MINISTERIAL STRATEGY FOR THE SOCIO-PROFESSIONAL INSERTION OF FIRST NATIONS AND INUIT

2025-2029

Votre gouvernement

Québec

This document can be consulted on the website of the Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale, at the following address: quebec.ca/gouvernement/ministere/emploi-solidarite-sociale/publications.

Writing
Direction des politiques d'emploi et des stratégies
Direction générale des politiques d'emploi, de la planification et du marché du travail
Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale

Editing
Direction générale des communications
Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale

Legal deposit – Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec, 2025

ISBN: 978-2-555-02518-9 (PDF)
ISBN: 978-2-555-02517-2 (print)

Translated from the original French.

Cover photo credits:
Simon Clark, Destination Québec cité
Eeyou Istchee Baie-James © GouvQc Olivier Langevin

FOREWORD

Québec must encourage the full participation of the entire population in the labour market in order to increase everyone's contribution to social and economic development. The Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale (Ministère) believes that the participation in the labour market of as many members as possible of First Nations and Inuit (FNI) is essential so that they can contribute to society and develop within it.

In this context, and in follow up to the *Formal Opinion on the Relevance of Developing a Ministerial Strategy for the Socio-Professional Integration of First Nations and Inuit People: A Contribution to the Development of Quebec*, submitted by the First Nations and Inuit Labour Market Advisory Committee to the Commission des partenaires du marché du travail, the Ministère implemented a first Ministerial Strategy for the Labour Market Integration of First Nations and Inuit People in 2017. However, training and development of the First Nations and Inuit workforce is primarily a federal government responsibility, with the Ministère playing a complementary role. Decisions regarding interventions are made by local and regional bodies based on concerns specific to their socioeconomic realities.

The Strategy is aligned with the agreements concluded by the Gouvernement du Québec. It also respects the agreements that FNI organizations have signed with the federal government regarding employment and training measures and services.

A WORD FROM THE MINISTER

Credit: Émilie Nadeau

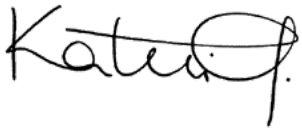
Kuei! Kuei!

It is with pride that I present the 2025-2029 Ministerial Strategy for the Socio-Professional Insertion of First Nations and Inuit and the Action Plan. They are the result of extensive collaboration, consultation, discussion and mobilization involving many partners and players from different sectors.

With this strategy, we hope to expand the scope of our efforts to integrate a greater number of members of FNI communities into the labour market. Indeed, it's an objective that I hold very dear to my heart. Both socially and economically, it is more essential than ever to create winning conditions so that each and every person can develop to their full potential.

I wish to warmly thank the First Nations and Inuit organization representatives for their precious collaboration. Their contribution was important in ensuring that the work was conducted in an inclusive and effective manner.

Tshinashkumitinau!



Minister of Employment and Minister Responsible for the Côte-Nord Region,

Kateri Champagne Jourdain

Photo credit: Eeyou Istchee Baie-James © GouvQc Au Québ – Alysson Gallant

TABLE OF CONTENT

Brenda Coudé is a member of the Innu nation of Mashteuiatsh, in Lac-Saint-Jean. She was looking for a job when the staff at a Services Québec office referred her to the First Nations Human Resources Development Commission of Quebec. This organization assisted her and she has now realized her dream of becoming a professional photographer.

INTRODUCTION

Collaboration: a pillar of shared prosperity

The Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale (Ministère) contributes to Québec's prosperity, collective wealth, and economic and social development. By supporting the participation of the population, businesses, organizations and communities, the Ministère promotes the autonomy of its clienteles and offers them simplified access to government services.

The insertion of members of First Nations and Inuit (FNI)[1] is a significant challenge in Québec. To identify effective solutions, it is essential to share a common understanding of the challenges FNI face. To achieve this, it is important to explore solutions together, to come to an agreement on the optimal conditions for their insertion into the labour market while respecting the aspirations and specificities of FNI. The Ministère reaffirms its commitment to inclusion, diversity and equity in all its actions.

To progress collectively, FNI organizations appealed to the Ministère to define a ministerial strategy to structure actions in favour of the socio-professional insertion of FNI. Implemented in 2017, this strategy, designed to evolve according to the labour market, is now being expanded in scope. By doing so, the Ministère seeks to strengthen the socio-professional insertion of FNI by optimizing their access to job opportunities and consolidating support tools adapted to their sociocultural, economic and geographical realities.

Thanks to the involvement of FNI organizations and their extensive collaboration with the Ministère, the Strategy proposes more solutions to increase the participation of FNI in employment services, as well as to encourage their hiring and job retention.

Lastly, a key guiding principle will inform the Ministère's actions: collaboration. This will encourage the Directions générales de Services Québec (DGSQ) to meet with FNI organizations and promote the emergence of relevant, joint and harmonized initiatives. The DGSQs will be responsible for implementing several initiatives adapted to the realities of FNI living on the territory, while calling for the mobilization and collaboration of FNI partners.

By committing to the socio-professional insertion of FNI members, this strategy contributes to building a more inclusive and diversified society, by proposing solutions for shared prosperity. It is based on openness, equity, understanding, development, integration and skill enhancement.

1. Note that the terms "Indigenous", "FNI" and "FNI members" are generally used interchangeably. However, in fact, the term FNI excludes certain Indigenous people, that is, the Métis. While the 2021 census indicated that more than 60 000 people self-identify at Métis in Québec, this number is challenged by Métis communities since very few of these individuals are also registered members of a Métis organization signatory of the *Canada-Métis Nation Accord*. For consistency, the terms "FNI" and "FNI members" will be used in this text.

1. BACKGROUND

In July 2013, the First Nations and Inuit Labour Market Advisory Committee (FNILMAC) sent the Commission des partenaires du marché du travail (CPMT)[2] a document entitled Formal Opinion on the Relevance of Developing a Ministerial Strategy for the Socio-Professional Integration of First Nations and Inuit People: A Contribution to the Development of Quebec. This opinion, based on the 2013 report Portrait of First Nations and Inuit in the Quebec labour market, contained several recommendations for improving FNI access to the labour market. In March 2015, in response to these recommendations, the Ministère committed to developing a ministerial strategy.

