who have chosen to live in rural areas represent a human potential of great value for our nation. These are people we can count on and whose contribution is invaluable for building the future of a strong and united Québec.

Our cultural and social identity is closely tied to the vast farmlands, forestlands and waterways that characterize our national territory. An immense common heritage was born of the active presence of the first inhabitants, the Aboriginal peoples, who were followed, many thousands of years later, by French, British, Irish and Scottish settlers who arrived, one by one, to put down roots. Today, rural Québec is inhabited by citizens from numerous ancestries.

As a national entity, the duty befalls us to ensure the sustainability of rural communities by supporting them in their development efforts and by building with them a social, cultural and economic standard of living that fulfils their expectations. If Québec now ranks among the OECD's 20 most industrialized nations in terms of its gross domestic product, it is due in part to the contribution of rural activity.

Rural Québec represents an asset to our society enviable the world over. Above and beyond the human potential it encompasses, it offers a precious capital on which to build the future and rise to the many challenges that face Québec. It offers a territory that is sufficiently vast and resource-rich to satisfy our needs for food, drinking water, energy and raw materials, not to mention tourism and recreational activities, housing and heritage. Indeed, the hundreds of rural communities that populate this territory are precious guardians and invaluable "developers".

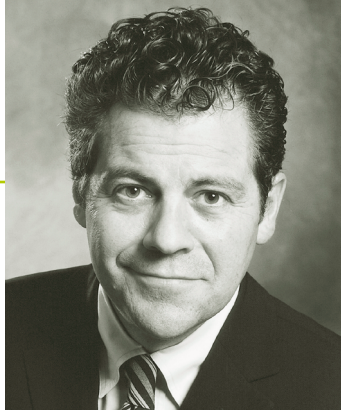


In the report *Villages prospères* (1996), the Government of Québec opened a window onto the rural world. We saw that rural communities are sometimes more vibrant and prosperous than many urban centres, with a standard of living that is second-to-none. This vitality is not the prerogative of a few privileged communities, but rather the lot of those who, with their nose to the grindstone, have consciously worked toward their development. As the government, we are staking that it is possible to extend this prosperity to other rural communities prepared to make the effort, by better supporting and accompanying them.

Certain rural municipalities in Québec are confronted not only with development problems but sometimes their very survival. The *National Policy on Rurality* seeks to complement the means already in place and serve to breathe new life into the most fragile of communities. More importantly, it emphasizes the need not only to strengthen what is already in place, but also to broaden and diversify the horizons of all rural areas. It is our collective duty to protect and enhance our rural territory. It is from this perspective that the Government of Québec intends to tailor its actions to the specific character of rural communities. We are therefore committing ourselves as the government to take into account the unique aspects of rural areas.

I invite all Quebecers from rural communities to pursue their efforts, with the implementation of the *National Policy on Rurality*, to occupy the territory in a dynamic fashion and to give a second wind to Québec's rurality and, consequently, to Québec as a whole.

Bernard Landry



Message from the Minister of State for Regions and Minister for Industry and Trade

By adopting the *National Policy on Rurality*, the Government of Québec formally acknowledges the rural world as a major and vital player in building and providing cohesiveness for Québec society. It also acknowledges the need to support rural communities and guide them in their development efforts. However, the government cannot act alone. This policy represents a commitment to bringing together several players, starting with the rural communities themselves, around which local and regional decision makers, national partners and the Government of Québec will converge and interact.

As Minister of State for Regions and person responsible for rurality, and as the MNA of a rural riding, I am fully aware of the numerous challenges that need to be met to secure a future for rural communities: land use and demographic trends, the strengthening and diversification of the economy, resource development, training of individuals, provision of services, preservation of identity, the revitalization of communities and the adaptation of government services to rural needs.

These concerns are shared by many. The government, along with local and regional communities, will have to invest time and energy into finding solutions. This is why a five-year horizon is needed to forge alliances, establish the bases for action and produce real change.

I will support rural communities in their quest for creative solutions adapted to their situation, helping to resolve some specific challenges. In this spirit, the *National Policy on Rurality* proposes that rural communities embark on an extensive journey centred on renewal and innovation. Together we will build a prosperous and dynamic rurality, a true reflection of Québec.

This policy not only aims to mobilize local communities and resources, but also to arrive at a more in-depth understanding of their environment so that their economic, social and organizational problems can be solved. Rural communities have the collective capability of doing something about their situation, which is expressed through close-knit ties, local culture and dynamics, a sense of belonging and identity with the community, which are key to renewed vitality. The time is right to rethink what approaches and actions to take and to create an environment that is conducive to bringing out the innovative and creative talents of local people. The revitalization of rural areas also calls for a new governance, one that involves all local elected officials.



To instil a sense of empowerment that will give results over time, the *National Policy on Rurality* has two aims. First, in the short term, it aims at making it possible for rural communities to handle situations that require immediate solutions and, second, in the long term, it aims at building the rural world of tomorrow, one for future generations. Working within this time frame means working toward long-lasting change by having a vision for the future and laying the groundwork that will ensure the sustainability of rural communities.

I therefore invite all Québec to take part in this stimulating and exciting exercise.

Gilles Baril

Declaration in Favour of the Rural World

The Government of Québec and its partners officially recognize the importance of rurality and are committed to work together toward the renewal, prosperity and sustainability of rural communities.

The Government of Québec, along with its partners, recognize:

- that the rural world and its local communities are a vital component of Québec's society and identity;
- that the future of Québec's rural world, like its present, concerns all Quebecers;
- that rural dwellers, by the cultural diversity of their environment, the values they hold dear and the heritage they preserve, are the bearers of a significant part of Québec's collective memory;
- that the diversity of communities, the presence of Aboriginal peoples, the use made of space, the size and variety of resources, the population density and the climate all shape rural Québec and give it a distinct place on the world stage;
- that the human, natural and cultural resources of the rural world not only contribute to the economic and social development of rural communities, but also to that of Québec as a whole;
- that rural communities play an essential role in the dynamic occupation and development of Québec's territory;
- that the future of rural and urban communities is closely related, and that their mutual cooperation is a determining factor for Québec;
- that a dynamic, prosperous and sustainable rural Québec is necessary for social, cultural and political cohesiveness and for the economic health of Québec as a whole.

The Government of Québec aims:

- to ensure that rural populations have access to quality public services;
- to adapt and adjust its programs and measures to take into account the unique aspects of rural communities, and more particularly those with low population density and spread out over large areas;
- to support, guide and stimulate the development capabilities of all rural communities and, within the framework of the National Policy on Rurality, to allocate technical and financial resources to them, starting with the communities experiencing the most difficulties;
- to adopt strategies for developing natural resources for the benefit of rural communities;
- to continue and step up the action taken to support initiatives involving the diversification of local and regional economies;
- to act in partnership with local and regional community leaders, notably their elected officials;
- to propose, when desirable, decentralized tools and means so that rural communities are more autonomous when it comes to their development.

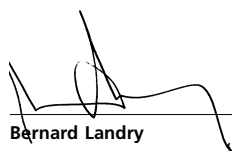


Whereas the current challenges require concerted action, rural players and the government, through their participation in implementing and following up the National Policy on Rurality, mutually agree:

- to set out and promote a common vision of rural development;
- to mobilize the public and elected officials around this issue;
- to support rural communities in their effort to build an environment that is socially, culturally and economically prosperous;
- to contribute, according to their respective mission, to the sustainability of the rural world by encouraging the active participation of women, the return of young people, the care of the elderly and the arrival of new families;
- to conserve, protect and develop rural territory.

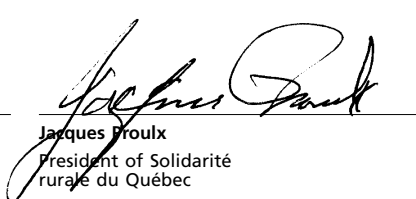
In witness whereof, the Government of Québec and its partners have agreed to work together to bring to fruition the statements contained in this declaration.

Government of Québec



Bernard Landry
Prime Minister

Primary Partners

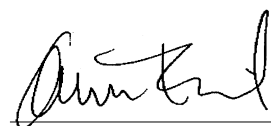


Jacques Proulx
President of Solidarité
rurale du Québec

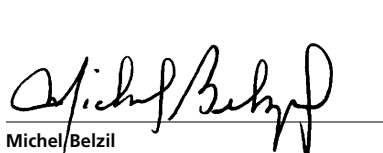
Associate Partners



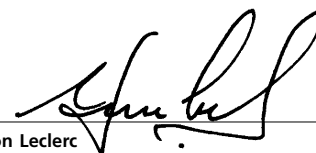
Émilien Nadeau
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Minister of State for Regions and
Minister of Industry and Trade



Michel Belzil
President of the Fédération
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Yvon Leclerc
President of the Association
des centres locaux de développement

Québec, Thursday, December 6, 2001

Québec 



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Introduction

Closely associated with the future of the rural world, land use is a true societal issue for Québec. With a vast expanse of land and an abundance of valuable resources, Québec's rural area is the envy of a number of countries. However, rural Québec, as elsewhere, is faced with unique constraints when it comes to demographics, youth migration, lack of skilled workers, erosion of proximity services and population aging. By adopting the *National Policy on Rurality*, the government has faith that rural communities are capable of managing their resources and bolstering their strengths. In so doing, they will bequeath a dynamic and prosperous territory to future generations who wish to settle in the country, where it is good to live.

For over 40 years, the Québec government has been concerned with regional development, always mindful of rural issues. The adoption of the *Policy Supporting Local and Regional Development* made 1997 a pivotal year. The Québec government started to make major changes to the way it was involved in the territory by granting a front seat to the local level and to rurality. It announced concrete measures in the document *Pour développer le Québec rural*: the hiring of rural officers and students and support for new initiatives. The measure for developing traditional Québec foods was introduced the following year.

In June 1997, the government recognized Solidarité rurale du Québec as an advisory body for rural development affairs. In 1998, it was entrusted with the mandate to prepare a brief on the expectations of rural communities with regard to a policy on rurality. This brief – *Avis pour une Politique gouvernementale de développement rural* – was tabled in February of 1999. At the same time, work was undertaken by interdepartmental and interregional committees and an MNA committee. Once these committees were in place, the Council of Ministers adopted, in October of 1999, a reference framework for the policy on rurality: *Pour une occupation dynamique du territoire rural*. This document was made available for consultation purposes in the regions and to the national partners of the Ministère des Régions. This framework served as the foundation of this policy.

The Québec government tabled, during the *2001-2002 Budget Speech*, the *Resource Regions Economic Development Strategy*. This strategy contained the budgetary and fiscal measures to strengthen and diversify the economy of seven regions, including over \$200 million going directly to rural areas.

Today, the *National Policy on Rurality* is meant to complete the *Policy Supporting Local and Regional Development* and provide more tangible and concrete support to the vitality of rural areas. It is also meant to break new ground and calls upon the boldness to act, a boldness that was a trait of our pioneers, who were not afraid to roll up their sleeves and build Québec.

This policy is subdivided into six chapters. The first chapter makes it possible to understand the place of rural communities in Québec society and the major challenges they face. The second chapter takes a look at the approach favoured and the policy directions proposed. The main thrust of the policy is found in the third chapter, for it outlines, on the one hand, a rural proposal that is a real “undertaking” toward development and, on the other, the mechanism and shared responsibilities for implementing and following up the policy. Each of the last three chapters focuses on a policy direction and defines the objectives and the means chosen to reach them. Some are already in place, serving as springboards to change, others are new. All call upon ways that will promote a unique rurality in Québec.



Rural Québec – 1 A Promising Territory



Although Québec's population lives mostly in urban areas, its territory has remained largely rural. In general, this territory is mostly found outside Québec's 31 urban agglomerations and includes over 1000 municipalities.

Over 1.6 million people, or 22% of the population, live in rural areas, which cover close to 78% of the inhabited territory¹. It is precisely this vast territory, inhabited by a very small population, that characterizes rural Québec.

Activities specific to rural areas are a major driving force in Québec's economy. Agriculture and fisheries, natural resources, manufacturing and tourism are all fields that contribute to Québec's diversity. These sectors continue to be valuable economic assets because of the thousands of jobs generated throughout both urban and rural Québec, in the areas of processing, distribution and services.

People who work in the agri-food processing industry, in sawmills and pulp and paper mills – or at the head offices that depend on them – live for the most part in Québec's 31 urban agglomerations. With its 400,000 jobs, the agri-food industry is a key sector in Québec's economy, fuelled by 70,000 direct jobs in agriculture. As for the natural resources sectors, they generate some 190,000 direct jobs in activities relating to the use, processing or development of forest, mining and energy resources. Investing in the development of rural areas therefore means striving for the prosperity of all.

On a social level, rural populations have shown time and time again their potential to effectively build and structure their communities and establish extensive solidarity networks. The cooperative model is a case in point. Moreover, rural areas have been one of the leading contributors to Québec's cultural diversity and a showcase for a multitude of events and tourist attractions in all regions. Settlement along the shoreline and the development of Québec's marine resources, the use of farmland, forests and energy, the quality and variety of landscapes, the originality of traditional and contemporary knowledge and know-how: these are all elements that, historically rooted in the rural community, have built Québec and will continue to shape it in the future. Rural dwellers, because of the cultural diversity of their way of life, the values they convey and the heritage they preserve, are the bearers of a significant part of Québec's collective memory.

