

Government Action Plan to
**Foster Economic Inclusion
and Social Participation**
2017-2023



A Basic Income for a Fairer Society

ERRATA



Here is what you should have read:

Page 52
Measure 13.4

Partners: Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux, ministère de l'Agriculture, des Pêcheries et de l'Alimentation du Québec

Page 53
Measure 13.5

Proponent: Ministère de l'Agriculture, des Pêcheries et de l'Alimentation du Québec

Page 72
Figure A1

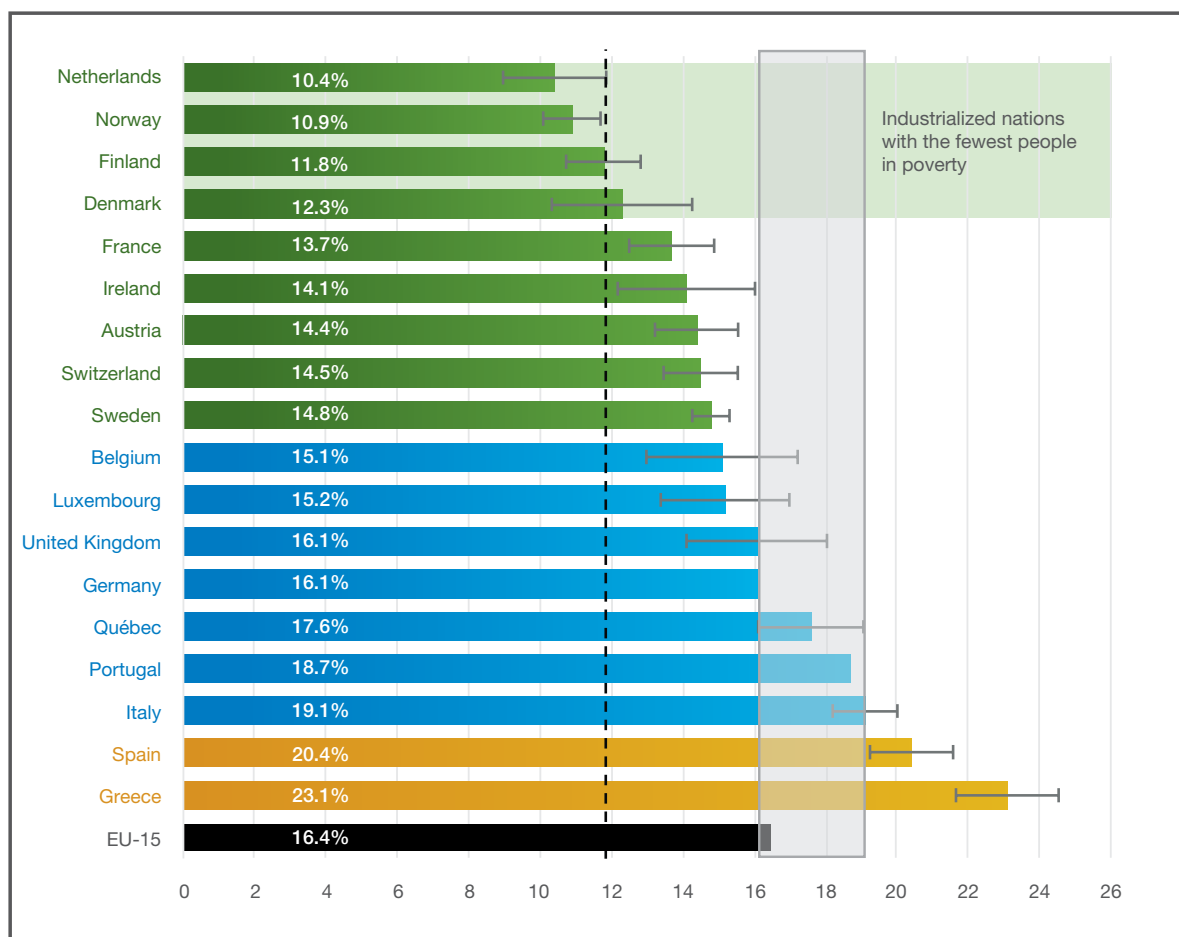
The following changes were made to the figure:

The confidence intervals (grey area) were repositioned between 16.1 and 19.1, in accordance with the data in Table A2 concerning Québec WITHOUT an action plan (p. 73);

The dotted line was moved to the upper limit of the low-income rate for the Netherlands.

Figure
A1

**Personal Low-Income Rate (60% LIM) for Selected European Countries and Québec
with a 95% Confidence Interval Estimate, 2013
(in percentages)**



Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Income Survey: Public Use Microdata File; EU Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC). Canada (including Québec) ranks between Spain and Greece.

*Trying to jump in one go to “full” basic income,
however precisely defined, would anyway be irresponsible.*

*There is a difference between, on the one hand, the next step on which we need
to get broad agreement in light of its likely consequences, and, on the other hand,
the level of basic income that makes most sense as a horizon,
a mobilizing utopia, an ultimate goal.*

PHILIPPE VAN PARIS AND YANNICK VANDERBORGHT

Basic Income: A Radical Proposal for a Free Society and a Sane Economy, 2017

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CONCRETE INITIATIVES TO ACHIEVE AN AMBITIOUS GOAL



A strong economy supports social progress. To ensure that all Quebecers have an equal chance to succeed and develop their full potential, the Gouvernement du Québec's main priority must therefore be to manage our public finances soundly and grow the economy in every region. In this way, we hope to give our society the means to introduce measures that raise Quebecers' standard of living and make it possible to pursue our social development. To quote Franklin D. Roosevelt: "Governing means maintaining the scales of justice equal for everybody."

Québec is the North American society that is most successful at fighting inequality. Since legislation was adopted 15 years ago to fight poverty and social exclusion, two plans for combatting poverty have been put into effect. They have already enabled us to make meaningful headway as we move towards being a more just, equitable and inclusive society.

But even though we can be proud of this progress, we must always strive to improve our policies and adapt them to evolve in step with our society. The 21st century has brought a wave of social and economic change to Québec, just as it has elsewhere. The labour market is in flux: we must respond in kind and assist the less fortunate in their search for employment, which remains the best way to get out of poverty. Yet we must also recognize that it is not a path that is open to everyone.

With this third action plan to fight poverty and social exclusion, we will go further still. Our objective is to lift 100,000 people out of poverty by 2023. Although this is an ambitious goal, we have the means to attain it, or even surpass it. With this plan, Québec becomes something of a trailblazer by increasing the disposable income of individuals who are unable, by their own means or with help from existing support measures, to find a job. By introducing a basic income for people with a severely limited capacity for employment, we are taking a new approach to the fight against poverty and social exclusion. We will also boost employment incentives like the work premium for those making the transition from social assistance to employment.

With this action plan and the participation of leading government, economic and social stakeholders, we are confident that Québec will soon be one of the industrialized nations with the fewest people living in poverty.

Striking a balance between economic development and social justice is both a priority for our government and the guiding principle that underpins this policy and makes it possible.

Together, let's leverage our resources and regained prosperity to build a new Québec that is fairer and more inclusive than ever.

Philippe Couillard
Premier of Québec

A THIRD ACTION PLAN FOCUSING ON SOCIAL PROGRESS



Building on the two earlier action plans, which created Québec's social safety net, and keen to fulfil the expectations voiced by Quebecers and the organizations that spoke during the public consultations, the government is proposing this Government Action Plan to Foster Economic Inclusion and Social Participation 2017-2023.

The 43 concrete measures and actions it sets out will enable us to better assist a segment of the population that is economically disadvantaged, particularly single people and couples without children, who are more likely to find themselves in vulnerable situations. To that end, we will bring about a gradual increase in their disposable income, invest in social housing, and encourage the social participation of low-income individuals and families.

In keeping with this spirit of social solidarity, the plan includes an unprecedented measure for many people struggling with limitations on their ability to participate fully in the labour market. A basic income for these people will provide reliable and long-term support that allows them to meet their needs.

We are also putting in place the necessary levers to improve Quebecers' standard of living by ensuring that they have access to the tools they need to boost their employability, enter the labour market and play a role in the Québec economy.

In this third action plan, the government is also maintaining its focus on joint action and a territory-based approach, recognizing the invaluable contribution of community organizations, local and regional stakeholders, and municipal-sector partners to efforts to combat poverty and social exclusion in every region of Québec.

Without a doubt, implementation of this innovative plan marks the start of a new era in social progress for Québec.

François Blais

Minister of Employment and Social Solidarity

A CLEAR VISION



The Gouvernement du Québec's vision for fighting poverty and social exclusion is clear: to make Québec a more just, inclusive and supportive society so that those who are living in poverty or at risk can fulfil their potential, within their own communities, with the help they require, in keeping with their level of autonomy and ability to take action.

To achieve this aim, the government is making an increase in disposable income a central thrust of its Government Action Plan to Foster Economic Inclusion and Social Participation 2017-2023. It has set itself an ambitious goal: to lift 100,000 people out of poverty by 2023, with special emphasis on single individuals and couples without children.

The government will innovate by introducing a basic income for a particularly vulnerable segment of the population. It will boost the disposable income of over 400,000 last-resort financial assistance beneficiaries and Aim for Employment participants.

The government will also create conditions that encourage people to find a job and remain employed, because this is the best way to definitively escape from poverty. Several measures set out in this plan focus on this aspect, with a view to achieving or even surpassing our goal of lifting over 100,000 people out of poverty.

Improving the living conditions of people who are living in poverty or at risk or by investing in social housing and boosting the social inclusion and participation of low-income individuals and families are other priorities for the government.

Between 2017 and 2023¹, the Gouvernement du Québec will inject close to 3 billion dollars² in implementing 43 measures and actions³, either new or substantially enhanced, to be spearheaded by 18 ministries and organizations.

1. Appendix 1 presents the financial framework for the 2017-2023 Government Action Plan.

2. Certain measures are financed from a \$434.3-million fund, set aside in budgets prior to the November 2017 Economic Update, or are self-funded.

3. Preparation of the Government Action Plan to Foster Economic Inclusion and Social Participation 2017-2023 took account of the recommendations of the Auditor General of Québec, and more specifically the recommendation to establish precise criteria for the choice of measures to be included. [http://www.vgq.gouv.qc.ca/fr/fr_publications/fr_rapport-annuel/fr_2011-2012-VOR/fr_Rapport2011-2012-VOR-Ch02.pdf] (Viewed on September 13, 2017).



PART 1

A FIRST STEP TOWARD INTRODUCING A BASIC INCOME



The government is taking steps to make Québec one of the industrialized nations with the fewest people living in poverty, as provided by the *Act to combat poverty and social exclusion*⁴.

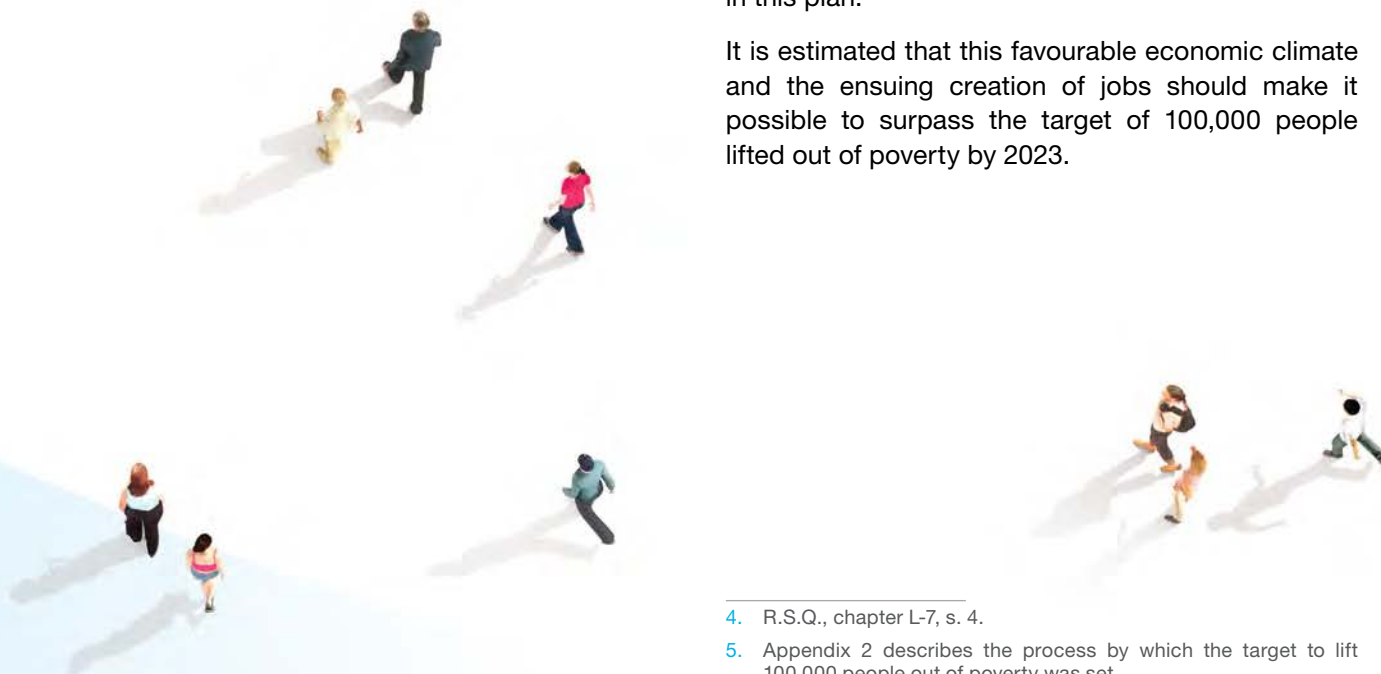
In 2013, Québec's low-income rate was similar to that of a group of countries ranked in the middle of the pack in terms of poverty⁵.

This plan and the associated investments should enable the government to lift over 100,000 people out of poverty and allow Québec to join the ranks of the industrialized nations with the fewest people living in poverty. That group, which can be defined as the lead group or benchmark group, includes the Netherlands, Norway, Finland and Denmark (Table 1 and Appendix 2).

To enable Québec to join their ranks, its low-income rate must drop by 1.8 percentage points, from 10.4% to 8.6% based on the market basket measure⁶.

The sound performance expected of the economy over the period covered by the plan, combined with an aging population, will spur job creation and provide opportunities for many low-income Quebecers to join the labour market. Since employment is the cornerstone of economic security for individuals and families, the strength of the Québec economy should enhance the positive impact of the actions presented in this plan.

It is estimated that this favourable economic climate and the ensuing creation of jobs should make it possible to surpass the target of 100,000 people lifted out of poverty by 2023.



4. R.S.Q., chapter L-7, s. 4.

5. Appendix 2 describes the process by which the target to lift 100,000 people out of poverty was set.

6. Based on the market basket measure (MBM), a family unit is considered to have a low income if its disposable income for consumption is less than the value of a basket of goods and services calculated for its community or for a community of the same size. This measure is used by the Gouvernement du Québec to monitor low-income situations as determined by the ability to meet basic needs. To illustrate the impact of this action plan on the reduction in poverty, the average low-income rate from 2013 to 2015 was used. Appendix 2 presents a more detailed explanation of international comparisons and the plan's impact in this regard.

Table 1

Impact of Target Attainment on Québec's Ranking among Industrialized Nations with the Fewest People Living in Poverty, before and after Action Plan Implementation

Prior to Action Plan Implementation		After Action Plan Implementation, in 2023	
First Group of Countries (with the Fewest People in Poverty)			
Netherlands	Ireland	Netherlands	Ireland
Norway	Austria	Norway	Austria
Finland	Switzerland	Finland	Switzerland
Denmark	Sweden	Denmark	Sweden
France		Québec	France
Second Group of Countries			
Belgium	Québec	Belgium	Portugal
Luxembourg	Portugal	Luxembourg	Italy
United Kingdom	Italy	United Kingdom	Germany
Germany			
Third Group of Countries			
Spain	Greece	Spain	Greece
Canada		Canada	

Source: Statistics Canada, Public Use Microdata File – Canadian Income Survey; EU Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC) in Centre d'étude sur la pauvreté et l'exclusion (2017), *La pauvreté, les inégalités et l'exclusion sociale au Québec : État de situation 2016*, Gouvernement du Québec, p. 28. [Online]. [https://www.mess.gouv.qc.ca/publications/pdf/CEPE_Etat_Situation_2016.pdf] (Viewed on November 23, 2017).

Note: See Appendix 2 for a description of the methodology used.

A First Basic Income for Quebecers with a Severely Limited Capacity for Employment

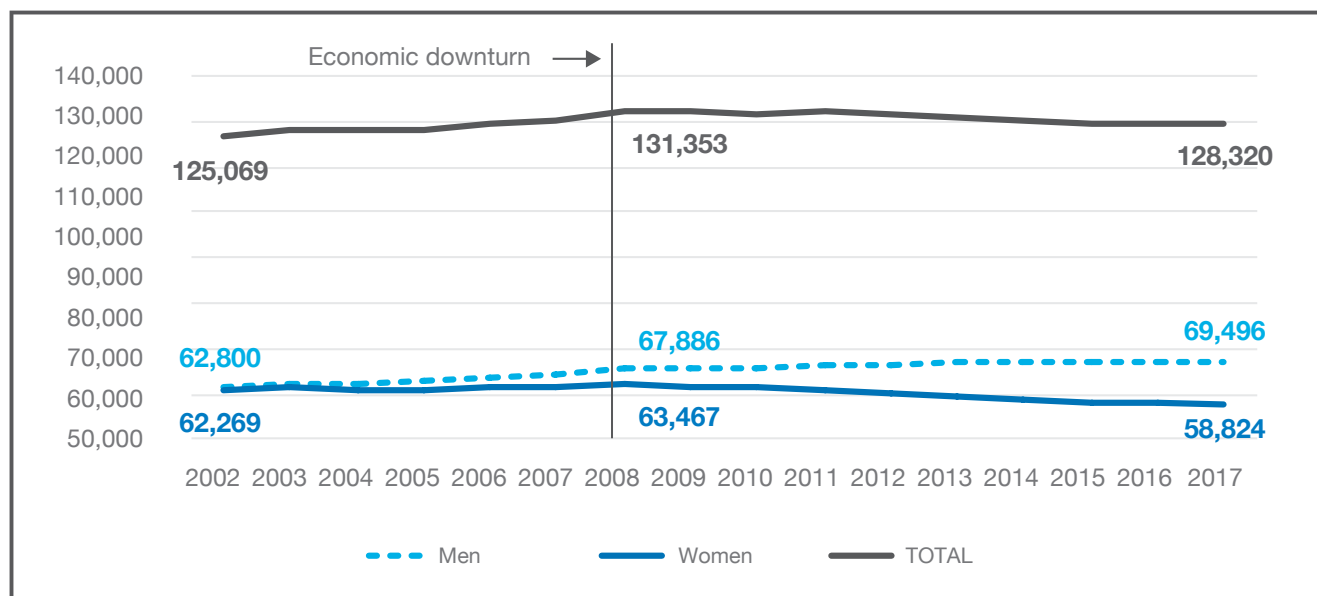
An economic climate conducive to job creation, combined with a labour market where employers are constantly seeking workers, will enable many Quebecers to find a job that will boost their disposable income and lift them out of poverty for good.

However, other people are unable, either by their own means or with help from existing support measures, to find and hold full-time employment providing sufficient income to reach the low-income threshold. That is the case for many adults with a severely limited capacity for employment and who receive benefits under the Social Solidarity Program.

The number of these adults with a severely limited capacity for employment has varied little over the last 15 years, showing that the economic climate has little or no effect on the number of people exiting the Social Solidarity Program (Figure 1).