Committing to adopting a strategy that concretized its engagement to FNI members was a significant milestone for the Ministère in reconciliation efforts with First Nations and Inuit.

Created in 2010, the goal of the FNILMAC is to promote the socio-professional inclusion and retention of FNI in the Québec labour market. It brings together several major FNI organizations: the First Nations Human Resources Development Commission of Quebec (FNHRDCQ), the Kativik Regional Government (KRG), the Conseil de la Nation atikamekw (CNA), the Regroupement des centres d'amitié autochtones du Québec (RCAAQ), the First Nations of Quebec and Labrador Economic Development Commission (FNQLEDC), the Algonquin Nation Human Resources and Sustainable Development Corporation (AN-HRSDC), the First National Adult Education School Council (FNAESC), the Fédération des travailleurs du Québec-Syndicat des Métallos, the First Nations of Quebec and Labrador Health and Social Services Commission (FNQLHSSC), the Comité sectoriel de main-d'oeuvre de l'économie sociale et de l'action communautaire (CSMO-ÉSAC), Apatisiiwin Skills Development – Cree Nation Government (CNG) and the Confédération des syndicats nationaux (CSN).

2. The CPMT is a public body subject to the *Public Administration Act*. To carry out its mission and fulfil its responsibilities, it can also rely on the participation of some one thousand partners who work with a network of sectoral and regional organizations representative of groups that are under-represented in the labour market.

1.1. 2017-2022 Ministerial Strategy for Labour Market Integration of First Nations and Inuit People

In 2017, the Ministère launched the 2017-2022 Ministerial Strategy for Labour Market Integration of First Nations and Inuit People, in collaboration with several partners, to promote the inclusion of Indigenous populations in Québec society and its labour market.

As a measure of the 2017-2022 Government Action Plan for the Social and Cultural Development of the First Nations and Inuit, named Do More, Do Better[3], the Strategy included three major orientations:

1) Increase the participation of FNI members in the labour market, by promoting their access to public employment services.
2) Promote the contribution of FNI labour in the labour market.
3) Collaborate with various regional and local partners to ensure consistent and fruitful interventions and to encourage a diversified and solid partnership that will lead to success.

The 2017-2022 Action Plan supported the deployment of the Strategy.

1.2. Evaluation of the 2017-2022 Ministerial Strategy for Labour Market Integration of First Nations and Inuit People

With the aim of renewing the Strategy and its implementation plan, the Ministère conducted a global performance evaluation of the Strategy in 2021 to make adjustments, if necessary. An evaluation committee[4] was created and its members were consulted at every stage.

The Strategy's action plan was extended until 2024 in order to be able to finalize the evaluation of the Strategy and to synchronize the results with preparations for the new action plan covering the 2025-2029 period. The evaluation report[5], published in May 2024, recommended:

- expanding the scope of the Strategy to take into account the socio-professional development of FNI;
- easing administrative constraints and adapting practices;
- clarifying the connections between the Ministère's central units, the DGSQs and the FNI organizations;
- improving the complementarity of interventions;
- supporting regional collaboration.

3. This action plan was pursued under the name 2022–2027 Government Action Plan for the Social and Cultural Wellness of the First Nations and Inuit – Together for Future Generations.
4. The Strategy evaluation committee was comprised of members of the FNILMAC and the Ministère.
5. Evaluation report of the Direction de l'évaluation du ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale, May 2024

1.3. 2025-2029 Strategy and Action Plan

While the 2017-2022 Strategy promoted greater participation of FNI in the labour market, the findings and recommendations from the evaluation report[6] as well as those formulated by the evaluation committee[7] highlighted the relevance of improving it, in particular by expanding its scope.

This strategy makes it possible, in particular, to take into account issues specific to integrating FNI members into the labour market, the conclusions of the evaluation report, the priorities identified by the FNILMAC during collaborative work, and consultations with labour market partners. In this context, it adopts an evolving approach and adapts to the sociocultural, economic and geographic realities of FNI.

This strategy will pursue efforts to facilitate labour market access for FNI while promoting communities' socioeconomic development. It employs a holistic approach[8] that respects FNI values and traditions. It will also promote the professional development of individuals by highlighting the strengths of these communities.

Expanding the Strategy's scope

The Strategy incorporates the progress made since the first version, but takes into greater account the job-related concerns of FNI. Two major modifications are proposed.

The concepts of integration and inclusion are now combined. Integration is a process by which the worker adapts to the working conditions and develops their skills to respond to the business's objectives. Inclusion means that the business adapts how it operates and the worker's position in order to take into account the worker's specificities so as to optimize their working conditions and promote their growth and professional success.

The scope of the proposed orientations is much wider and will encourage bilateral actions to enable FNI to access the labour market.

Moreover, the Strategy now includes an individual's socio-professional dimension. This holistic approach will make it possible to expand the scope of interventions to more comprehensively support the trajectory of the FNI clientele. It seeks to respond to a variety of needs: to prepare for integration into the labour market, to acquire new skills or to retain a position.

6. The Ministère's Direction de l'évaluation delivered its evaluation report including its recommendations in March 2024, and presented it to the Employment sector's management committee on April 18, 2024.
7. The committee was comprised of representatives of the First Nations Human Resources Development Commission of Quebec, the Kativik Regional Government, the Regroupement des centres d'amitié autochtones, the Direction des politiques d'emploi et des stratégies, the Direction régionale de Services Québec de la Mauricie, the Direction régionale de Services Québec du Nord-du-Québec, and the Direction des services aux entreprises.
8. A holistic approach takes the whole person into account rather than considering them in a compartmentalized manner.

2. ISSUES

2.1. Portrait of FNI

To develop the strategy, it was essential to understand and respect the specificities of FNI.

Over the last 40 years, there has been major legislative progress on issues related to First Nations and Inuit. FNI members form organized communities and are recognized as "peoples" under section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*. In 1983, the Québec Cabinet adopted 15 principles that recognize, among other things, the rights of Indigenous nations with regard to identity, economic development and autonomy within Québec. Lastly, the National Assembly recognized the existence of the 11 distinct Indigenous nations on its territory by adopting the resolutions of 1985 and 1989 (recognition of the Wolastoqiyik First Nation).