¹ See territorial scope in the appendix.

Rural areas can be characterized as follows:

- *Population and housing density are relatively low, resulting in small-sized communities, scattered around a vast geographic area dominated by vegetation.*
- *Agriculture, livestock production or the development of natural resources play a leading role in the economic use of the land.*
- *The population has a special relationship with open areas, nature, the climate and seasons, which in turn have a bearing on their social, economic and cultural life.*
- *The members of each community know one another, they have a sense of belonging to a specific community that identifies itself with the land it occupies.*

Despite these common characteristics, there are disparities from one rural community to the next and these disparities are not only apparent between regions, but also within a same region, even within a same regional county municipality (RCM).

Certain rural communities are located on the fringe of urban centres, resulting in a positive impact on their socio-economic environment. These communities count on a population that grows at a rate higher than the Québec average. The job structure and the professional profile of the population of these territories are similar to those of neighbouring urban municipalities. However, being so close to the city only increases the trend toward the scattering of the population and urban sprawl. In addition, ill-planned development may have a negative impact on the rural way of life, the environment, the protection of farmland and the preservation of heritage resources.

Other rural areas, located farther away from the city, are composed of relatively prosperous municipalities. These municipalities can often rely on a dynamic agricultural sector to provide a solid and stable economic foundation. They also benefit from the contribution of activities and services relating to manufacturing, tourism and recreation. In terms of demographics, their situations vary widely and range from slight population growth to a demographic decline. Population aging, the degradation of the built environment and the difficulty in maintaining services are all stumbling blocks for these communities.



Several rural areas are very far from an urban or service centre, and are generally on the outer edge of inhabited areas. Jobs in the forest sector have a much more important place than in the rest of Québec. These rural areas find themselves in a difficult socio-economic situation and are faced with populations that age at faster rates. Several of them see their traditional economic foundations eroding and are faced with the disappearance or disintegration of proximity services².

Québec's rural mosaic also includes close to thirty Aboriginal communities, each representing the equivalent of a village.

There are also, within the rural areas, service centres that contribute to the vitality of the surrounding rural communities. These centres are at the heart of their rural activities and together they form an interrelated and complementary whole.

A WORLD OF CHALLENGES

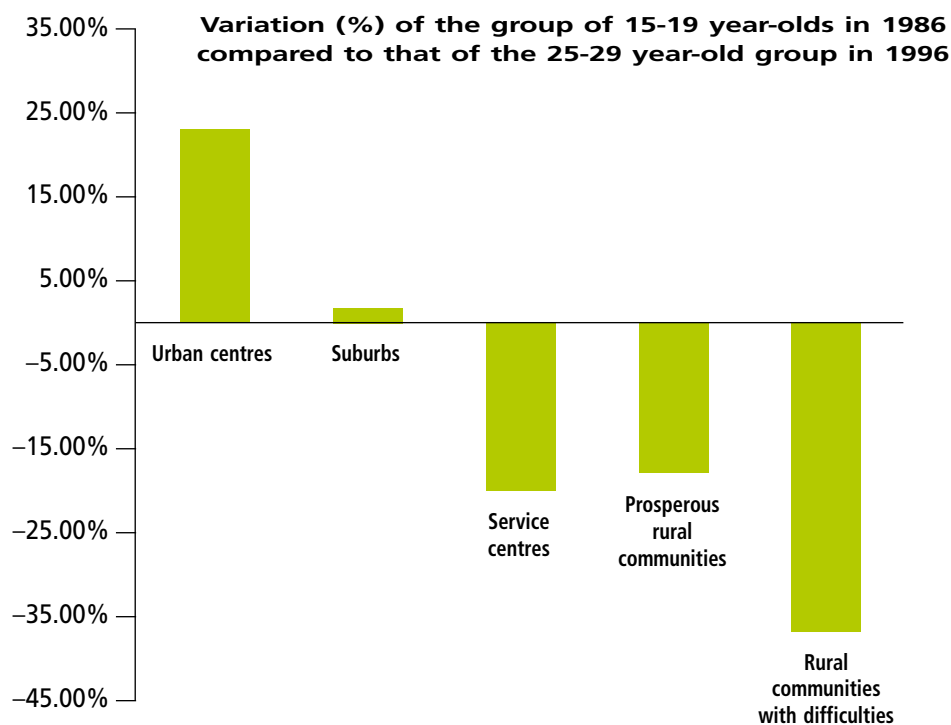
For rural communities to actively occupy their land, Québec needs to meet a number of challenges in the following areas: demographics, economic development and jobs, the development of resources, training and skills acquisition, neighbourhood network improvement, the provision of services, the participation of communities in their development and the adaptation of means of action. These challenges are formidable and interdependent. To meet them will take a broad vision and novel approaches.

USING THE LAND

Changing demographic trends represent one of the most acute problems for Québec. The low birth rate observed everywhere, except in Aboriginal communities, and the higher life expectancy rates will mean an older population in proportions never seen before and a lower number of available workers. The age pyramid will change enormously, a phenomenon made worse by the fact that the baby-boomer generation will progressively reach the age of 65 between 2010 and 2030. Of course, this phenomenon does not only affect rural communities.

² Proximity services refer to the range of public and private front-line services, regardless of the sector of activity in which they are provided: daycare, school, health or social service centre, police department, community or recreation centre, library, church, post office, grocery store, financial institution, garage, etc.

An analysis of trends per age group in the period from 1996 to 2021 shows the similarities among the various areas, whether rural, rural-urban or metropolitan. In these respective areas, the disquieting decline of young people under 25 years old (– 9.8%, – 10.4% and – 6.8%) and the increase of people aged 65 and over (10.9%, 11.5% and 8.7%)³ show a similar trend in all territories, a trend that is slightly more prevalent in RCMs with a census agglomeration⁴ (greater drop in young people and greater increase in older people).



The migration of young people is more problematic in rural areas. An analysis of the change which occurred in a group of young people aged 15 to 19 years in 1986 and aged 25 to 29 years in 1996⁵, is cause for much concern. In rural communities experiencing difficulties, this group dropped by 36.4%, whereas in prosperous rural communities, it only dropped by 18.1%. The rate increased by 22.6% in the 31 urban centres and by 1.3% in Québec as a whole.

³ Special compilations by the Ministère des Régions using demographic forecasts by the Institut de la statistique du Québec.

⁴ A census agglomeration (CA), as defined by Statistics Canada, is a large urban area (known as the urban core) together with adjacent urban and rural areas (known as urban and rural fringes) that have a high degree of social and economic integration with the urban core. A CA has an urban core population of at least 10,000, based on the previous census.

⁵ Based on censuses from 1986 to 1996.



A recent study⁶ on the migration of youth in Québec makes it possible to better understand this phenomenon. Close to half (46.5%) of Quebecers from 20 to 34 years old have left their place of origin at one time or another in their life. When young rural dwellers are compared with those from other environments, no big difference was noted. Accordingly, in all cases, migration increases with age and level of education, with women migrating more than men. However, young rural dwellers leave their home town (only a forth still live in the same municipality as their parents) in greater numbers than other young people to pursue their education or live their life. Twice as many rural dwellers migrate outside their region as other young people and 30% of them return to their birthplace to work, start a family or live in their own home. In addition, young rural dwellers look favourably on their place of origin. A large proportion of those who live in the city consider that their situation is temporary. When asked where they would rather live, two thirds opted for the country and the others for the suburbs.

These massive trends alone cannot explain the demographic situation of several rural communities. Some of them are caught in a true downward spiral. The closing of the main local business or the decline of the leading economic sector (mines, forests, fisheries) causes the number of jobs to drop, which in turn leads to the migration of active populations. A dwindling population means the disappearance of or a breakdown in services, making leaving even more tempting for those having stayed behind. The municipality stops developing and stagnates. Fewer initiatives are undertaken, the social fabric unravels, the economic structure erodes, and then people leave for good.

Maintaining and renewing populations is a crucial strategic challenge for a dynamic land use, both for rural communities and for Québec as a whole.

Diversifying the economy and developing resources

Economic problems show different faces depending on the area involved. Nonetheless, the symptoms of decline are more apparent in communities where cutbacks in the sectors of agriculture, forestry and fisheries were not compensated for by jobs created in second and third processing activities or in other sectors. The dependence on a single economic activity or industry or fiercer competition stemming from globalization of the economy has been, in some communities, a major obstacle.

⁶ Gauthier, Madeleine et al., INRS–Culture et Société, *La Migration des jeunes de milieu rural*, August 2001. Study conducted based on a survey of a sampling of 5328 young people from various regions in Québec, among whom more than 30% live or have lived in a rural area.

All of Québec's regions have benefited from the economic growth of recent years. However, for various reasons, both historical and geographical, development gaps still exist among the regions, and are particularly felt in regions whose economy is based on the development of natural resources and those with a highly active manufacturing sector. Mostly composed of RCMs of a rural nature, the resource regions are characterized by a less diversified economy and a less developed manufacturing sector than Québec as a whole. In the natural resources sector, these regions are faced with a difficult global market with direct repercussions on the forest and mining sectors, and on the fisheries sector, which has seen its demersal (bottomfish) stocks drop considerably. Companies established in resource regions or wishing to invest in them did not benefit, up until the adoption of the *Resource Regions Economic Development Strategy*, from any significant tax breaks.

One finding worth noting is that the level of development and vitality varies considerably from one rural community to the next. In the most prosperous communities, local players try to consolidate what they have, broaden the economic foundations and prepare workers for existing jobs or those to come. The vitality of these communities ensures that their population increases and is renewed, and that a wider range of services can be provided in several sectors. For some communities, globalization has been the impetus for an enhanced entrepreneurial spirit, thus contributing to faster growth and a greater spill-over effect.

The communities that have most successfully countered decline are those that were able to change their ways of doing things (cooperation, export, expansion and diversification of production systems, distinctive tourism products, etc.), and the vitality of their businesses is often remarkable.

Rural communities are keenly aware of the importance of preserving the resources that brought them into being and are their livelihood. These communities want to be more closely associated with the development and integrated management of their territorial resources. The wide open spaces, the environment and the beauty of the landscapes are all valuable assets and truly beneficial for their development. Local resources in agriculture, forestry and fisheries, along with the tourist and recreation potential and attractions, can be developed and promote the emergence of a wide variety of highly sought local products. However, developers have a limited access to technical resources and expertise, which limits the perfecting of new products or services.

Rural communities would like their area's resources (natural, cultural, tourism and heritage) to be developed within a perspective of sustainable development so that they may serve as the foundation for prosperity and an enviable quality of life.



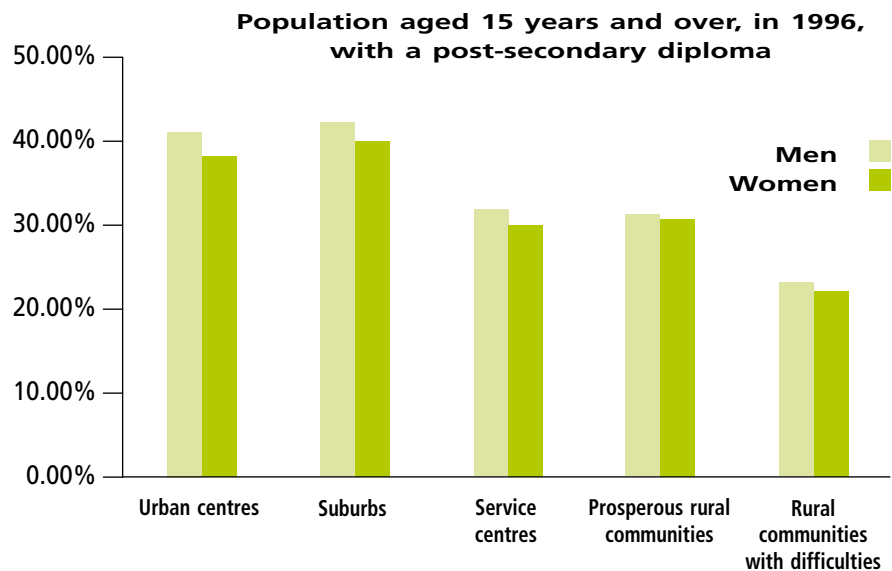
This means that the members of these communities, developers and the government need to mobilize and put serious effort into creating conditions that are conducive to bringing about community-based development initiatives and that lead to permanent jobs. Rural populations must be in a position to actively participate in developing a new economic, cultural and social environment. However, some rural areas have been harder hit economically than others. The poverty that exists in these areas is manifested by low education levels and major training deficiencies in the population.

Providing people with skills

A prosperous economy must rely on skilled and creative human capital with access to adapted tools. However, the problems stemming from low education levels and poor training are particularly acute in rural areas with difficulties, as demonstrated by these statistics.

The last census of Statistics Canada (1996) shows that almost 38% of young people aged 15 to 24 who live in rural communities with difficulties do not go to school, or 7% more than the Québec average. Also, 22% of the population aged 15 and over living in prosperous rural communities has a level of schooling below ninth grade. This percentage jumps to 32% in rural communities with difficulties, clearly higher than the Québec average, which is 18%.

