

A B R I D G E D V E R S I O N

INTERNATIONALIZATION: SUPPORTING THE DYNAMISM OF QUÉBEC'S UNIVERSITIES

BRIEF SUBMITTED TO THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION,
RECREATION AND SPORTS

November 2005

ABRIDGED VERSION

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INTRODUCTION

In its most recent brief, addressed to the Minister of Education, Recreation and Sports, to the other ministers concerned with internationalization and to Québec's universities, the Conseil supérieur de l'éducation (CSE) recommended that Québec's universities be supported in the pursuit and development of their international activities.

Four main areas of development were identified:

- assistance for faculty members joining international research groups
- promotion of incoming and outgoing student mobility
- consolidation of alliances with partner universities abroad
- curriculum internationalization

Internationalization in the university field is not a new phenomenon, as reflected in the past development of international activities by universities in the Western world. The data gathered for this study show that universities, in Québec and abroad, are intensifying their international activities. Why focus on this topic today? Two main reasons encouraged the Conseil to look at the question in more detail.

- The growing number of joint projects, exchanges and alliances with universities in other countries has had a profound effect on the university mission, which now extends beyond national interests. Higher education for the population of Québec, which is the core university mission (CSE, 1995), and the development of university research must now exist alongside international challenges such as promoting incoming and outgoing student mobility as a way to internationalize training, contributing to the advancement of knowledge on transnational problems, and reinforcing the capacity of university systems in emerging countries.
- University internationalization is a strategic tool for Québec's social, cultural and economic development. First, the demographic drop in the number of young adults increases the need to recruit students internationally. Second, the presence of international students in Québec promotes intercultural education and introduces new ways to solve problems, provided the international dimension is taken into account in program design. Last, the presence of international students brings economic benefits, whether through the contribution made by postgraduate students

to university research and related innovations, or the fact that some students eventually settle in Québec and join the ranks of the professional workers and researchers making up Québec's highly skilled workforce.

A USEFUL CONCEPT

Québec's universities are already active at the international level, through collaboration in international research projects, student mobility, cross-border education, assistance for emerging countries, curriculum internationalization and faculty mobility. Each aspect exists in various forms. However, what exactly lies behind the concept of university internationalization? The Conseil has based its work on the definition proposed by Jane Knight of the University of Toronto: "Internationalisation of higher education is the process of integrating an international/intercultural dimension into the teaching, research and service functions of the institution." The fact that it is a "process" stresses the dynamism inherent in the development of international activities. International activities retroactively encourage the development of other international activities. For example, the development of international research networks promotes student mobility within those networks.

FLUCTUATING POLITICAL OBJECTIVES

In Québec, as in other places, university internationalization is linked to several areas of government action, including education, research and innovation, immigration, international relations, assistance for development and international trade in services. The administrative complexity of managing international activities in Québec's universities is reflected in various regulations concerning visas and permits for entering Canada, tuition fees for international students, paid work by students and cooperation between Québec and countries in La Francophonie. The result is red tape and also a degree of inconsistency, since the policies adopted in various sectors of government action are sometimes contradictory.

Since 1970, the **general orientations** for the development of international activities by Québec's universities have been stated in public policies as follows:

- **Development assistance**, supported by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), was the main focus of federal government intervention at the beginning of this period, and Québec's universities worked resolutely in this direction.

- Toward the end of the 1970s, because around 75% of the international students in Québec attended English-language universities, priority in government actions shifted to **restoring a balanced distribution of international students between English-language and French-language universities**. Tuition fees for international students were increased, but in general students from francophone countries were exempted from the fees.
- Beginning in 1983, following the **reduction in grants made to universities by CIDA, international assistance** became relatively less important, a trend that continued into the 1990s.
- At this point, the **range of countries where international students were recruited broadened**. In addition, **priority was given to the recruitment of international students at the postgraduate level, and postdoctoral researchers**.
- After 2000, **university internationalization became a primary focus of public policy statements**, such as those targeting university development and funding, research and innovation, and the Québec education system as a whole.

In 2000, the Ministère de l'Éducation made internationalization one of the three priority targets of the Québec Policy on Universities, with the objective of helping Québec's universities establish their place on the international stage and in order to provide students with a high-quality education open to international realities. The following year, the Ministère de la Recherche, de la Science et de la Technologie continued this trend when it adopted the Québec Policy on Science and Innovation, which reaffirms the need to help researchers take part in international research networks and provides a strategic framework for government intervention. In 2002, the Ministère de l'Éducation defined its own strategy for the internationalization of education at all levels, *To succeed in internationalizing Québec education... A mutually advantageous strategy*. The same approach was apparent in several federal government policies: the Canadian government stated its intention of supporting the recruitment of international students by making the requirements for obtaining a study permit more flexible.