The realities specific to FNI require implementation of targeted approaches that respond to the specific issues of their employability and their socio-professional insertion. By integrating these aspects in government initiatives, the Strategy will make it possible to strengthen sustainable inclusion, that respects their cultures and traditions, while promoting access to labour market opportunities.

Photo credit: Québec region © GouvQc Gaëlle Leroyer

Demography

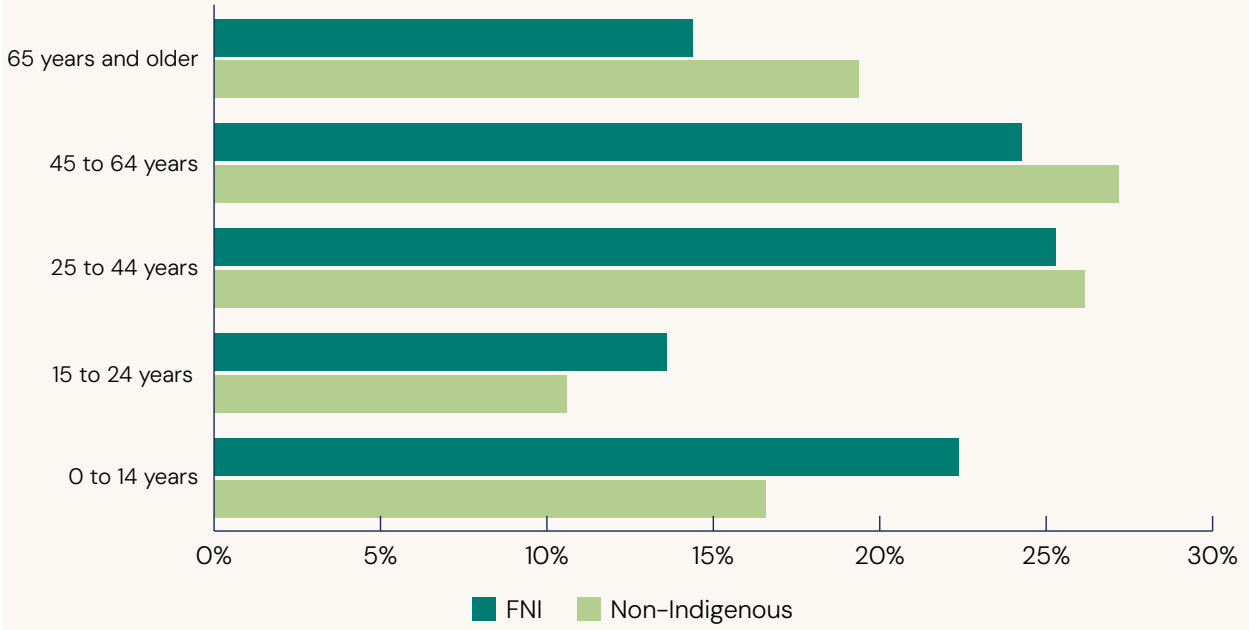
Québec is home to 10 First Nations and one Inuit nation. The First Nations in Québec are the Abenaki, Kanien'kehà:ka (Mohawk), Wendat, Mi'kmaq (Micmac), Innu, Eeyou (Cree), Naskapi, Anishinaabe (Algonquin), Attikamekw and Wolastoqiyik (Maliseet).

FNI are grouped into 55 communities dispersed across Québec, with 41 communities administered by a band council and 14 Inuit northern villages. Many FNI also live in urban areas.

In total, in 2023, there were 125 163 members of First Nations and Inuit. They represent just over 1.0% of the total population of Québec[9]. According to 2021 census data, 54 545 FNI members aged 15 and older lived in urban areas, or 53.1% of the total FNI population.

There are 68 650 women[10] FNI members, or 51.9% of the Indigenous population. This proportion is a 1.6 percentage point (pp) higher than among the non-Indigenous population. Lastly, the FNI population is typically much younger than the non-Indigenous population. Among FNI, 22.4% of the population is between 0 and 14 years of age, and 13.5% is between 15 and 24 years of age. These proportions are, respectively, 5.8% pp and 3.0 pp higher than among the non-Indigenous population.

Age groups among FNI and the non-Indigenous population

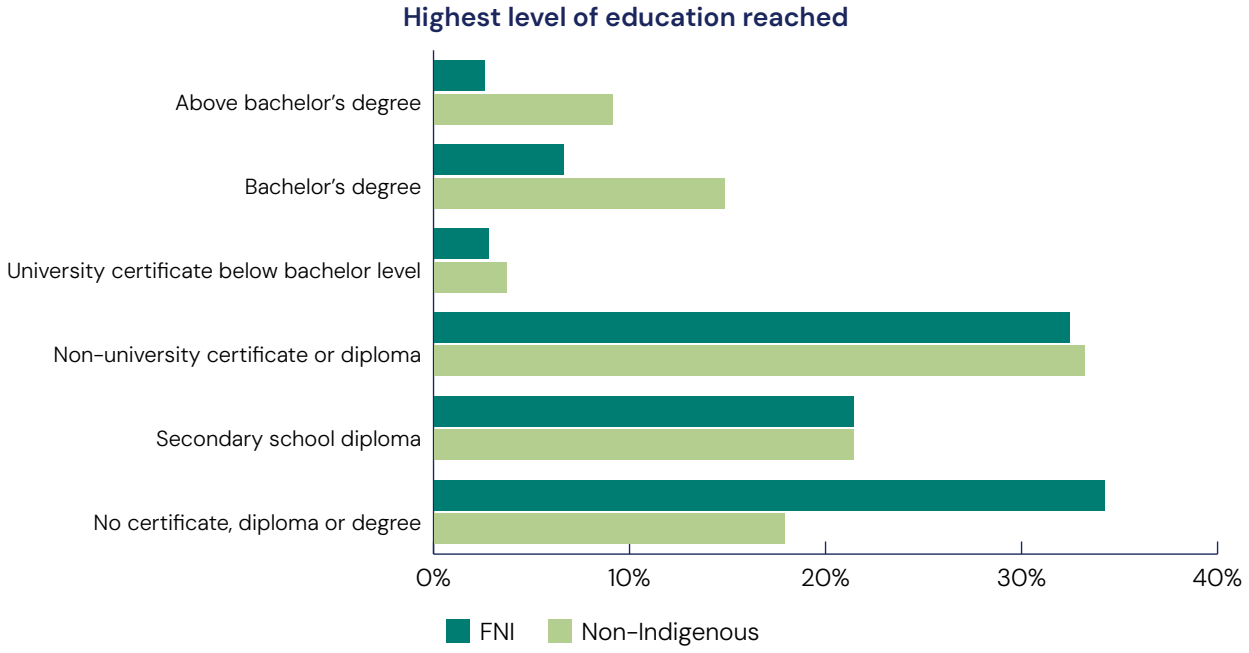


Source: Statistics Canada, *2021 Census*

9. Gouvernement du Québec (February 19, 2025) The 11 Indigenous nations of Québec
10. https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2021/ref/gender-genre-eng.cfm