The picture does not get any brighter where post-secondary education is considered. The Québec average for people 15 years and older who have a post-secondary diploma is 38%. This percentage drops to only 22% in rural communities with difficulties (30% in prosperous rural communities). Finally, four times fewer people 15 years and over in rural communities with difficulties have a university degree than the Québec average (3% compared to 12%). However, in rural areas, it is observed that women have almost the same level of education as men. The contribution of these women to the development of their community will therefore be essential and beneficial.



The distance from training centres, the difficulty in making groups of a sufficient size to benefit from certain programs, and training sometimes poorly adapted to the needs of rural communities are all stumbling blocks to educating young people and adults. Yet, training, the acquisition of individual and collective skills, innovation and a business sense are essential ingredients for the economic vitality of a community.

To offset these problems, it is necessary to call upon new ways of offering and organizing training services.

Ensuring services

Certain factors influence the provision of services in rural areas: the size of communities, their location in relation to service centres and urban poles, the nature of the secondary sector and, in a more general way, the economic structure of the geographic area where people live. Solidarité rurale du Québec recently conducted a survey in 70% of the RCMs that have rural areas to examine the provision of services in rural communities. "Municipalities with 5000 inhabitants or under have very few daycare services, [...] private doctors' offices, specialized grocery stores and, especially, mass transit services⁷." The survey also revealed a large gap among communities, since the range of services is considerably smaller in municipalities with 2500 inhabitants or under. Thus, "45% of municipalities with 500 to 999 inhabitants have a primary school whereas there is one in 83.7% of municipalities

⁷ Solidarité rurale du Québec, *Le Village au quotidien*, Études rurales collection, June 2001, p. 37. [translation]



with 3000 to 4999 inhabitants⁸.” The demographic situation will undoubtedly have an impact in the short, medium and long term on public and private services in certain areas.

When it comes to schools, grocery stores, post offices, banks or social housing, the provision of services is uneven and depends on a multitude of factors such as aging business owners, non-profitable services, the standardization of equipment and the difficulty to recruit skilled workers.

A declining rural community will gradually lose its services, and its population will then be increasingly forced to move on at increasing distances to obtain what used to be available locally. In addition, in low density areas, the dispersion of resources and the non-integrated management of the main services available do not make it possible to offer the best service at the lowest cost.

Nevertheless, it has been shown that a non-central location, a population reduced to a few hundred inhabitants or a difficult economic situation do not always determine the level of services offered.⁹ Some communities have found new ways of providing services that are adapted to their needs. For example, they share office space and equipment or they reinforce their services by serving several municipalities.

If ever there is a sector where innovation and original ideas are needed, it is certainly that of the provision of services in rural areas.

Preserving an identity

Local history, knowledge and expertise, along with landscapes and architectural heritage, are and must remain an ongoing source of inspiration for Québec artists to continue producing original work. From the *Bottine souriante* to the *Cirque du soleil*, rural Québec is the cradle of a world renowned cultural industry. Our society needs these individuals and groups, for they contribute productions and creations that reflect the diversity and richness of our identity. Our challenge is to keep providing a place for creation in Québec’s local areas and to stimulate the contribution of rural communities in expressing a flourishing home-grown Québec culture. Although individuals continue to be the main agents responsible for preserving heritage, efforts must be put forth to enhance towns and villages and develop the heritage resources of rural communities.

⁸ Leblanc, Patrice, Chaire Desjardins en développement des petites collectivités of UQAT, *Éléments pour un portrait des petites collectivités du Québec*, 1998. [translation]

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 21, From a study done by Lucie Pépin (2000).

Encouraging community action

Experience has shown that the most fragile type of development is one that comes from outside, that is imported and over which the community has little control. Among the various ways to counter this and to restore a climate conducive to development are more joint efforts, increased mobilization of local leaders and the decentralization of businesses in the area.

An entrepreneurial spirit and greater social cohesiveness should not be underestimated as a way to rise to the economic challenges facing rural communities. According to the report *Corvée d'idées*¹⁰ drafted by Solidarité rurale du Québec, rural communities top the list of those wanting to take development into their own hands provided they have the means to do so. Assuming this level of responsibility is demanding, but several rural areas, already on their way to endogenous development, may serve as models in this domain. Firing up the desire to take action, encouraging initiative, sharing approaches that lead to success and accepting the challenge of developing one's community are all ways of giving local communities the impetus to prosper.

The commitment of rural communities with regard to their development remains the cornerstone of social revitalization and economic diversification. Rural communities are in the best position to tap into the potential of their environment. By calling upon the creativity and innovation capabilities of people and communities, in addition to partnerships, mutual aid and networking among rural and urban municipalities, rural communities will be well on their way to a promising future.

Adapting government action

In a rural environment, the territorial scale on which action can be taken is often limited, but the economic or social impact of this action is wide-reaching. The various reorganizations that have affected government services or programs, such as those relating to employment insurance, have, in general, affected rural communities because of the major adjustments that were imposed.

On a social level, governmental action has made it possible to stabilize revenues and protect populations from sudden changes in the economy. However, this action has not been without its share of negative effects. Thus, the introduction of various income support measures, often of a passive nature, along with the implementation of programs that were generally centralized and poorly adapted to the realities of rural areas, have put a damper on the initiative and creativity of certain communities. In some cases, this intervention even contributed to developing a pattern of dependency.

¹⁰Solidarité rurale du Québec, *Tant vaut le village, tant vaut le pays*, Échafaudage pour une politique rurale, October 1998.



The application criteria of financial assistance programs are often ill-adapted to rural realities. For instance, some programs do not take into account the fact that the commercial value of buildings and businesses is lower than that in urban areas and requires comparatively higher capital outlays and personal guarantees from rural developers.

At the centre of the rural world's demands is that government policies and programs be tailored to the highly diversified environments of rural communities. To meet these demands, the government has proceeded to revise and harmonize its actions to better support efforts put forth on a local level, to define clear policy directions regarding rural development and to give itself more flexible and effective mechanisms for taking action.



The Rural World – A Vision for the Future

2



Designed to be progressive and complementary to the Policy Supporting Local and Regional Development, the National Policy on Rurality is above all a framework for action that strives to mobilize all interested parties and leaves the door open to new initiatives and original endeavours. Its implementation will make it possible to establish sustainable means of action and propose perspectives that deserve to be explored further. With the adoption of this policy, the Québec government agrees, along with its partners, to support and guide rural communities in their quest for tangible results, both in the short and long term.

This policy proposes, on the one hand, an approach that enables the setting out of terms and conditions for supporting rural communities and guiding them toward consensus-building. On the other hand, it presents three policy directions that translate the government's willingness to support rural communities while respecting their choices and development approaches.

The Québec government is proposing ambitious objectives to the rural world. However, neither party will seek to reach them all, or all at once. These objectives will serve as an impetus for change and provide a common vision of the rural Québec of tomorrow.

THE APPROACH

The approach proposed in the National Policy on Rurality includes several components, a summary of which follows:

- **A flexible approach:** The policy offers rural communities a flexible framework for action so that development efforts are geared toward their specific needs.
- **An approach that encourages local initiatives:** The policy aims to give rise to and spur on initiative along with an individual, collective and community entrepreneurial spirit, which will spark community vitality.
- **An approach that stimulates and supports innovation:** The policy promotes creativity so that local problems can be addressed differently and in doing so, new ways of looking at and taking action in rural areas will emerge.
- **A new way of governing that involves partnerships with community players:** The policy aims to improve the capacity of rural communities to take their development into their own hands by shouldering more responsibility, acquiring means of action and working in conjunction with local and regional partners.

FIRST POLICY DIRECTION

STIMULATING AND SUPPORTING THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND PROSPERITY OF RURAL COMMUNITIES

The experience of prosperous rural communities has taught us, both here and abroad, that their growth is derived from their population's sense of creativity and innovation. Success often stems from the secondary and tertiary processing of resources, the tapping into new niches born out of local creative genius, the access to technical resources, training, leadership and the development of distinctive local culture. While continuing to rely on traditionally thriving sectors such as agriculture, fisheries and forestry, one of the keys to the future of Québec's rural communities is to be economically diverse and open to national and international markets.

To ensure the sustainability of rural areas, it is important to instil a widespread development dynamic, especially in smaller communities and, more specifically, in those hard hit by an economic downturn. Realistic outlooks for economic development and job creation, which are mindful of local realities, will help create a promising future for rural areas. Looking at new avenues, in under-explored market segments, such as the creation of new products and distinctive niches, will open up opportunities for businesses and maximize community potential. It is imperative to stimulate and guide the individual and collective entrepreneurial spirit so that all aspects of local economic life are improved.

Several projects conceived in a rural environment, regardless of their scope, harbour the seeds for economic development and job creation. Too often, the lack of technical resources and expertise for local proponents holds back new enterprise and concrete projects.

In a process to appropriate development, human capital remains central to creativity. Furthermore, the acquisition of knowledge and the development of skills are essential components of this process.

Three objectives stem from this first policy direction:

- *To diversify the economy, strengthen and develop employment opportunities and foster an entrepreneurial spirit;*
- *To increase the population's participation in managing resources and developing its territory;*
- *To step up knowledge acquisition, skills development and innovation efforts.*



SECOND POLICY DIRECTION

ENSURING THE QUALITY OF LIFE OF RURAL COMMUNITIES AND INCREASING THEIR APPEAL

Maintaining and improving proximity services, social cohesiveness and community life represent, along with the economy and employment, determining factors in many people's decision to continue living, settle down or raise a family in a rural area.

The government intends to provide quality services to rural populations. This commitment involves a major challenge: that of maintaining services in rural communities or of making them available. To organize public services, maintain or set up private or collective services, it is more than ever vital to pool resources and find innovative ways of operating.

By developing their area's resources, rural communities will improve their quality of life. By making their surroundings more attractive, they will keep their current residents and draw new ones. By cultivating the natural and cultural heritage of towns and villages, by increasing the quality of their environment and giving it a distinctive character, rural dwellers will develop a strong sense of pride and belonging to their community.

Also, the Québec government will ensure that its programs and measures are adapted and adjusted to take into account rural communities with special needs, such as those with low population density, distant services and an aging population.

Three objectives stem from this second policy direction:

- *To ensure that proximity services are maintained and improved;*
- *To improve and promote the rural way of life and heighten the sense of belonging;*
- *To encourage the adaptation of government policies and programs.*

THIRD POLICY DIRECTION

SUPPORTING THE COMMITMENT OF CITIZENS TO DEVELOPING THEIR COMMUNITY AND ENSURING THE SUSTAINABILITY OF RURAL QUÉBEC

Regardless of its level of development, each rural community has its own dynamics and resources that enable it to improve its conditions. Undertaking a development process is demanding for there is no ready-made solution and each community must find the one that suits it best. The process proposed in this policy also seeks to create social cohesiveness to spur communities into joint action. Everyone must play their part: young people, the elderly, women and men, newcomers and long-time residents. The job of local leaders is to work in partnership so as to establish outlooks for the future that not only have a mobilizing effect, but that also create the climate of trust essential for making decisions and collective commitments.

The development process of rural communities must, in the long run, enable them to be appealing not only on an economic level but also in terms of living environment and quality of life. The work to be undertaken includes providing jobs, maintaining populations, taking care of the elderly, attracting young people and families, along with a larger proportion of immigrants, improving community services and taking advantage of the contribution of women. To achieve better results, good relations among the rural municipalities of an RCM and the contribution of urban areas appear to be assets worth promoting.

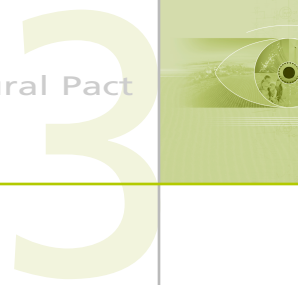
Three objectives stem from this policy direction:

- *To promote the place and role of young people and newcomers in maintaining dynamic rural communities and population renewal;*
- *To take into account the situation and special contribution of women who live in rural areas;*
- *To reinforce the participation and commitment of the rural world and emphasize “rural-urban” complementarity.*



To Undertake True
Development –
The Rural Pact

3



With the *National Policy on Rurality*, the Québec government intends to act in partnership with local and regional community leaders, notably elected officials, and agree on a joint commitment to invest and innovate for the purpose of building a prosperous rural environment that lives up to the expectations of rural populations. To solidify this commitment, the government plans to support, guide and stimulate the development capacity of all rural communities and provide technical and financial resources, in priority to those experiencing difficulties. It therefore proposes to conclude a solidarity pact with elected officials in each rural area, accompanied by a budget. These elected officials, for their part, will agree to support rural communities in their efforts to build an environment that is socially, culturally and economically prosperous.

Centred on commitment and innovation, the **rural pact** will provide rural communities with the means to join forces and undertake projects aimed at improving their living conditions. This collective “undertaking” also aims to test innovative approaches that call upon all local development potential and which are based on the furthering of the communities’ human, natural and heritage resources.

The pact is a tool that enables the government and the community to pool their strengths so they can act in a global, coherent and long-term manner for the good of the rural area, taking its specific features, forces and potential into account. This pact will be confirmed by a formal agreement between the Québec government and each RCM involved. The main terms of this solidarity agreement, aimed at the prosperity and sustainability of rural communities, are as follows:

- The pact states that the RCM and the government mutually agree to promote the development in rural communities according to the three policy directions outlined in the National Policy on Rurality:
 - stimulating and supporting the sustainable development and prosperity of rural communities;
 - ensuring the quality of life of these communities and increasing their appeal;
 - supporting the commitment of citizens to develop their community and ensuring the sustainability of rural Québec.
- This agreement commits the RCM to promoting the development of each rural municipality on its territory and puts in place conditions conducive to partnership, leadership and support.
- This agreement sets out the role of the various partners who will support rural development efforts, notably that of local development centres (LDCs).