Figure 1

Changes in the Number of Adults Receiving Social Solidarity Benefits in Québec, by Gender, March 2002 to March 2017 (in numbers)



Source: Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale.

Québec's last-resort financial assistance programs include the Social Solidarity Program, which pays higher benefits to individuals with a severely limited capacity for employment in light of the obstacles they face in finding employment. However, without employment income, these people cannot reach the low-income threshold, despite the financial support they receive.

In March 2017, the 128,320 adults who had a severely limited capacity for employment and received Social Solidarity benefits had significant and persistent physical, intellectual or learning disabilities or serious mental health problems (Figure 2). Of those beneficiaries, 95.4% were single or couples without children, and 45.8% were women while 54.2% were men.

A higher disposable income resulting from a substantial increase in government financial support is the preferred means of enabling this clientele to reach the low-income threshold set in accordance with the market basket measure.

The Gouvernement du Québec is therefore taking a major step in that direction by introducing a basic income.

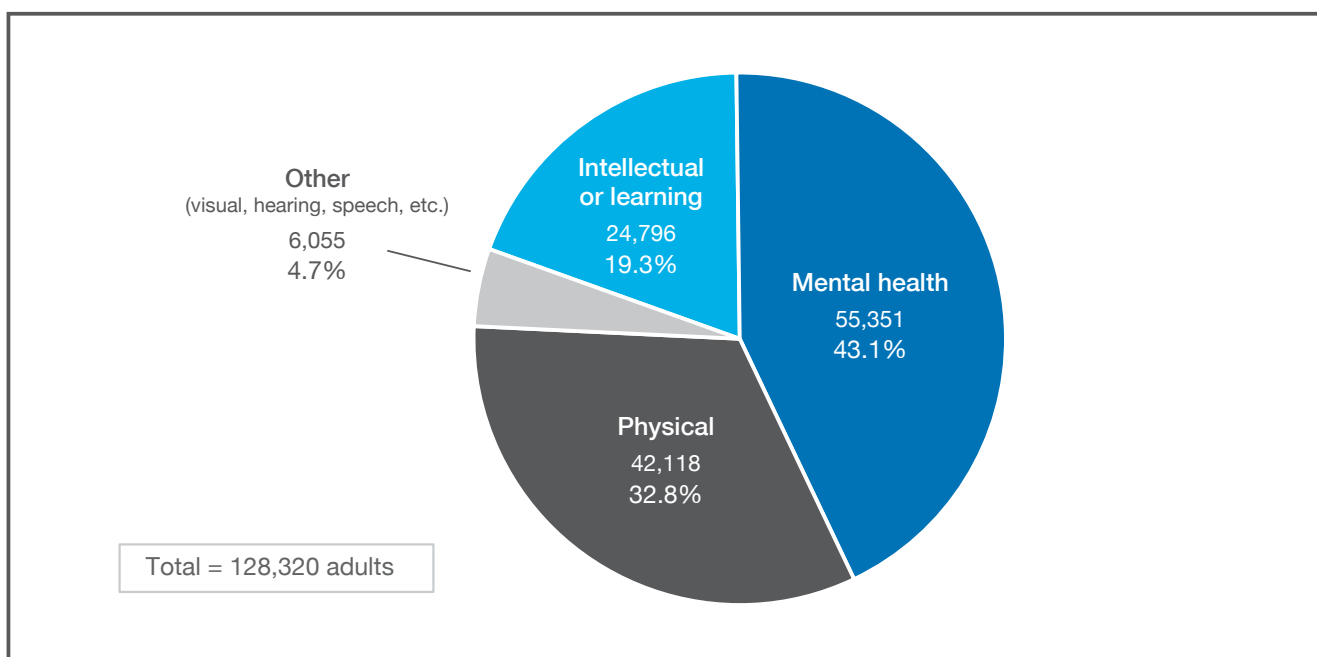
This new measure constitutes a significant change, perhaps even a revolution, in the way we perceive the fight against poverty and social exclusion in Québec.

It is an ambitious undertaking that requires a number of major steps to be taken before it can be fully executed.

Ultimately, the basic income measure will go hand-in-hand with a relaxing of certain existing rules so as to provide a guaranteed minimum income that represents a significant departure from the last-resort financial assistance paradigm currently in place.

Figure 2

**Breakdown of Adults Receiving Social Solidarity Benefits
by Nature of the Disability Constituting a Severely Limited Capacity for Employment
– As at March 31, 2017
(in numbers and percentages)**



Source: Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale.

Note: Percentages have been rounded and may not add up to 100%.

To introduce this new basic income into Québec's social safety net, the government plans to amend certain legislation. These amendments will allow beneficiaries to earn work income in addition to the basic income without their benefits being directly affected. Benefit payments to individuals and the easing of rules regarding the possession of property and liquid assets will also be included in these proposals.

In the meantime, the first steps in introducing the basic income measure will be taken in January 2018, with gradual increases in the benefits paid to adults with a severely limited capacity for employment who are eligible for the measure.

MEASURE 1

Introduce a basic income for Quebecers with a severely limited capacity for employment

In response to the persistence of poverty⁷ among individuals with a severely limited capacity for employment, the government is announcing the introduction of a basic income in Québec.

In order not to impede the prospects of finding employment for individuals who have a severely limited capacity for employment but are able to work, basic income eligibility will be tied to the period during which these individuals receive benefits under the Social Solidarity Program.

Because employment remains the best way to achieve financial autonomy and escape from poverty, support for Social Solidarity beneficiaries' efforts to find a job will be made a priority as soon as they are deemed eligible for the Program. These support measures will be strengthened in the second phase of the National Strategy for Labour Market Integration and Maintenance of Handicapped Persons.

National Strategy for Labour Market Integration and Maintenance of Handicapped Persons 2018–2022

Achieving a higher labour market participation rate for disabled persons is a priority for the Gouvernement du Québec, especially in a context of labour scarcity.

Anticipated in spring 2018, the National Strategy aims to increase the labour market participation rate of these individuals and provides an opportunity to take concerted action to improve their employment situation.

This strategy is in line with the steps taken by the Gouvernement du Québec to promote the full participation of all Quebecers in Québec society.



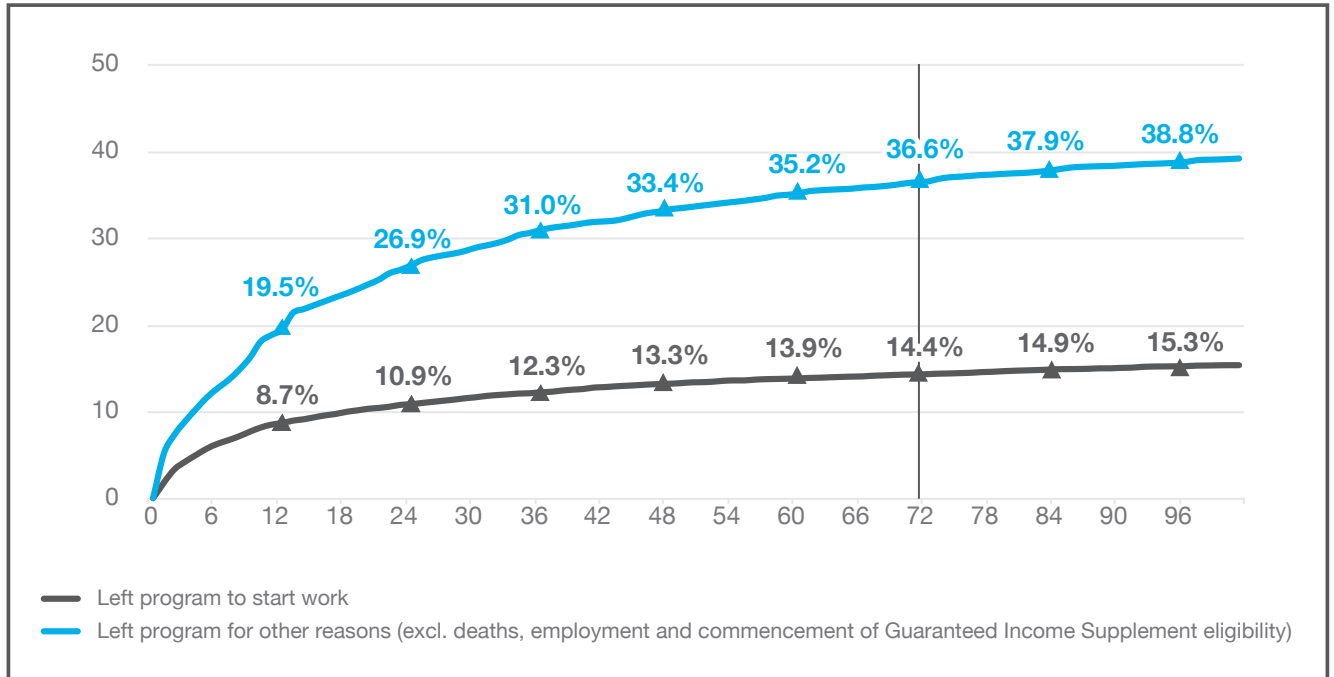
A basic income will be granted to adults who have a severely limited capacity for employment and have received Social Solidarity benefits for at least 66 of the last 72 months. This requirement will make it possible to assess the persistence of their socio-professional limitations and their ability to enter the labour market.

Studies have shown that for Social Solidarity beneficiaries, the likelihood of finding a job diminishes after the 72nd month following admission to the Program (Figure 3).

7. A poverty snapshot is provided in Appendix 3.

Figure
3

Proportion of Adults No Longer Receiving Social Solidarity Benefits, by Number of Months Elapsed Since They Were First Admitted to the Program (in percentages)



Source: Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale.

Note: Exit rate determined on the basis of behaviour observed in the months following admission to the Social Solidarity Program for the cohort of adult beneficiaries admitted in 2008-2009.

Over 84,000 adults with a severely limited capacity for employment, or 65.7% of all such adults, will receive a basic income that raises their disposable income past the low-income threshold.

Among adults eligible for payment of a basic income, 93.2% are single and 4.0% are part of a couple without children. In the same group, 46.2% are women and 53.8% are men.

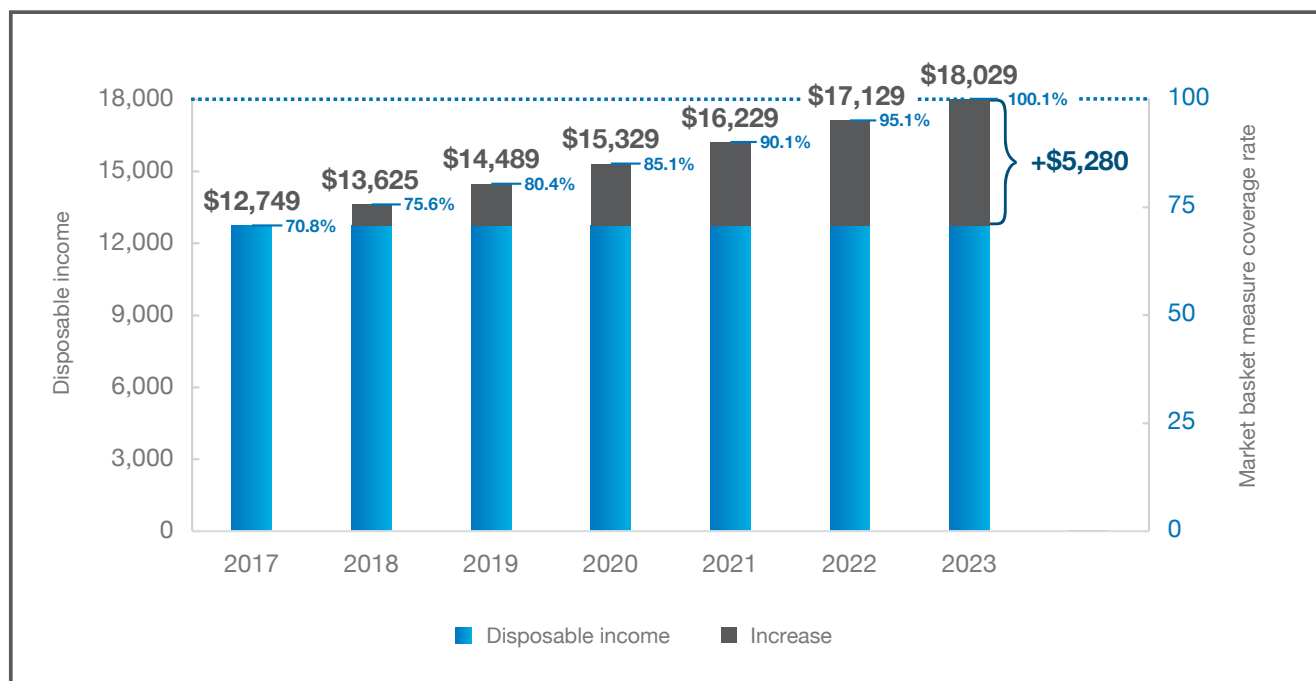
Starting in 2018, the benefits paid to households comprising an eligible adult will be increased (\$73 per month for a single individual and \$88 per month for a couple) to provide an increase in disposable income that significantly exceeds the rise in the cost of living.

For single individuals with a severely limited capacity for employment (78,589 adults in March 2017), the increase in benefits will ultimately represent an increase of \$440 per month or \$5,280 per year by January 2023. This constitutes a 41.4% increase in their disposable income (Figure 4).

This ambitious measure will be implemented progressively in the years between now and 2023 because a number of regulatory and legislative amendments are required in order to make it a guaranteed minimum income.

Figure
4

Impact of Introducing a Basic Income on the Disposable Income of a Single Person with a Severely Limited Capacity for Employment (in constant 2017 dollars)



Source: Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale.

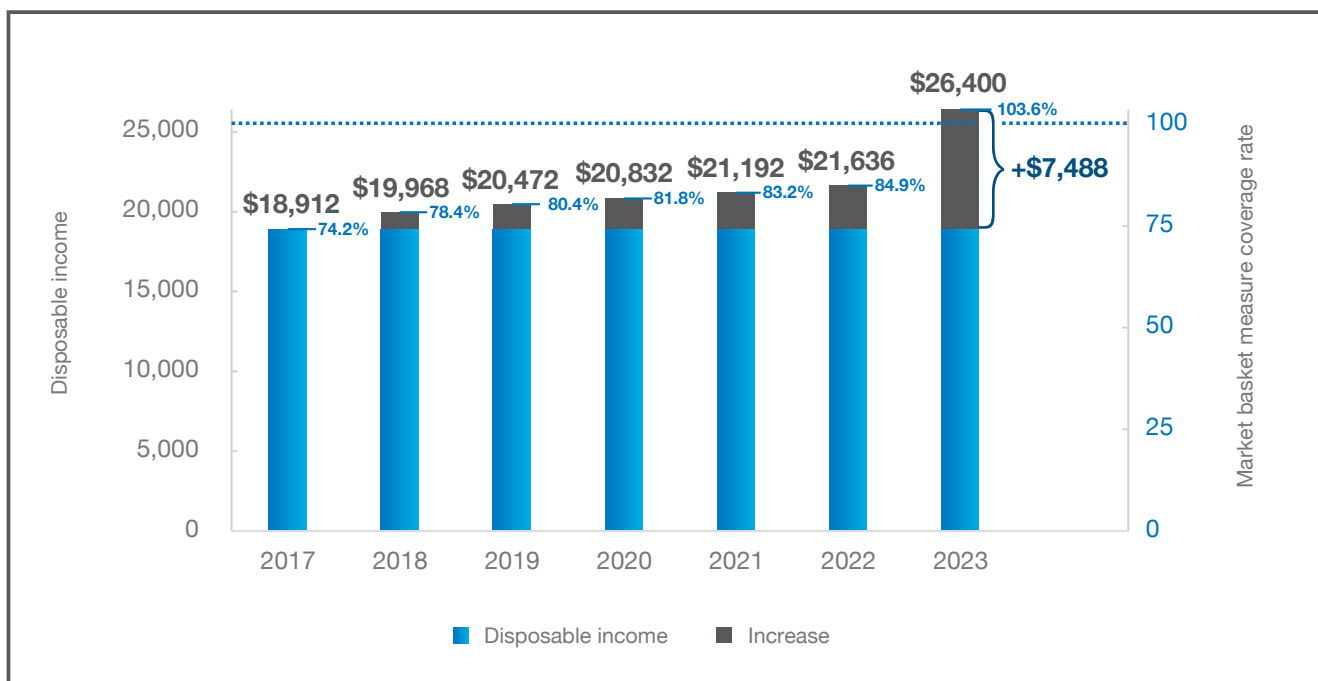
Note: These projections do not take account of assumptions regarding changes in the market basket measure (MBM) or the indexation of last-resort financial assistance benefits or other forms of government assistance paid during the period in question (2018 to 2023).

For couples without children who have a severely limited capacity for employment (3,343 adults in March 2017), if both adults are eligible for payment of a basic income, the change will represent an increase of \$624 per month or \$7,488 per year, for a 39.6% increase in disposable income (Figure 5).



Figure 5

Impact of Introducing a Basic Income on the Disposable Income of a Couple with a Severely Limited Capacity for Employment and no Children (in constant 2017 dollars)



Source: Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale.

Note: These projections do not take account of assumptions regarding changes in the market basket measure (MBM) or the indexation of last-resort financial assistance benefits or other forms of government assistance paid during the period in question (2018 to 2023).

An equivalent increase will also be granted to all eligible adults who have a severely limited capacity for employment and dependent children. For single-parent families (1,582 adults in March 2017), this change will represent a 22.1% increase in disposable income, whereas for couples with children (779 adults in March 2017), the change will represent a 20.9% increase.

Once the basic income is fully in effect, it will take the form of a monthly allowance paid to each eligible adult. An adjustment for adults with no spouse will be added to the monthly allowance to offset the additional costs associated with being a single adult.

In 2023, the basic income will provide a base that eligible beneficiaries can count on to meet their needs. When this basic income is combined with existing income support measures, recipients will have a considerably higher disposable income, enabling them to individually reach the market basket measure threshold set for adults.

Proponent: Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale

Annual investment upon completion (2022-2023):
\$384.1M

Total investment: \$1.247B



PART 2

A FAVOURABLE CONTEXT FOR COMBATTING POVERTY



1. Québec: A Progressive and Inclusive Society

Québec is a progressive society that embraces values of social justice, fairness, solidarity and social inclusion. By putting in place a wide variety of measures, Quebecers have acquired the collective capacity to support the most underprivileged individuals and families in our society.

Government policies and initiatives that help stem poverty and social exclusion have an impact on income, housing, homelessness and public transit. They promote the occupancy and vitality of Québec's territory, education, the matching of training to employment opportunities, gender equality, the rights of disabled persons and preventive healthcare.

They protect or assist families by making it possible for disadvantaged children to attend educational childcare services or begin schooling at the age of 4, by supporting the educational success of young people and by facilitating the family-study-work balance.

They also help people with disabilities find and retain employment and promote literacy and skills development for adults.

They support efforts to combat domestic, family and sexual violence, elder abuse, homophobia and transphobia.

The issues targeted by the government speak to its commitment to those who need help to participate fully in Québec society.

Finally, the government supports those agents of change who work hard every day to eliminate poverty and social exclusion in Québec.

2. Unanimous Adoption of the *Act to combat poverty and social exclusion*

Québec was the first Canadian province to pass a law to fight poverty and social exclusion. Adopted unanimously by the National Assembly in 2002, the *Act to combat poverty and social exclusion*⁸ bears witness to Québec society's desire to foster respect for human dignity, gender equality and the recognition of human rights and freedoms.

The strategies set out in the Act are reflected in the government's plans of action.