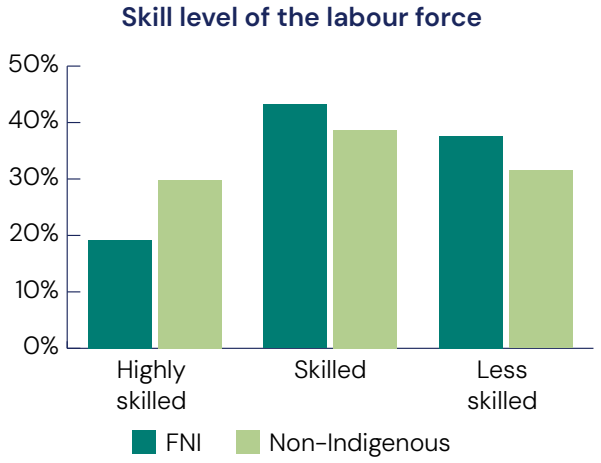
Socioeconomic characteristics

From a socioeconomic perspective, FNI members have certain characteristics that are distinct from the non-Indigenous population. In terms of education, FNI members face several challenges. Just over one third of FNI do not hold a certificate, diploma or degree, while this proportion is 17.9% among the non-Indigenous population. The proportion of FNI who holds a bachelor's degree or above is 9.2%, while this increases to 23.8% for the non-Indigenous population.



Source: Statistics Canada, *2021 Census*

The relatively low level of education among FNI is also reflected in the skill level of the labour force[11]. Only 19.2% of this labour force is highly skilled, compared with 29.8% for the non-Indigenous population. Consequently, the proportion of FNI occupying skilled employment or less skilled employment is higher than for the non-Indigenous population.

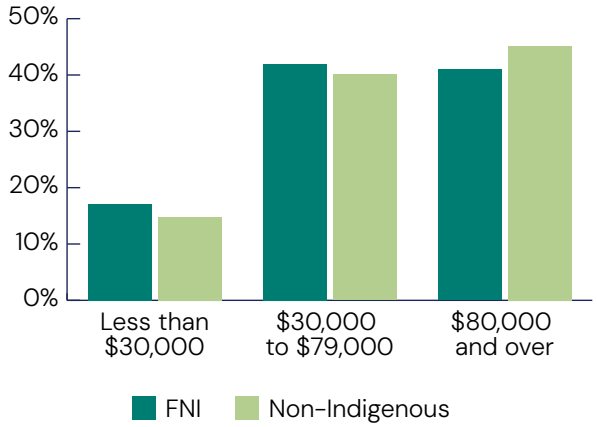


Source: Statistics Canada, *2021 Census*

11. Occupations are classified according to skill level based on training, education, experience and related responsibility. Concretely, "highly skilled" jobs include management professions and occupations that generally require a university diploma. "Skilled" jobs include occupations that require a diploma of college studies, two years or more of learning, supervisory tasks or on-the-job training of more than 6 months. Lastly, "less skilled" jobs include occupations that require a secondary school diploma, on-the-job training of several weeks or generally require a short-term demonstration of the work and no education.

The household income of Indigenous populations in Québec also shows a significant gap in relation to non-Indigenous households. In 2021, 17.1% of Indigenous households earned less than $30,000 versus 14.8% of non-Indigenous households. The proportion of households with an income of $80,000 or more was 41.0% among FNI members versus 45.1% among non-Indigenous households. The low income rate[12] of FNI households is higher than for the rest of the population. Before taxes, this rate is 20.1% for FNI, that is, 5.0 pp more than for the non-Indigenous population.