-
- For the duration of the agreement, the Québec government commits to transferring to the RCM a budget envelope that will make it possible:
 - to support the process that will see rural communities and the RCM get organized, put forth ideas and take action;
 - to support operations that make it possible to carry out local projects, i.e. organizational structure, start up and guidance phases;
 - to establish with the RCMs the support measures that all the rural communities of their territory could use: specific training for development players, knowledge of resources and any other guidance initiatives for rural renewal that an RCM would wish to undertake.

To live up to these rural pact commitments, the Québec government will put in place levers for innovating communities, which come with an envelope of **\$90 million over the next five years**. This budget envelope is designed to complement existing programs and measures. This amount will be shared among the RCMs involved, after taking into account the size of the rural municipality's population and their socio-economic situation. The assistance granted will therefore be greater for rural areas with difficulties.

- The RCM will be responsible for managing the budget envelope that applies to its territory. It will also ensure that each rural community sets itself a vision for the future, identifies what conditions are needed for it to develop and put together concrete projects.
- As a signer of the pact and as manager of the budget envelope, the RCM will be accountable for the sums it is entrusted with. The RCM will render accounts to the government, report to its population on the steps taken and results achieved by establishing simple management methods for its citizens.
- The government and the RCM will agree in the rural pact, if need be, to transfer certain sums to authorized agents.
- In this framework, the government agrees to stand behind the initiatives and projects included in the pact by providing knowledge and expertise through the departments and agencies in its regions.
- The government will encourage its departments, agencies and public corporations to institute and conceive new ways of doing business as a support to the rural pact.



The fields covered by the rural pacts could be wide-ranging so as to adapt to the rural areas involved. Certain of these fields are particularly important for the sustainability of rural communities, notably:

- getting young people and families to stay or to return, and providing ways to help them settle down permanently;
- encouraging young people to participate in the political, social, cultural and economic life of their local community;
- improving public and private services, such as transportation, cultural, recreational and sporting activities, offering integrated local services within a cooperative, a social economy business or any other form of local entrepreneurship;
- training, guiding or setting up networks of promoters and local players who will contribute to the process of revitalizing and innovating rural areas;
- researching and developing new products or potential areas for economic development and job creation;
- identifying the human resources available on the territory and developing them through knowledge and skills acquisition and qualification upgrading;
- expanding production systems, promoting business-based networks, supporting individual or collective entrepreneurship and encouraging self-employment.

Although their contents may vary, rural pacts will all have in common the ability to take the best possible action to stimulate and support projects in line with the directions of the National Policy on Rurality. Each RCM will have to establish on its territory a common will to develop rurality, set out a vision for the future, activate the intellectual capacities of the community and ensure that urban and rural areas complement each other better. By forging a partnership with the lifeblood of the community, by mobilizing the public, including local elected officials around rural issues, by properly using the specialized resources in its area (LDC, school board, CLSC, LEC, CJE, educational institutions and go-between groups) and by urging them to participate, the RCM will trigger a true collective “undertaking” toward rural development.

The policy’s means of action are all presented in the next chapters and constitute a tool box that will be used when the rural pacts are implemented.

A SHARED POLITICAL RESPONSIBILITY

The success of the National Policy on Rurality depends on a close partnership between elected municipal officials and the Québec government. This partnership is emphasized in the rural pact, the key mechanism of the policy, which outlines the responsibility of the **regional county municipalities** (RCMs) and of the Québec government.

The **Minister of State for Regions** and the **minister responsible for the region** will ensure, with the MNA, the commitment of the Québec government to support the National Policy on Rurality, to sign the rural pact and to bring it to fruition.

The **regional county municipality** will ensure, for its part, the commitment of the community and its partners to work toward revitalizing the rural territory. It is responsible for the budgets entrusted to it and must render accounts to the government and the population within its territory.

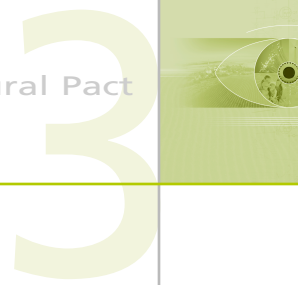
Rural municipalities will be the first ones called upon to implement this policy. Their commitment is essential. They must mobilize themselves, work together, encourage leadership in their community, open their doors to young people and families, show initiative and create projects. To succeed, they will need support, expertise and steadfast determination. Within the framework of the rural pact, the RCM will coordinate the implementation of this operation and will mobilize the partners and organizations of its area to support the communities involved.

ACTIVE REPRESENTATIVES

Certain representatives will have a more specific part to play in implementing the policy.

The **local development centre** (LDC), which is responsible for local economic development, job creation and the social economy, is well placed to guide the RCM in its rural development process. It will provide the support of a rural development agent for leadership, mobilization and technical assistance for processes undertaken by rural communities and consensus-building efforts by the RCM. It also provides assistance to proponents in rural and Aboriginal communities for carrying out their projects.

The role of this agent is central to successfully revitalizing rural communities and success will only be achieved if there is a climate of mutual trust between it and the local players. It is for this reason that its mandate will be adjusted to take into account the context of the rural pact.



The **regional development council** (RDC) has, for its part, the mandate to put in place a mechanism for supporting rurality at the regional level. Its actions will support the RCMs and rural communities by pooling and mobilizing the regional resources that can contribute to developing rural areas, such as the universities and CÉGEPs, regional development cooperatives, research centres and funding agencies. In addition, the RDC could support projects covering more than one RCM territory and integrate the concept of rurality into its strategic planning and general development agreements.

Under the presidency of the associate deputy minister of the region in question, the **conférence administrative régionale** (CAR), which brings together the regional offices of the government departments and agencies of a region, will support the implementation of the policy. Accordingly, these departments and agencies will work in a concerted fashion and will be the government partners for implementing the pact with each RCM concerned.

NATIONAL PARTNERS FOR IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY

The scope of the National Policy on Rurality, along with its global and territorial approach, will require a concerted effort on the part of the main players of Québec society.

Solidarité rurale du Québec, the government's advisory body in the area of rural development, is a forum for discussing, debating, researching and supporting the rural world. It keeps a constant watch on major societal issues and their impact on rurality. This is why the Ministère des Régions is planning to guarantee its funding until 2005 so it can assume the following mandate:

- provide the Québec government with briefs on issues concerning the rural world and carry out the necessary research and consultations;
- advise and support local and regional communities on the same types of issues;
- train and support rural development agents;
- collaborate with the Ministère des Régions and its partners in the area of rural development and be a centre for information and ideas for the rural world.

The Minister of State for Regions intends to set up and chair a committee which will provide support in implementing and following up the policy. This **Comité des partenaires de la ruralité** will be composed of representatives of the main national agencies that will take part in implementing this policy: Solidarité rurale du Québec (SRQ), the Fédération québécoise des municipalités (FQM), the Union des municipalités du Québec (UMQ), the Association des centres locaux de développement du Québec (ACLDQ), the Association des régions du Québec (ARQ) along with researchers recognized for their expertise in the field or any other body named by the minister.

The Minister of State for Regions is responsible for rural development at the Québec government level and will ensure that there is cooperation, knowledge, innovation and support for the initiatives of benefit to rural areas. To achieve this, a **Secrétariat à l'innovation rurale** will be created within the Ministère des Régions and have the following roles:

- to coordinate the implementation of the policy;
- to chair an interdepartmental coordination committee on rurality;
- to establish indicators, assess results, prepare regular reports on the policy, send them to the Minister of State for Regions and to the government;
- to be aware of any policy or initiative relevant to the rural world and undertake research and studies with its partners. For this, the Ministère des Régions has joined forces with the Fonds québécois de la recherche sur la société et la culture, to ensure concerted action when it comes to rurality-based research;
- to identify innovative approaches in the area of rural development that could be subject to pilot projects (e.g. have experimental programs in certain control RCMs to test various approaches), to promote good practices, to set up tactical action groups to support communities experiencing certain difficulties or lacking expertise;
- to support the associate deputy ministers of the regions and their teams in their mandates involving rurality issues;
- to see that Québec's rural areas have their rightful share of federal investment, and that the federal government respects the *National Policy on Rurality* and Québec's responsibilities in this area.



**Stimulating and Supporting the
Sustainable Development and
Prosperity of Rural Communities**

4



To occupy the territory in a dynamic fashion and improve future prospects for Québec's rurality, the National Policy on Rurality first places a strong emphasis on the diversification of the economy and the development of human, cultural and natural resources. Research and innovation, access to science and technology, entrepreneurship and skills development are the basic pre-requisites for the economic prosperity of rural communities.

These rural areas represents a fertile ground on which a community can build to support and boost job creation, while consolidating and implementing new activities. There are many ways to bring a community's economy back to life. They include the presence of all types of businesses, a well-grounded mentality of self-employed workers and resources to develop.

DIVERSIFYING THE ECONOMY, STRENGTHENING AND DEVELOPING EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES AND FOSTERING AN ENTREPRENEURIAL SPIRIT

Diversifying an economy not only results in creating a broader range of activities and businesses, but also helps prevent the weaknesses inherent in exploiting only one resource or depending on a single company. It also adds value to the economic activities already in the area.

Intensifying production methods results in a somewhat paradoxical situation, since the investments made are often inversely proportional to the number of jobs created. It is by seeking to be more competitive that many businesses modernize their facilities and in so doing decrease their number of workers. To strengthen and develop employment opportunities, this phenomenon needs to be compensated for by investing in other economic activities, creating new companies, consolidating established ones and seeking to increase earnings and spin-offs.

Rural communities have a number of potential strengths linked to their resources and their territory. They need to be drawn upon so that economic niches that catalyze development can be identified. Here again, innovation and an entrepreneurial spirit are key. One possibility could be to implement in several municipalities a territory-based project, which will call upon both physical resources (agriculture, forests, mining, aquatic environments, wildlife, fisheries) and unique socio-cultural aspects: history, housing and heritage. Moreover, a whole range of high quality productions could be developed to satisfy specific consumer needs. This context would create numerous business opportunities for small enterprises seeking to fill a void. They could, among other things, offer niche products or traditional farm products.

For rural communities to prosper and develop in a sustainable way, there is a host of tools that can be used. In conjunction with partnerships, such tools can lead to more effective land use and have a greater impact on local economies.

Since the implementation of the *Policy Supporting Local and Regional Development*, rural communities can count on a local development centre (LDC) in every RCM. This organization helps project proponents draw up their business plans, makes loans to businesses and supports self-employed workers. The LDC also lends a hand in developing social economy businesses and encourages young people seeking to start a business. A local employment centre (LEC) also offers various services to individuals, including training, job placement services and active employment measures.

In conjunction with the RCM, the government has reinforced the LDCs' capacity for action in the 56 RCMs in Québec that struggle with the greatest economic and social difficulties. An envelope of **\$11.2 million was earmarked to boost the economic initiatives of these rural areas**, and to support all the development phases of their projects (pre-start-up, specific expertise, micro-projects and resource inventories), including the social economy. This measure will make it possible to broaden the economic base of the most fragile communities.

Through the **Resource Regions Economic Development Strategy**, the government has recently set forth a series of measures having a significant impact on the development of rural communities. This strategy aims:

- to accelerate the diversification of the economy through persuasive tax measures and incentives (zero tax for SMEs in the manufacturing sector and a refundable tax credit for resource-processing activities);
- to ensure the growth of the resource sector through sustainable forest development, mining exploration and the modernization of fishing boats;
- to facilitate the financing of SMEs and the creation of businesses, notably by supplying new financial tools.

Over \$200 million have thus been allocated to stimulate the economy of rural communities in resource regions, where a sizeable portion of the economic activities relating to the development and processing of natural resources take place. Several of these measures will be explained further in this chapter.



In addition, **the Aboriginal Development Fund** has been allotted \$60 million over five years and this amount has been made available to Aboriginal communities for their economic and community development. These monies will also foster linkages and have a spill-over effect on the economy of surrounding rural communities.

To enhance the potential of local and niche farm products, the government made a commitment, in October of 2001, during the *Rendez-vous de mi-parcours des décideurs de l'agriculture et de l'agro-alimentaire*, a decision-making forum in the agricultural and agri-food sectors, to devising a **global development strategy**. It will include technical assistance, the creation of distinctive trademarks and the development of partnerships (marketing and business network associations).

To finalize this strategy, a working group will be formed and include Solidarité rurale du Québec, the regional agri-food consultation committees, MAPAQ and the Ministère des Régions.

To support this strategy and, with the aim of fostering the processing or enhancement of agricultural resources and the emergence of new productions or activities, the Québec government and **La Financière agricole** have agreed to create a **new branch**. It will manage a **capital of \$24 million to support upstream and downstream agricultural investment projects and regional development projects**.

To assist developers in safeguarding knowledge and know-how, enhancing rural heritage, fostering land use and developing local farmland, **the assistance measure for traditional Québec foods will be extended until 2004-2005 with annual appropriations of \$600,000**. This measure, the procedures of which will be revised, will make available a \$1.8-million envelope to rural developers. It will also be the subject of greater promotion throughout the Québec territory.