Poverty⁹ and social exclusion¹⁰ tied to material poverty can pose obstacles to the respect and defence of human dignity. They must be fought with persistence, open-mindedness and creativity by the government as well as by every other force in society. Social exclusion is a direct impediment to the social participation of individuals.

As stated in the preamble to the Act, people living in poverty and social exclusion are the first to act to improve their situation.

The goals and actions set out in the Act are still relevant today, 15 years after the Act was adopted.

Goals¹¹:

1. Promote respect for and protection of the dignity of persons living in poverty and combat prejudices in their regard
2. Improve the economic and social situation of persons and families living in poverty and social exclusion
3. Reduce the inequalities that may be detrimental to social cohesion
4. Encourage persons and families living in poverty to participate in community life and social development
5. Develop and reinforce the sense of solidarity throughout Québec so that society as a whole may participate in the fight against poverty and social exclusion

Actions¹²:

1. Prevent poverty and social exclusion, with a focus on developing the potential of individuals
2. Strengthen the social and economic safety net
3. Promote access to employment and increasing the attractiveness of work
4. Promote the involvement of society as a whole
5. Ensure consistent and coherent intervention at all levels

8. R.S.Q., chapter L-7 [Online]. [<http://legisquebec.gouv.qc.ca/fr/ShowDoc/cs/L-7>] (Viewed on July 27, 2017).

9. "‘Poverty’ means the condition of a human being who is deprived of the resources, means, choices and power necessary to acquire and maintain economic self-sufficiency or to facilitate integration and participation in society." (Excerpt from section 2 of the Act).

10. "L'exclusion sociale associée à la pauvreté peut se traduire notamment par des possibilités limitées pour les individus (et conséquemment pour leur famille et leur communauté) de maintenir leur autonomie économique, tout en affectant l'intégrité de leur identité sociale, leur santé, leur éducation, leur participation au marché du travail ainsi qu'aux réseaux de relations sociales et familiales. Ces conséquences peuvent à leur tour entraver la sortie de la pauvreté." [Social exclusion linked to poverty can result in limited prospects for individuals, and consequently for their families and communities, to maintain their economic self-sufficiency, while also undermining the integrity of their social identity, health, education, participation in the labour market and networks of social and family relationships -- *Translation*]. [Online]. [https://www.mtess.gouv.qc.ca/publications/pdf/CEPE_Lexclusion_sociale.pdf], p. 18 (Viewed on October 31, 2017).

11. Excerpt of section 6 of the Act.

12. Excerpt of section 7 of the Act.

3. Ongoing Transformative Measures

The first two government action plans put forward a number of transformative measures focusing on employment, among other aspects, as the principal means of ensuring the economic security of individuals.

Other measures were designed to improve the living conditions of individuals and families, in particular by raising or maintaining their disposable income and ensuring access to affordable housing.

Covering the period from 2004 to 2010¹³, the first government action plan to combat poverty and social exclusion, entitled *Reconciling Freedom and Social Justice for the Future: Government Action Plan to Combat Poverty and Social Exclusion*, ultimately contained 64 measures representing \$4.4 billion in public investments.

That action plan introduced a number of transformative measures, some of which, like child assistance, were geared first and foremost to improving the situations of families.

The 2010–2015 government action plan for poverty and social inclusion¹⁴, entitled *Québec's Combat Against Poverty*, aimed to continue strengthening the social safety net and give new impetus to this collective effort. It laid the foundations for actions all across Québec, including in Aboriginal communities. In total, some \$7.1 billion was invested to implement the 75 measures set out in this second plan, including \$1.6 billion in new investments¹⁵.

Here are a few examples of measures arising from the first two plans:

- Child assistance
- Work premium, adapted work premium and supplement to the work premium
- Solidarity tax credit
- Annual indexation of last-resort financial assistance benefits and exemption of support payments up to \$100 per child, per month

- Annual review of the minimum wage, taking into account its impact on poverty
- Gradual broadening of eligibility for the Shelter Allowance program for single individuals and couples without children
- Construction of affordable housing, the Rent Supplement program and support for housing adaptations for individuals with disabilities
- Modifications to legal aid eligibility requirements

Significant Gains

The measures put in place in connection with the first two action plans continue to have a positive impact on the living conditions of people experiencing poverty or social exclusion.

In 2016, these measures helped raise the total income support paid by the Gouvernement du Québec to \$11 billion (Table 2). That sum went to individuals and families eligible for basic financial assistance measures, family assistance measures and work incentive measures.

Table
2

**Assistance Paid under Québec's
Income Support System, 2016
(in millions of dollars)**

	Amount
Basic Financial Assistance Measures	
Last-resort financial assistance	2,872
Solidarity tax credit	1,676
Shelter Allowance program	76
Subtotal	4,624
Family Assistance Measures	
Child assistance ^a	2,231
Reduced-contribution childcare	2,295
Refundable tax credit for childcare expenses	639
Subtotal	5,165
Work Incentive Measures	
Work premium ^b	325
Tax shield	61
Tax credit for experienced workers	106
Deduction for workers	725
Subtotal	1,217
TOTAL	11,006

Source: Ministère des Finances du Québec.

a Including the Supplement for Handicapped Children and the Supplement for Handicapped Children with Exceptional Care Needs.

b Including the adapted work premium for individuals with a severely limited capacity for employment and the supplement for long-term recipients leaving last-resort financial assistance or the Youth Alternative Program.

13. Including a one-year extension.

14. This plan was extended until December 31, 2017, at the latest.

15. Ministère des Finances et de l'Économie du Québec (2013), "La lutte contre la pauvreté et l'exclusion sociale. Une décennie d'actions solidaires", [Online]. [http://qe.cirano.qc.ca/sites/default/files/Chapitres_PDF/Qe2012/QE2012_CH07.pdf] (Viewed on November 6, 2017).

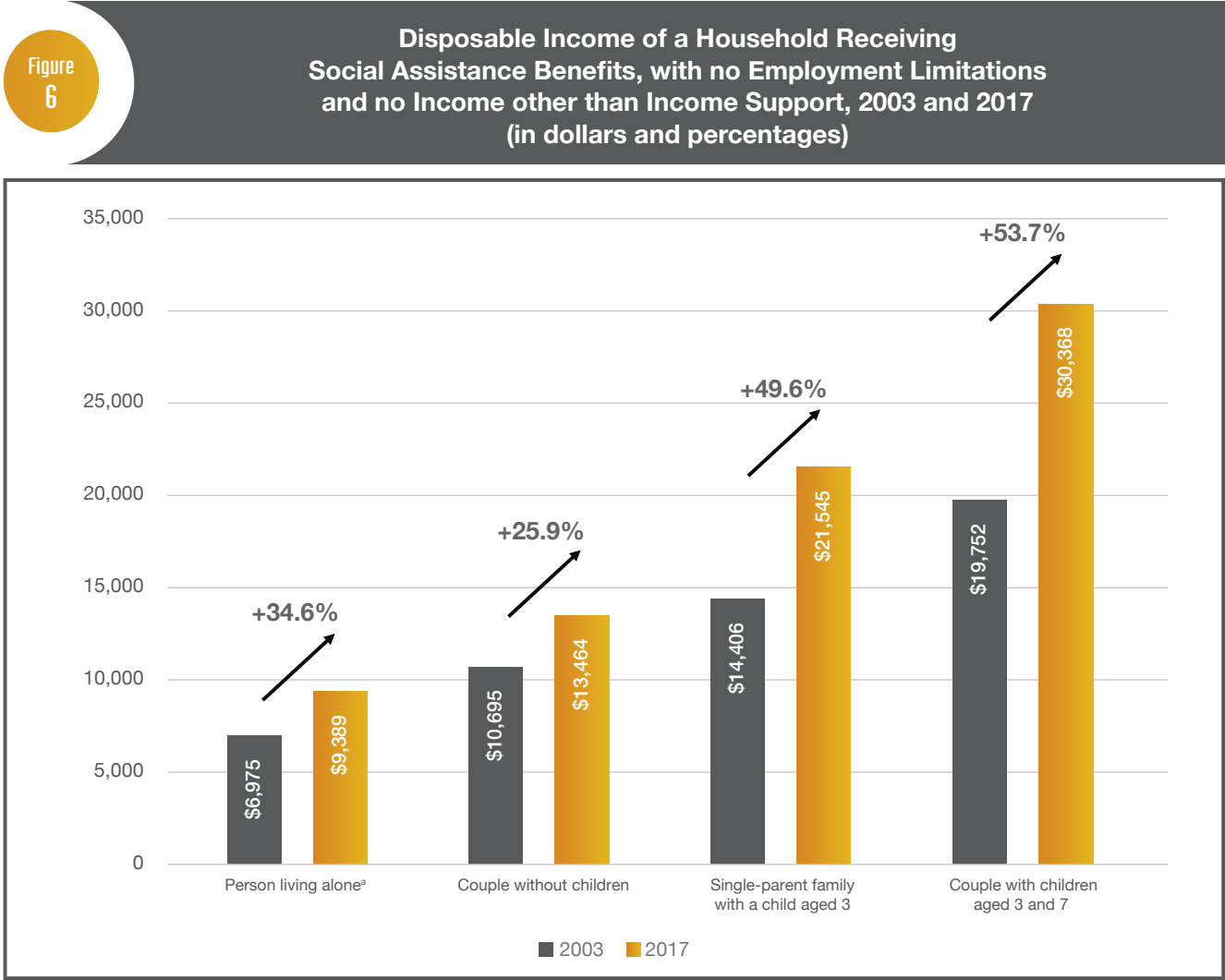
The work accomplished in connection with these two action plans has raised the disposable income of thousands of Quebecers living in poverty, especially beneficiaries of last-resort financial assistance (Figure 6).

Finally, initiatives stemming from local and regional priorities and funded as part of the government’s territorial action measure also benefited citizens living in poverty and social exclusion across Québec.

4. Favourable Economic Conditions

In recent years, the improvement in Québec’s economy, along with the measures and initiatives put in place by the government, have helped push back poverty.

These factors have led to a drop in the unemployment rate and a substantial decrease in the social assistance rate¹⁶. That rate even reached a historic low of 6% in July 2017 (Figure 7).



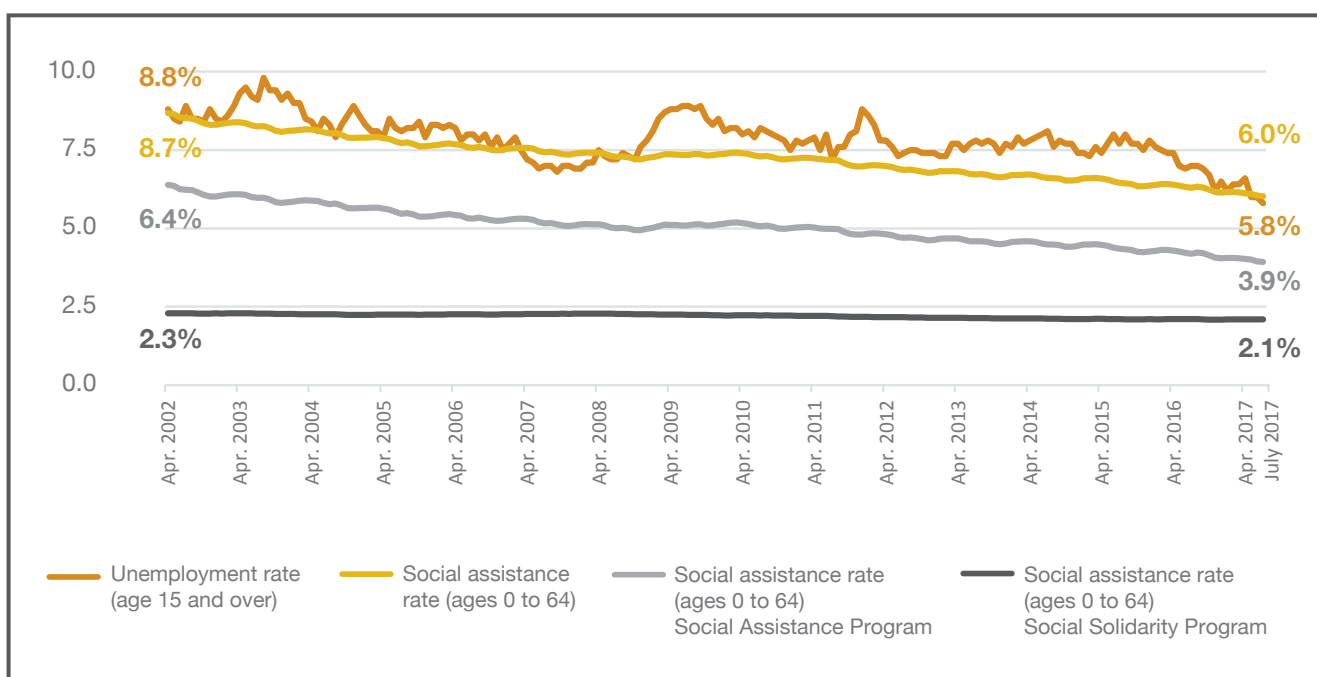
Source: Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale.

a Including the adjustment for a person living alone.

16. This is the proportion of the population receiving benefits from a financial assistance program of the Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale.

Figure
7

Changes in the Social Assistance Rate and Unemployment Rate, Québec, April 2002 to July 2017 (in percentages)



Sources: Statistics Canada, CANSIM, Table 282-0087 (seasonally adjusted unemployment rates); Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale (social assistance rates).

Note: The social assistance rate includes beneficiaries of both the Social Assistance Program and Social Solidarity Program.

In 2016, the Québec economy picked up steam, leading to a significant rise in its gross domestic product. Its economic growth is equivalent to that of Canada and the United States¹⁷.

The strong rate of job creation benefiting Québec households and the province's sound public finances have created a favourable economic climate that will persist in the coming years.

Combined with the aging of the population, which will open up many new jobs, that economic growth should continue to help many people find employment and escape from poverty.

5. An Inspiring Consultation

The Gouvernement du Québec conducted a broad public consultation from November 2015 to June 2016, which sparked considerable interest:

- 268 briefs were received from various organizations and the general public.
- 6 briefs were submitted by Aboriginal representatives (see box, p. 30).
- 5,248 people filled out the online questionnaire (75% women).
- 22 focus groups were created across Québec with people living in poverty¹⁸.
- The Minister of Employment and Social Solidarity or his parliamentary assistant met with 34 organizations.

17. Plan économique du Québec – Mars 2017 [Québec Economic Plan – March 2017], p. A.6, [Online]. [http://www.budget.finances.gouv.qc.ca/budget/2017-2018/fr/documents/economicplan_march2017.pdf#page=22] (Viewed on November 1, 2017).

18. These groups comprised a total of 179 people. Two thirds of them were receiving benefits from a last-resort financial assistance program. Care was taken to ensure a balance between men and women. Of the 22 focus groups, four were conducted in English.

The participants in the focus groups, which were composed of people living in poverty, provided special inspiration for this plan.

Focus Group Participants	
Single individuals:	57.5%
Couples with children:	19.0%
Couples without children:	12.9%
Single-parent families:	10.6%

The public consultation revealed the scale of income-related challenges. Issues associated with housing, access to healthy and affordable food, mass transit and access to cultural, sports and recreational activities were also mentioned. Participants reported that access to healthcare and social services was a concern. A number of participants also stated that the minimum wage was insufficient.

Those participating in the consultation also mentioned the importance of recognizing the contribution of community action, which has a direct impact on the fight against poverty and social exclusion.

Access to safe and affordable housing remains the top priority, and in the March 2017 Québec Economic Plan, the government renewed its commitment to building, renovating and adapting social, affordable and community housing in the coming years.

Native Peoples and the Fight against Poverty and Social Exclusion

By law¹⁹, the government is required to consult Native representatives in order to tailor its initiatives to the realities of Native communities.

Accordingly, in the course of the public consultation, Native organizations, including representatives of urban indigenous peoples and Québec Native Women, were asked for their input through a call for briefs.

The initiatives put forward in this plan will be implemented for the benefit of the entire Québec population, including its Native communities.

In addition, in order to provide concrete solutions geared to the realities of these communities, the Government Action Plan for the Social and Cultural Development of the First Nations and Inuit was released in June 2017.

Expert Committee on a Guaranteed Minimum Income

In order to evaluate mechanisms associated with the principle of a guaranteed minimum income that could provide inspiration for Québec society for the 21st century, the Gouvernement du Québec has created an expert committee to examine ways to simplify its transfers to individuals and families while ensuring greater transparency and streamlining administration.

¹⁹. R.S.Q., chapter L-7, s. 12

This process, undertaken in fall 2016, aimed to explore new approaches in order to combat poverty still more effectively, foster social inclusion and work toward the introduction of a guaranteed minimum income.

The committee made a number of recommendations to improve Québec's income support system.

Some of those recommendations²⁰ are reflected in this plan, while others will be studied in the coming years.

6. Government Commitments Incorporated into the Action Plan

The Government Action Plan to Foster Economic Inclusion and Social Participation 2017–2023 incorporates sustainable development principles and certain actions identified in the Government Sustainable Development Strategy 2015–2020²¹. Similarly, the gender-based analysis, the socio-economic integration of people with disabilities²², the recognition of Montreal's special metropolis status²³ and the evaluation of health impacts²⁴ were all taken into account.

Gender-Based Analysis and Its Contribution to Making Québec Society Fairer and More Inclusive

Gender-based analysis (GBA) is a means of achieving equality in practice based on a study of the distinct effects of various social measures on men and women, based on their different needs and realities²⁵. GBA is a legal requirement²⁶.

In this action plan, changes in various indicators were studied to detect differences between men and women and determine which factors had the greatest influence on movement into and out of poverty (access to employment, family status, income, education), some of which appear to be specific to women (Appendix 4).

In addition to reduce-contribution childcare services, the refundable tax credit for child assistance and the solidarity tax credit, several recent government initiatives aim, among other things, to mitigate differences between men and women, in particular implementation of the Government Strategy for Gender Equality Toward 2021²⁷ and the Policy on Educational Success. The progressive increase in the minimum wage announced in 2017²⁸, as well as the government's ongoing work on family-study-work balance and the review of the *Act respecting labour standards*, could also play a role in mitigating some differences.

20. COMITÉ D'EXPERTS SUR LE REVENU MINIMUM GARANTI (2017), *Le revenu minimum garanti : une utopie? Une inspiration pour le Québec*, Rapport final, volumes 1 and 2, [Online]. [<http://www.gouv.qc.ca/FR/RevenuMinimumGaranti/Pages/Accueil.aspx#publications>] (Viewed on November 30, 2017). [English version: *Guaranteed Minimum Income in Québec: A Utopia? An Inspiration for Québec*, Final Report.] http://www.gouv.qc.ca/EN/RevenuMinimumGaranti/Documents/Rapportfinal_RMG_volume1ENG_V2.pdf.

21. The fight against poverty and social exclusion supports some of the objectives of the Government Sustainable Development Strategy 2015–2020, including the objective of fostering social inclusion and reducing social and economic inequality, the objective of improving prevention and public health, and the objective of supporting community action. [Online]. [http://www.mddelcc.gouv.qc.ca/developpement/strategie_gouvernementale/strategie-DD.pdf] (Viewed on November 7, 2017).

22. *Act to secure handicapped persons in the exercise of their rights with a view to achieving social, school and workplace integration*, chapter E-20.1, s. 25, [Online]. [<http://legisquebec.gouv.qc.ca/en/ShowDoc/cs/E-20.1>] (Viewed on November 7, 2017).

23. Entente cadre, [Online]. [http://ville.montreal.qc.ca/pls/portal/docs/PAGE/PRT_VDM_FR/MEDIA/DOCUMENTS/ENTENTE_CADRE_REFLEXE_MONTREAL.PDF] (Viewed on July 28, 2017).