These government orientations led to various measures, including an increase in tuition fees for international students, exemptions from tuition fees, in particular for international students from francophone countries, new rules governing university funding and the collection of increased tuition fees, a bursary program for short-term university study outside

Québec open to students enrolled in a Québec university, bursaries for international students, a tax exemption program for international students at the postdoctoral level, reception services for international students in outlying regions, paid employment for international students, and a relaxation of study permit requirements. However, the overall coordination of the policies issued by various government sectors and levels constitutes a major challenge for the internationalization of Québec's universities.

How have the government orientations and measures affected the development of international activities by Québec's universities? What progress has been made? What challenges must the universities now meet?

A POSITIVE OUTCOME, BUT MORE CHALLENGES FOR THE FUTURE

Following consultations with Québec's university community,¹ the collection of relevant data, and a survey of related publications and analyses, only one conclusion is possible: international activities are a growing focus in most universities in Québec. The dynamic approach of the universities is reflected in the organizational changes that have already taken place, in the institutional policies or strategic plans that have been adopted in the field of internationalization, and in the projects that are planned or currently under way. Although Québec's universities have become involved in a range of international activities, the depth of their involvement varies depending on their own characteristics, including language of instruction and geographic location, and depending on the academic field and teaching level concerned. The next section summarizes² the key features of internationalization in Québec's universities, presented by type of activity, and lists challenges for the future.

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1. See Appendix C of the Brief for a description of the methodology used.
 2. Chapter 2 of the Brief gives a detailed view of internationalization in Québec's universities, and readers are referred to it for more information.

INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH COLLABORATION

Research is international in essence. The production of knowledge and advancement of learning are founded on the contributions made by the international scientific community. However, international collaboration in scientific projects or the dissemination of research work by Québec universities appears to be concentrated in certain specific sectors, and to be more developed in larger universities. In the view of the Conseil, in order to reconcile national and global interests, more support should be provided for scholarly work based on international collaboration. Some research topics (e.g. world population growth, identity and multiculturalism) require input from specialists at universities, wherever they may be located around the globe, as well as access to costly research infrastructures that require the pooling of national resources (e.g. genomics and climate change).

OVERVIEW

- In 2002-2003, according to a survey by the Conseil of the work performed by faculty members, almost half of Québec university faculty members considered their level of international research collaboration to be either medium or high (Bertrand, 2004, p. 124-125). Among these faculty members, a higher proportion from the humanities, medicine and the pure sciences considered that their level of international collaboration was medium or high.
- The number of scholarly papers published by Québec faculty members as part of an international collaboration in the fields of pure sciences and engineering has doubled over the space of 20 years. Between 1981 and 2000, roughly 40% of the papers published were the product of international collaboration.³ This trend can also be observed in the social sciences, where international collaboration is increasingly important in the publication of scholarly papers in Canada, rising from 11% to 22% between 1980 and 2002 (Larivière, Lebel and Lemelin, 2004, p. 15).

3. Paper given by Benoît Godin, professor at the Institut national de la recherche scientifique (INRS), at the 62nd meeting of the university teaching and research committee, held on November 4, 2004.

OVERVIEW

- In large universities,⁴ according to the administrators surveyed by the Conseil in the winter of 2005, international activities are becoming the rule in all research fields. In contrast, in smaller universities in outlying regions,⁵ the activities are more targeted and tend to be concentrated in one or more fields of excellence that characterize the university concerned.

CHALLENGE

- No country, however rich, has the ability to support scholarly output on its own, especially in sectors that require a wide range of expertise and costly research infrastructures. Given this context, international research collaboration becomes an indispensable part of scholarship. However, researchers wishing to join international research groups and networks must be able to provide matching funding. According to the university administrators surveyed, the lack of support of this type from funding agencies in Québec and Canada makes it harder for faculty members to join international research groups.

4. The large universities are those with the highest enrollment, namely Université de Montréal, McGill University and Université Laval.

5. The smaller universities in outlying regions are: Université du Québec en Abitibi-Témiscamingue, Université du Québec en Outaouais, Université du Québec à Chicoutimi, Université du Québec à Rimouski, and Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT MOBILITY

Besides research, the main international activity of Québec's universities involves enrolling international students. The number of international students is growing at a proportionately faster rate than the number of students overall, and at a faster rate than the number of international students in member countries of the OECD (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development). As noted above, the presence of international students makes a contribution to the social, cultural and economic development of Québec. Despite the attractiveness of Québec's universities for international students, the experience of other university systems around the world shows that any progress made is probably fragile. The power to attract international students depends on various factors, including general elements such as the relative strength of the currency and national security.

