

# Elections Québec 2012

Understanding the main issues

COMPARISON OF POLITICAL PARTIES - QUÉBEC ELECTION SEPTEMBER 4, 2012

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## Foreword

In the context of the current Québec election campaign, the CSQ has compiled table comparing the election platforms of the Parti libéral du Québec (PLQ), the Parti Québécois (PQ), the Coalition Avenir Québec (CAQ) and Québec solidaire. We have taken information relevant to our analysis from the platforms and the websites of the political parties, except for the PLQ. Indeed, this party has not tabled an election platform. As a result, we referred to this party's convention document of October 2011.

This comparison does not cover all aspects of the election proposals. And for good reason! We decided to examine the issues and present the proposals that are most meaningful for the CSQ, basing ourselves on our demands and the societal vision we adopted at our Congress in June 2012. Note that we will be regularly updating this table.

## Party Proposals

On the theme: "*For Québec*," the PLQ is positioning itself in continuity with its last three terms and is focusing its orientations on three major issues: employment, the Plan Nord and a balanced budget. Beyond a general statement about the economy, it is not presenting an election platform or proposal to define its vision in a number of areas, but is instead adding measures to its government action plan. These measures are added on a daily basis.

The theme of the PQ platform is "*À nous de choisir*" which presents three parts: *S'affirmer, S'enrichir, S'entraider*. The PQ presents itself as the credible alternative to the Liberal government, i.e., as an honest, responsible government that is proposing a sound affirmation of Québec's identity, and the creation and distribution of wealth in a perspective of collective solidarity.

The CAQ is presenting itself as the party of change, an uncorrupted party, which is reflected in the theme "*Enough, vote for change*." This party wants to shake up the institutions and operations of the Québec government and is articulating its proposals in a vision of societal development that is based on performance and a bean-counter vision of the economy.

Québec solidaire's platform is "*Debout*." It is ambitious and articulates a societal vision that speaks to growing problems of inequality and the environmental crisis. This is the only party that advocates an entirely free education system, an end to privatization in the health and social services network and electoral reform.

## 1. EDUCATION

Would education be a priority for any of the parties? Perhaps, but we must note that the proposals put forward do not necessarily fulfill the CSQ's expectations. Only QS includes lifelong, free and accessible education. This party does not address the issue of the structure of education institutions. In contrast, the PLQ, the PQ and the CAQ have their sights on school boards and the issue of school management occupies a significant place in their proposals. The CAQ wants to abolish them and transfer their responsibilities to the schools and service centres. The PLQ wants to revise their mandates and the PQ wants to eliminate overlap between the Ministère and the school boards. The evaluation of teachers' performance and the creation of an order of teachers form the core of the CAQ's platform. It also wants to reassess rules governing the acquisition of tenure. These measures are presented to offset increased remuneration for teachers and school principals. The PLQ does not plan to add professional resources or support in the schools whereas all the other parties have committed to doing so.

As for education programs, the PLQ and CAQ proposals strongly insist on standardizing province-wide evaluations, in particular for French (PLQ, CAQ) and mathematics (PLQ). The PLQ proposal for intensive English-language instruction is familiar and the CAQ shares this orientation. Student perseverance is a topic of proposals from all of the parties while the CAQ emphasizes placing the burden of student success on teaching staff.

As for vocational training, the CAQ's approach to this sector is based solely on meeting the needs of the labour market whereas the PLQ wants to restructure technical training programs to better meet the needs of students and the labour market. In contrast, none of the parties specifies concrete measures that would allow a response to their proposals.

The PLQ's solutions concerning tuition fees and student debt are familiar. The PQ would cancel the tuition fee hikes and hold a summit on higher education. The CSQ proposes improvements to the loans and bursaries system and a repayment formula for student debt. Finally, QS takes a different approach by proposing the elimination of all fees charged for attending a public institution.

	<b>PARTI LIBÉRAL DU QUÉBEC</b>	<b>PARTI QUÉBÉCOIS</b>	<b>COALITION AVENIR QUÉBEC</b>	<b>QUÉBEC SOLIDAIRE</b>
School boards	<p><b>Revise the mandates and the responsibilities of school boards to secure annual savings of \$100 million/year over 3 years.</b></p> <p><b>Study the opportunity of holding simultaneous school and municipal elections.</b></p>	<p>Reinforce the autonomy of schools.</p> <p>Eliminate overlap of responsibilities between MELS and the school boards.</p> <p>Foster mergers of school boards on a voluntary basis.</p> <p>Hold school and municipal elections on the same day.</p>	<p>Abolish school boards and MELS regional offices.</p> <p>Create 30 Francophone regional service centres and 9 Anglophone service centres.</p>	