Finally, the government intends to support projects with a revitalizing impact on land use and that contribute to the sustainability of agricultural activities and local economies. As a result, **an envelope of close to \$5.9 million over three years** will be used to extend to RCMs in difficulty in the central regions **measures to diversify agriculture and process agri-food products**, included in the Resource Regions Economic Development Strategy.

INCREASING THE POPULATION'S PARTICIPATION IN MANAGING RESOURCES AND DEVELOPING ITS TERRITORY

Resource development contributes to the sustainability of communities and the revitalization of local economies to the extent that local people get involved and that potential strengths can be identified and built upon. Actions thus directed and that encourage more integrated management practices will make it possible to maximize the use of resources, while ensuring their conservation for future generations. As a result, the enhancement of an area's forest sector or tourism potential, the development of new productions in a context of multi-resource management and the conservation of the territory are among the activities that must involve and solicit the participation of local and regional stakeholders.

The **Resource Regions Economic Development Strategy** proposes several **measures for the value-added and integrated development of resources**: consolidating outfitting companies, managing wildlife habitats in forested areas, and enhancing and investing in parks, wildlife reserves and ZECs (controlled harvesting zones).

A sum of **\$18 million** has also been devoted to **specific agreements that make it possible to improve the tourism supply in the regions**, according to regional priorities.

To **stimulate mining exploration**, five regions innovated and signed with the Québec government **specific agreements for the creation of regional mining funds** (training and exploration promotion, land reconnaissance, discovery and development of mineral indicators).

The **Forest Resource Development Program** makes it possible to fund silvicultural, wildlife, environmental, recreational or educational projects for both private and public forests. Administered in conjunction with local and regional stakeholders, this program, **with a budget of \$128.7 million over three years**, makes it possible to support an array of job creation projects to help enhance the development potential of forested land. Certain projects stemming from rural pacts could be supported by this program.

Moreover, **the review of the Québec Forest Management Policy**, that completed an important stage with the amendment, in 2001, of the Forest Act¹¹, offers new development perspectives. The new legislation will make it possible to **extend access to various forest resources to a wider range of developers and work toward the cohabitation of productions** for optimal advantages and revenues.

¹¹ Act to amend the Forest Act and other legislative provisions.



- From now on it will be possible to establish maple syrup production in stands presently used for wood production or wood production in sugar bushes now used mainly for maple syrup production.
- It will now be possible to obtain permits to clear woodlots for production purposes (e.g. blueberries) and for enabling the cohabitation of wood production with agricultural productions in certain areas.
- Individuals and companies seeking to commercially harvest bushes, tall shrubs or their branches to produce various products can obtain a permit (e.g. to meet the demand of pharmaceutical companies).

Individuals or companies not holding wood processing plant operating permits, such as certain forestry cooperatives, may, through the new **forest management agreements** (FMAs), be attributed with a pre-determined volume of wood from public forests for harvesting and marketing purposes.

These agreement holders will have the same rights and obligations as holders of timber supply and forest management agreements, except when it comes to the destination of wood that would be sold on the free market. The Minister of Natural Resources will consult with the Aboriginal communities concerned and with the regional development councils before granting FMAs in their region.

The revised forest management system **will promote integrated forest resource management**. As a result, it will oblige RCMs, Aboriginal communities, wildlife managers or other persons involved in forest management to take part in the preparation of general forest management plans.

Legislation will now link the maintaining of agreement-based allocations to forestry, environmental and industrial performance. This new approach should incite agreement holders to make the best possible use of the forest environment and harvested wood.

The **Financial Assistance Program for the Development of Private Woodlots** will make it possible to annually inject more than \$42.5 million into the development of all private forest resources. Funded in the amount of \$34.5 million by the Ministère des Ressources naturelles (MRN) and \$8 million by the industry, this program is administered by the regional agencies responsible for developing private woodlots. These agencies bring together representatives who speak for the municipal world, forest producers, industry and the MNR. Within a perspective of sustainable development, they devise protection and management plans and offer financial and technical support to carry out this type of activity. The agencies foster cooperation among the persons or bodies concerned and are a prime example of what partnership is all about.

STEPPING UP KNOWLEDGE ACQUISITION, SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AND INNOVATION EFFORTS

Economic conditions often affect the economy of rural communities. The sudden fluctuations cause strong variations in employment levels. Personnel with little training, few qualifications or who are not versatile enough find themselves in precarious positions. It can be difficult for them to go from one sector of activity to another with training that lacks diversity or is not recognized.

Moreover, vocational and technical training is often offered outside the regions where rural young people live. This situation is not without an impact on their level of training or on their ability to remain in their rural community.

Knowledge Acquisition and Skills Development

To strike a better balance between training and employment, to improve the response to the needs of local businesses and to facilitate the acquisition of a person's first occupational skills, which should also be of particular benefit to the rural area in question, **the Ministère de l'Éducation will support the diversification of training alternatives after the first cycle of secondary school.** Young people can therefore register for complementary sectors of activity (agriculture and agri-food, forestry, wildlife, tourism, etc.). An example is the agri-forestry training given by the Maison familiale rurale in the MRC du Granit. Communities interested in looking into the approach taken by the Maison familiale rurale could make use of budgets available through the rural pact in RCMs to prepare a project and find all the stakeholders needed for its success.

There is also an urgent need for job market partners to provide short-term and more flexible training to meet the needs of labour and business. The Ministère de l'Éducation intends to respond with programs tailored to local training needs. These **short-term, transferable and qualifying training programs will be implemented by school boards**, and will lead to an official attestation of study delivered by the school boards and will encourage the academic recognition of the qualifications acquired with the view to obtaining a diploma and entering the job market.

The Création d'Emplois en Forêt program, administered by the Ministère des Ressources naturelles and implemented by Rexforêt with community organizations, aims at providing training and creating jobs in the area of forest management. Recent changes to this program, applying to both public forests and private woodlots, have made it possible to create two new components. The component to support regional economic activity targets regions that are experiencing difficult economic conditions. The component to train



employees in companies aims to broaden the pool of silvicultural workers in regions with recruitment problems. This program comes with a **budget envelope of \$29.3 million in 2001-2002 and \$26.0 million per year for the four subsequent years.**

Innovation

In January 2001, the Québec government adopted the Québec Science and Innovation Policy that pursues three ultimate goals: to encourage the well-being of Québec society, to encourage common prosperity within a perspective of sustainable development and to enrich Québec's culture and contribute to the world's knowledge base. Research, science, technology and innovation are the inevitable dimensions from which to launch a new development dynamic on the rural territory of Québec.

The Ministère de la Recherche, de la Science et de la Technologie (MRST) already contributes to the advancement of rural communities in Québec in particular through its action in research centres and agencies (liaison, transfer, appropriation and diffusion of science and technology). The MRST intends to do more by delving into **an envelope of \$350 million to support infrastructure projects, such as research centres,** throughout Québec.

The 2001 situation report from the Conseil de la Science et de la Technologie entitled *The Regional Dimensions of Innovation in Québec* will serve as a guide. It provides invaluable information to rural regions in Québec to help them gain or maintain economic viability and to identify promising niches.



Ensuring the Quality of Life of Rural Communities and Increasing Their Appeal

5



A top priority of rural communities that work collectively toward their development is the quality of life of their population.

Maintaining and improving local services of both a public and private nature constitutes, along with economic diversification and employment, the basis for fostering the renewal of the population and the vitality of rural communities.

It is a well-known fact that by improving the living conditions in rural communities, spill-over effects are inevitable. Not only does this increase the rural area's appeal and contribute to population renewal, but it also reinforces a sense of pride and belonging and is great for tourism.

ENSURING THAT LOCAL SERVICES ARE MAINTAINED AND INCREASED

The government intends to provide rural populations with quality public services and to seek, in conjunction with them, appropriate solutions to ensure the satisfactory provision of services. This explains why several departments have announced their commitments and orientations with regard to rural communities.

Rural dwellers seek access to a variety of services of the same quality as those offered in urban centres. They are however aware that such services cannot be available everywhere, at any price and under any conditions. Innovation and the pooling of resources appear to be possible ways to deliver comparable services at a cost that is acceptable to the public.

It is important to have a territory-based approach when it comes to the provision of public services. This approach should aim at bringing services closer to rural communities and fostering a dynamic cooperation among service providers of a same area. Sharing offices and pooling the resources of several services are prime examples.

To maintain private services, new organizational practices, joint entrepreneurship, linkages among existing businesses and networking among rural associations are all innovative solutions that could be implemented.

Education

When it comes to the question of village schools, the Minister of Education favours:

- maintaining these schools, to the extent that it is the will of the parents and community, and that this is in the students' best interest and that quality services can be offered to all;
- the holding of debates on the quality of the education services offered in small schools;
- looking, with school governing boards and community representatives, into various solutions for keeping the school open (e.g. shared classrooms, sharing of costs and responsibilities, rental of space to groups with vocations compatible with the school's mission);
- transparency in the discussions where the participation of parents and community representatives is required, especially on the part of municipalities.

Moreover, the Ministère de l'Éducation has granted school boards additional resources to **foster the organization of educational services for groups with a small number of students in schools with reduced personnel or in schools that are far away from large urban centres or scattered throughout the territory.**

The Ministère de l'Éducation also intends to introduce a **new financing method for school boards**, starting in 2002-2003, so that resources are shared more equitably, among other things by ensuring school boards with a reduced staff, sufficient resources for them to offer quality educational services. In this context, special attention will be given to educational and administrative services and facilities to be maintained in the regions.

Furthermore, in the framework of the *Early Steps Toward Success* program, the **Ministère de l'Éducation will grant additional teaching resources for schools located in underprivileged areas.** The updating of the school population map makes 441 new schools eligible grant of \$5 million. These schools are mainly located in rural areas and outlying regions.

The colleges and universities found in the regions, although generally outside the territory covered in the rural pact, offer services to all the rural population. These higher learning institutions often experience problems, such as small student population pools, cutbacks in personnel, and difficulty in keeping qualified staff. **The formula used to finance universities takes into account the size of the institution and the specific mission of the universities located in the regions.** In the collegiate sector, considering that the financing of CÉGEPs



is based in large part on the size of the student population, the Ministère de l'Éducation introduced in 2001-2002 a **new financing rule** aimed at reducing the financial impact caused by a decrease in the number of students.

Health and Social Services

The Ministère de la Santé et des Services Sociaux will take into account the specific nature of the needs of rural areas in its orientations, policies and programs and the planning and organization of its services on the territory. It intends:

- to ensure access to basic services on all local territories by pursuing the implementation of family medicine groups, by implementing front-line services and by providing all clienteles with the possibility of receiving the services they need close to where they live;
- to ensure that the resource allocation process is fair in relation to the needs of the population in rural areas;
- to foster home-care support for the elderly, thus contributing to the growth of the economy in rural areas;
- to make it possible for young people who are experiencing difficulties to receive, in their area, psychosocial services adapted to their condition;
- to guarantee rural populations better access to specialized and supra-specialized services through a better allocation of medical staff and better travelling arrangements for people who need services in urban centres;
- to increase the number of admissions into medical schools, reserving a number of places for students from outlying regions;
- to ensure that pre-hospital emergency services are properly provided in rural areas and that agreements are reached with municipal associations to make first-responder services available.

To develop communities, the Ministère de la Santé et des Services Sociaux also proposes the following measures:

- to encourage the technical and professional development of communities based on the objectives outlined in the national public health program and in regional and local action plans;
- to better support community agencies in the health and welfare sector to reinforce cooperation and solidarity in communities experiencing the most difficulty;
- to foster the promotion of health and wellness and the prevention of social problems so that the consequences of certain inequalities are reduced, and in particular those tied to poverty. For example, the programs *Naître égaux et grandir en santé* (NEGS), *École en santé* and *Villes et villages en santé*, propose conditions that foster health and well-being.

Family and Childhood

The Ministère de la Famille et de l'Enfance (MFE) intends to **foster, within the framework of the family policy, the development of three poles particularly important for parents.** They are: support for the parenting role, adaptation of living conditions to the needs of families and reconciliation of family and professional responsibilities. To contribute to the improvement of local services and the standard of living in communities, the MFE intends to pursue the establishment of early childhood centres by tailoring its action to the realities of rural areas. Such services must be implemented in partnership with regional development councils, providing each region with the services necessary to meet the needs of children and parents.

Transportation

The Ministère des Transports proposes, through a joint venture, to better use the different **general and specialized transit services already serving rural communities:** municipal transportation for the disabled, health and social service network transportation, school transportation, and taxis and buses offering inter-urban service. This endeavour would make it possible to offer transportation services to both specific clienteles and the general public, using a system adapted to the needs and characteristics of each area.



The availability of a public transit system makes it possible to offset the isolation of certain rural clientele, especially in communities located on the fringes of a region. Moreover, almost all municipalities have school bus transportation and parallel transit services, along with specialized services from the public system and the health system, whose vehicles are only used, at this time, for specific clientele.

Pilot projects involving integrated transportation using pooled public transit services are currently being carried out in several of Québec's RCMs. These projects make it possible for citizens or specific clientele (disabled persons, adults who have gone back to school, regular students, etc.) to benefit from school or parallel transit services to go to the closest city's service points, to their workplace or to their school. The pilot projects are supported by the Ministère des Transports and by different stakeholders in the area: RCMs, school boards, municipalities, CLSCs and others. They often give rise to social economy businesses capable of coordinating the service and generating jobs.