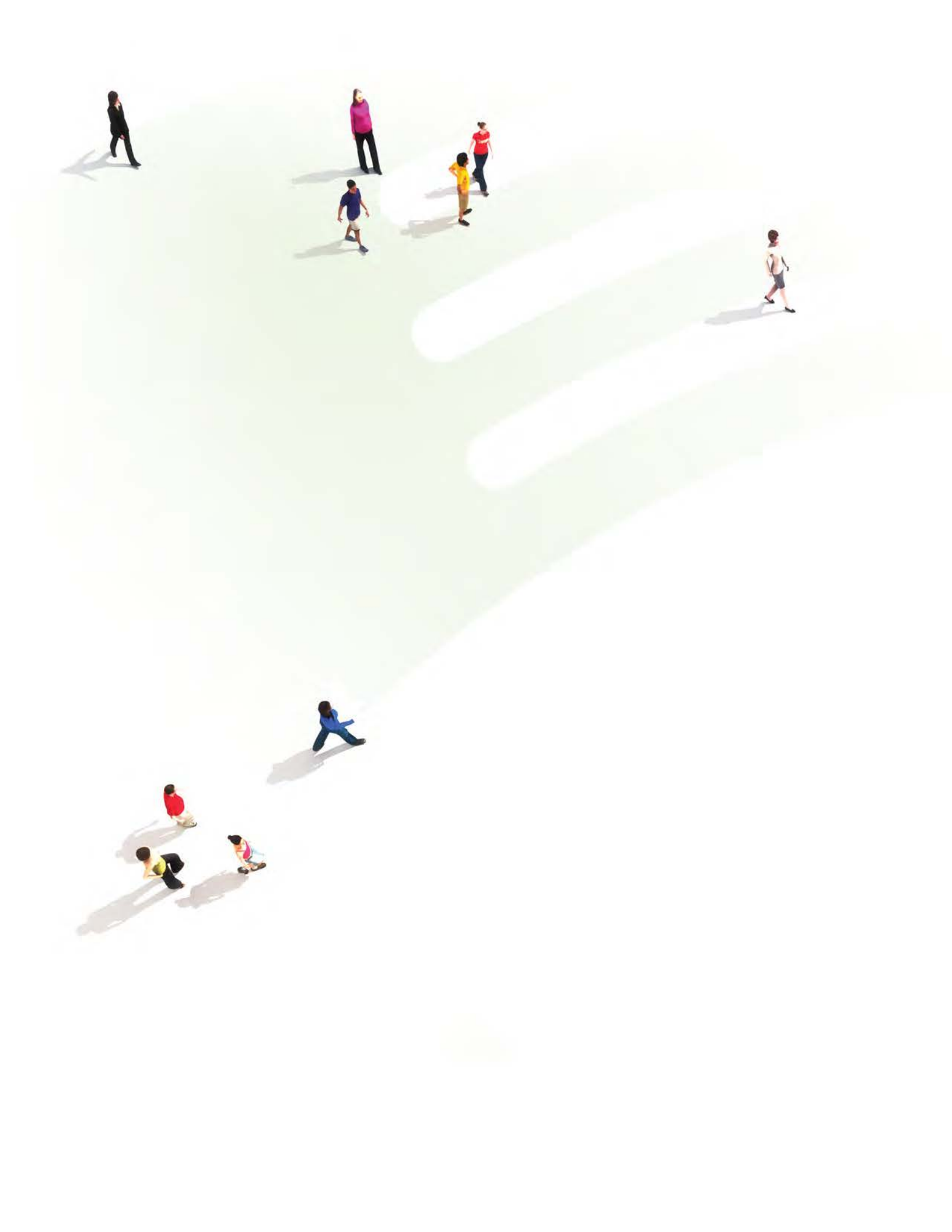
24. *Public Health Act*, chapter S-2.2, s. 54 [Online]. [<http://legisquebec.gouv.qc.ca/en/ShowDoc/cs/S-2.2>] (Viewed on November 7, 2017).

25. SECRÉTARIAT À LA CONDITION FÉMININE (2007), *Guide synthèse de l'analyse différenciée selon les sexes*, p. 4, [Online]. [http://www.scf.gouv.qc.ca/fileadmin/publications/ADS/ads_guide2007-10.pdf] (Viewed on July 28, 2017).

26. "Those actions [set out in the government action plan] must also [...] take into account realities specific to women and men, in particular through gender-based analysis" (s. 7).

27. *Ensemble pour l'égalité : Stratégie gouvernementale pour l'égalité entre les femmes et les hommes vers 2021*, [Online]. [http://scf.gouv.qc.ca/fileadmin/publications/Strategie_Egalite/strategie-egalite-2021.pdf] (Viewed on August 1, 2017). [English version: *Together for Equality: Government Strategy for Gender Equality Toward 2021*, [Online]. [http://scf.gouv.qc.ca/fileadmin/publications/Strategie_Egalite/strategie-egalite-2021-ANG.pdf].

28. [<http://www.fil-information.gouv.qc.ca/Pages/Article.aspx?aiquillage=diffuseurs&listeDiff=349&type=1&Page=3&idArticle=2501195313>] (Viewed on August 1, 2017).



PART 3

TAKING DECISIVE ACTION FOR PEOPLE LIVING IN POVERTY AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION



Building on its achievements in the fight against poverty and social exclusion and drawing on the ideas put forward during the public consultation, the government's transformative and innovative actions will revolve around three main thrusts:

- 1st thrust: Lift over 100,000 people out of poverty and increase the incomes of people living in poverty
- 2nd thrust: Invest to improve social housing
- 3rd thrust: Encourage the social participation of low-income individuals and families and mobilize communities

These goals are complemented by research and assessment activities that will inform decision-making on how best to combat poverty and social exclusion.

Several measures are complementary to this plan. For example, government actions to encourage students to stay in school are covered in the Policy on Educational Success²⁹, and most measures affecting Native people are included in the Government Action Plan for the Social and Cultural Development of the First Nations and Inuit. These complementary actions included in government strategies and policies are not included in this plan, although references to them are occasionally made³⁰.

The government will ensure that the actions carried out under its various policies and strategies, on the one hand, and the initiatives taken in civil society, on the other, act in synergy in order to maximize their impact.

29. MINISTÈRE DE L'ÉDUCATION ET DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT SUPÉRIEUR (2017), *Politique de la réussite éducative : Le plaisir d'apprendre, la chance de réussir*, p. 13, [Online]. [http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/fileadmin/site_web/documents/PSG/politiques_orientations/politique_reussite_educative_10juillet_F_1.pdf] (Viewed on August 1, 2017). [English version: *Policy on Educational Success: A Love of Learning, a Chance to Succeed*, p. 13 [Online]. [http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/fileadmin/site_web/documents/PSG/politiques_orientations/politique_reussite_educative_10juillet_A_1.pdf].

30. "Les travaux d'élaboration du plan d'action ont pris en compte les recommandations du Vérificateur général du Québec notamment celle qui suggère d'établir des critères précis pour le choix des mesures à inclure." [Online]. [http://www.vgq.gouv.qc.ca/fr/publications/fr_rapport-annuel/fr_2011-2012-VOR/fr_Rapport2011-2012-VOR-Ch02.pdf] (Viewed on September 13, 2017).

1st Thrust — Lift over 100,000 people out of poverty and increase the incomes of people living in poverty

Underlining the government's commitment to gradually raise Québec to the ranks of the industrialized countries with the fewest people living in poverty, the action plan sets a clear and ambitious target: to lift over 100,000 people, mostly single individuals and couples without children, out of poverty.

Target 1: Lift over 100,000 people out of low-income situations (determined using the market basket measure)³¹, mostly single individuals and couples without children who have a severely limited capacity for employment.

Through the measures that it will put in place, the government will increase the disposable income of all last-resort financial assistance beneficiaries and Aim for Employment participants.

1.1 Increase the disposable income of people living in poverty

MEASURE 1

Introduce a basic income for Quebecers with a severely limited capacity for employment

As mentioned in Part 1, people with a severely limited capacity for employment cannot always escape from a low-income situation, whether by their own means or with assistance from existing income support measures.

To assist Quebecers in this situation, the government will gradually increase social solidarity benefits to enable those who have received such benefits for at least 66 of the last 72 months to reach or exceed the low-income threshold.

Proponent: Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale

Annual investment upon completion (2022-2023):
\$384.1M

Total investment: \$1.24B

MEASURE 2

Progressively increase benefits granted under last-resort financial assistance programs and the Aim for Employment program

Although last-resort financial assistance benefits are generally indexed, they have not kept pace with the rise in the cost of living, resulting in an income shortfall.

The government plans to progressively increase the benefits granted under last-resort financial assistance programs and the Aim for Employment program starting in 2018 in order to make up this shortfall (Table 3).

For single individuals without employment limitations, the increase in benefits will ultimately (in 2021) amount to \$45 per month or \$540 per year. This represents a 5.8% increase in disposable income.

For couples without children and without a severely limited capacity for employment, the increase will amount to \$45 per month or \$540 per year, representing a 4.0% increase in disposable income.

An equivalent increase will also be granted to all single-parent families and to couples with children.

31. Whether a family unit is in a low-income situation is determined by comparing the family unit's disposable income to the market basket measure. According to this method, a family unit is considered to have a low income if its MBM disposable income is less than the value of a basket of goods and services calculated for its community or for a community of the same size.

Table
3

Impact of Increasing Benefits on Disposable Income and Market Basket Measure (MBM) Coverage Social Assistance Program, 2017 to 2021^a (in constant 2017 dollars)

	Benefit Increase		Impact of Increase			
	Monthly Increase	Cumulative Increase	Annual Disposable Income (\$)	Cumulative Difference		MBM Coverage (%)
				(\$)	(%)	
Single Person, with no Employment Limitations^a						
2017 MBM Threshold^b			18,012			
2017	-	-	9,389	-	-	52.1
2018	15	15	9,569	180	1.9	53.1
2019	10	25	9,689	300	3.2	53.8
2020	10	35	9,809	420	4.5	54.5
2021	10	45	9,929	540	5.8	55.1
Couple without Children and no Employment Limitations^a						
2017 MBM Threshold^b			25,472			
2017	-	-	13,464	-	-	52.9
2018	15	15	13,644	180	1.3	53.6
2019	10	25	13,764	300	2.2	54.0
2020	10	35	13,884	420	3.1	54.5
2021	10	45	14,004	540	4.0	55.0

Source: Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale.

a These projections do not take account of assumptions regarding changes in the market basket measure (MBM) or the indexation of last-resort financial assistance benefits or other forms of government assistance paid during the period in question (2018 to 2021).

b 2015 market basket measure threshold, indexed to 2017.

For single individuals with a severely limited capacity for employment to whom Measure 1 does not apply, the increase in benefits will ultimately (in 2021) amount to \$103 per month or \$1,236 per year. This represents a 9.7% increase in disposable income (Table 4).

For couples without children where one adult has a severely limited capacity for employment, the increase will amount to \$118 per month or \$1,416 per year. This represents a 7.5% increase in disposable income.

An equivalent increase will also be granted to all single-parent families and couples with children.



**Impact of Increasing Benefits on Disposable Income
and Market Basket Measure (MBM) Coverage
Social Solidarity Program^a, 2017 to 2021^b
(in constant 2017 dollars)**

	Benefit Increase		Impact of Increase			
	Monthly Increase	Cumulative Increase	Annual Disposable Income (\$)	Cumulative Difference		MBM Coverage (%)
				(\$)	(%)	
Single Person, with no Employment Limitations ^a						
2017 MBM Threshold ^c			18,012			
2017	-	-	12,749	-	-	70.8
2018	73	73	13,625	876	6.9	75.6
2019	10	83	13,745	996	7.8	76.3
2020	10	93	13,865	1,116	8.8	77.0
2021	10	103	13,985	1,236	9.7	77.6
Couple without Children and no Employment Limitations ^a						
2017 MBM Threshold ^c			25,472			
2017	-	-	18,912	-	-	74.2
2018	88	88	19,968	1,056	5.6	78.4
2019	10	98	20,088	1,176	6.2	78.9
2020	10	108	20,208	1,296	6.9	79.3
2021	10	118	20,328	1,416	7.5	79.8

Source: Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale.

- a These data exclude adults eligible for Measure 1, meaning adults who had a severely limited employment capacity for at least 66 of the last 72 months.
- b These projections do not take account of assumptions regarding changes in the market basket measure (MBM) or the indexation of last-resort financial assistance benefits or other forms of government assistance paid during the period in question (2018 to 2021).
- c 2015 market basket measure threshold, indexed to 2017.

These increases will be applied in addition to the annual indexation of benefits, thereby providing households receiving last-resort financial assistance and households participating in the Aim for Employment program with an increase in disposable income that exceeds the rise in the cost of living. This increase will enable some households to exit a low-income situation.

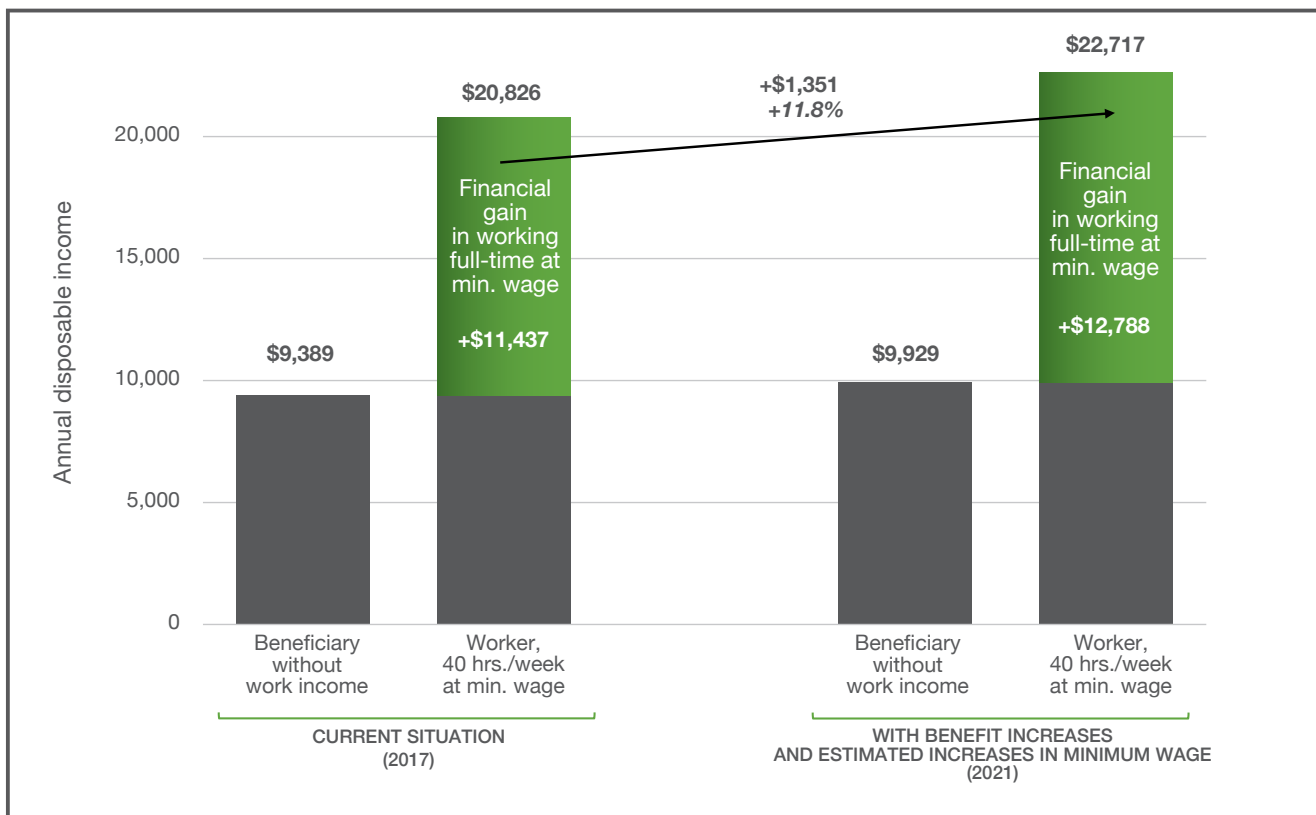
Over 220,000 households will benefit from this supplementary assistance, with over 75% representing single individuals or couples without children. Thanks to this measure, the disposable incomes of social assistance beneficiaries in Québec will continue to be among the highest in Canada.

For the Gouvernement du Québec, providing employment incentives is a priority. In response to the scarcity of labour, government action to combat poverty and social exclusion must encourage as many people as possible who are able to hold employment to join the workforce.

Accordingly, and despite the progressive increase in benefits to be granted under last-resort financial assistance programs from now until 2021, the financial gain provided by minimum-wage employment will be further boosted by \$1,351 per year once the government's work incentive actions, including annual adjustments to the minimum wage, are taken into account (Figure 8).

Figure
8

Impact of Increasing Social Assistance Program Benefits on the Financial Gain Associated with Working Full-Time at Minimum Wage Single Person with no Employment Limitations (in dollars)



Source: Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale.

Note: Calculations based on the assumption that the minimum wage will be \$12.75 an hour on May 1, 2021. The calculation takes account of the income tax reduction announced in the November 2017 Economic Update. The projections do not take account of changes in the market basket measure (MBM) or of the indexation of last-resort financial assistance benefits or other government support paid during the period in question (2018 to 2021).

CONSULTATION

During the consultation, people living in poverty reported that they hoped for greater social justice through the redistribution of collective wealth.

Target 2: Increase benefits for single individuals and couples without children who receive benefits under the last-resort financial assistance (except for people receiving benefits under Measure 1) and Aim for Employment programs to bring them up to 55% of the market basket measure.

Proponent: Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale

Annual investment upon completion (2022-2023):
\$131.3M

Total investment: \$580.3M

MEASURE 3

Take action to ensure that more low-income Quebecers complete their income tax returns

A number of tax measures provide income support for people living in poverty. In some cases, these measures can even help them escape poverty.

To qualify for these tax measures, however, beneficiaries must complete and file an income tax return.

The Volunteer Program was created to provide assistance to people who are unable to fill out their income tax return or do not have the means to have a professional service complete their tax return for them. This program may enable low-income individuals to obtain the benefits and tax credits for which they are eligible.

In 2017, over 3,500 volunteers at 533 community organizations across Québec helped nearly 165,000 people complete their tax returns.

This program, which has received the backing of Revenu Québec and the Canada Revenue Agency for many years, supports the efforts of the organizations and volunteers that provide these services to their target clientele. Revenu Québec plans to boost the assistance offered to these organizations by means of a \$1-million financial contribution over the next five years, in addition to promoting the program.

Proponent: Revenu Québec

Annual investment upon completion (2022-2023):
\$200,000

Total investment: \$1M

1.2 Increase disposable income and create conditions favourable to labour market participation

The Gouvernement du Québec will increase the incomes of individuals receiving last-resort financial assistance or Aim for Employment benefits and encourage their participation in the labour market.

MEASURE 4

Change certain last-resort financial assistance parameters and create conditions favourable to labour market participation

4.1 Increase employment income exemptions for individuals and families receiving Social Solidarity Program benefits

Ensuring that as many Quebecers as possible hold a job remains a priority for the government. In the case of individuals who receive Social Solidarity Program benefits and have a severely limited capacity for employment, finding and keeping a job can be a major challenge.

In order to encourage their participation in the labour market, the government will increase the amount of the work income exemption that they may earn without having their benefits reduced.