School management	<b>Give more autonomy to public school principals, particularly with regard to hiring professional and specialist resources and to measures for retaining their best teachers.</b>		Increase the powers of schools. Increase representation of parents on governing boards.	Reduce the number of students per class.
Teaching staff	<b>Negotiate clauses with the unions to increase job stability for young teachers.</b>		Increase the average salary of teachers and school principals by about 20%. Evaluate the overall performance of teachers. Create a professional order of teachers. Reassess the rules governing the acquisition of tenure for teachers, which will from now on be allocated throughout Québec.	
Professional and support staff		Increase the number of professions and support staff in schools.	Provide additional professional resources and give precedence to schools with larger concentrations of students having difficulties.	Hire more professionals providing direct services to students.
Education programs	<b>Evaluate schools by student performance through standard ministerial exams in French and mathematics and reward those with the best performance.</b> <b>Provide better support to gifted students and better</b>	Launch a wide-ranging literacy campaign, including numerical illiteracy, to significantly reduce illiteracy by 2020.	Promote intensive teaching of English as a second language. Abolish the Ethics and Religious Culture program in elementary school and allocate more time for the teaching of French and mathematics.	Encourage specific or alternative non-elitist educational projects designed by communities, in compliance with the policy directions of MELS.

	<p><b>rewards for effort and excellence.</b></p> <p><b>Extend the "Entrepreneurship" program to Secondary IV and V.</b></p> <p><b>Add 10 hours of compulsory volunteering in Secondary V.</b></p>		<p>Improve mastery of French and evaluate it through province-wide exams at all educational levels.</p>	
Student perseverance	<p>Double funding for the Homework Assistance Program.</p>	<p>Strongly encourage the mobilization of all sectors of society in combatting the school dropout problem.</p>	<p>Add one hour per day to the high school schedule for diverse activities starting in 2014-2015.</p>	<p>Improve support measures for student perseverance and to reduce bullying and violence.</p> <p>Improve nutritional support programs in disadvantaged communities.</p>
Financial support	<p>Offer, in fall 2013, tax-free financial support of \$100 per child for the purchase of school supplies.</p>			<p>Ensure lifelong, accessible and free education for all.</p>
Private schools		<p>Modify funding for private schools to require them to accept students with learning disabilities.</p> <p>Stop subsidizing denominational private schools.</p>		<p>Adopt a plan to implement, by 2020, the gradual transfer of all public subsidies allocated to private schools to the public system and integrate those wishing to move to the public system.</p>
Vocational training	<p><b>Restructure technical training programs to provide for more pathways leading to an AEC or a DCS, to better meet the needs of students and the labour market.</b></p>		<p>Promote ties between schools and businesses to meet the needs of businesses.</p> <p>Promote internship programs in businesses and work-study programs.</p>	<p>Facilitate access for women to non-traditional occupations.</p>

<p>Higher education and accessibility</p>		<p>Cancel the 82% tuition fee hike immediately upon election and repeal Bill 78.</p> <p>Hold a summit on the accessibility of higher education, the evaluation of the overall costs of tuition fees including ancillary fees, the quality of teaching and research, and the funding and management of universities.</p> <p>Propose different modes of repayment of student loans to ensure access to education and mitigate student debt.</p>	<p>Improve the loans and bursaries program: lower the parental contribution in the calculation of financial assistance for families earning an income of \$60,000 or less.</p> <p>Implement a repayment plan proportional to income at 5% of income over a period of ten years, after which the debt will be cancelled.</p>	<p>Eliminate all fees charged for attendance at any public institution from preschool through university, "including tuition fees."</p> <p>Repeal Bill 78 and amnesty for accused persons.</p>
<p>Performance contracts</p>			<p>Introduce performance contracts in the universities.</p>	

## 2. HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

To get an idea of the PLQ's orientations in health, we must once again refer to the decisions of the 2011 convention. As for their election commitments, the documents tabled reflect their accomplishments, and above all they refer us to the situation nine years ago with the PQ government. As for the management of the health network, none of the four party's programs propose a truly comprehensive vision. The CAQ intones its mantra on abolishing structure and funding tied to performance, the PLQ wants to extend evaluation of performance in the network's institutions, while the PQ is announcing a shift toward per-act funding. As for the organization of care, the CAQ proposes the most concrete measures. A promise to provide access to family doctors is in the platforms of each of the four parties, but none explains how this would be accomplished.

There are differences in the party proposals regarding the role of private services in health care. The CAQ goes further with privatization of health care by proposing a pilot public-private project, whereas QS offers a vision of an entirely public system and states it will make all prescription drug insurance public and part of pharmaceutical research and production.

Access to care and housing for seniors is a concern for all the parties. While the three parties claim to wish to improve access to home care, the PQ stands out with its proposal to create autonomy insurance.