OVERVIEW

- The number of international students⁶ enrolled in Québec's universities has tripled in a little over 20 years, growing from 6 544 in 1982 to 19 922 in 2004 at the bachelor's, master's and doctoral levels.
- From 1997 to 2004, the number of postdoctoral researchers from abroad almost doubled, from 405 to 741.
- In 2001, Québec's universities reported around 30% of the international students present in all Canadian universities, an increase over 20 years earlier (Julien, 2005, p. 17). In addition, the proportion is higher than the proportion of Québec students in the Canadian student population as a whole, estimated at 25% for the same year (Canadian Association of University Teachers, 2005, p. 23).
- Despite the policy designed to rebalance the distribution of international students between English- and French-language universities, adopted in 1979, and the progress made, international students are proportionately more likely to register in English-language universities. In 2003, McGill University and Concordia University together recorded 44% of the international students in Québec's universities (n=19 211), although they account for only 25% of Québec's total student population.

6. These figures relate mainly to international students holding a study permit for study in Canada (93% of cases), whether registered in a full program or an exchange program for a temporary period of study. Permanent residents are excluded.

OVERVIEW

- In 2003, some French-language universities reported higher proportions of international students. Université de Montréal, Université Laval, Université du Québec à Montréal and École Polytechnique together reported 39% of international students (Julien, 2005, p. 40).
- As part of the total student population of Québec's universities in the fall of 2004, international students were found in greater proportion at the postgraduate levels, namely 19.5% at the doctoral level and 9.9% at the master's level, compared with 6.5% at the bachelor's level.
- The same year, foreign nationals were in the majority in the group of postdoctoral researchers (n = 1 388), representing 53.4% of the total.
- In 2003, the greatest number of international students in Québec's universities came from France, with French students representing around one quarter of the total (5 238 students), followed by sub-Saharan Africa and North Africa (4 004), the United States (2 395), and the Middle East and Far East (2 272).

CHALLENGE

- In 2004, half of the international students who studied at a Canadian university encountered financial difficulties, either paying for living expenses or tuition fees (Prairie Research Associates, 2004, p. 26). The policies on tuition fees for international students, exemptions from extra tuition fees for international students and the availability of bursaries all helped reduce the financial difficulties of these international students and make Québec universities more attractive, allowing them to compete with other, more attractive university systems. However, the presence of international students creates a need for support that grows with the gap between the two cultures concerned. More financial resources must be allocated in this area.

NATIONAL STUDENT MOBILITY

In OECD countries, only a few university systems show a balance between incoming and outgoing students. Japan has achieved a balance, and Canada is close. However, national student mobility in Canadian universities only affects a small part of the student population, and the same applies in Québec. It should be noted that the data available to assess national student mobility are incomplete, and this fact should be taken into account when considering the following observations.

OVERVIEW

- According to a survey of Canadian university administrators by the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC), around 1% of Canadian students are estimated to have acquired training abroad in 1999 (Knight, 2000, p. 41). According to the Québec university administrators consulted by the Conseil during the winter of 2005, the proportion could reach 10% or 15%, taking into account all university-level training until graduation. However, this percentage is not representative of all Québec's universities.
- According to the studies consulted from Québec and Canada,⁷ students who live abroad during their university-level training report positive effects, including enriched research training, exposure to a range of teaching approaches, the discovery of another culture, and independence.
- According to the information gathered during consultations by the Conseil, the establishment of the bursary program for short-term university study outside Québec (Programme de bourses pour de courts séjours d'études universitaires à l'extérieur du Québec, or PBCSE) has resulted in a significant increase in student mobility. In some universities, there are so many students wishing to register for study abroad that it is hard to meet the demand.

7. Including a study by Prairie Research Associates commissioned by the Canadian Bureau for International Education in 2004, the survey conducted by Denis Monière and Antoine Khater in 2004 for the Centre de coopération interuniversitaire franco-québécoise (CCIFQ), and the study carried out by Mathieu Albert, Pierre Doray and Julie Sarrault in 2000 for the latter organization.