Increase in the Work Income Exemption

In 2017, an individual or couple with work income may earn up to \$100 a month without that amount being deducted from their benefit. This amount will be raised to \$200 a month for a household consisting of one adult and to \$300 a month for a household consisting of two adults.

Proponent: Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale

Annual investment upon completion (2022-2023):
\$2.1M

Total investment: \$8.9M

4.2 Grant a work income supplement to last-resort financial assistance beneficiaries

Under last-resort financial assistance programs, the amount paid to beneficiaries is calculated on the basis of their work income. This means that the benefit payable to a person receiving work income is reduced as soon as his or her income exceeds the prescribed exemption.

To boost support for beneficiaries who obtain employment, the government will introduce a work income supplement.

A supplement equal to 10% of a beneficiary's net work income in excess of the applicable exclusions will be granted for a maximum of 12 cumulative months. This sum will be paid separately from the benefit.

For example, for a monthly net income of \$500, a \$200 exemption will apply. For the remaining \$300, the beneficiary will receive a supplement of \$30 (that is, 10% x (\$500-\$200)).

Proponent: Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale

Annual investment upon completion (2022-2023):
\$2.1M

Total investment: \$8.9M

4.3 Change the manner in which the parental contribution is calculated

In some circumstances, the parental contribution³² is taken into account when calculating the benefit to which an adult child is entitled under the last-resort financial assistance and Aim for Employment programs.

Changing the way in which the parental contribution is calculated will increase the number of adult children for whom the parents' income is not taken into account.

The change will allow for an increase in the disposable income of certain young adults and will help them make the transition to education, training or employment.

As a result of the new method for calculating the parental contribution, young adults who qualify will receive an average of \$170 more per month.

Proponent: Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale

Annual investment upon completion (2022-2023):
\$1.6M

Total investment: \$7.8M

4.4 Increase work premiums

Workers with low or moderate incomes can receive a work premium designed to support and reward their work efforts and encourage beneficiaries to get off last-resort financial assistance and join the workforce. Workers may be eligible:

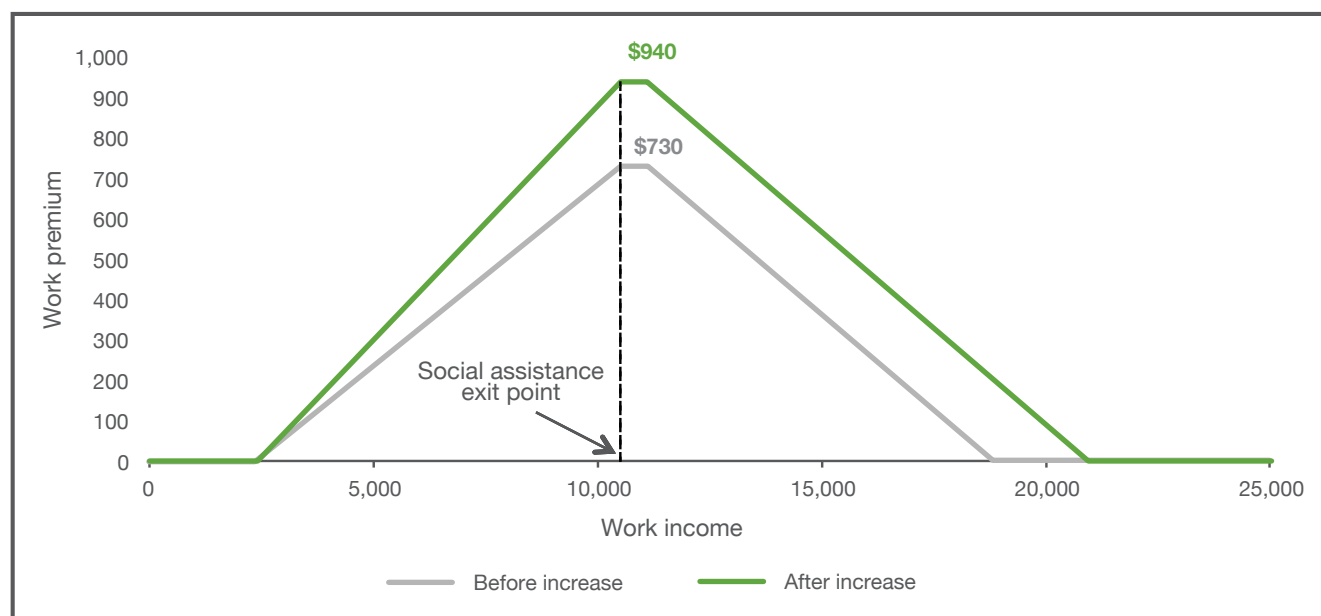
- for the general work premium;
- for the adapted work premium (for individuals with a severely limited capacity for employment);
- for the supplement to the work premium (long-term beneficiaries who are getting off last-resort financial assistance).

Work Premiums

Workers with low or moderate incomes can qualify for a work premium, which is paid as a refundable tax credit. The aim of the tax credit is to support and reward the work effort and encourage workers to get off last-resort financial assistance by joining the workforce.

Figure 9

Illustration of the Increase in the General Work Premium for a Single Person – After Implementation (in dollars)



Source: Ministère des Finances du Québec.

32. The income of the adult's mother and father are calculated on the basis of their total income shown in their income tax returns submitted in accordance with the *Taxation Act* (chapter I-3) and confirmed in the notice of assessment issued by the Minister of Revenue.

To facilitate the transition to employment, work premiums boost recipients' incomes by an amount based on their work income and family situation. They are granted to last-resort financial assistance beneficiaries as well as to low- and moderate-income workers. They are an effective means of recognizing beneficiaries' work efforts.

For the general work premium, the rate of increase applied to the work income of households without children will gradually climb from 9% to 11.6% to encourage these beneficiaries to work more or get off social assistance. Starting on January 1, 2018 and continuing until 2022, the combined rate of the work premium and working income tax benefit will gradually rise from 29.5% to 32.1% for households without children. For a single person who is eligible for the work premium, the maximum assistance will increase from \$729.54 to \$940.30 (Figure 9)³³.

The rate of increase applicable to the adapted work premium will rise from 11% to 13.6% over the same period.

The supplement to the work premium, set at \$200 per month, is granted to last-resort financial assistance beneficiaries who have received such benefits in at least 36 of the last 42 months and who are exiting the program because they are receiving work income. The supplement is paid for a maximum of 12 consecutive months. Starting with the 2018 tax year, the eligibility requirements for the supplement to the work premium will be eased in order to make as many people as possible eligible. To qualify for the supplement to the work premium, an individual must have received last-resort financial assistance or Aim for Employment benefits in 24 of the last 30 months.

Proponent: Ministère des Finances du Québec

Annual investment upon completion (2022-2023):
\$78.6M

Total investment: \$260.0M

The minimum wage will be half the average hourly wage in 2020.

To increase employees' purchasing power and encourage them to play a bigger part in the collective enrichment of Québec society, the Minister responsible for Labour announced in January 2017 planned increases in the minimum wage over four years: \$0.50 in 2017, \$0.50 in 2018, \$0.35 in 2019 and \$0.35 in 2020.

These increases will result in a minimum-wage-to-average-salary ratio of 0.50 in 2020. The increases, which take into account businesses' ability to pay, will be adjusted according to the performance of the Québec economy.

4.5 Grant a \$100-per-month exclusion on cash gifts received by individuals and families receiving benefits

From time to time, the loved ones of individuals receiving last-resort financial assistance or Aim for Employment benefits give them small sums of money to help them out. These acts of solidarity can often make a real difference.

However, if these gifts are made in cash, they are taken into account and deducted from the amount of the benefit received.

The government will grant individuals and families receiving benefits a monthly exclusion of \$100 for gifts received in cash.

The disposable income of individuals and families who receive cash gifts will increase by up to \$100 a month.

Proponent: Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale

Annual investment upon completion (2022-2023):
\$0.8M

Total investment: \$3.4M

³³. These amounts are estimated based on figures for 2017 and do not reflect annual indexing.

4.6 Grant adult status to children of full age enrolled in the secondary school general education stream

To encourage young adults who wish to pursue a general education stream at the secondary level, the government will offer them direct assistance (Figure 10). Young people whose parents receive last-resort financial assistance or Aim for Employment benefits will receive adult benefits.

This measure is consistent with the Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur's Policy on Educational Success, which aims to reduce the gap between the graduation rate of economically disadvantaged children and that of the general population.

Proponent: Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale

Annual investment upon completion (2022-2023): \$16M

Total investment: \$68M

4.7 Grant an employment retention bonus

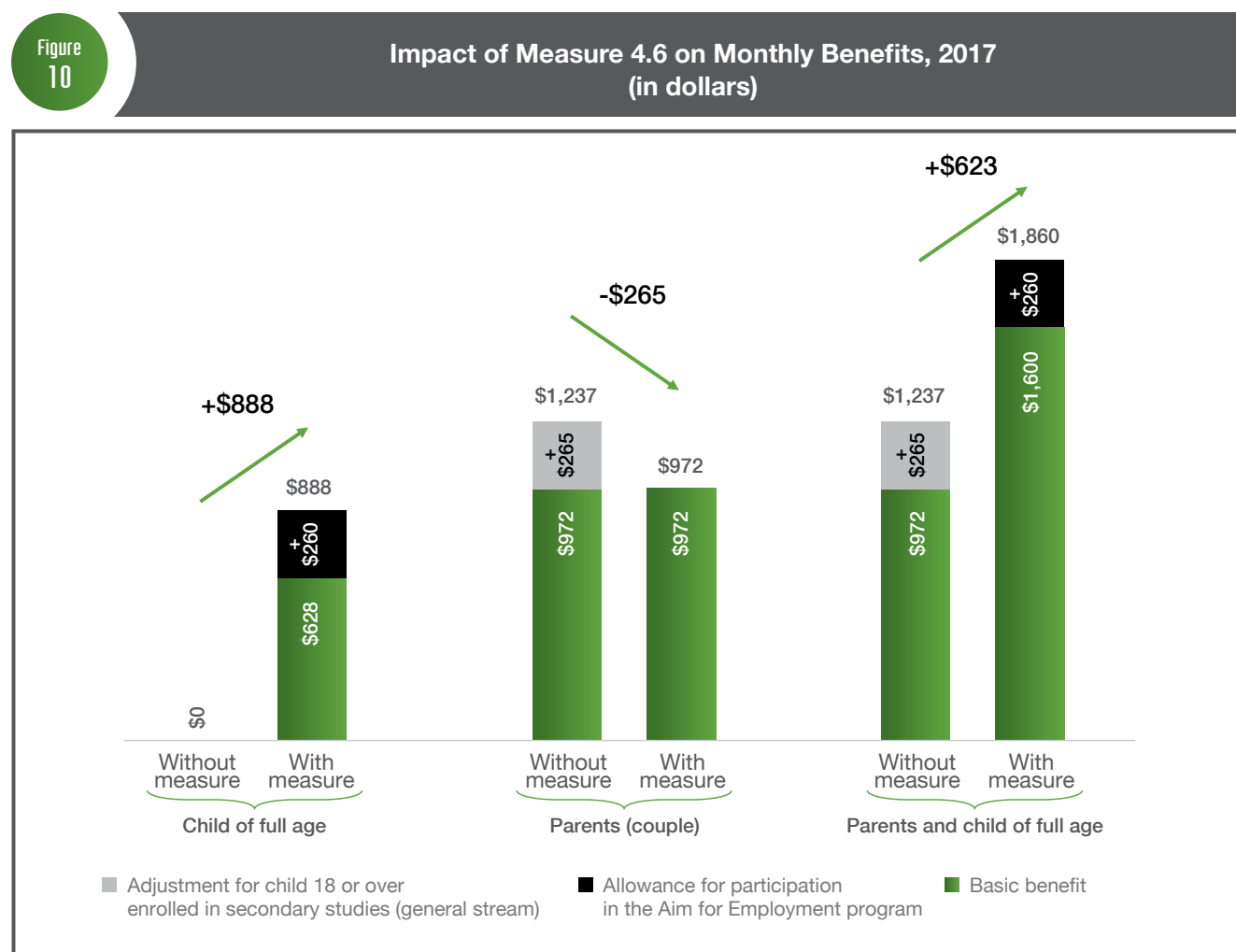
To encourage last-resort financial assistance and Aim for Employment beneficiaries to make a lasting and successful transition to the labour market, the Gouvernement du Québec will introduce a \$1,000 employment retention bonus.

The details regarding this bonus will be determined at a later date.

Proponent: Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale

Annual investment upon completion (2022-2023): \$10M

Total investment: \$38.1M



Source: Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale.

1.3 Assist Quebecers in gaining access to training and employment

MEASURE 5

Aim for Employment program

Under the Aim for Employment program, Quebecers who qualify for the Social Assistance Program for the first time will receive personalized coaching to help them find a job, along with increased financial assistance to make the process easier. In addition, the program will provide opportunities to develop their social skills in order to enhance their employability.

The program encourages participants to develop a personal project and undertake a process that will lead to lasting improvements in their living conditions through employment. In many cases, skills development is a key part of this process.

Increase in monthly participation allowances to foster participant engagement:

- \$165 a month for active job hunting and the development of social skills;
- \$260 per month for an adult or \$390 per month for an adult who is the head of a single-parent family, earmarked for skills development.

Proponent: Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale

Annual investment upon completion (2022-2023):
\$7.6M

Total investment: \$45.6M (measure already funded)

MEASURE 6

Support last-resort financial assistance beneficiaries who wish to develop their skills

CONSULTATION

The people living in poverty who took part in the consultation and want to join the labour market sometimes need assistance to maximize their chances of success.

Emploi-Québec offers a range of measures for last-resort financial assistance beneficiaries who wish to advance towards employment. Its training measure and job preparation projects, for example, have already proven their efficacy.

The weekly employment assistance allowance paid to last-resort financial assistance beneficiaries participating in these two measures will be increased to further encourage them to use the measures at their disposal.

This allowance, which is added to the financial assistance benefit paid to beneficiaries, will increase from \$45 to \$51 a week.

Proponent: Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale

Annual investment upon completion (2022-2023):
\$6.9M

Total investment: \$33.8M

MEASURE 7

Support training for young people in situations of poverty and social exclusion

People growing up in a disadvantaged home face numerous challenges, especially striving to improve their lives and those of their family members. The government provides incentives to encourage Quebecers in these situations to return to school and young people with low incomes to become more socially involved.

CONSULTATION

The people in situations of poverty who took part in the focus groups feel that it is very important to reach out to younger people to break the intergenerational poverty cycle, particularly through education and by encouraging young people to stay in school so that they can get better jobs.

7.1 Promote the resumption of training for young people aged 16 and 17

To raise the labour market participation rate of young people aged 16 and 17 who have left school and whose parents receive last-resort financial assistance benefits or are participating in the Aim for Employment program, pilot projects will be put in place to provide support.

The projects will aim to help these young people obtain vocational qualifications by taking an innovative approach to providing support. The projects will be spearheaded by four school boards and will assist 75 young people by June 30, 2019.

Proponents: Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale and Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur

Partner: Ministère du Conseil exécutif
(Secrétariat à la jeunesse)

Total investment: \$354,000 (measure already funded)

7.2 Create opportunities for young people aged 16 to 29 in vulnerable situations to carry out social engagement projects

The Créneau carrefour jeunesse program is one of the signature programs of the Youth Action Strategy 2016-2021³⁴ and is run by Québec's carrefours jeunesse-emploi in partnership with the government. The program has six components, one of which focuses on building the personal and social autonomy of young people aged 16 to 29 who are experiencing personal difficulties or problems with social integration.

The government will enhance this component of the Créneau carrefour jeunesse program by enabling the carrefours jeunesse-emploi to launch experiential projects that foster the social engagement of young people.

\$4.5 million over five years to enhance the Créneau Carrefour jeunesse program

The Créneau carrefour jeunesse program complements existing government services, in particular those provided by educational institutions and the health and social services network, as well as public employment services.

Proponent: Ministère du Conseil exécutif
(Secrétariat à la jeunesse)

Partners: Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale, Réseau des carrefours jeunesse-emploi du Québec, Carrefours jeunesse-emploi

Total investment: \$4.5M (measure already funded)

7.3 Provide assistance to help students from disadvantaged backgrounds obtain a first diploma

With help from parents, local partners and volunteers, the Pathways to Education program's preventive approach makes it easier for students from disadvantaged backgrounds to obtain a first diploma.

To reduce the gap between the success rates of students from low-income backgrounds and those of other students, the Gouvernement du Québec will provide support for the Pathways to Education program, which provides academic, financial and social assistance to students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds.

Proponent: Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur

Annual investment upon completion (2022-2023): \$3M

Total investment: \$15M

34. GOUVERNEMENT DU QUÉBEC. [Online]. [https://www.jeunes.gouv.qc.ca/strategie/projets-structurants/creneau-cje.asp].

1.4 Support businesses with workforce recruitment and retention

To ensure people not already active in the labour market are able to find lasting employment, it is important to provide assistance to certain businesses upon hiring and in the course of employment.

MEASURE 8

Ramp up business advisory services in the areas of diversity management and labour attraction and retention

To enable businesses to meet their growing labour needs, the hiring of segments of the population currently under-represented in the workforce should be encouraged. Consequently, in order to make businesses aware of the benefits of having a diverse workforce, the government will enhance its services. Advisory services in the area of human resources management—and diversity management in particular—will be ramped up with the assistance of public employment services.

This measure will encourage the hiring and retention of individuals who encounter barriers to employment (immigrants, people with disabilities, last-resort financial assistance beneficiaries, sexual-minority members³⁵, etc.).

CONSULTATION

The public consultation participants affirmed that there are several barriers to employment for people living in poverty, including the lack of a diploma of secondary studies, health problems, a lack of work experience, single parent status, non-recognition of diplomas earned abroad, advanced age, a criminal record, and social assistance beneficiary status.

In addition, the government will publish a guide for businesses entitled *Profiter du plein potentiel d'une main-d'œuvre diversifiée*, which describes the best human resources management practices in the area of diversity.

Proponent: Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale

Annual investment upon completion (2022-2023):
\$0.5M

Total investment: \$3M

2nd Thrust – Invest to improve social housing

As both an essential need for every household and an anchor for our communities, housing is the cornerstone underlying the many ways in which we relate to and participate in society: work, school, social life, and so on.

Housing accounts for a greater share of total expenses for low-income households than for other types of households³⁶. In Québec, in 2016, 33.7% of tenants spent over 30% of their income on housing³⁷, and that figure was much higher for low-income households³⁸. When housing costs make up an excessive portion of a household's budget, other expenses, like food and transportation, have to be cut.

36. In 2015, housing was the single largest budget item for all household income quintiles, except for the fifth quintile. The ratio of housing to total expenses increases as household income decreases (STATISTICS CANADA, CANSIM, Table 203-022. Survey of Household Spending).

37. STATISTICS CANADA (2017), Census Profile, 2016 Census. [Online]. [http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/prof/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=PR&Co-de1=24&Geo2=PR&Co-de2=01&Data=Count&SearchText=24&-SearchType=Begins&-SearchPR=01&B1=Housing&TABID=3] (Viewed on November 15, 2017).

38. CENTRE D'ÉTUDE SUR LA PAUVRETÉ ET L'EXCLUSION (2015), *Avis sur la mesure de l'exclusion sociale associée à la pauvreté : des indicateurs à suivre*, p. 16.

35. The section of the guide on managing sexual diversity in the workplace is one of the measures set out in the 2017-2022 Government Action Plan against Homophobia and Transphobia.

Québec invests heavily in social housing, particularly in low-rent housing (HLMs), the Rent Supplement program, the AccèsLogis Québec program, the Shelter Allowance program and other measures³⁹.