	<b>PARTI LIBÉRAL DU QUÉBEC</b>	<b>PARTI QUÉBÉCOIS</b>	<b>COALITION AVENIR QUÉBEC</b>	<b>QUÉBEC SOLIDAIRE</b>
Administration of the network	<b>Evaluate the performance of institutions and the productive for certain areas of specialization.</b>	Give more autonomy to institutions.  Modulate the funding of healthcare institutions based on services provided.	Abolish health and social services agencies and refocus the Ministère's functions on its basic missions.  Modify the funding mode for healthcare institutions based on the volume of care provided to patients.	
Organization of care	<b>Modify work organization and regulations concerning the processing and case management of chronically ill patients.</b> <b>Modify the ranking of special medical activities.</b> Entrust nurses with the		Review the concept of special medical activities that obligates young family doctors to work 12 hours per week in a hospital.  Implement guaranteed access to diagnostic testing such as medical imaging.  Hire sufficient numbers of nurses	

	<p>coordination of care for chronically ill patients provided by health care professionals.</p> <p>Put in place a monitoring system for chronically ill patients based on home calls.</p>		<p>at a modified salary.</p> <p>Promote the establishment of specialist clinics affiliated with the public network for certain types of outpatient surgery.</p>	
Accessibility	<p><b>Improve access to family doctors and supplement the Family Medicine Groups network.</b></p> <p>Create a portal indicating wait times for all specialists.</p> <p>Extend RAMQ dental care eligibility to age 16 (except for orthodontics).</p>	<p>Rule out all per-act fees, such as user fees.</p> <p>Ensure that all Quebeckers have access to a family doctor and speed the development of the GMS network.</p>	<p>Ensure that all Quebeckers have access to a family doctor.</p>	<p>Guarantee public, universal, free, quality, local health care and social services, 24/7.</p> <p>Ensure that everyone has a family doctor.</p> <p>Ensure that women who want midwifery services have access.</p>
Drug insurance			<p>Abolish the 15-year rule for reimbursing innovative drugs in order to curb the costs of the drug insurance plan.</p>	<p>Implement a universal public drug insurance plan.</p> <p>Create Pharma Québec, a public pharmaceutical acquisition and production centre.</p>
Privatization	<p><b>Frame the health cooperative model.</b></p>	<p>Put in place a framework policy for health cooperatives in compliance with the Health Insurance Act.</p>	<p>Set up a public-private pilot project.</p>	<p>End privatization in the healthcare system.</p>
Seniors	<p><b>Ensure quality service in hospital centres.</b></p>	<p>Adopt a real home care and services policy, implement autonomy insurance and simplify access to the funding of these</p>	<p>Review the financing rules for housing and home support.</p> <p>Expand access to services at home and in CHSLD.</p>	<p>Expand home care services.</p>

		services.	Create an ombudsman for seniors.	
		Implement all of the recommendations of the report of the special commission: "Mourir dans la dignité."	Implement all of the recommendations of the report of the special commission: "Mourir dans la dignité."	

### 3. PUBLIC FINANCES AND PUBLIC SERVICE

As for public finances and the management of the state, the PLQ is keeping to the same orientations defined in recent budgets: curtail the growth of public spending and government machinery to restore a balanced budget and pay off the debt. The PLQ's formulation: "favour a taxation system that encourages savings and investment" also reveals its intent to pursue a shift toward a tax system more strongly based on fees and consumption taxes.

The PQ and QS have adopted more balanced approaches to public finances. Both parties propose eliminating the health tax and in return, enhance progressive income tax to secure additional revenues. QS differs in that it places more emphasis on companies' participation in taxes. The CAQ proposes measures to considerably reduce state revenues (cancellation of the health tax and a tax cut of \$1000 per family) while wishing to quickly accelerate repayment of the debt. However, it proposes no measures to ensure other sources of revenue to balance the budget. The CAQ is mainly counting on savings obtained through the abolition of 7000 public service jobs and increased efficiency through the imposition of a higher level of accountability and responsibility on public administrators. As for the management (administration) of the state, both QS and the PQ want to further decentralize the management of services to bring them closer to citizens.

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Public debt	Continue to balance the books in 2013-2014. Then, prioritize debt repayment.  <b>Devote half of royalties on oil and gas resources to the Generations Fund.</b>	Comply with the Balanced Budget Act.  Abolish the Generations Fund and use the funds for direct debt repayment.	Give priority to debt repayment.  Apply 100% of royalties from non-renewable natural resources toward debt repayment.	
<b>Taxation</b>	<b>Favour taxation that encourages savings and investment.</b>  <b>Harmonize the tax system and tax credits to reduce disincentives to working for the poor and low-income families.</b>  <b>Step up the fight against tax avoidance and evasion.</b>	Increase taxes for more affluent citizens with the addition of two new brackets (\$130,000 and \$250,000).  Study the concept of a luxury goods tax.  Revise tax exemptions for capital gains and dividends.	Reduce income tax for the middle class by \$600 from savings secured through streamlining of public administration.	Enhance progressive income tax by adding two new brackets for more affluent taxpayers.  Increase corporate income taxes and make them progressive.  Reassess tax incentives for companies in order to reduce them.
Health tax		Abolish the \$400 per family	Abolish the \$400 per family	Abolish the \$400 per family