CHALLENGE

- Only a tiny percentage of Québec students are able to experience a period of study abroad during their university careers, which underlines the need for curriculum internationalization.
- Like international students in Canadian universities in general, and despite the establishment of a bursary program to support the mobility of Québec university students, Québec students studying abroad often experience financial difficulties. For study periods in France in 2002-2003, the weakness of the dollar against the Euro made the difficulties even worse (Monière and Khater, 2004). In addition, the financial difficulties anticipated by postgraduate students tended to act as a brake on projected study periods abroad during their university careers (Albert, Doray and Sarrault, 2000, p. 73). The Québec university administrators consulted by the Conseil consider that the prospect of debt is also an obstacle to student mobility in Québec universities.
- Despite the appreciable support provided by the PBCSE program to encourage Québec university student mobility, a contribution that is recognized by the university community, some of the terms of application of the new program should be reviewed.

NETWORK OF PARTNER UNIVERSITIES ABROAD

Various factors are involved in the establishment of a network of partner universities abroad. The geographical proximity of university systems tends to encourage international collaboration, except in North America. Language is another important factor. English is clearly the common language of internationalization, giving a different kind of advantage to English-language and French-language universities, and creating separate challenges for the two components of Québec's university system. The orientations, choice of international activities, application conditions and resulting alliances entered into with partner universities are based on the founding values for the internationalization of university systems. These are only a few examples of the structural factors of internationalization that influence the network of partner universities abroad.

OVERVIEW

- In the fall of 2003, international students in English-language universities in Québec came mainly from the United States, the Middle East, Asia and Oceania. In French-language universities, the network mainly served students from France, North Africa and sub-Saharan Africa (Julien, 2005, p. 36).
- In Canada, during the period 1998-2002, international collaboration on scholarly publications in the fields of the natural sciences and engineering mainly involved researchers from the United States, the United Kingdom, Germany and France. In the fields of the social sciences and the humanities, collaboration centred on the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia and France (Larivière, Lebel and Lemelin, 2004, p. 21-22). In these fields, over the period 1980-2002, researchers in Québec collaborated mainly with France and Belgium (Larivière, Lebel and Lemelin, 2004, p. 24).
- During the winter of 2005, a large number of Québec universities were undergoing a period of change in their organizational structures to support the development of international activities and a network of partner universities abroad. The agreements entered into with partner universities were redefined. In general, the goal was to consolidate existing agreements, abandon inactive agreements and introduce clauses to stipulate the end date for collaboration under new agreements signed by partner universities.

OVERVIEW

- During the same year, universities in Québec gave priority to the signing of “bilateral” agreements. This type of agreement targets partner teaching and research units abroad, for example by establishing integrated curricula to promote student mobility between two teaching and research units. Another goal is to reinforce collaboration with other universities in Canada, and through them, with universities in the United States.

CHALLENGE

- The Asia-Pacific region is home to roughly half the world’s population. Some Asian countries have insufficient capacity to meet the demand for higher education, and must import education resources. In these countries, priority is given to education in English. Because of this, Québec’s English-language universities are more attractive to international students from the Asia-Pacific region.
- Universities in Québec and Canada and their counterparts in the United States maintain relatively few collaborative links compared with the alliances established by university systems within the European Community (OECD, 2004). Alliances between university systems in North America, although they currently exist with respect to student mobility and scholarly publications, need to be consolidated in the future.

CROSS-BORDER EDUCATION

Cross-border education refers to the educational activities provided on foreign soil thanks to the mobility of programs, courses, institutions or teaching faculty. It also includes distance education supported by information and communication technologies.⁸ Cross-border education reflects a willingness to export education. Data on the subject are limited.

OVERVIEW

- In 1999, only 8% of Canadian universities reported a high level of activity in the area of cross-border education, and 62% had a medium level of activity, as shown in a survey by the AUCC (Knight, 2000, p. 65-66).
- According to data provided by the Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport (MELS), Québec's universities offered courses on foreign soil to around 1 700 students in the fall of 2003. The consultations conducted by the Conseil in the university community suggest that this number is underestimated and does not reflect the true level of activity of Québec's universities abroad.

CHALLENGE

- According to Knight (2004, p. 57), the interest shown by Canadian universities in cross-border education is "new" and "expanding," meaning that this type of activity could develop significantly over the next 10 years.
- The development of cross-border education highlights the importance of establishing a quality-assurance mechanism for education offered abroad.

8. The Conseil previously addressed this question in its annual report for 1999-2000 on the state and needs of education, *Éducation et nouvelles technologies : pour une intégration réussie dans l'enseignement et l'apprentissage*. [education and new technologies: successfully integrating technology with teaching and learning].

DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE

The grants made by CIDA were reduced in the early 1990s, leading to a drop in international assistance activities by universities which, however, remain involved in various forms of assistance to emerging countries.

OVERVIEW

- In 2005, according to the data gathered by the Conseil, development assistance is still mentioned in the priorities of 5 out of 18 university-level institutions in Québec.
- Indirect means are used to support emerging countries, namely training for students from those countries, professional development for public administrators, cross-border education delivered in the countries concerned, and research projects on global problems, such as AIDS.

CHALLENGE

- In the view of the Conseil, it is important to ensure that the direct or indirect aid offered to emerging countries does not, in fact, lead to a subversion of their resources, such as a brain drain toward Québec, which needs new immigrants to develop its economy. This ethical issue must be addressed by both Québec and Canada.

THE INTERNATIONALIZATION OF EDUCATION

The internationalization of education is a central challenge in university internationalization. It results from several approaches, such as those listed above, and from curriculum internationalization, which allows all students to receive education that is strongly rooted in their national culture as well as being open to world realities. The main objective is to train “world citizens” who are able to solve global problems and to appreciate and value cultural diversity as a source of enrichment for the heritage of humanity (Gacel, 2004).

OVERVIEW

- In 2005, according to the information gathered by the Conseil, curriculum internationalization was being implemented in most of Québec's universities, at varying speeds depending on when programs were reviewed. It is based on an administrative goal that is clearly stated in university policies. However, it has not been possible for the Conseil to assess how this goal of internationalization of education is reflected in university programs.

CHALLENGE

- The development of global competencies among students, openness to world realities, intercultural education and the enrichment of research methods are some of the components of curriculum internationalization, which aims to bring about a profound change in the curriculum. The extent of the challenge results from the fact that the internationalization of training must reach the entire university student population.

RECOMMENDATIONS GROUPED UNDER FOUR MAIN HEADINGS

The internationalization of Québec's universities is, now more than ever before, a condition for the successful pursuit of the university mission, as well as for the development of the universities and of society as a whole. For this reason, the Conseil supports the efforts made by the universities to develop their international activities. It urges the State to foster their dynamism, in particular by providing support for the development of international research, student mobility, the consolidation of the network of partner universities abroad, and curriculum internationalization. The 11 recommendations made below are grouped under these four headings.

Although the focus is on the experience of Québec's universities, the Conseil recognizes that the challenges raised and the scope of the public policies concerned cover the broader reality of internationalization in the higher education system as a whole. Québec's CEGEPs have similar problems, sometimes even more extreme, with respect to international student support, national student mobility and curriculum internationalization. Because of this, several of the recommendations made to promote the internationalization of Québec's universities could also help develop the college system.

INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION BY UNIVERSITY RESEARCHERS

RECOMMENDATION 1:

HELP UNIVERSITY RESEARCHERS JOIN
INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH GROUPS

Considering the need for a concerted effort by various organizations and levels of government, as well as various groups of players in the university system, to promote the internationalization of university research;

Considering the steps that must be taken in the wake of the Québec Science and Innovation Policy, which remains relevant today;

Considering the importance of the collaborative effort needed within Québec's universities to develop poles of research excellence, or to promote existing research specializations, as a prior condition for the development of research alliances of international scope;

Considering the importance of matching funding, especially in the pure and applied sciences, but also in research projects in other fields that require costly equipment;

Considering the joint responsibilities of the Ministère des Relations internationales, the Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport and the Ministère du Développement économique, de l'Innovation et de l'Exportation for the internationalization of university research;

The Conseil recommends that the Minister of Education, Recreation and Sports, in collaboration with the Minister of International Relations and the Minister of Economic Development, Innovation and Export Trade

- **establish the necessary links between Québec universities, provincial and federal funding agencies and international research funding bodies to set up a funding mechanism to facilitate collaboration between faculty members at Québec universities and international research groups;**
- **promote abroad, in a more systematic way, the poles of research excellence of Québec's universities.**

The Conseil recommends that the Minister of Economic Development, Innovation and Export Trade

- **enhance component 3 – assistance for international research and innovation initiatives – of the research assistance program.**

The Conseil recommends that the Conférence des recteurs et des principaux des universités du Québec (CREPUQ)

- **promote—in Canada and around the world—research conducted in Quebec, and facilitate grant applications by university researchers to international research funding bodies;**
- **collaborate with the AUCC and the relevant federal departments and agencies to adopt strategies to promote Canadian research and place Canadian researchers in international research groups.**

The Conseil recommends that the rectors and vice-chancellors of Québec's universities