With the aim of serving rural communities, an assistance of **\$10 million will be granted from now to 2006 to support and consolidate these projects** and to expand this new approach, in partnership with municipal officials throughout the territory.

It is also important to underscore, as announced by the government in the 2002-2003 Budget Speech, the public-sector accelerated investment plan that will significantly improve infrastructure, with close to **\$400 million devoted to rebuilding and improving the national road network**. This investment is but a first phase of a larger road network reconstruction plan that, over the next ten years, will involve investments of more than \$3 billion and contribute in part in improving the quality of national and regional roads and rural collector roads.

Cooperatives

Several rural communities confronted with various problems such as finding a new generation of workers for businesses and the closing or absence of services in certain fields, could benefit from a community-based approach. For example, the cooperative formula is particularly well-suited to the rural context.

The Ministère de l'Industrie et du Commerce will improve the implementation and operation of all types of cooperatives (solidarity, workers, worker shareholders, producers and consumers) when the Cooperatives Act is reviewed.

The solidarity cooperative, which makes it possible to unite various members (workers, producers or consumers) who have in common their community's socio-economic interest, could be improved upon so that municipalities and RCMs are able to join. Moreover, capitalization and financial tools could be tailored to allow involvement in this kind of company.

Infrastructure

The **Ministère des Affaires municipales et de la Métropole** has committed to investing **20% of the Canada-Québec Infrastructure Program and the new Québec-Municipalités Infrastructure Program** announced in the 2002-2003 budget to support rural municipalities in implementing or rebuilding infrastructure pertaining to the supply, treatment and distribution of drinking water and wastewater collection or treatment. This financial support will also help build infrastructure for services to businesses in these municipalities, thus making it possible to create new jobs or maintain existing ones, in particular in the sectors of agri-food, forestry and adventure tourism. These two programs will also enable a part of the contributions reserved for rural municipalities to be allocated specifically to local road infrastructure. These investments are over and above those mentioned in the section under transportation for the superhighway reconstruction program.

Technological Infrastructure

Rural areas do not benefit from high-speed telecommunications, slowing down their economic development and their ability to use certain services. The **Ministère de la Culture et des Communications** has committed to **supporting feasibility studies**, piloted notably by RDCs, having already produced a status report and a **strategy to speed up the deployment of high-speed access in rural communities**.

As a result, the program **Villages branchés** will make it possible to link Québec's schools through a state-of-the-art telecommunication network. The infrastructure will also serve other bodies that act as partners, such as municipalities, thus establishing a solid basis for a truly national information highway.

It is in this spirit that **the Ministère de l'Éducation** has been given an **additional \$75-million budget** to implement **the program Villages branchés du Québec**. It will work in partnership with the main departments involved, i.e. the **Ministère de la Culture et des Communications**, the **Ministère des Régions**, the **Ministère des Affaires municipales et de la Métropole**, and with local and regional partners to provide access to high-speed links to the greatest possible number of rural communities.



Recreation and Sports

For rural areas, recreational activities and facilities are a vital component of proximity services and community life. **The specific nature of these needs will be taken into account in the planning of the orientations, policies and programs of the Secrétariat au loisir et au sport.** This implies, among other things, an awareness of and support for the realities of local communities by regional and national bodies, support for community recreational centres and the setting up of conditions favourable to the practice of physical activities. It presupposes encouragement for the consolidation and development of agreements on the use of recreational and sporting equipment and facilities.

IMPROVING AND PROMOTING THE RURAL WAY OF LIFE AND HEIGHTENING THE SENSE OF BELONGING

The quality of life represents a major factor in the decision to continue living in a rural area or to move to one. The abundant natural and cultural heritage, the quality of the habitat and the appealing character of villages reinforce pride and the sense of belonging to a rural community and also the desire to live there and to develop it.

Anniversary celebrations, numerous festivals as well as the participation of communities in restoring the church or the village's main square are shining examples of what feelings of pride and belonging can accomplish. It is often on the basis of these two qualities that an area can regain its initiative and start developing.

The rural pact represents a key tool for working toward the improvement of the quality and standard of living of rural communities. It can get the public and private stakeholders (municipalities, RCMs, LDCs, government departments and corporations), whose activities involve rural areas, to work together in a synergetic way toward a same goal. In addition, it can serve to give communities the expertise they need to implement integrated approaches. Communities are encouraged to use all the tools available to them to improve their quality of life.

Culture

The **Ministère de la Culture et des Communications (MCC)** will lend its expertise to RCMs **seeking to implement a cultural policy and actions plans.** To encourage cooperation among local and regional elected officials, the MCC will continue to support the dynamic action of regional culture councils.

In addition, so that communities can develop their heritage and promote the arts and culture on their territory with a view to increasing cultural tourism, **the program Villes et Villages d'Art et de Patrimoine has been renewed until January 2003**. This program has been tailored to meet the specific concerns of RCMs with less vigorous rural communities. The Ministère de la Culture et des Communications will grant **an additional \$8 million** to support projects from this program and that meet the directions of the National Policy on Rurality.

In the framework of the **government's public-sector accelerated investment** plan announced in the 2002-2003 Budget Speech, the MCC will foster **access to culture with funding of \$120 million**. This amount will make it possible to improve cultural facilities in cities and towns, to acquire books for public libraries, to restore religious and built heritage, to upgrade collections by calling upon the expertise of the MCC and interested parties throughout the region, to renew permanent exhibitions in museums and to purchase specialized equipment. The projects evaluated in view of bolstering the cultural network will take into account the needs and unique aspects of rural communities. Finally, the MCC will pursue its partnership with the Société d'habitation du Québec to revitalize older sites and restore built heritage.

Housing and Planning

Convinced that the enhancement of built heritage and the development of villages reinforce their drawing power and contributes to revitalizing the environment, the government also announced during the 2002-2003 Budget Speech, **a village beautification program**. **With a grant of \$9 million per year for two years**, this program will make it possible to support residential renovation efforts, village enhancement and heritage conservation.

To reconcile traffic safety and quality of life for citizens, a **new road intervention approach**, under the responsibility of the Ministère des Transports, has been proposed **to make it easier to go through towns**. Initiated at the road construction planning stage, these improvements will make it possible to avoid building bypasses or widening roads, which so often cause disruptions to the town.

This approach will make it possible to design and build roads that let people enjoy the view as they drive through rural communities, to beautify town centres and to encourage people to stop there.

Such an initiative could serve to launch an integrated revitalization project for a town centre and improve heritage buildings. The Ministère des Transports will fund the efforts of municipalities interested in participating in such a public and private partnership approach and will participate in working groups and project realization.



Aware of the visual impact of overhead cable transmission networks on the beauty of landscapes, the Québec government has implemented a **governmental cable burying program** which seeks to improve the environment and the integrity of heritage, cultural and tourist sites. This new program is for all municipalities in Québec. **An envelope of \$300 million over four years**, shared among the Québec government (\$75 million), Hydro-Québec (\$200 million) and the municipalities (\$25 million) has been provided for this purpose. The investments to bury the cables in areas of special interest, particularly those located in the heart of villages, will contribute to the enhancement and development of the rural territory.

In the area of housing, the last government budget announced several programs, which will greatly contribute to improving the built heritage and the living environment of rural communities. Among them, the **Réno-Villages** program of the Société d'Habitation du Québec, managed in close cooperation with the RCMs, aims to correct major defects in homes and targets low-income owner occupants in rural areas. A contribution from Québec of \$16 million was announced. To that can be added the federal contribution which will bring to **\$36 million the budget of this program for the next two years**.

Moreover, the **Accès-Logis** program, intended for cooperatives and non-profit bodies whose main objective is to offer housing to low and middle income families, has been renewed and improved. It will make it possible to build 6500 housing units over the next five years. Rural communities can take advantage of this program. Moreover, within the framework of the **Programme Revitalisation Québec (PRQ)**, which seeks to further residential renovation efforts, neighbourhood revitalization and heritage conservation **will be revised to expand funding to town cores and small service centres in rural areas**. Finally, rural communities can soon benefit from the new **affordable housing program**, designed to stimulate the supply of rental housing at affordable costs.

Various types of action have been planned in the framework of this program, to be enforced over two years: construction, renovation, recycling, etc.

The Société d'habitation du Québec will take into account rural realities in reviewing its existing programs such as Accès-Logis, or in devising new programs, such as the one on affordable housing.

ENCOURAGING THE ADAPTATION OF GOVERNMENT POLICIES AND PROGRAMS

The government plays a preponderant role in defining the overall national objectives and strategic choices, particularly when it comes to supplying public services and delivering programs tailored to the different parts of the territory. The government has a leading role among the actors associated with the development of rural communities.

However, a good number of rural communities of Québec cannot, because of their particular characteristics, namely their being in outlying areas and having low population density, respond to the requirements and normative frameworks of government programs and measures. Often, the programs are designed in such a way as to be enforced as blanket policies from one end of Québec to the other, without regard to the unique nature of the rural territory.

To fully assume its mandate on the rural territory, the Québec government is aware of the need to foster approaches that make way for innovation and to tailor its sectoral services, policies and programs.

To do this it must, upstream from government decisions, take into account the unique aspects of rural areas and, downstream, offer the flexibility necessary to manage the programs and measures. Rural areas do not all develop at the same rate and the government must take this into account when allocating resources.

The government therefore agrees:

- to incite government departments and agencies to **include in their normative frameworks, adjustments to programs and adaptation of their services to take into account the unique aspects of rural areas** (low population density, reduced clientele and distances);
- to include a **territorial clause that will take into account the characteristics of rural areas when examining memorandums on bills, policies or regulations and to assess their impact on rural areas;**
- **to take into account the different development levels of rural areas** when taking action.



**Supporting the Commitment
of Citizens to Developing
Their Community and
Ensuring the Sustainability
of Rural Québec**

6



Québec's rural communities are confronted with structural changes that will have an impact on their future. To guarantee the sustainability of the rural world, these communities will have to tackle several problems and make maximum use of all the instruments available to them. Moreover, the public's participation must be stimulated, and young people and newcomers must be integrated into collective rural development projects. Women, as much as men, must take part in the decisions that shape their way of life, including decisions involving common resource development and sharing, and those having an impact on the future direction of rural communities.

PROMOTING THE PLACE AND ROLE OF YOUNG PEOPLE AND NEWCOMERS IN MAINTAINING DYNAMIC RURAL COMMUNITIES AND POPULATION RENEWAL

Generational renewal has emerged, for rural populations, as a basic condition to revive leadership and instil the confidence needed to revitalize the rural world. Young people and newcomers represent a fundamental asset for reinvigorating the life forces of rural communities.

Immigration

Immigration can create a better balance in population movements and have a catalyst effect on the internal dynamics of a community. It can, furthermore, provide a multipurpose or specialized labour force and contribute to consolidating the territorial identity through cultural diversity and enrichment. To help immigrants settle outside the Communauté métropolitaine de Montréal, the **Ministère des Relations avec les citoyens et de l'Immigration (MRCI)** has announced a concerted action plan by government departments and agencies. It involves **four priorities**:

- providing information on the regions, their economic development, business opportunities and accommodation capacities;
- making the public aware of the contribution of immigrants;
- fostering regional and local cooperation among the various stakeholders;
- welcoming newcomers and supporting individuals with training, job search or business start-up needs.

However, the success of the social and economic integration of young people, rural newcomers and immigrants to rural areas requires concerted action. The mentoring of young people to ensure a new generation of workers, the organization of job fairs and a welcome adapted to the needs of newcomers are good examples. Several of these activities could be undertaken on the initiative of local communities in the framework of the rural pact.

Young People

Just as young people are at the heart of Québec's vitality, they are at the heart of the future of each region. However, they must feel like they have a place in the community or that they can live there creatively and carry out their projects. The Québec government made public in May 2001 its **policy entitled *Young People at the Heart of Québec***, in which it presented its directions to ensure young people's place in Québec's society. One of these directions involves rural areas: the belonging and commitment of young people in the communities in which they live. Moreover, the policy underlines the importance for Québec society to promote a culture of generational renewal.

To maintain and attract young people, rural communities can take advantage of the **Fonds Jeunesse** of \$240 million created following the Québec Youth Summit. Regional youth forums manage, in their respective regions, a portion of this fund and can provide financial assistance to projects from rural communities.

Many young people leave their region to study in urban centres and only a limited number come back to settle in their community of origin. Most of these young people know little or nothing of the job opportunities found there. This is why the **Initiative Place-aux-Jeunes** is a precious tool to incite the return of young people to their region or municipality. To encourage the return and welcoming of young people with university degrees and college and vocational diplomas, activities are organized to help them rediscover their community's potential, provide a network with employers and companies and encourage them to create their own jobs or businesses. Place-aux-Jeunes is active in 70 RCMs and a **recurring amount of \$875,000 per year will be granted.**

To stimulate a major return of young people to the regions, a pre-requisite condition is to facilitate their access to the job market. In this regard, the Québec government agrees to find ways to give a greater place to Québec's upcoming generation of workers in different sectors of the rural economy, including forestry, mining, water-based industries, wildlife, fisheries and tourism.