		health tax.	health tax.	health tax.
State administration		<p>Decentralize and transfer the administration of services to the regions and municipalities.</p> <p>Implement a major reorganization of the state to reduce bureaucracy and hierarchical levels.</p>	<p>Abolish 7,000 jobs in the public service.</p> <p>Increase accountability and responsibility of the public service and government corporations.</p>	<p>Decentralize and transfer to municipal and regional authorities.</p> <p>Elect representatives to various regional and municipal bodies by universal suffrage.</p>

#### 4. INTEGRITY AND GOVERNANCE

The theme of integrity is central to this election campaign and it comes as no surprise that the PLQ claims that the outgoing government has already made every effort to contain the problem. Thus, the PLQ has no new proposals on this topic.

The PQ, the CAQ and QS are proposing numerous measures to restore confidence in political parties and the workings of government. All three are tackling the central problem of financing for political parties by proposing to review lowering the limit for annual individual donations to political parties. However, QS goes a little further than the other two by also proposing a reduction in allowable spending during election campaigns and an increase in public financing of political parties.

The PQ, the CAQ and QS are all proposing to strengthen the role or the means of various integrity watchdogs (Auditor General, Directeur général des élections lobbying and ethics commissioners) while the PQ and the CAQ is proposing to create a new one (Parliamentary Budget Officer). The three parties are also proposing a range of measures to reform the electoral system: fixed-date general elections (PQ, CAQ, QS), *référendum d'initiative populaire* (PQ) and limits on the terms of elected members (PQ). Note that QS is the only party to commit to amending the voting system and introducing a form of proportional representation.

Lastly, the CAQ proposes a few measures to improve monitoring of the process of awarding public contracts.

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Financing of political parties	No new proposals. The position of the PLQ is that the outgoing government has already made every effort to fight corruption and collusion.	Limit the maximum annual donation to a political party to \$100, with no tax credit.	Limit the maximum annual donation to a political party to \$100.	Lower the ceiling on individual donations to political parties, lower the ceiling on allowable election campaign spending and increase the public funding of parties.
Electoral system	Table a bill to prohibit access to public contracts for companies that have been subject to a criminal charge.	Implement fixed-date general elections.  Limit the number of consecutive terms for the prime minister to two and limit the number of consecutive terms for mayors of municipalities with over 5,000 inhabitants to three.  Allow the holding of <i>référendums nationaux d'initiative populaire</i> at the request of less than 15% of	Implement fixed-date general elections.	Implement fixed-date general elections.          Reform the voting system in favour of a compensatory mixed voting system (60% of MNAs)

		voters.		elected in accordance with the current voting system and 40% divided between regions).
Watchdogs	Strengthen the Lobbying Transparency and Ethics Act (increase the penalties and the time periods for prescription).	Broaden the mandate of the Auditor General of Québec to cover government corporations.	Combine the Lobbyists Commissioner and the Ethics Commissioner to create the position of Commissioner for the Integrity of public life.	Provide the Directeur général des élections with more resources to combat illegal funding and implement more severe sanctions.
		Create the position of Parliamentary Budget Officer in the National Assembly.	Create the position of Parliamentary Budget Officer in the National Assembly.	Set-up of a public inquiry commission on the awarding of public contracts and funding of political parties in areas not covered by the Commission Charbonneau.
Public contracts		Lower the threshold for which a municipality will be obligated to engage the services of an Auditor General from 100,000 to 50,000 inhabitants.  Inform the public of any cost overruns in a public contract and introduce the possibility of cancelling tenders if the bids are deemed too high.		

## 5. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The PLQ is basing its strategy on deploying Plan Nord and on work incentives for individuals, in particular, older workers. The other three parties are basing their economic development strategy on increased intervention on the part of government and its financial arms (Caisse de dépôt et placement du Québec and Investissement Québec).

The PQ, the CAQ and QS would direct the Caisse de dépôt et placement du Québec City to be more actively involved in Québec's economy. The PQ and QS would amend the mission of the Caisse to restore the "development of Québec" component. The PQ and the CAQ are proposing, through similar means to require a higher proportion of investment in Quebec from the Caisse. All of the aspiring parties (PQ, CAQ and QS) want the Caisse to play a more active role in opposing the takeover of Québec corporations by foreign interests whereas the PLQ is promising to introduce legal measures to allow corporations to oppose such offers.