- **take appropriate steps within each university to encourage synergy in the work of university researchers in Québec universities, in order to establish poles of research excellence in Québec modelled on existing expertise (e.g. nanosciences and genomics);**
- **facilitate faculty mobility, among other means by establishing conditions for sabbatical leave in collective agreements, in order to develop international research collaboration;**
- **when travelling abroad in an official capacity, promote their respective universities but also act as “ambassadors” for Québec's poles of research excellence in dealings with other universities and international organizations.**

STUDENT MOBILITY

RECOMMENDATION 2:

REVIEW THE POLICY ON EXTRA TUITION FEES

Considering the importance of recruiting international postgraduate students to further the development of research and innovation in Québec;

Considering that the policy on extra tuition fees has allowed significant progress to be made with regard to the initial objective of balancing the intake of international students between English-language and French-language universities;

Considering the financial difficulties affecting around half of all international students in Canadian universities;

Considering the need to review the current system to recruit a larger number of international students;

Considering the competition for international students between university systems, in particular in OECD countries;

Considering the role that Québec's universities must continue to play to assist emerging countries, especially by offering higher education for students from those countries and by reinforcing the capacity of their university systems;

Considering the need to maintain the efforts of provincial and federal departments and agencies to support the recruitment of international students;

The Conseil recommends that the Minister of Education, Recreation and Sports

- **revise the system for exempting certain international students from the payment of extra tuition fees, in order to**
 - **exempt international students registered in postgraduate research training programs;**
 - **allow the universities to manage all the exemptions from extra tuition fees.**

The Conseil recommends that the rectors, principals and vice-chancellors of Québec's universities

- **take into account the financial needs of international students when granting exemptions from extra tuition fees.**

RECOMMENDATION 3:

INCREASE BURSARIES FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Considering the importance of maintaining the current bursary system to enhance the recruitment of international students;

Considering the limited number of bursaries offered to international doctoral-level students (30 bursaries available each year) under the program of the Fonds québécois de la recherche sur la nature et les technologies (FQRNT);

Considering that the bursaries offered to international students should not affect the funding for bursaries for national students;

Taking note of the considerations for the preceding recommendation;

The Conseil recommends that the Minister of Education, Recreation and Sports

- **increase the funding for the existing program of excellence bursaries for doctoral-level international students and post-doctoral researchers administered by the Fonds québécois de la recherche sur la nature et les technologies.**

The Conseil recommends that the Minister responsible for Canadian intergovernmental affairs

- **negotiate with the federal government to set up a program of excellence bursaries for postgraduate international students.**

RECOMMENDATION 4:**IMPROVE THE ENTRY PROCESS FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS**

Considering the concerns raised about the red tape involved in issuing study permits for international students;

Considering the measures recently introduced by Citizenship and Immigration Canada that are expected to streamline the issue of study permits for international students;

Considering the work under way in Québec government departments to coordinate their administrative processes to facilitate the recruitment of international students;

The Conseil recommends that the Minister of International Relations and the Minister of Education, Recreation and Sports, in collaboration with Citizenship and Immigration Canada,

- **simplify the entry process for international students, reduce the time required and report on the results to the general population.**

RECOMMENDATION 5:**SUPPORT INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS**

Considering the support needs of international students arriving in Québec, which grow in proportion to the cultural gap between their own society and society in Québec;

Considering the financial resources derived from extra tuition fees, which are charged by the universities and remitted to the Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport;

The Conseil recommends that the Minister of Education, Recreation and Sports

- **work with the university community to assess the additional cost of providing support for international students as compared with national students, if any, and increase the funding of universities that receive international students.**

As a consequence, the Conseil recommends that rectors, principals, vice-chancellors, vice-rectors and the directors of the units involved in supervising international students

- **establish services and activities to integrate international students into the university community, or consolidate existing measures;**
- **establish the pedagogical support measures required to take into account the intercultural dimension of the relationship between international and national students in the classroom and in terms of campus life;**
- **ensure that international students receive support in order to integrate into the civic life of their host city.**

RECOMMENDATION 6:**SUPPORT THE MOBILITY OF QUÉBEC STUDENTS**

Considering the value of training received abroad as a way to internationalize education;

Considering the cultural enrichment and openness toward other cultures generated among students by periods of training abroad;

Considering the contribution, recognized and appreciated by the university community, made by the bursary program for short-term university study outside Québec (Programme de bourses pour de courts séjours d'études universitaires à l'extérieur du Québec, or PBCSE) in terms of improving the mobility of Québec university students;