Several jobs could be saved if companies with aging owners were supported in the process of transferring ownership and preparing new workers to take over. This is why the government, in an effort to ensure continuity, wishes to support young people seeking to start a business or endeavouring to buy shares in the ownership of a company where they work for the purpose of ensuring continuity. Tools for cooperative development (worker and shareholder-worker co-ops) are already available through regional development cooperatives. The Ministère des Régions intends to make amendments to two measures administered by local development centres (LDCs). **The measure *Jeunes Promoteurs* will be broadened to offer a \$5,000 grant** to support young people seeking to work in a company with the view of ensuring its future. Moreover, **the normative framework of the Fonds local d'investissement (FLI) will be amended** to make it possible for young entrepreneurs to obtain an interest-free loan up to a maximum of \$25,000, reimbursement-free for the first year.

The government will identify, in conjunction with Solidarité rurale du Québec, the means to foster the establishment in rural areas of young vocational, technical and university graduates. These initiatives, aimed at reinforcing the appeal of rural areas to young graduates, could make it possible, for instance, to reimburse a part of their student loan and moving costs.

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE SITUATION AND SPECIAL CONTRIBUTION OF WOMEN LIVING IN RURAL AREAS

In rural communities, the work world has marked distinctions: women are still virtually absent from jobs associated with resource exploitation and remain largely confined to lower-wage jobs. The government pledges to look more closely at the current situation of rural communities, which involves a study that separates the problems facing women and those facing men, so that the means put forth to improve their situation will be better tailored to their needs.

Local officials are in a position to understand the characteristics of living conditions of women on their territory and consider them in their development activities. Following the commitments taken in the **Action Plan 2000-2003 – Equality for all Women of Québec** the Minister of Regions notified the RDCs and LDCs of what was expected of them. They must now implement mechanisms aimed at reaching and maintaining an equitable female representation on their board of directors and take into account the needs and realities of women when devising their territory's development tools.

Following the lead of women from the Côte-Nord region who implemented a female entrepreneurship investment fund to fill certain “funding gaps” felt by women entrepreneurs, the Québec government announced, for the resource regions, the implementation of an **investment fund for women entrepreneurs**. This fund is in addition to front-line LDC services involving other investment funds and financial assistance already available in the regions.

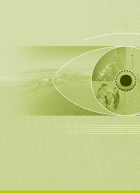
REINFORCING THE RURAL WORLD’S COMMITMENT AND EMPHASIZING “RURAL-URBAN” COMPLEMENTARITY

The participation of the rural world and especially the role of rural communities and the RCMs are at the heart of the entire approach retained in the National Policy on Rurality. This participation will only be meaningful if the population comes together and is supported by the leadership and determination of elected officials. Accordingly, the attribution of new responsibilities to the RCMs of a rural nature, the development of a concerted approach by government and elected officials in favour of the rural world and the granting of new revenues to the RCMs are among the means promoted by this policy.

The government has taken some concrete steps to **reinforce RCMs of a rural nature**. From now on, these RCMs will have exclusive jurisdiction in property tax valuations and management of municipal waterways. They could, if they request it and the government consents, also take care of managing residual materials, the local road network, regional parks, social housing and transportation of disabled persons. They will also be able to manage and finance facilities, infrastructures, services and activities of a supra-local nature, with no local municipality allowed to exercise a right of withdrawal. They could also devise a cultural and heritage policy and a local tourism development policy. Furthermore, these RCMs can decide if the election of their warden will be held through universal suffrage.

For the other RCMs, the government agrees to maintain their “rural-urban” nature and to make their elected officials more accountable.

In the framework of the National Policy on Rurality, a partnership will be formed with each RCM. As a result, the concerns of the rural world will be shared among the RCM’s elected officials, working jointly to create a spill-over effect. For example, the organization of transportation services in rural areas could be carried out in conjunction with existing urban services; a public market could also serve to sell niche products from rural areas.



The **Ministère des Affaires municipales et de la Métropole** is committed to taking into account the **National Policy on Rurality** in the guidelines it gives to RCMs regarding **land use planning**. It will also request that RCMs identify the characteristics of their rural areas and the less affluent parts of their territory in their development plan. They will also have to identify the means to improve the situation of these areas.

With the aim of better diversifying municipal revenues and supporting the efforts of local communities to develop their territory, a measure reached in the framework of the fiscal pact between the government and the municipalities will be undertaken. Accordingly, **an envelope of \$2.5 million in 2002-2003, of \$7.5 million in 2003-2004 and of \$10 million annually** thereafter, will be allocated to RCMs, in proportion to the public land area on their territory. **This will enable them to benefit from spin-offs created due to the royalties stemming from the exploitation of natural resources** and to develop their territory. RCMs of a rural nature will be the main beneficiaries of this measure.

The fiscal pact also includes a measure that will specifically benefit rural areas, i.e. a **government compensation program in lieu of taxes for public land**, found for the most part in rural areas. This compensation will reach \$6 million in 2003, \$12 million in 2004 and, at cruising speed in 2005, will have **an annual envelope of \$17 million**. The rules of this program are now being defined but it would appear that, from now on, a sizeable amount will be granted to municipalities where there is public land with a recreational, conservation or economic development vocation.

Another measure in the fiscal pact that will specifically benefit less privileged rural municipalities is the **review of the equalization system**. The new criteria for cost sharing will translate into greater assistance for the municipalities that are poorest in terms of real estate wealth. Such municipalities are found, more often than not, in rural communities. The new formula will also correct a bias in the old formula that hurt municipalities experiencing a rapid demographic decline.

Giving more power and responsibility to RCMs with regard to rural areas along with the attribution of new resources and authority will make it possible to introduce a new vitality throughout Québec. The RCMs will be in a position to solicit the necessary confidence in a renewal of rural communities through a partnership approach that fosters the dynamic use of all Québec's territory.



Conclusion

Québec now has an invaluable tool with which to develop its territory called the *National Policy on Rurality*. It is through this policy that the Government of Québec has set forth conditions that are favourable for rural development. On one hand, the measures and programs encourage the initiatives of local communities; and on the other, the commitments and directions reflect the government's willingness to support rural dwellers.

Rural communities need to diversify their economy, develop their resources, provide training to their population, deliver services, preserve their identity and strive for prosperity. It is by rising to these challenges and by setting themselves a vision for the future that rural communities can pave the way for upcoming generations.

To achieve the above, it will be necessary to stimulate and support sustainable development and prosperity, to offer a standard of living to the men and women who have chosen to live in the country and to build attractive communities. By maintaining quality and promoting a strong economy, rural dwellers will see other people lay down roots on the land and young people come home to their region. Motivating rural people to assume the development of their communities is the key to ensuring their sustainability.

But the basics will be lived out from day to day, in the field, by undertaking a development project through the rural pact. It is by signing a pact with each of the RCMs involved, that the government and local elected officials intend to work in partnership, carrying out at least one project per village, and thus jointly building the Québec of tomorrow.



Appendix

TERRITORIAL SCOPE OF THE NATIONAL POLICY ON RURALITY

In general, the National Policy on Rurality will apply to all rural areas located outside Québec's 31 large urban agglomerations. The policy therefore involves more than 1000 municipalities.

The territory covered by the rural pact is divided into three groups of RCMs:

1. RCMs of a rural nature

- All municipalities, Aboriginal communities and unorganized territories of the **50 RCMs of a rural nature** and the **two rural communities**: Communauté rurale du Fjord and Communauté rurale des Chenaux;
- Aboriginal municipalities and communities of the **Basse-Côte-Nord**;
- The municipalities of Villebois, Beaucanton and Val-Paradis in the **Nord-du-Québec** region.

2. RCMs with a census agglomeration¹²

In the 26 RCMs where there is a census agglomeration (CA), the territory includes:

- All municipalities, Aboriginal communities and unorganized territory outside the census agglomeration;
- Some CAs also include municipalities of a rural nature. Following discussions between the RCM and the government, the municipalities included in a CA having, at the time of the census, more than 50% of their population living in a rural area¹³ could be included in the rural pact. Furthermore, when a new municipality or CA is created, discussions between the government and the RCMs involved will make it possible to decide upon the territory in which the rural pact will apply.

¹² A census agglomeration (CA), as defined by Statistics Canada, is a large urban area (known as the urban core) together with adjacent urban and rural areas (known as urban and rural fringes) that have a high degree of social and economic integration with the urban core. A CA has an urban core population of at least 10,000, based on the previous census.

¹³ A rural area, as defined by Statistics Canada, represents everything outside a urban area. Urban areas have minimum population concentrations of 1,000 and a population density of at least 400 per square kilometre, based on the previous census population counts.

3. The urban communities of Montréal and Québec

a) **In the four RCMs partially included** (l'Assomption, La Vallée-du-Richelieu, Rouville and Vaudreuil-Soulanges):

- The territory includes all municipalities outside the urban community;
- Within the urban community, are included those municipalities where over 50% of the population is rural.

b) **In the seven RCMs entirely included** (Lajemmerais, Roussillon, L'Île d'Orléans, Côte-de-Beaupré, Jacques-Cartier, Deux-Montagnes and Mirabel):

The territorial scope includes municipalities where over 50% of the population is rural.

As a result, there are 91 RCMs affected by the National Policy on Rurality.

TERRITORIAL SCOPE OF THE NATIONAL POLICY ON RURALITY

1. All municipalities, Aboriginal communities and unorganized territory of the following 54 RCMs or territories of a rural nature:

MRC Abitibi-Ouest	MRC Bécancour	MRC Les Laurentides
MRC Acton	MRC La Nouvelle-Beauce	MRC Les Pays-d'en-Haut
MRC Antoine-Labelle	MRC La Vallée-de-la-Gatineau	MRC L'Islet
MRC Asbestos	MRC Le Domaine-du-Roy	MRC Lotbinière
MRC Avignon	MRC Le Granit	MRC Maskinongé
MRC Bellechasse	MRC Le Haut-Saint-François	MRC Matawinie
MRC Bonaventure	MRC Le Haut-Saint-Laurent	MRC Mékinac
MRC Caniapiscau	MRC Le Rocher-Percé	MRC Minganie
MRC Charlevoix	MRC Le Val-Saint-François	MRC Montcalm
MRC Charlevoix-Est	MRC L'Érable	MRC Montmagny
MRC Coaticook	MRC Les Basques	MRC Nicolet-Yamaska
MRC Kamouraska	MRC Les Collines-del'Outaouais	MRC Papineau
MRC La Côte-de-Gaspé	MRC Les Etchemins	MRC Pontiac
MRC La Haute-Côte-Nord	MRC Les Îles-de-la-Madeleine	MRC Portneuf
MRC La Haute-Gaspésie	MRC Les Jardins-de-Napierville	MRC Robert-Cliche
MRC La Matapédia	MRC D'Autray	MRC Témiscamingue
MRC La Mitis		MRC Témiscouata
Communauté rurale des Chenaux		
Communauté rurale du Fjord-du-Saguenay		
Municipalities and Aboriginal communities of the Basse-Côte-Nord region		
Nord-du-Québec (3 municipalities)		

54 RCMs

2. The municipalities, Aboriginal communities and unorganized territories located outside the census agglomerations of the following 26 RCMs:

MRC Abitibi	MRC La Rivière-du-Nord	MRC Maria-Chapdelaine
MRC Argenteuil	MRC Lac-Saint-Jean-Est	MRC Matane
MRC Arthabaska	MRC L'Amiante	MRC Memphrémagog
MRC Beauce-Sartigan	MRC Le Bas-Richelieu	MRC Rimouski-Neigette
MRC Beauharnois-Salaberry	MRC Le Centre-de-la-Mauricie*	MRC Rivière-du-Loup
MRC Brome-Missisquoi	MRC Le Haut-Saint-Maurice	MRC Rouyn-Noranda
MRC Joliette	MRC Les Maskoutains	MRC Sept-Rivières
MRC Drumond	MRC Manicouagan	MRC Vallée-de-l'Or
MRC La Haute-Yamaska		

* As of January 1, 2002, the MRC Le Centre-de-la-Mauricie will no longer exist.

26 RCMs

3. Certain municipalities, Aboriginal communities and unorganized territories included in an urban community and belonging to the following RCMs:

RCMs partially included	RCMs completely included
MRC l'Assomption	Lajemmerais
MRC La Vallée-du-Richelieu	Roussillon
MRC Rouville	L'Île-d'Orléans
MRC Vaudreuil-Soulanges	La Côte-de-Beaupré
	La Jacques-Cartier
	Deux-Montagnes
	Mirabel

11 RCMs

Total: 91 RCMs

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE TERRITORIAL SCOPE OF THE NATIONAL POLICY ON RURALITY: LIST OF MUNICIPALITIES, ABORIGINAL COMMUNITIES AND UNORGANIZED TERRITORIES

1. RCMs of a rural nature

All municipalities, Aboriginal communities and unorganized territories of the following 50 RCMs and 2 rural communities:

RCMs of a rural nature	
Communauté rurale des Chenaux*	Communauté rurale du Fjord-du-Saguenay**
MRC Abitibi-Ouest	MRC Le Val-Saint-François
MRC Acton	MRC L'Érable
MRC Antoine-Labelle	MRC Les Basques
MRC Asbestos	MRC Les Collines-de-l'Outaouais
MRC Avignon	MRC Les Etchemins
MRC Bellechasse	MRC Les Îles-de-la-Madeleine
MRC Bonaventure	MRC Les Jardins-de-Napierville
MRC Caniapiscau	MRC Les Laurentides
MRC Charlevoix	MRC Les Pays-d'en-Haut
MRC Charlevoix-Est	MRC L'Islet
MRC Coaticook	MRC Lotbinière
MRC Kamouraska	MRC Maskinongé*
MRC La Côte-de-Gaspé	MRC Matawinie
MRC La Haute-Côte-Nord	MRC Mékinac
MRC La Haute-Gaspésie	MRC Minganie
MRC La Matapédia	MRC Montcalm
MRC La Mitis	MRC Montmagny
MRC La Nouvelle-Beauce	MRC Nicolet-Yamaska
MRC La Vallée-de-la-Gatineau	MRC Papineau
MRC Le Domaine-du-Roy	MRC Pontiac
MRC Le Granit	MRC Portneuf
MRC Le Haut-Saint-François	MRC Robert-Cliche
MRC Le Haut-Saint-Laurent	MRC Témiscamingue
MRC Le Rocher-Percé	MRC Témiscouata
MRC Bécancour	MRC D'Au-tray

* As of January 1, 2002, the MRC du Centre-de-la-Mauricie will no longer exist. The new city of Shawinigan will be officially created, the municipality of Notre-Dame-du-Mont-Carmel will be annexed to the Communauté rurale des Chenaux and the municipalities of Charrette, Saint-Élie, Saint-Mathieu-du-Parc and Saint-Boniface-de-Shawinigan will become part of the MRC de Maskinongé.

