

UNDER EMBARGO
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2022-2023 Expenditure Budget

**Building Québec's Future and Sustaining its Economic Growth:
\$9 Billion More in the Expenditure Budget**

Québec City, March 22, 2022 –Today, Sonia LeBel, Minister Responsible for Government Administration and Chair of the Conseil du trésor, tables the 2022-2023 Expenditure Budget today and confirms that the government is once again pledging to reinvest to improve public services, particularly in the priority sectors of health, education and higher education.

For 2022-2023, the Program Spending Budget is set at \$108.7 billion, an increase of \$2.2 billion from the probable expenditure for the 2021-2022 fiscal year. The last two years have been challenging because of the global COVID-19 pandemic, and, the measures rolled out to combat it had a significant effect on the level of spending in 2021-2022. Excluding the effect of these measures, the 2022-2023 Program Spending Budget shows an increase of \$9.0 billion, or 11.0%, from the 2021-2022 probable expenditure.

Expenditure Budget priorities

The government is proposing a level of spending that will allow us to keep making the necessary investments in priority sectors, including health and education. In fact, Budget 2022-2023 focuses on a set of initiatives that make it possible to reinvest and enhance public services, in particular to:

- enhance care and services to the public while taking steps to improve the health system through more humane, efficient and accessible care and services;
- provide additional support to youth to foster student retention and success;
- foster and support student access to and success in higher education to address labour shortages;
- deploy the Québec Research and Innovation Strategy 2022-2027, enabling wealth creation and the development of new technologies in Québec;
- increase the supply of social and affordable housing and improve the quality of housing in Québec;
- support gender equality and combat sexual and domestic violence;
- support the cultural sector, which was hard hit by the pandemic, and ensure its successful recovery;

- strengthen the actions of community bodies through the Plan d'action gouvernemental en matière d'action communautaire 2022-2023.

Public service and recruitment

Human resources management practices are being transformed. The renewal undertaken several years ago is moving quickly. Hiring processes are being overhauled to make them more agile, and make Québec's public service more attractive. It will be easier to hire the right person for the right job. The context of telework and, more recently, hybrid work will also create new opportunities for hiring. A government project to transform the workplace is also underway. It aims to provide employees with the optimal environment to work in.

As promised, the Québec government is engaged in the rolling out its plan to regionalize 5,000 public service positions. The Conseil du trésor has approved the regionalization targets for the 55 public administration bodies covered by the plan to meet by September 2028. To ensure the new jobs in the regions are a success, the regional county municipalities (RCMs) with the lowest economic vitality index will be addressed first. Shared government offices will be also developed across Québec to support the plan's deployment.

Efficient public administration

The government is unstinting in its efforts to efficiently manage public funds and maintain high-quality public services for Quebecers. It is committed to improving public administration performance and the State's transparency. The Tableau de bord de la performance is updated on a yearly basis to keep it relevant over time. The most recent performance monitoring of the departments highlights the resilience of public bodies and their personnel in the face of an unprecedented public health crisis. Despite the many challenges resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, the performance of organizations remains stable.

A new Ministère de la Cybersécurité et du Numérique

On January 1, 2022, the Québec government undertook a major shift to pool its expertise in information resources within the new Ministère de la Cybersécurité et du Numérique. In this manner, the government is creating the conditions needed to accelerate its digital transformation and ensure optimal protection for the public data held by the State, in addition to combating cyber threats and attacks on its information systems more efficiently and effectively. Cybersecurity and digital technology thus become a priority government mission.

Public contracts: Prioritizing Québec-sourced and innovative procurement

In February 2022, the government unveiled its Stratégie gouvernementale des marchés publics : Pour des marchés publics innovants, the governmental strategy for innovative public procurement. It consists in having government departments and bodies procure more of their goods and professional services from Québec businesses. The government intends to increase the annual proportion of goods acquired from Québec suppliers from 38% to 50% by 2026, representing a \$1.5-billion increase in government purchases of Québec goods.

Once passed, Bill 12, *An Act mainly to promote Québec-sourced and responsible procurement by public bodies, to reinforce the integrity regime of enterprises and to increase the powers of the Autorité des marchés publics*, will support several components of the new strategy. Innovation is at the heart of the evolution of the government procurement regulatory framework, which will now provide innovative Québec businesses with better access to public contracts. The creation of the new public procurement innovation space will foster environmentally responsible purchasing.

Infrastructures: A historic investment

Carrying out public infrastructure projects remains an effective way to support economic growth in the major centres and regions. This year, the government continues its record investments with its 2022-2032 Québec Infrastructure Plan. The plan totals a record \$142.5 billion. Public infrastructure investments have grown by \$42.1 billion in the last four years. The plan aims to make the government's priority projects a reality, for example, building new schools, rebuilding deteriorated CHSLDs in keeping with the senior residence model, renovating and redeveloping hospitals, and developing new electric public transit.

Quote:

"For a fourth straight year, our government has demonstrated responsible management of public funds, in what has been a challenging situation given the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the economy. Our main aim is to ensure we have the resources needed to keep improving Québec's standard of living continually. This Budget will allow us to get there. I'm proud of what our team has accomplished. Together, we will keep working for Québec's economic success."

Sonia LeBel, Minister responsible for Government Administration and Chair of the Conseil du trésor

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