The PQ also promises to adopt measures to foster innovation and to rally all programs and agencies committed to economic development around a new development bank equipped with regional offices. The CAQ proposes the creation of a new Natural Resources Fund administered by the Caisse de dépôt et placement du Québec. Lastly, QS would implement a Green Plan to initiate a transition toward a greener economy through significant investments in public transportation and energy efficiency.

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General	Adopt a range of measures to be specified later in the election campaign in order to create 250,000 jobs and lower the unemployment rate to 6% by 2017.	Boost private and public investment in research and development to attain 3% of the GDP in 2018, in particular by amending corporate taxation.		Introduce a Green Plan to create 166,000 jobs by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investing \$1 billion per year over 5 years for the development and electrification of public transportation;</li> <li>Launching an energy efficiency program (see the environment).</li> </ul>
Roles of public institutions	Create the Québec Ambition Fund of \$1 billion for foreign acquisitions by our corporations.	Create the Economic Development Bank of Québec with regional offices to offer one-stop service to assist businesses.	Create a \$5 billion Natural Resources Fund to hold strategic minority interests in natural resource development projects.	Provide Investissement Québec with the necessary budget to efficiently support small businesses, cooperatives, and social economic bodies.

		Broaden the mandate of the Caisse de dépôt et placement du Québec so that it contributes more to Québec's economic development and create a \$10 billion fund to be administered by the Caisse to invest in Québec.	Increase the percentage of the Caisse de dépôt et placement du Québec's investments in Québec businesses.  Create the "Invest In Québec" network to coordinate Québec's solicitation of foreign companies and entrust the administration to Investissement Québec.	Review the role of the Caisse de dépôt et placement du Québec to foster Québec's economic development.
International commerce	<b>Foster international commerce by reaching and taking part in new cooperation and free-trade agreements.</b>		Reach an agreement with the FTQ, CSN and Desjardins funds to add a new mandate targeting foreign marketing of Québec products.	Consider progressive alternatives to the current free trade agreements  Oppose signing any new secret trade agreements.
Productivity and innovation	<b>Review all of the assistance programs for enterprises and direct funds to improvement and innovation projects.</b>	Adopt a development strategy for the manufacturing sector by supporting small and medium businesses.		
Social economy		Adopt framework legislation to recognize the positive contribution of the social economy sector to Québec's economic and social development.		As a government assume a leading role when a company shuts down or relocates (recover financial assistance, nationalization).

## 6. REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Both the PLQ and the CAQ believe that regional development must involve the Plan Nord and the development of natural resources. The PLQ proposes to continue deploying Plan Nord and foster the investment of Quebecers in the projects in the North through a new tax credit. The CAQ would use its new Natural Resources Fund to hold strategic minority interests in natural resource development projects. The PQ has taken a more critical stance toward the Plan Nord and is proposing better oversight for Northern development and better support for Northern communities. The PQ also proposes creating regional investment funds to promote the diversification of regional economies. QS is

silent about Plan Nord, but is proposing to nationalize certain strategic resources or hold majority interests in natural resource development projects. The PQ and QS also propose to require companies to process the ore they mine in Québec.

Royalties on natural resources are also included in several proposals while the PLQ is content to assert that the recent reform of natural resource royalties system is adequate. The PQ and QS propose increased royalties. Note that all the political parties (the PLQ has not yet made an official announcement) propose higher royalties on water catchment.

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Local economy		Create regional funds to promote the diversification of local and regional economies.	Implement an economic growth plan for the regions based on prospecting strategy to attract new enterprises in each region.	
Plan Nord	Pursue the deployment of Plan Nord.	Adopt a comprehensive management strategy of Northern resources in order to monitor the development of mining projects, to help municipalities in the North and to promote the participation of all Northern communities.		
Royalties	Maintain the royalties system that was reformed during the last term.	Review mining royalties to introduce a minimum compulsory royalty of 5% on the gross value and 30% tax of excess profits.  Put in place a royalty system for hydrocarbon development to recover over 50% of the profit before taxes (after a BAPE study of this sector).		Set up an adequate system of royalties for extraction and industrial use of natural resources, including water.  Mining royalties of 10% on the gross value of extracted ore.
	Over a period of 5 years, triple the royalties on water catchment for production purposes.	Determine a royalty on profits linked to water catchment for bottling and industrial processes.	Review the provincial water policy to implement a royalty system.	
Holding interests in projects	Create a 10% tax credit on	Ensure that wind energy	Hold minority interests through	Nationalize or hold majority

	Québeckers' investments in companies involved in the North.	production projects are controlled by the Québec government, cooperatives or local communities.	the Natural Resources Fund.	ownership of strategic resources, particularly raw and energy resources (wind, among others).
Resource processing	<b>Encourage the development of mining resource processing companies.</b>	Require companies able to do so, to carry out secondary and tertiary processing.		Implement financial incentives to ensure that processing mainly occurs in the regions where resources are extracted or elsewhere in Québec.
Democratic control			Submit exploration and development of natural resources to rigorous environmental and social evaluation and to truly public consultation.	Eliminate the supremacy of the Mining Act and grant a veto on mining permits to the affected communities.