** As of February 2002, the Communauté rurale du Fjord-du-Saguenay will be created at the same time as the city of Saguenay.

(Continued on following page)

To which are added:

The municipalities and Aboriginal communities that are part of the Basse-Côte-Nord:

Blanc-Sablon	Pakuashipi	Gros-Mécatina
Bonne-Espérance	Saint-Augustin	La Romaine
Côte-Nord-du-Golfe- Saint-Laurent		

And the following municipalities in the Nord-du-Québec region:

Villebois	Val-Paradis	Beaucanton
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2. The municipalities, Aboriginal communities and unorganized territories of RCMs with a census agglomeration (CA)

MRC Abitibi

Champneuf	La Motte	Berry
Rochebaucourt	Launay	Trécesson
La Morandière	Sainte-Gertrude-Manneville	Landrienne
Pikogan (IR)	Lac-Chiobi	Saint-Marc-de-Figuery
Lac-Despinassy	Preissac	Saint-Mathieu-d'Harricana
La Corne	Saint-Dominique-du-Rosaire	Saint-Félix-de-Dalquier
Barraute		

MRC Argenteuil

Saint-André-d'Argenteuil	Wentworth	Grenville (VL)
Mille-Isles	Brownsburg-Chatham	Grenville (TP)
Gore	Calumet	Harrington

MRC Arthabaska

Saints-Martyrs-Canadiens	Chesterville	Saint-Albert
Ham-Nord	Sainte-Séraphine	Saint-Rosaire
Kingsey Falls	Sainte-Clotilde-de-Horton	Sainte-Anne-du-Sault
Saint-Samuel	Sainte-Élisabeth-de-Warwick	Daveluyville
Saint-Valère	Chester-Est	Maddington
Notre-Dame-de-Lourdes-de-Ham	Saint-Norbert-d'Arthabaska	Saint-Louis-de-Blandford
Saint-Rémi-de-Tingwick	Norbertville	Saint-Christophe-d'Arthabaska
Tingwick	Warwick	

MRC Beauce-Sartigan

Saint-Benoît-Labre	Saint-Philibert	Saint-Théophile
Saint-Éphrem-de-Beauce	Lac-Poulin	Saint-Gédéon-de-Beauce
Notre-Dame-des-Pins	Saint-Évariste-de-Forsyth	Saint-Gédéon
Saint-Simon-les-Mines	La Guadeloupe	Saint-Hilaire-de-Dorset
Saint-René	Saint-Honoré-de-Shenley	
Saint-Côme-Linière	Saint-Martin	

MRC Beauharnois-Salaberry

Saint-Urbain-Premier	Sainte-Martine	Saint-Louis-de-Gonzague
Saint-Étienne-de-Beauharnois	Saint-Stanislas-de-Kostka	

MRC Brome-Missisquoi

Brigham	Bolton-Ouest	Sutton (TP)
Saint-Ignace-de-Stanbridge	Brome	Dunham
Notre-Dame-de-Stanbridge	East Farnham	Abercorn
Farnham	Lac-Brome	Frelighsburg
Saint-Pierre-de-Véronne-à-Pike-River	Bedford (C)	Saint-Armand
Pike-River	Bedford (TP)	Stanbridge Station
Sutton (C)	Stanbridge East	Sainte-Sabine

NOTE: IR: Indian reserve or Indian settlement

VL: Village

TP: Township

P: Parish

C: City

UNO: Unorganized Territory

MRC Joliette

Notre-Dame-de-Lourdes Sainte-Mélanie Saint-Thomas	Saint-Ambroise-de-Kildare Crabtree Saint-Pierre	Saint-Paul
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MRC Drummond

Durham-Sud Lefebvre L'Avenir Saint-Félix-de-Kingsey Saint-Lucien Sainte-Brigitte-des-Saults	Saint-Joachim-de-Courval Saint-Eugène Saint-Guillaume Saint-Cyrille-de-Wendover Saint-Bonaventure Wickham	Notre-Dame-du-Bon-Conseil Saint-Edmond-de-Grantham Saint-Majorique-de-Grantham
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MRC La Haute-Yamaska

Saint-Alphonse Waterloo Warden	Shefford Saint-Joachim-de-Shefford Roxton Pond	Sainte-Cécile-de-Milton Bromont
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MRC La Rivière-du-Nord

Sainte-Sophie Prévost	Saint-Hippolyte	Saint-Colomban
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MRC Lac-Saint-Jean-Est

Desbiens Métabetchouan-Lac-à-la-Croix Hébertville L'Ascension-de-Notre-Seigneur Lac-Achouakan	Saint-Bruno Saint-Gédéon Saint-Nazaire Labrecque Lamarche Hébertville-Station	Mont-Apica Belle-Rivière Saint-Henri-de-Taillon Sainte-Monique Saint-Ludger-de-Milot Lac-Moncouche
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MRC L'Amiante

Garthby-Beaulac Disraeli Saint-Julien Saint-Fortunat Saint-Jacques-le-Majeur-de-Wolfestown	Irlande Saint-Joseph-de-Coleraine Sainte-Praxède Sainte-Clotilde-de-Beauce Saint-Adrien-d'Irlande Saint-Jean-de-Brébeuf	Kinnear's Mills East Broughton Sacré-Coeur-de-Jésus Saint-Pierre-de-Broughton Saint-Jacques-de-Leeds Adstock
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MRC Le Bas-Richelieu

Saint-David Massueville Saint-Aimé Saint-Robert	Saint-Ours Saint-Roch-de-Richelieu Yamaska-Est Yamaska	Saint-Michel-d'Yamaska Saint-Gérard-Majella Sainte-Victoire-de-Sorel
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MRC Le Haut-Richelieu

Venise-en-Québec Sainte-Brigide-d'Iberville Noyan Saint-Georges-de-Clarenceville	Saint-Valentin Saint-Paul-de-l'Île-aux-Noix Henryville Saint-Sébastien Saint-Alexandre	Lacolle Sainte-Anne-de-Sabrevois Saint-Blaise-sur-Richelieu Mont-Saint-Grégoire
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MRC Le Haut-Saint-Maurice

Lac-Édouard Wemotaci Petit-Lac-Wayagamac Lac-Berlinguet Parent	Obedjiwan (UNO) Lac-des-Moires La Bostonnais Obedjiwan (IR) Lac-Tourlay	Lac-Pellerin Rivière-Windigo Coucoucache (IR) Kiskissink
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MRC Les Maskoutains

Saint-Pie (VL) Saint-Damase Sainte-Madeleine Sainte-Marie-Madeleine Notre-Dame-de-Saint-Hyacinthe Saint-Pie (P) Saint-Dominique	Saint-Valérien-de-Milton Saint-Liboire Sainte-Hélène-de-Bagot Saint-Hugues Saint-Barnabé-Sud Saint-Jude Saint-Bernard-de-Michaudville Saint-Louis	Saint-Marcel-de-Richelieu La Présentation Saint-Simon Saint-Hyacinthe-le-Confesseur
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MRC Manicouagan

Baie-Trinité Godbout Pointe-aux-Outardes	Betsiamites (IR) Rivière-aux-Outardes Ragueneau	Franquelin Pointe-Lebel
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MRC Maria-Chapdelaine

Saint-Augustin Péribonka Saint-Eugène-d'Argentenay Rivière-Mistassini Albanel	Normandin Saint-Thomas-Didyme Saint-Edmond Girardville Notre-Dame-de-Lorette	Sainte-Jeanne-d'Arc Saint-Stanislas Chute-des-Passes
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MRC Matane

Les Méchins Saint-Jean-de-Cherbourg Grosses-Roches Saint-Adelme	Saint-René-de-Matane Sainte-Paule Saint-Léandre Sainte-Félicité	Rivière-Bonjour Baie-des-Sables Saint-Ulric
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MRC Memphrémagog

Stanstead (C) Ogden Stanstead (TP) Potton Ayer's Cliff Sainte-Catherine-de-Hatley	Saint-Benoît-du-Lac Austin Eastman Hatley North Hatley Bolton-Est	Saint-Étienne-de-Bolton Stukely-Sud Orford Magog (TP)
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MRC Rimouski-Neigette

Esprit-Saint La Trinité-des-Monts Saint-Narcisse-de-Rimouski Saint-Marcellin	Saint-Valérien Mont-Lebel Saint-Fabien Saint-Eugène-de-Ladrière	Lac-Huron Le Bic Saint-Anaclet-de-Lessard Grand-Lac-Touradi
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MRC Rivière-du-Loup

Saint-Cyprien	Cacouna (IR)	Saint-Georges-
Saint-Modeste	Saint-Hubert-de-Rivière-	de-Cacouna (P)
Whitworth (IR)	du-Loup	Notre-Dame-des-Sept-Douleurs
Saint-François-Xavier-de-Viger	L'Isle-Verte	Saint-Arsène
Saint-Épiphanie	Saint-Georges-	Saint-Antonin
Saint-Paul-de-la-Croix	de-Cacouna (VL)	Notre-Dame-du-Portage

MRC Rouyn-Noranda

Bellecombe	Cléricky	D'Alembert
Rollet	Destor	Cloutier
Lac-Montanier	Rapide-des-Cèdres	Arntfield
Cadillac	Lac-Surimau	Montbeillard
Mont-Brun	McWatters	

MRC Sept-Rivières

Port-Cartier	Gallix	Rivière-Nipississ
Lac-Walker	Rivière-Pentecôte	Moisie

MRC Vallée-de-l'Or

Rivière-Héva	Kitcisakik (IR)	Lac-Metei
Malartic	Lac-Granet	Belcourt
Lac-Fouillac	Senneterre (P)	Matchi-Manitou
Senneterre (C)	Lac-Simon (IR)	Réservoir-Dozois

3. The municipalities, Aboriginal communities and unorganized territories of RCMs partially or completely included in an urban community:

MRC l'Assomption

L'Épiphanie (C)	L'Épiphanie (P)
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MRC La Vallée-du-Richelieu

Saint-Marc-sur-Richelieu Saint-Mathieu-de-Beloeil	Saint-Charles-sur-Richelieu Saint-Denis-sur-Richelieu	Saint-Antoine-sur-Richelieu
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MRC Rouville

Ange-Gardien Saint-Mathias-sur-Richelieu Notre-Dame-de-Bon-Secours Saint-Ange-Gardien	Saint-Paul-d'Abbotsford Saint-Césaire Sainte-Angèle-de-Monnoir Rougemont	Marieville Sainte-Marie-de-Monnoir Saint-Jean-Baptiste
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MRC Vaudreuil-Soulanges

Rivière-Beaudette Saint-Télesphore Saint-Polycarpe Saint-Zotique Les Coteaux Coteau-du-Lac	Saint-Clet Sainte-Marthe Sainte-Justine-de-Newton Très-Saint-Rédempteur Rigaud Pointe-Fortune	Les Cèdres Pointe-des-Cascades Notre-Dame-de-l'Île-Perrot L'Île-Cadieux
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Lajemmerais

Calixa-Lavallée

Roussillon

Saint-Mathieu	Saint-Philippe	Saint-Isidore
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L'Île-d'Orléans

Saint-François Sainte-Famille Saint-Jean	Saint-Laurent-de-l'Île-d'Orléans Sainte-Pétronille	Saint-Pierre-de-l'Île-d'Orléans
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La Côte-de-Beaupré

Saint-Tite-des-Caps Sault-au-Cochon Saint-Ferréol-les-Neiges	Lac-Jacques-Cartier Saint-Joachim	Saint-Louis-de-Gonzague-du-Cap-Tourmente
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La Jacques-Cartier

Fossambault-sur-le-Lac Sainte-Catherine-de-la-Jacques-Cartier	Lac-Saint-Joseph Saint-Gabriel-de-Valcartier Lac-Delage	Stoneham-et-Tewkesbury Sainte-Brigitte-de-Laval Lac-Croche
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Deux-Montagnes

Saint-Joseph-du-Lac Oka	Kanesatake	Saint-Placide
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Mirabel

Mirabel