Considering the difficulties encountered in applying the program;

Considering the financial difficulties encountered by students during training periods abroad;

Considering the importance of ensuring that it is not only financially advantaged students that enjoy the experience of mobility;

The Conseil recommends that the rectors, principals and vice-chancellors of Québec's universities

- **prepare an assessment of the PBCSE program, highlighting its strengths and weaknesses, and submit it to the Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport;**
- **if necessary, make changes to the components under the responsibility of their respective universities.**

The Conseil recommends that the Minister of Education, Recreation and Sports

- **adjust the guidelines and rules for the PBCSE program, based on the assessment drawn up by the university community and the Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport, to make it more flexible;**
- **improve the PBCSE program to allow more students to benefit from training abroad as part of their education, and increase the maximum monthly amount paid to students to ensure that the grant covers the average cost of a study period abroad.**

The Conseil recommends that the Minister of International Relations

- **negotiate with the partner countries of Québec's universities concerning the establishment of bursary programs to facilitate incoming and outgoing student mobility (e.g. the ERASMUS or Commonwealth Scholarship programs).**

RECOMMENDATION 7:**ENSURE RECIPROCAL COLLABORATION BETWEEN QUÉBEC AND FRANCE**

Considering the close ties between Québec and France;

Considering that France is the country where Québec's universities recruit the most international students;

Considering that in 2003, under the "CREPUQ programs," there were almost five times more students from France studying temporarily in a Québec university than there were students from Québec studying temporarily in a French university;

Considering that parity-based university funding, in connection with student exchanges for temporary study periods, could lead to a reduction in the number of students accepted from France in order to avoid a drop in funding;

Considering that the principle of reciprocal exchange must be applied in an open way, in other words taking into account all the international activities in which exchange exists between two countries;

The Conseil recommends that the Minister of Education, Recreation and Sports

- **suspend the application of the parity-based rule for the funding of Québec's universities with regard to exchange students on temporary study periods in France.**

The Conseil recommends that the rectors, principals and vice-chancellors of Québec's universities

- **maintain or re-establish, as the case may be, a reciprocal collaboration between Québec and France that goes beyond the question of exchange students, by continuing to receive as many students from France as in the past and, in return, by entering into agreements with French universities to facilitate access by Québec university researchers to French and European research groups.**

THE NETWORK OF PARTNER UNIVERSITIES AND COUNTRIES

RECOMMENDATION 8:

CONSOLIDATE THE NETWORK OF PARTNER UNIVERSITIES AND COUNTRIES

Considering that the targets of the Québec Science and Innovation Policy concerning the development of the network of partner universities and countries were not implemented through concrete measures;

Considering the need to consolidate the network of partner universities and countries with which Québec's universities will maintain reciprocal relationships with regard to the university-level activities pursued as part of their mission;

Considering the North American context and the internationalization of Québec's universities;

Considering that Québec, as a developed society, must pursue its mission to strengthen the university systems in emerging countries;

Considering the importance of maintaining lively relations between Québec and francophone countries;

Considering the academic needs of Asian countries;

The Conseil recommends that the rectors, principals and vice-chancellors of Québec's universities, as well as all management staff responsible for international activities

- continue to revise agreements already signed between universities in Québec and their counterparts abroad, consolidate existing agreements, and sign new agreements based on the following parameters:
- ensure that efforts to develop new alliances focus primarily, but not exclusively, on universities in the Americas, Europe and francophone countries, including emerging countries;
- over the medium term, develop alliances with Asia;
- with regard to all alliances, ensure that students have access to a broad range of training opportunities abroad, as an alternative to the integrated programs resulting from bilateral agreements between universities.

INTERNATIONALIZATION OF TRAINING

RECOMMENDATION 9:

INTERNATIONALIZE THE CURRICULUM

Considering that curriculum internationalization is a key component in the internationalization of the education received by Québec students;

Observing that Québec's universities have undertaken to internationalize their curricula;

Considering the various levels of progress made in efforts to internationalize the curricula of Québec's universities;

The Conseil recommends that the rectors, principals and vice-chancellors of Québec's universities and, where applicable, the administrative staff responsible for international activities,

- **equip teaching and research units, when they revise their programs with regard to the internationalization of the curriculum, with the tools they need to identify the essential components of curriculum internationalization, the skills students need to develop and the pedagogical approaches that should be introduced;**
- **monitor the progress of curriculum internationalization work to assess their scope and intensity, and verify the extent to which the revised programs allow the university's objectives to be met;**
- **identify and publicize the international experience of their faculty members;**
- **take advantage of the international expertise of their faculty members by involving them in the program revision process;**
- **recognize and place value on international activities in faculty members' evaluations, for promotion purposes;**
- **ensure that the international dimension is a component in the evaluation process for new programs and in the periodic assessment of existing programs.**