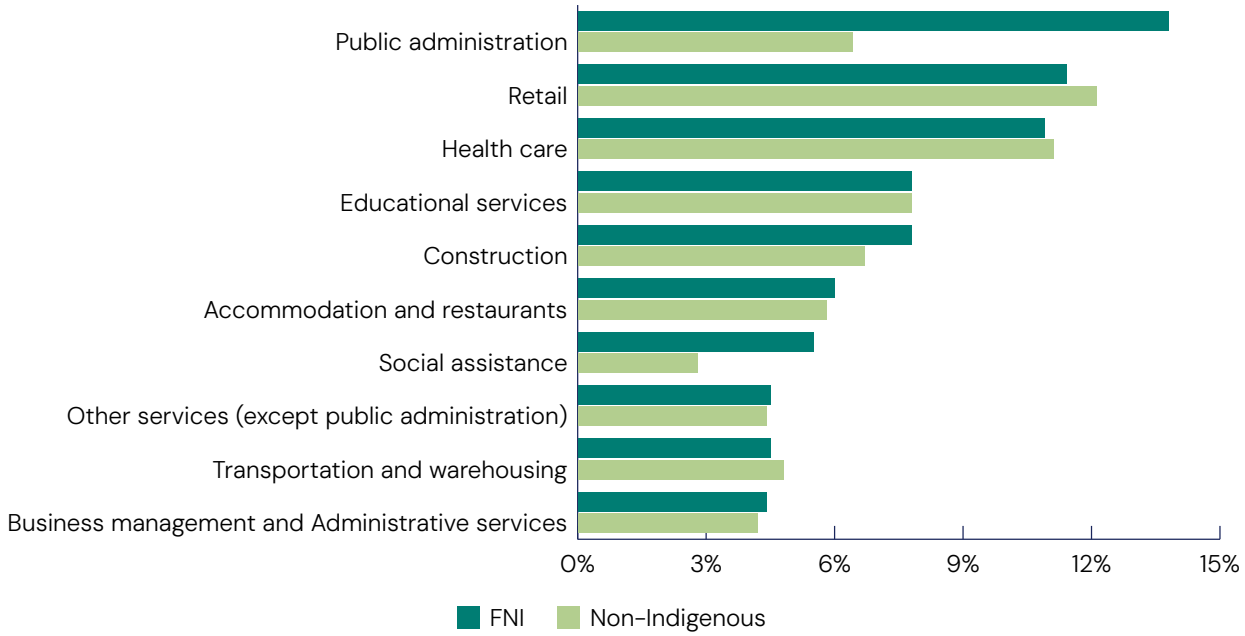
Household income



Source: Statistics Canada, *2021 Census*

By analyzing the different sectors of the Québec economy, we note that FNI members are generally employed in the same fields as the rest of the population. However, two employment sectors stand out: public administration and social assistance. In fact, 13.8% of FNI workers occupy jobs in public administration compared with only 6.4% of non-Indigenous workers. Moreover, 5.5% of the FNI labour force works in the field of social assistance, compared with 2.8% of the non-Indigenous labour force.

The 10 sectors most occupied by FNI



Source: Statistics Canada, *2021 Census*

12. The proportion or percentage of individuals whose income is below a specific low income threshold.

Situation of FNI members in the labour market

FNI members face many challenges on the labour market. The main labour market indicators show that this population has less favourable participation, employment and unemployment rates than the rest of the Québec population.

- The employment and participation rates among FNI aged 15 to 64 years were, respectively, 62.2% and 68.7%. These rates were 11.7 and 10.7 pp lower for FNI than for the non-Indigenous population, at the time of the last census.
- The unemployment rate among FNI was 2.3 pp higher than for the rest of the population in 2021[13].
- Between 2016 and 2021, all of the indicator gaps decreased. In Québec, the participation rate gap decreased by 1.5 pp, the employment rate gap by 4.8 pp and the unemployment rate gap by 5.3 pp[14].
- Lastly, the gaps between FNI and the non-Indigenous population in Québec were less pronounced than for all of Canada. More specifically, the unemployment rate gap was 2.3 pp, the lowest of Canada's provinces. In Ontario, this gap was 3.8 pp and for all of Canada it was 6.7 pp[15].

Situation of FNI members in urban areas

According to the last census (2021), FNI members in urban areas were more active on the labour market than their non-urban counterparts:

- The participation rate of ages 15 to 64 years living in the metropolitan areas surveyed was 72.7% (8.3 pp higher than in rural areas) and their employment rate was 66.1% (7.9 pp higher than in rural areas).
- However, FNI in urban areas have an unemployment rate of 9.7%, similar to that in rural areas (10.0%). The unemployment rate of the non-Indigenous population in urban areas in 2021 was 7.7%.

Situation of FNI women in the labour market

The unemployment rate of FNI women ages 15 years and over was 9.3%, that is, 1.0 pp lower than among the men in this population. This gap is 0.2 pp for the non-Indigenous population.

Among the working-age population (15 to 64 years), women's participation rate was 67.0%, that is 3.5 pp lower than among men. This is a smaller gap than that observed for the non-Indigenous population (4.5 pp).

Lastly, the employment rate of FNI women is 61.1%, that is, 2.3 pp lower than among men; it is also a smaller gap than that observed for the non-Indigenous population (3.9 pp)[16].

13. Statistics Canada, *2021 Census of Population.*
14. Statistics Canada, *2016 and 2021 Census of Population.*
15. Statistics Canada, *2016 and 2021 Census of Population.*
16. Statistics Canada, *2021 Census of Population.*

2.2. Challenges of the First Nations and Inuit workforce in Québec

FNI have different life experiences, values and perspectives that are influenced by their sociocultural history. These specificities, manifested culturally, educationally, politically, societally and spiritually, are important to consider when seeking relevant solutions.

By demonstrating an openness to adapting their management practices, workplaces can create a culturally safe space for the FNI workforce. Employment issues can be categorized as follows:

- Individual integrity and identity: FNI must reconcile their cultural identity with the demands of the labour market, which can lead to periods of occupational adaptation.
- Accessibility of resources and support tools: Access to relevant training and adapted employment services, locally accessible resources and concrete tools to support integration into the labour market continue to be a challenge for many Indigenous communities due to cultural, geographic and structural barriers.
- False perceptions: Prejudices against FNI continue to limit their full participation in the labour market.

It is important that labour market players acknowledge and value the cultural specificities of FNI, in particular through open and inclusive management practices, as well as by making available adapted and easily accessible resources.

Photo credit: Québec region © GouvQc Gaëlle Leroyer

3. PRINCIPLES

3.1. Guiding principle

The Strategy privileges partnerships as well as close and constant consultation with various institutions that represent the Gouvernement du Québec, the federal government, organizations, specialized workforce development bodies and private enterprise. The consultation and mutualization of stakeholder efforts will serve to optimize the socio-professional insertion of FNI members.

The following guiding principle will inform the Strategy's implementation over the next few years:

Collaboration with First Nations and Inuit organizations to promote openness and new initiatives. Working together, for everyone.

3.2. Secondary principles

In addition to the guiding principle underpinning the implementation of the Strategy from beginning to end, other secondary principles define the major orientations and strategic pillars. More specifically, these principles are reflected in the following aspects of the Strategy:

- The Strategy is **implemented locally** taking into account territorial realities, the specificity of the FNI clientele and characteristics of the labour market in each region.
- **Cultural safety** makes it possible to adapt services to the specificities of FNI by acknowledging their distinct histories and cultures. It seeks to create a respectful and inclusive environment, where caring practices promote the integration and wellbeing of FNI members.
- The Strategy's **holistic approach** considers the person in all their dimensions and privileges learning based on observation and practice to foster autonomy. It supports cultural safety by promoting Indigenous cultures and knowhow in the workplace, thereby reinforcing their recognition and their contribution.
- Lastly, the Strategy encourages access to employment services for these populations, ensuring that each person benefits from **measures appropriate** to their insertion into the labour market.