AccèsLogis Québec

The AccèsLogis Québec program enables housing bureaus, housing cooperatives and non-profit organizations (developers) to build social, community or affordable housing for households with low or modest incomes or people in difficulty who have specific needs. The amount of financial assistance varies by region, target clientele and the number of rooms in the housing unit.

The programs of the Société d'habitation du Québec improve access to safe, adequate and affordable housing for low-income households. In 2016-2017, over \$830M was invested to support more than 231,000 households, 92% of which had low incomes.

As an essential need, access to affordable housing plays a central role in the fight against poverty and social exclusion.

CONSULTATION

Over half of online consultation participants (52.2%) stated that adequate and affordable housing for low-income Quebecers was one of the most important issues in combatting poverty and social exclusion.

³⁹. The Gouvernement du Québec is also investing in a variety of renovation programs and in the adjustment for a person living alone for people who are receiving benefits under a last-resort financial assistance program or taking part in the Aim for Employment program and are not receiving housing assistance, and provides assistance for low-income Hydro-Québec customers (payment arrangements, debt forgiveness and energy efficiency program).

In this action plan, the Gouvernement du Québec intends to acknowledge that vital role by boosting its investment in social housing.

MEASURE 9

Invest in social housing

9.1 Enhance the supply of social housing

As announced in the March 2017 Québec Economic Plan, 3,000 new housing units will be built to increase the supply of social, community and affordable housing across Québec, especially under the AccèsLogis Québec program (\$226.4M).

This measure will benefit low- or modest-income households and others with special needs. Including these new units, a total of 13,877 social housing units will be available in the coming years.

The construction of new social, community and affordable housing stock is also addressed in other government action plans and a number of policies (e.g., Government Policy of Prevention in Health, the Aging and Living Together policy, and the Interministerial Action Plan on Homelessness 2015-2020).

The government also plans to make an additional \$16.3M investment to continue the Rénovation Québec program, which provides municipalities of all sizes with financial assistance to renovate housing stock in rundown residential areas.

Proponent: Société d'habitation du Québec

Annual investment upon completion (2022-2023):
\$45.5M

Total investment⁴⁰: \$242.7M (measure already funded)

⁴⁰. After 2022-2023, the March 2017 Québec Economic Plan calls for \$28.6M in further investments for the construction of social housing; these investments are not included in this action plan. In addition, the recurring investments already provided for in the Société d'habitation du Québec budget are not reflected herein.

9.2 Provide assistance to homeless individuals to foster residential stability

The March 2017 Québec Economic Plan called for an additional \$7M in funding for the Interministerial Action Plan on Homelessness 2015-2020. Further injections of \$1M in 2017-2018 and \$2M per year from 2018 to 2021 have been granted to the Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux.

Making it easier to find and retain housing is a key factor in both preventing and escaping from homelessness. The steps leading to residential stability vary depending on the situation and involve a range of types of housing and accommodations in conjunction with support mechanisms that take different forms, depending on the beneficiaries' needs.

This measure involves creating support teams to help the homeless find and keep housing. Calling for \$4M in additional investments, it will complement the housing measures found in the Interministerial Action Plan on Homelessness 2015-2020 entitled *Mobilisés et engagés pour prévenir et réduire l'itinérance* as well as in this action plan.

Proponent: Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux

Annual investment upon completion (2022-2023): \$1M

Total investment: \$4M

9.3 Improve housing conditions for homeless individuals

Several non-profit organizations across Québec provide housing services to the homeless. Some buildings require major renovations such as replacing windows and repairing roofs.

The sums allocated under this measure will be used to renovate one or more buildings that require renovations of this kind so that residents can enjoy better living conditions.

Proponent: Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux

Total investment: \$0.5M (one-time investment)

MEASURE 10

Improve housing by providing additional support for the construction of affordable housing

The Gouvernement du Québec will provide additional support for the construction of affordable housing by introducing supplementary funding for AccèsLogis Québec projects that are still in the preliminary phase or for which no housing units were allocated in 2017.

Ultimately, this investment will make nearly 7,000 new high-quality housing units available to households with low or modest incomes at an affordable price.

“Vers une nouvelle approche d’intervention en habitation”

This public consultation on a new approach to housing initiatives laid the groundwork for an in-depth review of the financial model and parameters of the AccèsLogis Québec program.

The government plans to review its full portfolio of housing programs with a view to reinvesting in social and affordable housing stock while expediting project completion.

Proponent: Société d’habitation du Québec

Annual investment upon completion (2022-2023): \$4.6M

Total investment: \$38.8M

3rd Thrust – Encourage the social participation of low-income individuals and families and mobilize communities

In the fight against poverty and social exclusion, increasing disposable income is a big part of the solution. However, the multifaceted nature of poverty suggests that a wider variety of responses is required.

In fact, poverty may be related to several aspects of a person's life, including his or her physical and mental health, living conditions, relationship to work, education, personal circumstances compared to those of others, social networks and level of participation in a range of activities.

Moreover, living in poverty in a relatively wealthy society often means suffering a degree of marginalization, blows to one's self-esteem, and feelings of powerlessness, injustice or exclusion. In this way, poverty is tied to inequality and social exclusion⁴¹.

The government recognizes that the social participation of low-income individuals and families must be encouraged.

Solidarity Week

In accordance with a resolution adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations, the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty is held on October 17. The goal is to raise awareness of the difficulties experienced by people living in poverty and social exclusion, combat the prejudice that they sometimes face, and highlight their potential.

The Gouvernement du Québec will continue to mark this event as part of Solidarity Week, turning the spotlight on its own achievements and those of society in general. In addition, it will encourage local and regional stakeholders to inform others about their accomplishments in combatting poverty and social exclusion.

In addition to issues involving access to adequate, safe and affordable housing, poverty and social exclusion can take many different forms, including an insufficient supply of high-quality food, health problems, the lack of a social network, mobility difficulties, low literacy levels, under-education, limited access to culture, recreation and tourism, as well as stigmatization, to name just a few.

CONSULTATION

According to the people consulted, society plays little or no heed to those living in poverty. They describe themselves as “society’s forgotten members” because they do not “contribute.”

The people living in poverty who expressed their views want to be consulted, listened to and heard by the government and their own communities.

The government is committed to mobilizing communities around issues related to poverty and social exclusion, with due attention to the priorities identified during the public consultation. Among other measures, it will support initiatives to boost food security and access to culture, recreation and tourism.

The representatives of people living in poverty and social exclusion have intimate knowledge of the challenges these people face every day.

Their participation and input can be of invaluable assistance to policy makers tasked with finding appropriate measures to improve the lives of people in poverty and social exclusion.

41. CEPE (2009), *Prendre la mesure de la pauvreté - proposition d'indicateurs de pauvreté, d'inégalités et d'exclusion sociale afin de mesurer les progrès réalisés au Québec* [Online]. [https://www.mtess.gouv.qc.ca/publications/pdf/CEPE_Avis.pdf] (Viewed on October 5, 2017).

The government wishes to encourage the participation of these representatives, particularly in the context of future solidarity alliances.

In every region, government bodies that put forward regional action plans to combat poverty and social exclusion will be encouraged to include at least one person who has experienced poverty or social exclusion firsthand.

The prejudices faced by people in situations of poverty, including those who receive last-resort financial assistance, have the effect of raising barriers between them and the rest of society. Consequently, the government is also taking action to fight these prejudices.

3.1 Support local and regional projects to combat poverty and social exclusion

MEASURE 11

Pursue the Solidarity Alliances initiative

The regional initiatives introduced in the first two government action plans to fight poverty and social exclusion, including solidarity alliances, helped create a Québec-wide dynamic of broad-based local and regional dialogue focusing on the issues surrounding poverty and social exclusion.

Issues surrounding social development and the efforts to combat poverty are central to regional concerns. Several regions have identified these issues as priorities, in particular for the Fonds d'appui au rayonnement des régions regional support fund, which will work synergistically with the Fonds québécois d'initiatives sociales (FQIS)⁴².

The government recognizes the ability of local and regional stakeholders to identify the needs of their community and find appropriate solutions.

The active participation of partners is also of vital importance in implementing the initiatives stemming from community-identified priorities.

The government hopes to build on this local and regional mobilization. For that reason, it is implementing an approach to territorial governance that recognizes the autonomy of local and regional stakeholders, including Indigenous nations.

Accordingly, agreements will be signed to mandate the FQIS to play a role in regions across the province.

Target 3: Enter into solidarity alliances across Québec, including with Native organizations, to enable local and regional stakeholders to invest the available resources according to the priorities established in consultation with their communities.

The government is inviting all relevant partners to develop mechanisms in which people living in poverty and social exclusion can be directly involved.

Target 4: Give people living in poverty and social exclusion a direct role in the mechanisms created to implement agreements on fighting poverty and social exclusion.

From 2010 to 2016:

- 3,915 local or regional initiatives received financial support.
- For the duration of the Solidarity Alliances initiative, community-level responsibility for this measure gave rise to an average of 783 initiatives a year.
- The supported initiatives represented a \$118.5M investment for the FQIS and a total investment of \$279M, including investments by local and regional partners (\$160.5M).

42. R.S.Q., chapter L-7, s. 46.

Ville de Montréal

The government recognizes the expertise that the Ville de Montréal has acquired since 2003 in identifying the most pressing issues in the fight against poverty and social exclusion.

Many Solidarity Alliances initiative projects were implemented in Montréal following the last action plan. In addition, Montréal launched its social development policy, *“Montréal, where everything is possible!”*, in June 2017. The policy will pay special attention to people who are in situations of vulnerability and at risk of social, economic and cultural exclusion. The government intends to continue its long-standing collaborative relationship with Montréal in implementing the new policy.

The March 2017 Québec Economic Plan calls for a sum of \$129.5 million to be granted over five years to the FQIS, representing a boost in financial support for local and regional initiatives and projects. That amount will be increased again with additional injections of \$3 million for 2018-2019 and 2019-2020, \$4 million for 2020-2021, and \$5 million for the last two years, bringing the total investment to more than \$160 million over the plan's duration.

Proponent: Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale

Partners: Ministère des Affaires municipales et de l'Occupation du territoire, Québec's health and social services network, and Québec's education system

Annual investment (2021-2022): \$31.5M

Total investment: \$160.1M (\$140.1M of which has already been funded under the March 2017 Québec Economic Plan)

MEASURE 12

Improve the living conditions and social participation rate of people living in social housing

Over 103,000 households (families, single individuals and seniors) live in low-rental housing in Québec.

To assist with the social integration of people living in social housing, help them escape poverty and ensure its services are geared to their needs, the government will enhance the assistance provided to them directly in their own communities. It will support projects that encourage mobilization and the coordination of initiatives spearheaded by local and regional public-sector stakeholders, especially in the areas of literacy training, skills development, social and workforce integration and food security.

One Example: Initiatives of the Office municipal d'habitation de Trois-Rivières

The social economy enterprise MultiBoulot supports the social and socio-professional reintegration of low-rental housing residents and last-resort financial assistance beneficiaries in Trois-Rivières. Since its instigation, the project has helped 217 people set out on a path to employment.

By coordinating the expertise and resources available in the education, employment, family, health and social services sectors in this way, the impact of their actions is maximized.

Main Priorities

- Literacy training
- Skills development
- Social and workforce integration
- Integration of immigrants
- Food security
- Culture

Proponent: Société d'habitation du Québec

Partners: Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux, Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur, Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale, Ministère de l'Immigration, de la Diversité et de l'Inclusion, Ministère de la Famille, Ministère de la Culture et des Communications, Ministère de l'Agriculture, des Pêcheries et de l'Alimentation, Office des personnes handicapées du Québec

Annual investment upon completion (2022-2023):
\$0.5M

Total investment: \$2.3M

3.2 Support food security initiatives

Food security and healthy eating are central to many government and public initiatives, especially in regard to the Government Policy of Prevention in Health, the Québec Public Health Program 2015-2025 and the Table québécoise pour une saine alimentation. Food security has also become a primary focus of projects supported by solidarity alliances in regions across Québec (2010-2016). Nevertheless, a great deal remains to be done.

Ensuring universal access to a sufficient supply of nutritious food at a reasonable cost and to simple, reliable information on how to make well-informed dietary choices, with full respect for every person's dignity, is one of the initiatives prescribed by the Act⁴³.

The right to health and food is enshrined in the United Nations' 1948 *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*. In 2012, after an official visit to Canada, the UN special rapporteur on the right to food noted that he was sorry to see a situation “qui empêche les pauvres d'accéder à des régimes alimentaires nourrissants et qui tolère des inégalités grandissantes entre les riches et les pauvres, et entre les populations autochtones et non autochtones” [that prevents the poor from accessing nutritious diets and tolerates the growing inequalities between rich and poor, as well as between Native populations and non-Native populations – *Translation*].

The Gouvernement du Québec will invest to provide better support for the diets of individuals and families living in poverty and social exclusion.

MEASURE 13

Improve access to healthy, nutritious and affordable food for people with low incomes

13.1 Increase support for food security initiatives for Quebecers with low incomes

Food aid and initiatives that boost food autonomy mitigate the impact of poverty and social exclusion on the diets of low-income individuals and families. “Upstream” initiatives that increase disposable income also have a positive long-term impact on their food security.

In an effort to ramp up its efforts to reduce food insecurity, the government will provide additional financial support to community organizations targeting the social, economic and physical determinants⁴⁴ of food security and to organizations that provide food aid.

To that end, national and regional stakeholders in the public health sector and their partners will identify the organizations and transformative activities to be supported.

44. M. PAGEAU (2008), *Cadre de référence en matière de sécurité alimentaire – Mise à jour 2008*, Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux, Direction générale de la santé publique, Service de promotion des saines habitudes de vie, 37 p. [Online]. [<http://publications.msss.gouv.qc.ca/msss/document-000883/>] (Viewed on November 17, 2017).

43. *Act to combat poverty and social exclusion*, s. 9, para. 4.

CONSULTATION

Most focus group participants said that their income did not allow them to eat three meals a day on a regular basis or to eat their fill. As a result, they have to ration their food and, in many cases, use the services of food banks.

That support will help defray the cost of nutritious food for people living in poverty and improve access to high-quality food for food assistance organizations, to cite just two examples. It will also fund activities designed to boost social integration and employability.

Proponent: Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale

Partner: Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux (responsible for implementation)

Annual investment upon completion (2022-2023): \$6M

Total investment: \$30M

13.2 Increase the quantity of fresh fruits and vegetables distributed to people in situations of poverty and social exclusion

To combat food insecurity and increase the quantity of fresh fruits and vegetables distributed to people in situations of poverty and social exclusion while simultaneously providing them with work or volunteering experience, a number of regional county municipalities across Québec (such as Lotbinière and Argenteuil) have set up gardening projects.

The government will offer financial support for the development of seven new solidarity gardens as well as technical consulting on growing fruits and vegetables.

The harvested produce will be given to food banks as well as individuals and families living in poverty.

Since 2006, Défi jeunesse Québec has spearheaded a vegetable production project in the Lotbinière RCM in conjunction with Moisson Québec. The “Moissonneurs Solidaires” farm workers supply a significant quantity of vegetables to Québec’s food banks. The initiative’s objectives are as follows:

- Develop an alternative solution for supplying food banks with fresh vegetables;
- Increase the consumption of fresh vegetables by people living in poverty, in terms of both volume and the length of the period during which they are available;
- Help people in difficulty find their place in society through agricultural work.

In 2015, 2,000 people in need in the Basses-Laurentides region received 13,000 tonnes of vegetables grown in the Argenteuil RCM thanks to a local farming program with a social mission.

Proponent: Ministère de l'Agriculture, des Pêcheries et de l'Alimentation

Partner: Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux, Food Banks of Quebec

Annual investment upon completion (2022-2023): \$70,000

Total investment: \$700,000

13.3 Support pregnant women and low-income families with a child under the age of 2 by reducing their food insecurity through the OLO approach

Pregnant women experiencing food insecurity are at greater risk of developing nutritional deficiencies, which increase the probability of giving birth to an underweight baby with neo-natal health problems.

A low birth weight is also associated with developmental delays and chronic illnesses in adulthood. Inversely, a healthy diet during pregnancy is conducive to the child's overall development.

By supporting Fondation OLO, the Gouvernement du Québec hopes to:

- reach more eligible pregnant women and make them aware of the free online resources available to them;
- enhance group activities for low-income parents offered by community organizations that work in synergy with the health and social services network;
- reach parents more effectively during a child's infancy through cooperation with the educational childcare system;
- reduce the impact of food insecurity in Native communities by adapting Fondation OLO's services to their needs.

An assessment of the OLO program's impact showed that the prenatal program had a significant long-term impact on the health of unborn children⁴⁵.

Proponents: Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale, Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux

Partner: Ministère de la Famille

Annual investment upon completion (2022-2023):
\$850,000 (\$200,000 of which is annually self-financed)

Total investment: \$4.3M

13.4 Improve the knowledge and practices of community food aid organization managers, staff and volunteers

The food provided by food aid organizations is often intended for quick consumption or has to be preserved to prolong its shelf life.

To improve the knowledge of staff and volunteers working at community food aid organizations, the government will make training in hygiene and safety in regard to food aid more widely available. Available online, the training will be offered in French and English.

Proponent: Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale

Partners: Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux and Ministère de l'Alimentation, des Pêcheries et de l'Agriculture du Québec

Annual investment upon completion (2022-2023):
\$60,000

Total investment: \$308,000

13.5 Use surplus food and develop the culinary skills and knowledge of young people aged 12 to 17

Every year, the hotel, food services and institutional sectors are left with surplus food that is often thrown out. These surpluses could be used instead to feed people in situations of food insecurity.

A host of factors explain why the culinary know-how of Québec's young people is on the decline. To remedy the situation, several initiatives have been developed and put in place, especially in schools, to build young people's skills and knowledge and educate them about healthy eating habits.

45. C. HAECK and P. LEFEBVRE (2016) "A Simple Recipe: The Effect of a Prenatal Nutrition Program on Child Health at Birth", *Labour Economics*, no. 41, Université du Québec à Montréal, p. 77-89.

To help ensure this surplus food is redirected to people living in poverty through food banks and to introduce more young people to cooking and healthy eating, the Gouvernement du Québec will provide financial assistance for the activities of La Tablée des chefs.

Proponent: Ministère de l'Alimentation, des Pêcheries et de l'Agriculture du Québec

Partner: Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux

Annual investment upon completion (2022-2023): \$1M

Total investment: \$5M

3.3 Take action during childhood to promote equal opportunity

MEASURE 14

Promote equal opportunity

Early intervention increases the likelihood of making a successful transition to school and helps prevent difficulties throughout a child's years of schooling. In disadvantaged communities, such interventions are a considerable asset in the fight against poverty and social exclusion.

The age-four kindergarten program in disadvantaged communities, introduced by the Gouvernement du Québec, offers children a stimulating environment conducive to the development of cognitive, social and sharing skills where creativity and a sense of initiative are particularly valued.

The program's goal is to cultivate the pleasure of learning for both children and their parents. It pays special attention to the latter with the aim of facilitating the transition between home and school.

14.1 Continue to open full-time age-four kindergarten classes in disadvantaged neighbourhoods

Taking action in early childhood makes it possible to respond effectively to a child's needs and have a beneficial impact on his or her overall development and ability to learn.

With that in mind, the government wishes to continue opening full-time age-four kindergarten classes in disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

In addition, to support implementation of the age-four preschool education program, \$3 million in one-time financial assistance will be granted to school boards in 2018-2019⁴⁶. This funding will enable the boards to acquire educational materials for age-four kindergarten pupils and materials for school childcare services geared to children in this age group.

In addition, the admission requirements for age-four kindergarten classes will be reviewed to ensure that clients living in poverty are prioritized as beneficiaries.