## 7. ENVIRONMENT

As for climate change, the PLQ recently presented its greenhouse gas reduction target of 20% for 2020 compared to 1990. The party has made no new commitments on this issue. While the CAQ is silent about climate change, the PQ and QS are proposing respective reduction targets of 25% and 40% by 2020. As for energy, all the parties support reducing Québec's dependence on fossil fuels. To do so, they propose a range of actions to improve public transportation and electrification (PQ, CAQ and QS) and energy efficiency strategies (PLQ, CAQ and QS).

The PQ and the CAQ are also promising to place a moratorium on shale gas development while QS goes further by proposing an outright ban fossil fuel extraction throughout the territory of Québec. Lastly, the PQ and QS propose closing Gentilly-2, and the PQ explains that significant economic support would be provided to the affected regions.

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Combatting climate change		Adopt measures to reduce greenhouse gas by 2020 by at least 25% compared to 1990 levels.	Adopt measures to reduce greenhouse gas by 2020 by at least 25% compared to 1990 levels.	Adopt measures to reduce greenhouse gas by 2020 by at least 40% compared to 1990 levels.
Energy	<b>Establish an action plan for biomass development.</b>	Table an energy strategy following consultation.  Shut down Gentilly-2 nuclear power station and set up a \$200 million economic diversification fund for Centre-du-Québec and La Mauricie.	Encourage the use of alternative energy sources (biogas, forest biomass, ethanol and geothermy).  Set up a Hydro-Québec green energy buyback program at a tariff equivalent to the marginal cost of new hydroelectric dams.	Found Énergie-Québec to oversee the entirety of energy production and distribution.  Ban nuclear energy in Québec.
Fossil fuel energy	<b>Undertake decisive action to reduce oil consumption.</b>	Adopt a moratorium on the exploration and extraction of shale gas.  Adopt an energy independence policy to reduce the consumption and import of oil and gas.	Adopt a moratorium on the exploration and extraction of shale gas.	Ban the exploration and production of fossil fuel energy (including shale gas) and nuclear energy in Québec.  Develop a strategy to stop using all forms of fossil fuel energy by 2030.

<p>Energy efficiency</p>	<p><b>Undertake decisive action to reduce energy consumption in the real estate sector.</b></p> <p>Establish a one-year 20% tax credit for green renovation.</p>		<p>Adopt an ambitious energy efficiency plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make the energy efficiency agency a one-stop system;</li> <li>• Gradually tighten the standards of the Building Code;</li> <li>• Study the gradual implementation of a compulsory carbon budget for businesses</li> </ul>	<p>Launch a vast energy efficiency program:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote the renovation of existing buildings;</li> <li>• Gradually tighten the standards of the Building Code.</li> </ul>
<p>Transportation</p>		<p>Invest in public transit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote reserved traffic lanes;</li> <li>• Extend metro lines;</li> <li>• Build parking facilities as incentives;</li> <li>• Add more commuter trains.</li> <li>• Invest in the electrification of transportation.</li> </ul>	<p>Improve public transit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote reserved traffic lanes;</li> <li>• Encourage cities to concentrate residential density around public transportation hubs.</li> </ul> <p>Implement financial incentives for the purchase of fuel-efficient vehicles.</p>	<p>Develop an expansive plan for public transportation across Québec.</p> <p>Invest \$5 billion in electric public transportation.</p> <p>Implement financial incentives for the purchase of fuel-efficient vehicles.</p>

## 8. LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

The Charter of the French language is a priority for the PQ and it wants to adopt a new Charter that would make French the official language of instruction from elementary school through college and that would subject companies with more than 10 employees to the Charter. QS and the PQ agree on the last point. The CAQ intends instead to strengthen the role and powers of the Office de la langue française. All the parties, except for the PLQ, want to prohibit bridging schools.

Compared to previous electoral platforms, the political parties' position on the role of culture has clearly improved with regard to access to cultural activities in the schools (PQ, CAQ and QS) and funding for Québec culture. Not surprisingly, the PQ wants to provide Télé-Québec with the resources to implement a regional and province-wide news mission.