RECOMMENDATION 10:

REINFORCE FRENCH-LANGUAGE SKILLS, THE LEARNING OF ENGLISH AND OPENNESS TO OTHER LANGUAGES

Considering the key role played by elementary-, secondary- and college-level education in the development of French-language skills by French-speaking students to ensure that they have an appropriate mastery of French when entering university;

Considering the importance of maintaining activities to disseminate knowledge in French, via the participation of Québec's university system in the university system of francophone countries in general;

Considering the importance of learning languages other than French, including English, well before entering university;

Considering that globalization will require university graduates to practise their professions as part of an international exchange process;

Considering that English is the common language of internationalization and scientific communication;

Considering that measures have been taken to integrate the learning of languages other than French in university education activities;

The Conseil recommends that the rectors of French-language universities continue to pursue the linguistic policies of their institutions, while respecting the following guidelines:

- reinforce the primary place of French as the language of instruction and communication for students at all university levels, while remaining open to cultural and linguistic diversity;
- contribute actively to the development of a network for the dissemination of high-quality scientific work in French, and invite faculty members from Québec's English-language universities to join;
- offer postgraduate students opportunities to learn how English is used to disseminate scientific knowledge (for example, by participating in a paper presented in English at a conference or by writing a scientific article in English);
- include foreign-language modules in the curriculum, when appropriate for a given profession;
- develop alliances with francophone countries, as a priority, while creating links with other university systems outside the francophone countries.

RECOMMENDATION 11:
DEVELOP CROSS-BORDER TRAINING

Considering that work is under way at the national and international levels concerning recognition for prior learning, the certification of diplomas and quality assurance;

Considering the relatively low and asymmetrical involvement of Québec's universities in cross-border training;

Considering the possibilities for developing cross-border training in the future;

The Conseil recommends that the CREPUQ

- **identify examples of “sound practices” with respect to cross-border training, inform all Québec universities of the results, and establish suitable criteria in this field;**
- **set up a monitoring mechanism for the development of cross-border training by Québec's universities.**

The internationalization of universities derives from a synergy of measures under the responsibility of various government departments. Given the administrative environment, coherent public policy must be a primary objective of any government intervention.

CONCLUSION

The crucial issues raised by the internationalization of Québec's universities, with regard to the pursuit of their mission, university development and the development of Québec society as a whole, justify the importance placed on this topic by the Conseil. A clear position is defined in this brief: the Conseil urges the State to support Québec's universities in the development of their international activities. In addition, the scope of the issues raised justifies the resources that the State must devote to them, and the dynamism within the university community that must be maintained if the development of international activities is to continue.

However, the idea of internationalization raises a number of fears within the university community, especially concerning trade in higher education, the predominance of international research collaboration over all other forms of research, and the loss of cultural diversity that results from a Westernization of higher education. These fears highlight the essential need to continue to reflect on the reasons underlying the commitment made by universities to their international activities, and on the rationale for the guidelines set out in public policies and the measures taken under their lead. This process should lead to the definition of markers for the development of international activities and the related policies, as in the examples suggested by the Conseil.

- University internationalization must be based on a **conciliation of national and global interests**, without sacrificing the former or creating obstacles for the latter. As discussed above, university internationalization extends the university mission beyond the national interest, which is to provide higher education for the Québec population, to cover international interests, including collaboration in international research teams, the recruitment of international students, cross-border education and the reinforcement of emerging countries' capacities.
- The exchanges and alliances that result from international activities must be based on a **principle of reciprocity**, to ensure that they benefit all the partners.
- The development of international activities must target **quality**, especially with respect to cross-border education.
- Sooner or later, successive rounds of negotiation for the General Agreement on Trade in Services, under the authority of the World Trade Organization, will require universities to formalize the **general policy elements connected with cross-border education** (Knight, 2003, p. 110).

- In short, as highlighted by UNESCO at the World Conference on Higher Education (1998, p. 14-15), **internationalization must be founded on well-affirmed values**, including the enrichment of peoples around the world through the promotion of sustainable development, the progress of democracy, respect for fundamental human rights, a reinforcement of social cohesion and a culture of peace. For example, the development assistance granted to emerging countries must lead to ethical interventions by Québec and Canada, to reduce the risk of the brain drain threatening those countries.

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