Photo credit: Nunavik © GouvQc Hooké/Stuart Davis

4. ORIENTATIONS AND STRATEGIC PILLARS

The Strategy is organized around two major orientations:

Increase the participation of FNI members in employment services.

Promote the hiring and job retention of FNI members.

The orientations and their related actions are the fruit of concerted work with the various FNI organizations to respond to the main issues identified. This process included:

- **Evaluating the needs of FNI** in the employment context.
- **Identifying the challenges** they face.
- **Collaborating with FNI organizations** during participatory workshops.
- **Organizing brainstorming sessions** with regional officials to identify possible actions.
- **Reviewing current services and programs** to identify shortcomings and opportunities for improvement.
- **Consulting publications and studies** on best practices in the professional insertion of FNI.

Orientation 1:
Increase the participation of FNI members in employment services

Considering the lower participation rate of FNI and their difficulties sustainably integrating into the labour market, the Strategy seeks to strengthen and expand the Ministère's actions in order to increase the participation of FNI members in employment services. Designed in consultation with the stakeholders, it responds to the specific challenges encountered by these populations by proposing solutions adapted to their cultural, social and economic realities.

Access to employment services is still hindered by various social issues that influence the perseverance of FNI members in their integration efforts.

Moreover, remote regions often have a limited-service offer. Added to that, a lack of awareness of cultural safety where these services are offered limits their appeal and relevance with respect to the communities' needs. The Strategy seeks to modify the Ministère's interventions to ensure more adapted, better structured access that is culturally respectful of FNI realities.

Their history and realities must be understood and taken into account during interactions with various employment resources in order to sensitize the various players working for the success of their socio-professional trajectory.

Strategic pillar 1.1
Increase knowledge of the Ministère's employment programs, measures and services and those of FNI organizations

This focus area seeks to increase awareness of the Ministère's programs and services and those of its FNI and non-Indigenous partners working in employability in order to maximize participation of the populations in question. By promoting better knowledge and understanding of the available resources, it encourages members of First nations and Inuit to develop their employability

Strategic pillar 1.2
Disseminate the Strategy in order to enable effective use of the support tools available

It is essential that the DGSQs, specialized employability bodies and labour market partners have a clear understanding of the Strategy's orientations. The Strategy must engage and mobilize the staff of the Ministère and all of its partners in its implementation.

Strategic pillar 1.3
Promote preparation and support of FNI in their job skills development

This focus area seeks to improve employment assistance for FNI members by supporting their preparation and socio-professional insertion through concerted, culturally adapted and structured services, while promoting a holistic approach that responds to their specific needs.

The Strategy is interested in particular in the employability of young FNI, whose employment rate is improving, but is still below that of their non-Indigenous counterparts. The Ministère is committed to referring these young people to activities to develop their employability, to qualifying training or to employment. It seeks to put in place innovative, relevant and effective projects to support their sustainable insertion into the labour market.

Strategic pillar 1.4
Document the labour market situation of FNI members

Through this focus area, the Strategy seeks to improve the availability of information on the socio-professional situation of FNI to better adapt employment services to their profiles, challenges and specific needs.

This focus area will also make it possible to orient policies based on reliable data, to clearly identify challenges and opportunities, and to sensitize FNI and non-Indigenous labour market partners.

Orientation 2:
Promote the hiring and job retention of FNI members

While the Québec labour market is doing well, FNI continue to be underrepresented, with lower employment rates and higher unemployment rates. Efforts must be maintained to help FNI members overcome obstacles to employment, in particular by supporting socio-professional development.

The situation of FNI on the labour market continues to be complex and varies depending on several factors, among others, level of education, qualification and skills. FNI members also face persistent challenges in terms of hiring and job retention, due to cultural, geographic and social obstacles, which lead to significant gaps with the non-Indigenous population.

To promote the acquisition of essential skills for improving FNI employability, it is important to adopt a proactive approach in the design and adaptation of training programs so that they effectively respond to the realities and specific needs of these populations.

Learning through the journeyperson system as well as workplace training promotes this adaptation through personalized training at a pace that makes it possible to overcome the challenges faced by FNI.

Note that the actions implemented under the 2017-2022 Strategy led to some advances. Actions raised employer awareness of the specificities of FNI cultures and promoted the value of this workforce.

The funding of several innovative projects in workforce skills development among FNI members through workplace training adapted to their realities enabled a relevant response to the needs raised by partners, individuals and businesses over the last few years targeted by the previous strategy.

This new action plan will promote the pursuit of these initiatives and the development of new projects.

Strategic pillar 2.1
Promote the contribution of the FNI workforce in the labour market

The employment services network seeks to sensitize employers to the labour market challenges faced by FNI members in order to facilitate their insertion into relevant jobs and encourage more adapted human resources practices.

Supporting FNI workers improves their insertion and job retention. This focus area seeks to strengthen these initiatives through support, provided by the most appropriate local resources.

Strategic pillar 2.2
Focus on the skills development of the FNI workforce through workplace training, adapted to their realities

The proportion of FNI occupying low-skilled jobs is 37.6%, that is, 6.1 pp higher than for the non-Indigenous population[17]. In the next few years, the Québec economy will evolve toward a labour market increasingly focused on skilled or highly skilled jobs[18]. To respond to businesses' labour needs and the skills development aspirations of FNI members, this focus area seeks to ensure that they will benefit from workplace training measures that are adapted to their sociocultural context.

The Ministère is also committed to promoting the skills development of FNI members by supporting the adoption of pedagogical approaches adapted to their training needs and ensuring a culturally safe framework.

The Strategy encourages training and qualification efforts for the low-skilled Indigenous workers by privileging basic training and helping companies fulfil their obligation in the area of vocational qualification. For example, the promotion and use of the Workforce Skills Development and Recognition Framework, in collaboration with workforce sectoral committees, will contribute to improving FNI workers' skills.

Strategic pillar 2.3
Promote a better understanding of the labour market needs and specificities of FNI members

A comprehensive understanding of the needs of FNI members is critical to guaranteeing adequate support by labour market partners and Ministère staff.

Indeed, to promote the insertion of FNI members into the labour market, it is essential to provide employees and partners with tools and training adapted to their cultural realities and their specific needs. This focus area consists of supporting the development of training initiatives for employees.