	<b>PARTI LIBÉRAL DU QUÉBEC</b>	<b>PARTI QUÉBÉCOIS</b>	<b>COALITION AVENIR QUÉBEC</b>	<b>QUÉBEC SOLIDAIRE</b>
Charter of the French Language		<p>Adopt a new Charter of the French Language to make French the official language of the workplace (companies with 11 and more employees) and of instruction, from elementary school through college.</p> <p>Repeal bridging schools legislation (Bill 103).</p>	<p>Reinforce the role and powers of the Office québécois de la langue française and French the language of the workplace.</p> <p>Prohibit bridging schools and call for an amendment to section 23 (2) of the Canadian Charter.</p>	<p>Reaffirm the application of the Charter of the French Language in all workplaces and extend its scope to cover businesses with 10 or more employees.</p> <p>Prohibit the use of bridging schools.</p>
Teaching of history		<p>Reinforce the teaching of history at all education levels and prioritize knowledge of the history of Québec.</p>		
Cultural activities in the schools		<p>Support elementary and secondary schools to encourage participation in cultural activities.</p>	<p>Increase arts and culture budgets for elementary school and preschool.</p>	<p>Ensure access to at least four professional cultural events for elementary and high school students.</p>
Culture policy	<p><b>Stimulate public and private investment in culture.</b></p>	<p>Support both regional and province-wide production and dissemination networks and</p>	<p>Ensure funding of major cultural events.</p>	<p>Increase funding to carry out professional artistic projects with fair distribution between regions.</p>

	<p><b>Develop support for the presence of Québec artists abroad.</b></p>	<p>simplify public aid for cultural actions.</p> <p>Provide greater support to the international influence of Québec's cultural production.</p> <p>Grant a \$500 tax credit/child for enrolment in an arts activity.</p>	<p>Increase the budget for exporting cultural products abroad and in digital markets.</p>	<p>Increase the budget of the Office québécoise de la langue française.</p> <p>Adjust francisation programs to meet the needs of young immigrants and women.</p>
Télé-Québec		<p>Give Télé-Québec the resources needed to implement a regional and province-wide news-broadcasting mission.</p>		

## 9. FAMILY POLICY

To a large extent, the family policy of all the political parties can be summarized as a few proposals dealing with the subsidized childcare network.

As for the number of childcare spaces, the PLQ has no new proposals and is upholding its goal of attaining 235,000 spaces by 2015-2016, i.e. an increase of 15,000 spaces. The PQ proposes 250,000 spaces (an increase of 30,000 spaces) whereas QS promises 40,000 new spaces, explaining that these would all be granted to the CPE network. Lastly, without quantifying the number of new spaces it intends to create, the CAQ merely states that it would grant priority to disadvantage communities.

As for fees, the PLQ and the CAQ both propose indexing the rate to cost of living increases while the PQ and QS promise a freeze. The PLQ, the CAQ and QS all propose more flexible childcare service hours.

Lastly, the CAQ and the PQ have mentioned introducing family responsibility leaves. Only the CAQ has clarified its intentions by announcing the creation of a bank of 5 days of paid leave.

	PARTI LIBÉRAL DU QUÉBEC	PARTI QUÉBÉCOIS	COALITION AVENIR QUÉBEC	QUÉBEC SOLIDAIRE
Childcare services	<p>Grant a tax credit equivalent to 50% of the operating costs of a daycare service to businesses who will create spaces workplace childcare centres (3,200 spaces planned).</p> <p><b>Extend the operating hours of CPE and authorize billing additional costs to parents who use this service on a voluntary basis.</b></p>	<p>Attain 250,000 childcare spaces to ensure a space for every child in childcare centres.</p> <p>Freeze on childcare fees until 250,000 spaces become available.</p>	<p>Table a Daycare Development Action Plan in Québec and depoliticize the allocation of permits using a transparent mechanism.</p> <p>Ensure that priority is given to the creation of new subsidized spaces in disadvantaged communities.</p> <p>Institute more flexible hours to meet the needs of diverse parental situations.</p>	<p>Create 40,000 new CPE spaces.</p> <p>Gradually transfer the financing of private childcare services to the CPE.</p> <p>Relax the structure of childcare centres to support families with parents working in non-standard jobs.</p> <p>Amend funding rules to enable</p>

	<p>Index childcare fees up to \$7.73 in 2017-2018.</p> <p><b>Step up early stimulation for reading and screening for behavioural and language disorders.</b></p>		<p>Index the costs of reduced contribution spaces in the childcare centre network by limiting their increase to cost of living increase.</p>	<p>childcare centres to extend access to part-time and summertime daycare, notably by implementing drop-in centres affiliated with childcare centres.</p> <p>Ensure monitoring of the application of educational programs in childcare and daycare centres.</p>
<p>Family leave</p>		<p>Introduce family leaves to allow parents to meet their family obligations.</p>	<p>Amend the Act respecting labour standards to gradually introduce 5 days of paid leave (1 per year for 5 years) to take care of a sick child under age 6.</p>	