Proponent: Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur

Annual investment upon completion (2022-2023): \$8M

Total investment: \$40.6M

14.2 Improve access to childcare services

When their children attend subsidized daycare services, parents who are receiving last-resort financial assistance benefits or taking part in the Aim for Employment program can receive free daycare services for 2.5 days a week on certain conditions. However, they must pay the full parental contribution for the extra days.

CONSULTATION

During the online consultation, respondents often mentioned how important receiving financial support was in gaining access to childcare services for their children.

46. In 2018-2019, \$5.6 million will be invested to open new classes, and \$3 million to purchase educational materials.

The Gouvernement du Québec will extend the exemption period from 2.5 to 5 days a week, starting in January 2020. This measure will provide children with more opportunities for educational activities and help prepare them for starting school.

Proponent: Ministère de la Famille

Annual investment upon completion (2022-2023):
\$20M

Total investment: \$65M

14.3 Boost funding for school breakfasts

Even today, some children come to school without having had breakfast because their families do not have enough food to eat. Providing this first meal of the day prepares them for learning and fosters educational success.

The government wishes to provide primary schools in underprivileged communities with the means to offer students a nutritious breakfast every day, in particular by working with the Breakfast Club of Canada.

For 20 years, the Breakfast Club of Canada has supplied nutritious breakfasts before classes start. Its approach is based on engagement, enrichment and empowerment.

Proponent: Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur

Annual investment upon completion (2022-2023): \$2M

Total investment: \$9.4M

3.4 Facilitate access to cultural activities, recreation and tourism

MEASURE 15

Facilitate access to cultural activities, recreation and tourism

A lack of money can make it impossible for many low-income individuals and families to take part in cultural, recreational and tourism activities in their community. For some people with disabilities, access to such activities can be even more difficult because

they require assistance from another person, leading to additional costs. For these reasons, the Gouvernement du Québec will enhance access to these aspects of community life.

With this measure, the government hopes to enable people living in poverty to break out of their isolation and participate in local social life, thereby bolstering their potential as individuals as well as their sense of being part of a community.

15.1 Roll out the Accès-Loisirs Québec program in more municipalities and organizations

The Accès-Loisirs program provides consulting services to organizations and municipalities that want to develop and provide free recreational activities for people living in poverty. As part of its mission, Accès-Loisirs Québec also provides free access to a new or used equipment centre, depending on the donations received, to enable these Quebecers to practise a sport or pursue a physical or recreational activity.

CONSULTATION

Already unable to provide for their basic needs, the Quebecers experiencing poverty and social exclusion who were consulted and their children go without sports and recreational activities that are too expensive for their budgets.

The government wishes to encourage municipalities and organizations to join them in this initiative by supporting the Accès-Loisirs program's services in every region of Québec.

This additional support will enable program personnel to respond positively to the requests for services that they receive and to upgrade the tools and website they make available to organizations and municipalities offering the program.

Proponent: Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur

Partners: Accès-Loisirs Québec, municipalities

Annual investment upon completion (2022-2023):
\$150,000

Total investment: \$900,000

15.2 Create, implement and promote an access card for people with disabilities in the areas of recreation, cultural activities and tourism

By and large, people with disabilities still tend to live in poverty and to be less educated, in poorer health⁴⁷ and more socially isolated.

To encourage their participation in recreational, cultural and tourism activities, the government will provide financial support for the creation and promotion of an official access card applicable to these activities.

With this measure, the government will raise the number of handicapped people who hold an access card and the number of partners who recognize the card.

The card will replace the Tourist and Leisure Companion Sticker currently held by some 25,000 Quebecers with disabilities.

Proponents: Office des personnes handicapées du Québec, Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur

Partners: Ministère de la Culture et des Communications, Ministère du Tourisme, Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux

Annual investment upon completion (2022-2023): \$105,000

Total investment: \$586,000

15.3 Foster social inclusion through access to and participation in cultural activities for vulnerable and marginalized populations

Taking part in cultural activities helps people develop their skills and potential and forge strong social ties.

The government will support cultural projects put forward by non-profit organizations working with and for various vulnerable or marginalized populations living in poverty and social exclusion.

Leveraging culture as a driver, the participatory projects will focus on the empowerment of the participating individuals and communities.

Proponent: Ministère de la Culture et des Communications

Partner: Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale

Annual investment upon completion (2022-2023): \$0.5M

Total investment: \$2.6M

3.5 Promote the social inclusion of people who are living in poverty and have a criminal record

MEASURE 16

Foster a more human-centred form of justice

The prosecution of homeless people and people with mental disorders is an inadequate response to complex social problems. To foster a more human-centred form of justice, the Gouvernement du Québec will invest in three priority actions.

16.1 Better address the needs of individuals with significant mental health problems

With a view to establishing programs across Québec that provide alternatives to judicialization, the government will enhance training and knowledge-sharing for legal and mental health workers. It will develop and regularly update a guide to intervention and best practices in justice and mental health.

It will assist with the implementation and regional adaptation of outreach programs⁴⁸ developed by the Service de police de la Ville de Montréal (SPVM), in cooperation with the health and social services network.

47. GOUVERNEMENT DU QUÉBEC (2009), *Equals in Every Respect: Because Rights Are Meant to Be Exercised - Government Policy for Increasing the Social Participation of Handicapped Persons*, p. 16.

48. These are outreach programs similar to the Mobile Reference and Intervention Team for Homeless Individuals and Psychosocial Emergency Response Team.

Finally, it will document innovative practices in cooperation in the fields of justice and mental health⁴⁹.

Proponent: Ministère de la Justice

Partners: Directeur des poursuites criminelles et pénales, Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux, Ministère de la Sécurité publique, municipalities and police forces

Total investment: \$300,000 (one-time investment)

16.2 Facilitate access to means of amicably resolving conflicts identified in the Code of Civil Procedure and to the Programme de mesures de rechange en matière criminelle for people in situations of poverty

The new *Code of Civil Procedure* seeks to facilitate access to civil justice while preserving the parties' option to assert their rights before the courts. The use of amicable dispute-resolution methods is a fast, accessible and user-friendly solution.

The Programme de mesures de rechange offers alternative solutions to the legal proceedings set out in the *Criminal Code*, which may be better suited to bringing down crime and recidivism rates.

To improve access to these alternative solutions for people living in poverty, the Gouvernement du Québec intends to modify the legal aid rate. Quebecers eligible for this form of aid will be able to take advantage of amicable dispute-resolution methods, in civil matters, and the Programme de mesures de rechange, in criminal matters, with assistance from lawyers working in private practice.

Proponent: Ministère de la Justice

Partner: Commission des services juridiques

Investment: Self-funded measure, the value of which is to be determined

16.3 Reduce incarceration rates for people in situations of poverty and social exclusion

The government has eased the terms of judgment enforcement measures for vulnerable segments

49. The *Plan d'action en santé mentale 2015-2020 – Faire ensemble et autrement* proposed the idea of greater interministerial cooperation in matters of justice and mental health and proposed the adoption of a national strategy for cooperation in justice and mental health developed by the Forum justice et santé mentale.

of the population. Accordingly, when someone is unable to pay a fine, for instance, he or she may be able to reach a payment agreement or carry out compensatory work, provided certain conditions are met. However, taking a training course or receiving health services or social services with a view to rehabilitation or social reintegration may prove to be a more appropriate response than compensatory work.

The Québec and Montréal municipal courts are at the forefront of efforts to find alternatives to compensatory work. Nevertheless, there is still work to be done across Québec. This measure will enable the government to harmonize practices across Québec by 2020 by supporting the development and implementation of training resources and best-practices guides for fine collectors and community organizations that oversee the execution of compensatory work.

Proponent: Ministère de la Justice

Partners: Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux, Ministère de la Sécurité publique

Total investment: \$200,000 (one-time investment)

3.6 Improve the computer skills of people in situations of poverty

MEASURE 17

Improve the computer skills of people in situations of poverty

Today, a significant portion of Quebecers' dealings with the state, municipalities, groups and community networks takes place via information and communication technologies.

The Gouvernement du Québec wishes to invest in upgrading the digital skills of people living in poverty and social exclusion by providing skills development training, particularly in the area of digital security, on Services Québec premises.

Proponent: Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale

Annual investment upon completion (2022-2023): \$600,000

Total investment: \$1.8M

3.7 Work with people in situations of poverty and social exclusion to combat prejudice

The lack of knowledge and poor understanding of poverty and social exclusion contribute to the stigma and discrimination faced by individuals and groups in these situations⁵⁰. Prejudice can have a real impact on life trajectories, socio-professional integration and self-esteem. However, knowledge about the prejudices facing these segments of the population and how they change over time remains limited.

CONSULTATION

The public consultation confirmed that prejudice regarding people in situations of poverty and social exclusion, especially last-resort financial assistance beneficiaries, is a major impediment to improving their living conditions and social participation rate.

MEASURE 18

Break the barriers of prejudice to encourage full social participation

In pursuing this goal, the government wishes to start by acquiring a better understanding of the factors and mechanisms that reinforce prejudices faced by people in situations of poverty and social exclusion, and last-resort financial assistance beneficiaries in particular.

To that end, it intends to give a mandate to the Centre d'études sur la pauvreté et l'exclusion sociale⁵¹.

CONSULTATION

According to public consultation participants, the media convey negative images of people who are "on welfare" or unemployed. They would like Quebecers to see positive stories of people living in poverty who have noteworthy accomplishments to their credit.

The goal is to propose indicators that can be used to track the evolution of prejudice over time and identify the mechanisms of exclusion. People in situations of poverty and social exclusion will play a role in this process in order to achieve a better understanding of the obstacles they face. This work will inform future discussions on how to combat prejudice more effectively and will improve government actions in the area of social inclusion.

"When social exclusion goes hand-in-hand with poverty, they can strengthen each other over time. [...] The mechanisms of social exclusion can be addressed through collective action and public policy⁵²."

Proponent: Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale

Total investment: \$100,000 (one-time investment)

50. COMMISSION DES DROITS DE LA PERSONNE ET DE LA JEUNESSE (2014), Brief to the Commission de l'économie et du travail de l'Assemblée nationale in regard to the review of Bill 70.

51. Created in the spirit of the Act, the Centre d'étude sur la pauvreté et l'exclusion sociale (CEPE) seeks to collect, compile, analyze and disseminate information, especially of a statistical nature, on poverty and social exclusion. In keeping with this mandate, it conducts qualitative and quantitative research to improve our understanding of poverty and social exclusion.

52. CEPE (2014), *L'exclusion sociale : construire avec celles et ceux qui la vivent*, p. 18, [Online]. [https://www.mtess.gouv.qc.ca/publications/pdf/CEPE_L'exclusion_sociale.pdf] (Viewed on October 10, 2017).

3.8 Support community action

MEASURE 19

Improve the funding of organizations supported by the Secrétariat à l'action communautaire autonome et aux initiatives sociales

19.1 Strengthen community development corporations' ability to take action

Community development corporations are umbrella groups that seek to ensure the active participation of the independent community movement in the socioeconomic development of their communities.

Currently operating in 14 regions, Québec's 63 community development corporations represent over 2,500 organizations that are active on many different fronts. They work in conjunction with local actors, whether municipalities, organizations or citizens, to carry out collective projects.

To increase support for their actions, the Programme de soutien financier des corporations communautaires will be gradually enhanced, making it possible to boost funding for existing corporations and support new ones.

Proponent: Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale

Annual investment upon completion (2022-2023):
\$1M

Total investment: \$4.5M

19.2 Better support organizations that fight social problems

The Assistance Fund for Independent Community Action supports organizations in the pursuit of their mission.

Through their public education, mobilization and representation activities, many organizations defend social and economic rights as part of their efforts to tackle social problems like discrimination.

To help these organizations pursue their missions, their funding will be gradually raised, starting in 2018-2019.

In addition, the funding budget for these organizations will be increased as of 2019-2020 to boost support for organizations that provide individual services to the general public. That funding will be consistent with an upcoming government action plan on community action.

The multi-sectoral organizations include three national umbrella associations that have been formally mandated to serve as primary interlocutors for the Minister of Employment and Social Solidarity, who is responsible for government strategy in the areas of community action and volunteering. In addition, nine organizations that are not attached to any specific government department are financed by the Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale on a transitional basis. These three umbrella associations and nine organizations will receive a gradual increase in their funding, starting in 2018-2019.

Proponent: Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale

Annual investment upon completion (2022-2023):
\$12.6M

Total investment: \$50.7M

4th Thrust — Research and assessment: Make government action to combat poverty and social exclusion more effective

Scientific research into poverty and social exclusion informs public policy decisions and assists in the identification of new ways to tackle these problems and introduction of new, innovative practices.

Our understanding of poverty and social exclusion is also informed by an evaluation of the measures already put in place by the government and its partners. Accordingly, an assessment of the current action plan will allow us to make the necessary adjustments as we move forward and provide guidelines for future initiatives in this area.

MEASURE 20

Support research and assessment initiatives in regard to poverty and social exclusion

The fight against poverty and social exclusion is a rigorous government undertaking that must be based on indicators and research findings that inform the government's decision-making process.

In addition, the government will have to assess the impact of the transformative actions taken over the next five years.

20.1 Support research into poverty and social exclusion

The government wishes to measure changes in poverty and social exclusion indicators and gauge the degree to which this action plan's objectives are achieved.

To that end, it will monitor all social exclusion indicators using data and survey samples.

It will carry out research projects on poverty and social exclusion and conduct further research under the "Actions concertées de recherche" program of the Fonds de recherche du Québec — Société et culture⁵³.

Proponent: Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale

Partners: Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux, Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur, Fonds de recherche du Québec — Société et culture

Total investment: \$2.7M (one-time investment)

20.2 Support university research into the impact of an adaptability and support program or protocol in the area of justice and mental health

A number of support and adaptability initiatives have recently been pursued in Québec for people living with a mental disorder and who have become involved with the justice system.

53. [<http://www.frqsc.gouv.qc.ca/parteneriat/rapports-de-recherche?page=1&field=0&institution=0&proposition=10&volets=0&partner=0&year=0&sort=year-desc>] (Viewed on November 10, 2017).

So far, 11 support and adaptability programs or protocols in the areas of justice and mental health have been introduced at the Court of Québec and at municipal courts by various local stakeholders. The first such program was introduced at the Montréal municipal court and inspired programs in other communities.

The Gouvernement du Québec will fund research to assess the effectiveness of these programs. That research will aim to identify best practices to be adopted in the field with a view to developing models for carrying out similar projects in other regions of the province.

Proponent: Ministère de la Justice

Total investment: \$400,000 (one-time investment)

20.3 Evaluate the Government Action Plan to Foster Economic Inclusion and Social Participation (2017–2023)

This action plan will be evaluated in a manner consistent with the evaluation of the second action plan.

The evaluation will look at the impact of selected transformative measures and the degree to which the plan's four targets have been achieved.

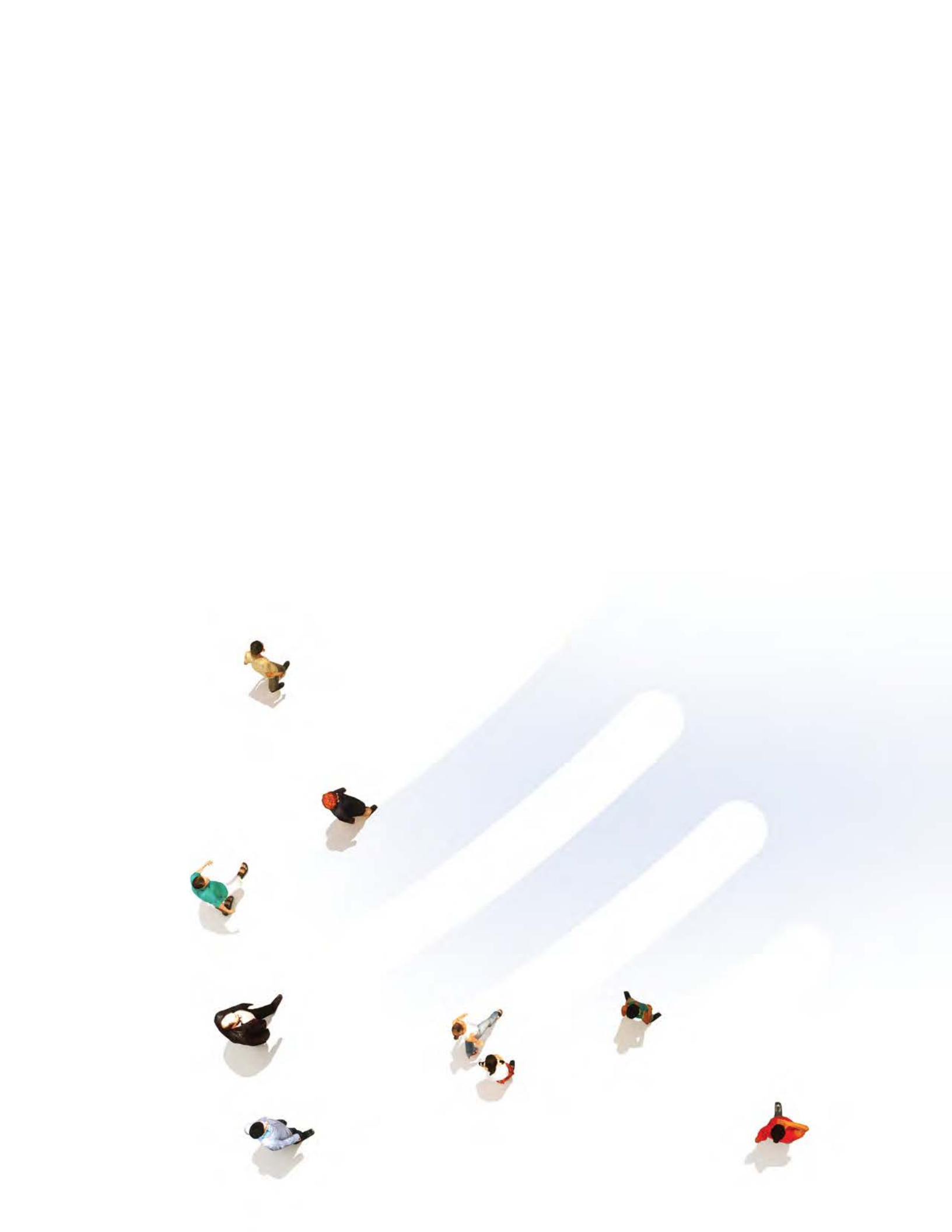
The evaluation framework will also specify how the results of the gender-based analysis results will be taken into account.

The government will draw on the results of the evaluation to gauge the impact of its third action plan and to inform and support work on preparing the next action plan. The results will also inform the analysis of various government ministries, partner organizations and the general public, in particular at the time of future public consultations.

Proponent: Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale

Partners: All ministries and organizations taking part in the third action plan to combat poverty and social exclusion

Total investment: \$250,000 (one-time investment)



PART 4

MEASURING IMPACTS, EVALUATION, REPORTING AND GOVERNANCE

4.1 Measuring the impacts

The Minister will report to the government on the results of the actions undertaken in cooperation with the other ministries and organizations.

The Centre d'étude sur la pauvreté et l'exclusion publishes an annual status report describing progress made toward the target set out in the *Act to combat poverty and social exclusion*, based on recognized methods for making international comparisons. It also tracks the principal poverty and social exclusion metrics. More specifically, its work will make it possible to determine the degree to which the target of lifting over 100,000 people out of poverty has been achieved.

Monitoring of plan targets

A number of indicators have been selected to track progress in achieving the four targets set out in the government action plan.