17. Statistics Canada, *2021 Census of Population*.
18. Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale, État d'équilibre du marché du travail à court et moyen termes (in French), 2024, p. 12.

5. STRATEGY FUNDING

A sum of $10 million over four years, which is related to additional credits granted by the Ministère in the 2024-2025 Québec budget, was allocated for the implementation of the Strategy's action plan. This sum is in addition to those regarding actions funded out of the same Ministère budgets.

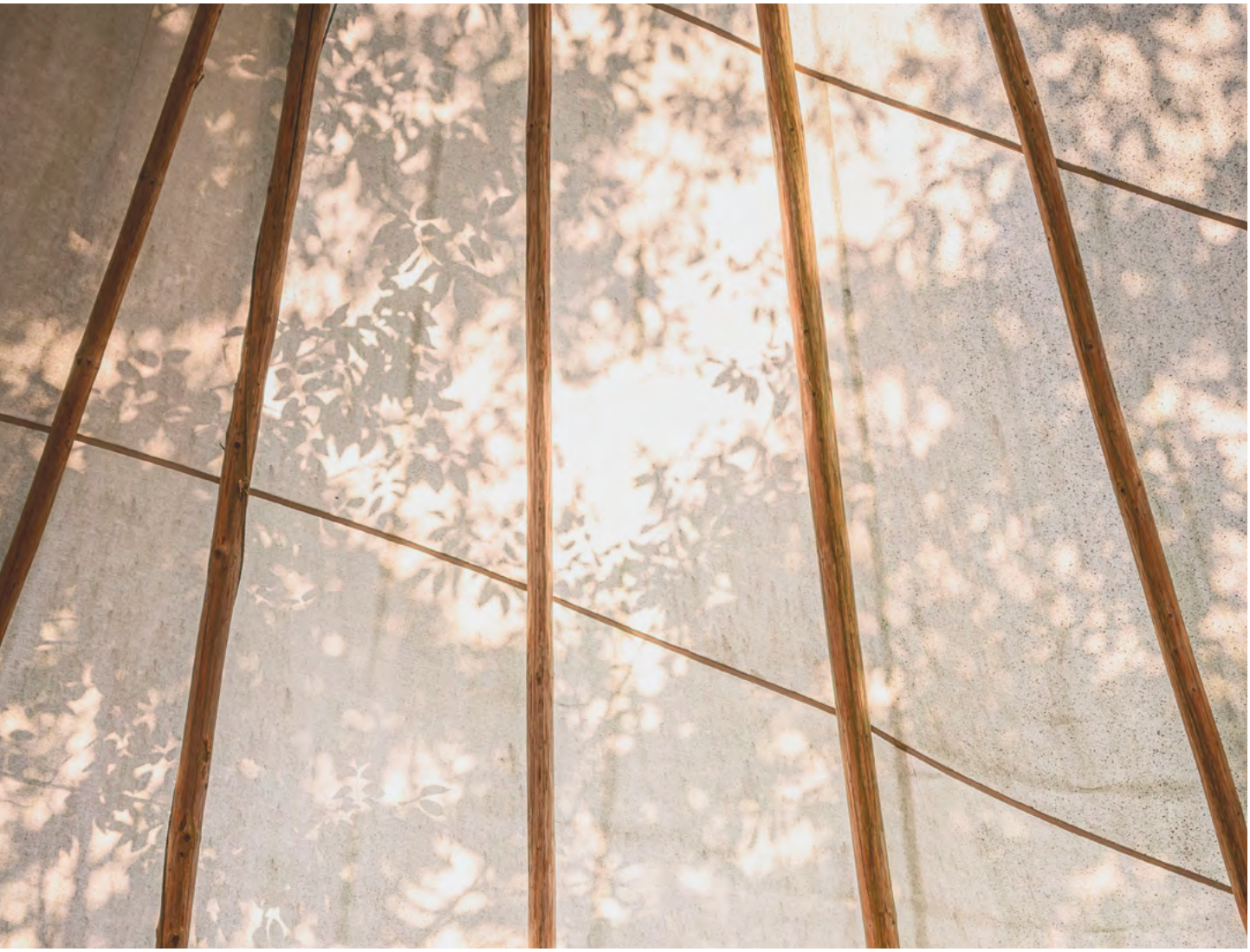


Photo credit: Simon Clark, Destination Québec cité

6. MONITORING

6.1. Monitoring indicators

Monitoring indicators were established based on a series of criteria including relevance, feasibility and reliability. In total, indicators of an operational nature will measure the scope of the Strategy in relation to the labour market situation of FNI members and their participation in employment services. These indicators will make it possible to monitor the progress of the socio-professional insertion of FNI as well as the evolution in the gap in this area compared with non-Indigenous people.

The Strategy proposes indicators to measure progress in the socio-professional insertion of FNI. The main objectives are as follows:

- Raise awareness of the Strategy and employment services among the main labour market players and the FNI population.
- Facilitate the trajectory of the FNI clientele in order to obtain a continuum of services within a holistic approach.
- Guide ministerial actions in an efficient and targeted manner.
- Acquire additional information regarding data and needs of FNI members.
- Enhance employer awareness by promoting the implementation of projects to improve human resources management and skills development of the FNI workforce.

6.2. Monitoring committee

A monitoring committee will be established and ensure rigorous and concerted monitoring of initiatives.

The monitoring committee will bring together representatives of the Ministère's central units in addition to members of the FNILMAC.

6.3. Accountability reports

Several FNI organizations contributed to developing the Strategy. An accountability report will be produced for the purposes of continuity and to ensure implementation of the measures and actions. At the end of year four of implementation, a final evaluation report of the Action Plan will be produced, in order to evaluate outcomes and recommend adjustments, if necessary. On the regional level, the DGSQs will be encouraged to develop an action plan (annual or covering the entire duration of the Strategy) to ensure coherence between the different local interventions.

6.4. Strategy evaluation

The Ministère is responsible for evaluating the Strategy. An evaluation committee will be created to participate in evaluation and monitoring. FNI partners will be invited to participate in this process.