## 10. SOCIAL SOLIDARITY AND COMBATTING EXCLUSION

There are two contrasting visions of solutions for combatting poverty and exclusion in the programs of the political parties. On the one hand the PLQ and the CAQ believe that wealth creation will benefit the entire population, including the most disadvantaged. True to this vision, the CAQ is not proposing any measures to deliver assistance to the most disadvantaged. The PLQ bases its entire anti-poverty plan on work incentive measures. On the other hand, the PQ and QS believe that growth is not sufficient and that the government must implement redistribution measures. The PQ and QS both propose raising the minimum wage and accelerating construction of social housing. However, these two parties have different visions of the level of social assistance. The PQ bases its intervention on integrating those receiving social assistance into the labour market, while QS wants to eliminate conditions for accessing last resort assistance by creating a guaranteed minimum income.

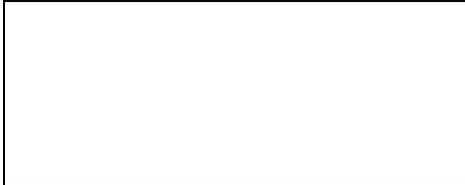
	<b>PARTI LIBÉRAL DU QUÉBEC</b>	<b>PARTI QUÉBÉCOIS</b>	<b>COALITION AVENIR QUÉBEC</b>	<b>QUÉBEC SOLIDAIRE</b>
Working poor	Expand access to the working premium and increase the maximum amount by \$200 for single individuals.	Raise the minimum wage to a decent level.		Increase the minimum wage so that an individual working a 35-hour week surpasses the low-income threshold.
Social assistance	<b>Add a personalized, voluntary return to work game plan for youths under the age of 21 along with a financial incentive of \$120 per month.</b>	Launch measures promoting integration into the labour market for persons receiving last resort assistance.		Replace social assistance with a guaranteed minimum annual income of \$12,000.
Social housing		Build 3,000 social housing units per year in all regions of Québec, including Native and Inuit communities.  Obligate real estate promoters to help build social housing units.		Build 50,000 new ecological social housing units.  Provide the Régie du logement with adequate funding, create an online national lease registry and limit real estate speculation.
Integration of immigrants into the job market.	<b>Create limited practice permits to foster the integration of immigrants into regulated professions.</b>	Adopt a real anti-racism and anti-discrimination strategy.	Negotiate with professional orders to ensure more comprehensive and faster recognition of the professional skills of immigrants.	Conclude agreements to facilitate the recognition and integration of professional immigrants.

	<b>Accelerate the process of degree recognition.</b>	Provide greater support to community organizations working to integrate immigrants.	Uphold measures to support new immigrants who have accepted a job that does not correspond to their skill level.	Increase financial support for community organizations working to integrate immigrants.
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## 11. UNION RIGHTS AND LABOUR RELATIONS

To date the PLQ has made no commitments or adopted any positions concerning labour relations or union rights. The CAQ is opening the door to major reform of the Labour Code to make unionization more complex and to limit the right to strike. The PQ and QS in particular have announced measures to enhance the power of employees, as reflected in their plan to modernize anti-scab provisions. As for pensions, the PLQ and the CAQ are seeking to modify pension plans to encourage older employees to stay on the job, whereas QS proposes expanding the Québec Pension Plan to guarantee decent pension. Lastly, the PQ and QS acknowledge the necessity of protecting pension funds in the event of restructuring or bankruptcy.

	PARTI LIBÉRAL DU QUÉBEC	PARTI QUÉBÉCOIS	COALITION AVENIR QUÉBEC	QUÉBEC SOLIDAIRE
Labour Code reform		Modernize anti-scab provisions.	Amend the Labour Code to add secret balloting during the union certification process.  Subject childcare services to essential services legislation to limit the right to strike.	Amend the Labour Code in order to allow multi-employer accreditation.  Ban both lockouts and recourse to injunctions against picketing.  Modernize anti-scab provisions.
Other labour legislation		Protect temporary help agency workers.  Repatriate employment insurance to finance an integrated training program for laid off employees needing reclassification.		Give greater protection to temporary foreign workers.  Extend the application of the Pay Equity Act to all workplaces.  Eliminate pay disparity based on employment status.
Pensions	<b>Modify public pension plans and old age security to promote gradual or later retirement.</b>  Lower the age of eligibility for \$1,500 tax credit for persons who continue working to 62 years.		Modify public pension plans and adjust work hours to promote gradual or later retirement. Limit the fiscal impacts of this option.  Uphold the voluntary retirement savings program and entrust its administration to the QPP.	Extend Québec Pension Plan coverage to guarantee a decent pension income. Self-employer workers and stay-at-home parents will be able to participate.



Protect pension plans by ensuring that employer contributions cannot be seized in the event of restructuring or bankruptcy.

Ensure that businesses that relocate or shut down assume their responsibilities for the pension funds of its employees.