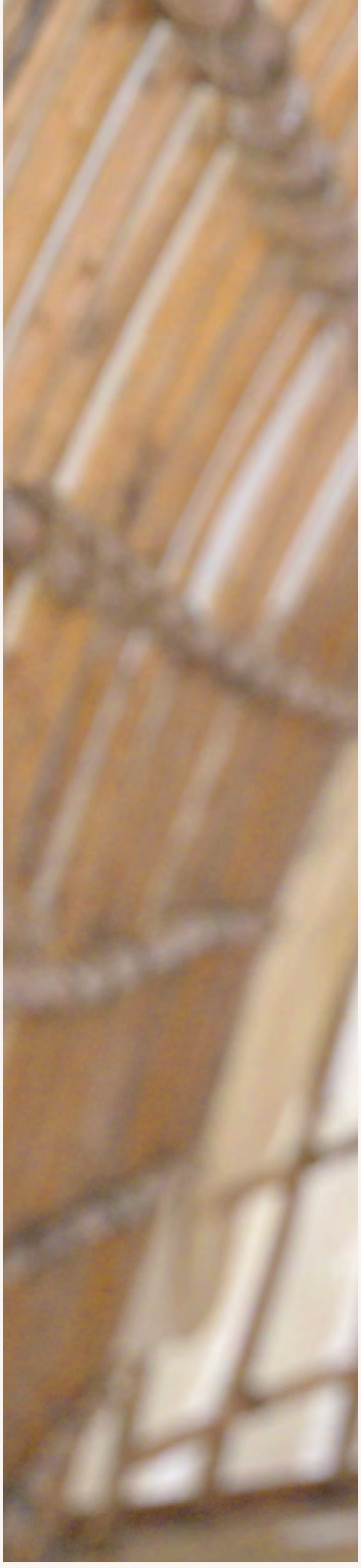
6.5. Gender-based analysis

The proposed actions under the Strategy do not make any distinction between women and men. Their implementation was planned so that women and men will benefit equitably. However, for information purposes, the Strategy's monitoring indicators will be broken down according to gender, where data is available. Consequently, the report and evaluation that will be conducted at the end Strategy must include a gender-based analysis.

CONCLUSION

The 2025-2029 Ministerial Strategy for the Socio-Professional Insertion of First Nations and Inuit represents an important step forward in achieving socioeconomic equity and inclusion of these nations. By supporting concerted initiatives to improve participation in employment services and the hiring and job retention of FNI, this strategy seeks to increase their participation in the labour market.

The success of the projects put forth by all labour market players depends on close collaboration between the Ministère, the FNI organizations and the various labour market partners. This synergy will not only make it possible to improve the socio-professional situation of FNI, but also dynamize the socioeconomic fabric of Québec as a whole.



APPENDIX

Guiding principle:
Collaboration with First Nations and Inuit organizations to promote openness and new initiatives. Working together, for everyone.

Summary Table

2025-2029 Ministerial Strategy for the Socio-Professional Insertion of First Nations and Inuit Action Plan.

Strategic pillars	Action
Orientation 1: Increase the participation of First Nations and Inuit members in employment services	
Strategic pillar 1.1 Increase knowledge of the Ministère's employment programs, measures and services and those of First Nations and Inuit organizations	1. Support employment promotion activities among First Nations and Inuit members, such as forums and job fairs in targeted regions and cities.
	2. Ensure the coordination of a partnership network of Québec and federal government bodies as well as First Nations and Inuit organizations for the deployment of mobile clinics offering employability services and various government services to the First Nations and Inuit clientele.
	3. Consolidate the partnerships between the representatives of organizations involved in the employability development of the First Nations and Inuit clientele.
Strategic pillar 1.2 Disseminate the 2025-2029 Ministerial Strategy for the Socio-Professional Insertion of First Nations and Inuit in order to enable effective use of the support tools available	4. Mobilize all partners as well as the staff of the Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale around the Strategy's objectives in order to operationalize it among the Commission des partenaires du marché du travail, the Conseils régionaux des partenaires du marché du travail and regional collaboration bodies in partnership with First Nations and Inuit organizations.
Strategic pillar 1.3 Promote preparation and support of First Nations and Inuit in their job skills development	5. Support a continuum of services during a First Nations and Inuit person's employability trajectory in collaboration with First Nations and Inuit organizations.
	6. Contribute to the development of projects including pre-employability and employability activities for First Nations and Inuit members within a holistic approach to respond to specific needs.
	7. Support concerted projects that promote guidance of First Nations and Inuit youth toward employment.
	8. Support a round table bringing together Indigenous representatives in order to develop and implement a pilot project on socio-professional insertion, using an approach centred on the needs of First Nations and Inuit participants.

Strategic pillars	Action
Strategic pillar 1.4 **Document the situation of First Nations and Inuit in the labour market**	9. Support the creation of portraits of the First Nations and Inuit workforce in order to identify profiles and needs according to regional realities.
	10. Conduct an investigation to establish the situation of First Nations and Inuit women in the labour market and identify the challenges related to their employability.
	11. Carry out data collection aimed at establishing the situation of First Nations and Inuit people with disabilities to promote their insertion and job retention.
Orientation 2: Promote the hiring and job retention of First Nations and Inuit members	
Strategic pillar 2.1 **Promote the contribution of the First Nations and Inuit workforce in the labour market**	12. Support and undertake awareness-raising activities with employers on First Nations and Inuit realities in order to encourage the hiring of FNI members, while promoting the development of more adapted human resources practices.
	13. Promote the integration and job retention of First Nations and Inuit through sustained support involving consultation with local employment resources.
Strategic pillar 2.2 **Focus on the skills development of the First Nations and Inuit workforce through workplace training, adapted to their realities**	14. According to the needs of the First Nations and Inuit workforce and the labour market, identify and conduct training or skills development activities.
	15. Promote skills development tools such as the Workplace Apprenticeship Program, compulsory qualification, the activities of the Workforce Skills Development and Recognition Fund (WSDRF) and those developed by sectoral workforce committees (CSMO) with First Nations and Inuit organizations and clienteles.
Strategic pillar 2.3 **Promote a better understanding of the labour market needs and specificities of First Nations and Inuit members**	16. Provide labour market partners and employees of the Ministère with tools promoting the understanding of the needs of FNI, better knowledge of their sociocultural realities and the services available to them.

Emploi
et Solidarité sociale
Québec