1. Lift over 100,000 Quebecers, mainly single people and couples who have a severely limited capacity for employment and no children, out of a low-income situation (determined using the market basket measure).

Indicators:

- Changes in the disposable income of people living in poverty resulting from the measures in this action plan: difference between the greater disposable income of eligible Quebecers and the same income without the increase resulting from these measures.
- Comparison of the low-income rate with and without the measures designed to increase the disposable income of people living in poverty.
- Changes in the number of Quebecers living in poverty according to the market basket measure.

The low-income rate determined according to the market basket measure for Québec will be tracked on an annual basis. However, since data are released with a two-year delay, whether the target is achieved at the conclusion of the plan (in 2023) cannot be measured until 2025.



2. Increase the benefits of single people and couples without children receiving last-resort financial assistance (except those of beneficiaries under Measure 1) and Aim for Employment benefits to 55% of the market basket measure.

Indicator:

- Changes in the after-tax disposable income of last-resort financial assistance beneficiaries and Aim for Employment participants according to their family situation (single, couple without children, single-parent family or couple with children).

3. Enter into solidarity alliances across Québec, including with Native organizations, so that local and regional stakeholders can invest the available resources according to the priorities established in conjunction with their communities.

Indicator:

- Percentage of agreements signed in relation to all possible agreements in Québec.

4. Give people experiencing poverty and social exclusion a role to play in the implementation mechanisms for the agreements entered into in relation to the fight against poverty and social exclusion.

Indicator:

- Percentage of agreements for which people living in poverty and social exclusion are actively involved in the implementation mechanisms for all the agreements signed.

Other indicators

Other general indicators have been selected to reflect the multifaceted nature of poverty and social exclusion: income, health, food security, housing, education, work and employment, and the size of personal and institutional networks. A gender-based analysis will be conducted on the following indicators when the data are available. Recent changes in the selected indicators are shown in Tables 5 and 6.

Low Income

- International comparison of industrialized nations' low-income rates
- Low-income rate and the gap between disposable income and the low-income threshold, by family situation
- Income inequalities, by Gini coefficient
- Economic dependency ratio (government transfers received for every \$100 in total employment income received in a given region)
- Social assistance rate

Health, Food Insecurity and Housing

- Life expectancy at birth
- Premature mortality rate according to the material and social deprivation index (for 100,000 people)
- Proportion of households that are frequently or occasionally concerned about not having enough food for financial reasons
- Proportion of households that spend at least 30% of their income on housing

Education

- Breakdown of education level by age
- Proportion of population (ages 25 to 64) without a diploma of secondary studies (%)
- Proportion of population with the lowest literacy level

Labour Market

- Employment and unemployment rates
- Proportion of people experiencing long-term unemployment (12 months and over)
- Proportion of workers with involuntary part-time work
- Proportion of people with a permanent disability that prevents them from working

Personal and Institutional Networks

- Proportion of people without an acceptable level of emotional or informational support

4.2 Evaluation of the 2017–2023 Action Plan

The Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale is responsible for evaluating the government action plan. That evaluation is described in Measure 20.3.

An evaluation framework will be presented to the Secrétariat du Conseil du trésor. It will include an evaluation of the impacts, among other things. Collecting data and applying a gender-based analysis to the findings will be considered once the data are available.

Government ministries and organizations will be charged with evaluating the transformative measure(s) under their responsibility. The Comité interministériel d'évaluation, representing partner organizations, will assist in developing or realizing evaluation activities carried out by the Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale.

4.3 Reporting

As required by law, a follow-up report on the measures and initiatives set out in the 2017–2023 plan will be submitted to the government every year and made public. Once the necessary data are available, a gender-based analysis will be conducted.

4.4 Governance

To ensure implementation of the measures and initiatives set out in this plan, three committees were formed. Coordinated by the Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale, they are composed of assistant deputy ministers, managers and ministerial representatives.

Table
5

Recent Changes in Various Monitoring Indicators, Québec

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Income inequalities (Gini coefficient)	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	NA
Social assistance rate (in March) (%)	7.0	6.8	6.7	6.6	6.4
Men	7.1	6.9	7.0	6.9	6.7
Women	6.7	6.5	6.5	6.3	6.1
Economic dependency ratio (\$)	22.3	22.5	22.6	23.8	NA
Men	15.7	16.0	16.3	17.3	NA
Women	32.3	32.2	31.8	33.3	NA
Life expectancy at birth (years)	81.7	NA	82.4 (P)	NA	82.7 (P)
Men	77.9	NA	80.4 (P)	NA	80.8 (P)
Women	83.7	NA	84.3 (P)	NA	84.5 (P)
Premature mortality rate by material and social deprivation index (number of deaths per 100,000 people)^a					
Highly affluent group	NA	150.8	NA	NA	NA
Highly disadvantaged group	NA	436.5	NA	NA	NA
Proportion of households that spend at least 30% of their income on housing (%)	NA	NA	NA	NA	33.7
Employment rate (%)	59.8	60.1	59.7	59.9	60.0
Men	63.2	63.5	62.6	63.1	63.0
Women	56.5	56.8	56.8	56.7	57.0
Unemployment rate (%)	7.7	7.6	7.7	7.6	7.1
Men	8.4	8.3	9.0	8.5	8.1
Women	7.0	6.7	6.3	6.6	6.0

Sources: Institut de la statistique du Québec (economic dependency ratio; life expectancy at birth); Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale (social assistance rate); Statistics Canada (income inequalities; proportion of tenant households that spend at least 30% of their income on housing; employment rate; unemployment rate); Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux, Registre des événements démographiques du Québec - Fichier des décès (premature mortality rate by material and social deprivation index).

a Data on the 2009-2013 period

NA: Data not available

P: Projection

Indicator	Last Available Metric	Change
1. Material Conditions		
Proportion of households that are frequently or occasionally concerned about not having enough food for financial reasons	39.4% of low-income households were concerned about not having enough food in 2011-2012.	Up slightly from 2007-2008
Proportion of income spent on housing	Low-income families spent an average of 59.3% of their disposable income on rent in 2010.	Stable in relation to 2007
Proportion of households that consider their housing to be inadequate, based on the national occupancy standard	7.4% of low-income families felt their housing was inadequate in 2010.	Up from 2003
2. Health		
Proportion of people with a permanent disability that prevents them from working (ages 18 to 64)	48.6% of people with a permanent impairment that prevented them from working had a low income in 2011-2012. Of this number, 55.4% were women and 44.6% were men.	Stable in relation to 2007-2008
3. Work and Employment		
Proportion of people experiencing long-term unemployment	13.1% of unemployed people had been looking for a job for at least 52 weeks in 2013. This proportion was 12.7% for women and 13.4% for men.	Slightly down from 2014
Proportion of workers with involuntary part-time work	4.5% of all workers held an involuntary part-time job in 2013. This was true for 5.9% of women and 1.7% of men.	Slightly down from 2000
4. Education		
Proportion of population (age 25 to 64) without a diploma of secondary studies	32.2% of Quebecers aged 25 to 64 with low incomes did not hold a diploma of secondary studies in 2010. Slightly fewer women (31.6%) than men (32.6%) did not have a diploma of secondary studies.	Trending downward since 2000
Proportion of population with no more than literacy level 1	14.9% of the Québec population had a very low level of reading comprehension in 2012 (literacy level 1). There is no significant difference between men and women in this regard (14.9% and 14.8%, respectively).	No previous comparable metrics
5. Networks (Personal and Institutional)		
Proportion of people without an acceptable level of emotional or informational support	26.2% of low-income Quebecers lacked acceptable emotional or informational support in 2009-2010; that was true for 22.6% of women and 31.2% of men.	Stable in relation to 2007-2008

Sources: Centre d'étude sur la pauvreté et l'exclusion (2015), *Avis sur la mesure de l'exclusion sociale associée à la pauvreté : des indicateurs à suivre...*, Gouvernement du Québec, p. 10. [Online]. [https://www.mtess.gouv.qc.ca/publications/pdf/CEPE_2015_Indicateurs_exclusion_sociale.pdf] (Viewed on November 7, 2017); Institut de la statistique du Québec (2015), *Les compétences en littératie, en numératie et en résolution de problèmes dans des environnements technologiques : des clefs pour relever les défis du XXI^e siècle*, p. 74. [Online]. [<http://stat.gouv.qc.ca/statistiques/education/alphabetisation-litteratie/peica.pdf>] (Viewed on November 9, 2017); Statistics Canada, CANSIM, Tables 282-0014 and 282-0048.

APPENDIX 1

FINANCIAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE GOVERNMENT ACTION PLAN TO FOSTER ECONOMIC INCLUSION AND SOCIAL PARTICIPATION

Financial Framework for the Government Action Plan to Foster Economic Inclusion and Social Participation 2017-2023

Number	Measure	Responsible Ministries and Organizations	Funding Status	Cost of Measure (\$M)							
				2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	Total (5 years)	2022-2023	Total (6 years)
1st Thrust:											
Lift over 100,000 people out of poverty and increase the incomes of people in poverty											
1.1 Increase the disposable income of people living in poverty											
Measure 1	Introduce a basic income for Quebecers with a severely limited capacity for employment	MTESS	EU	21.7	112.0	169.6	243.5	315.6	862.4	384.1	1,246.5
Measure 2	Progressively increase benefits granted under last-resort financial assistance programs and the Aim for Employment program	MTESS	EU	18.0	77.5	99.9	120.1	133.5	449.0	131.3	580.3
Measure 3	Take action to ensure that more low-income Quebecers complete their income tax returns	RQ	EU	–	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.8	0.2	1.0
1.2 Increase disposable income and create conditions favourable to labour market participation											
Measure 4	Change certain last-resort financial assistance parameters and create conditions favourable to labour market participation										
Action 4.1	Increase employment income exemptions for individuals and families receiving Social Solidarity Program benefits	MTESS	EU	–	0.5	2.1	2.1	2.1	6.8	2.1	8.9
Action 4.2	Grant a work income supplement to last-resort financial assistance beneficiaries	MTESS	EU	–	0.5	2.1	2.1	2.1	6.8	2.1	8.9
Action 4.3	Change the manner in which the parental contribution is calculated	MTESS	EU	–	1.3	1.7	1.6	1.6	6.2	1.6	7.8
Action 4.4	Increase work premiums	MFQ	EU	0.6	13.8	45.9	54.7	66.4	181.4	78.6	260.0
Action 4.5	Grant a \$100-per-month exclusion on cash gifts received by individuals and families receiving benefits	MTESS	EU	–	0.2	0.8	0.8	0.8	2.6	0.8	3.4
Action 4.6	Grant adult status to children of full age enrolled in the secondary school general education stream	MTESS	EU	–	4.0	16.0	16.0	16.0	52.0	16.0	68.0
Action 4.7	Grant an employment retention bonus	MTESS	EU	–	1.6	6.5	10.0	10.0	28.1	10.0	38.1
1.3 Assist Quebecers in gaining access to training and employment											
Measure 5	Aim for Employment program	MTESS	2015-2016 and 2016-2017 budgets	7.6	7.6	7.6	7.6	7.6	38.0	7.6	45.6
Measure 6	Support last-resort financial assistance beneficiaries who wish to develop their skills	MTESS	EU	–	6.3	6.9	6.9	6.9	26.9	6.9	33.8
Measure 7	Support training for young people in situations of poverty and social exclusion										
Action 7.1	Promote the resumption of training for young people aged 16 and 17	MTESS and MEES	Self-funded	0.2	0.2	–	–	–	0.4	–	0.4

Number	Measure	Responsible Ministries and Organizations	Funding Status	Cost of Measure (\$M)							
				2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	Total (5 years)	2022-2023	Total (6 years)
Action 7.2	Create opportunities for young people aged 16 to 29 in vulnerable positions to carry out social engagement projects	MCE (SAJ)	2017-2018 budget	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	4.5	–	4.5
Action 7.3	Provide assistance to help students from disadvantaged backgrounds obtain a first diploma	MEES	EU	–	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	12.0	3.0	15.0
1.4 Support businesses with workforce recruitment and retention											
Measure 8	Ramp up business advisory services in the areas of diversity management and labour attraction and retention	MTESS	EU	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	2.5	0.5	3.0
2nd Thrust: Invest to improve social housing											
Measure 9	Invest to improve social housing										
Action 9.1	Enhance the supply of social housing ^a	SHQ	2017-2018 budget	–	10.0	6.3	72.1	108.8	197.2	45.5	242.7
Action 9.2	Provide assistance to homeless individuals to foster residential stability	MSSS	EU	–	–	1.0	1.0	1.0	3.0	1.0	4.0
Action 9.3	Improve housing conditions for homeless individuals	MSSS	EU	–	0.5	–	–	–	0.5	–	0.5
Measure 10	Improve housing by providing additional support for the construction of affordable housing	SHQ	EU	–	6.0	8.6	12.2	7.4	34.2	4.6	38.8
3rd Thrust: Encourage the social participation of low-income individuals and families and mobilize communities											
3.1 Support local and regional projects to combat poverty and social exclusion											
Measure 11	Pursue the Solidarity Alliances initiative	MTESS	Self-funded	21.5	21.5	21.5	21.5	21.5	107.5	10.6	118.1
			2017-2018 budget	2.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	22.0	–	22.0
			EU	–	3.0	3.0	4.0	5.0	15.0	5.0	20.0
Measure 12	Improve the living conditions and social participation rate of people living in social housing	SHQ	EU	–	0.2	0.4	0.6	0.7	1.8	0.5	2.3
3.2 Support food security initiatives											
Measure 13	Improve access to healthy, nutritious and affordable food for people with low incomes										
Action 13.1	Increase support for food security initiatives for Quebecers with low incomes	MTESS	EU	–	6.0	6.0	6.0	6.0	24.0	6.0	30.0
Action 13.2	Increase the quantity of fresh fruits and vegetables distributed to people in situations of poverty and social exclusion	MAPAQ	EU	–	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.6	0.1	0.7

Number	Measure	Responsible Ministries and Organizations	Funding Status	Cost of Measure (\$M)							
				2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	Total (5 years)	2022-2023	Total (6 years)
Action 13.3	Support pregnant women and low-income families with a child under the age of 2 by reducing their food insecurity through the OLO approach	MTESS and MSSS	EU	–	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	2.6	0.7	3.3
			Self-funded	–	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.8	0.2	1.0
Action 13.4	Improve the knowledge and practices of community food aid organization managers, staff and volunteers	MTESS	EU	–	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.3
Action 13.5	Use surplus food and develop the culinary skills and knowledge of young people aged 12 to 17	MAPAQ	EU	–	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	4.0	1.0	5.0
3.3 Take action from childhood to promote equal opportunity											
Measure 14	Promote equal opportunity										
Action 14.1	Continue to open full-time age-four kindergarten classes in disadvantaged neighbourhoods	MEES	EU	–	8.6	8.0	8.0	8.0	32.6	8.0	40.6
Action 14.2	Improve access to childcare services	MF	EU	–	–	5.0	20.0	20.0	45.0	20.0	65.0
Action 14.3	Boost funding for school breakfasts	MEES	EU	–	1.4	2.0	2.0	2.0	7.4	2.0	9.4
3.4 Facilitate access to cultural activities, recreation and tourism											
Measure 15	Facilitate access to cultural activities, recreation and tourism										
Action 15.1	Roll out the Accès-Loisirs Québec program in more municipalities and organizations	MEES	EU	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.8	0.2	0.9
Action 15.2	Create, implement and promote an access card for people with disabilities in the areas of recreation, cultural activities and tourism	OPHQ and MEES	EU	0.03	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.5	0.1	0.6
Action 15.3	Foster social inclusion through access to and participation in cultural activities for vulnerable and marginalized populations	MCC	EU	0.2	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.5	2.1	0.5	2.6
3.5 Promote the social inclusion of people who are living in poverty and have a criminal record											
Measure 16	Foster a more human-centred form of justice										
Action 16.1	Better address the needs of individuals with significant mental health problems	MJQ	EU	0.03	0.1	0.1	0.1	–	0.3	–	0.3
Action 16.2	Facilitate access to means of amicably resolving conflicts identified in the <i>Code of Civil Procedure</i> and to the Programme de mesures de rechange en matière criminelle for people in situations of poverty	MJQ	Self-funded	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Action 16.3	Reduce incarceration rates for people in situations of poverty and social exclusion	MJQ	EU	0.03	0.1	0.1	–	–	0.2	–	0.2

Number	Measure	Responsible Ministries and Organizations	Funding Status	Cost of Measure (\$M)							
				2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	Total (5 years)	2022-2023	Total (6 years)
3.6 Improve the computer skills of people in situations of poverty											
Measure 17	Improve the computer skills of people in situations of poverty	MTESS	EU	–	0.1	0.2	0.3	0.5	1.2	0.6	1.8
3.7 Work with people in situations of poverty and social exclusion to combat prejudice											
Measure 18	Break the barriers of prejudice to encourage full-fledged social participation	MTESS	EU	–	0.1	0.1	–	–	0.1	–	0.1
3.8 Support community action											
Measure 19	Increase funding for organizations supported by the Secrétariat à l'action communautaire autonome et aux initiatives sociales										
Action 19.1	Strengthen community development corporations' ability to take action	MTESS	EU	–	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.9	3.5	1.0	4.5
Action 19.2	Better support organizations that fight social problems	MTESS	EU	–	2.2	11.7	12.0	12.3	38.2	12.6	50.7
Goal 4: Research and assessment: Make government action to combat poverty and social exclusion more effective											
Measure 20	Support research and assessment initiatives in regard to poverty and social exclusion										
Action 20.1	Support research into poverty and social exclusion	MTESS	EU	–	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	2.2	0.5	2.7
Action 20.2	Support university research into the impact of an adaptability and support program or protocol in the area of justice and mental health	MJQ	EU	0.03	0.1	0.1	0.2	–	0.4	–	0.4
Action 20.3	Evaluate the Government Action Plan to Foster Economic Inclusion and Social Participation 2017–2023	MTESS	EU	–	0.1	0.03	0.1	0.1	0.3	–	0.3
New Funding											
2017-2018 Economic Update				41.3	253.6	405.4	532.0	625.8	1,858.1	701.6	2,559.7
2017-2018 Québec Economic Plan				2.9	15.9	12.2	78.0	114.7	223.7	45.5	269.2
Subtotal				44.2	269.5	417.6	610.0	740.5	2,081.8	747.1	2,828.9
Other											
Previous funding				7.6	7.6	7.6	7.6	7.6	38.0	7.6	45.6
Self-funding				21.7	21.9	21.7	21.7	21.7	108.7	10.8	119.5
Subtotal				29.3	29.5	29.3	29.3	29.3	146.7	18.4	165.1
Total				73.5	299.0	446.9	639.3	769.8	2,228.5	765.5	2,993.9

Note: Amounts have been rounded and may not add up to the totals indicated.

- a The construction of new social, community and affordable housing is covered by other government action plans and policies (e.g., the Government Policy of Prevention in Health, the Aging and Living Together policy, and the Interministerial Action Plan on Homelessness 2015-2020). After 2022-2023, the March 2017 Québec Economic Plan calls for \$28.6M in additional investments for the construction of social housing; these investments are not included in this action plan. The recurring investments already provided for in the Société d'habitation du Québec budget are not reflected herein.

List of abbreviations

EU: Included in the financial framework provided in the November 2017 Economic Update

MAPAQ: Ministère de l'Agriculture, des Pêcheries et de l'Alimentation

MCC: Ministère de la Culture et des Communications

MCE: Ministère du Conseil exécutif

MEES: Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur

MF: Ministère de la Famille

MFQ: Ministère des Finances

MJQ: Ministère de la Justice

MSSS: Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux

MTESS: Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale

OPHQ: Office des personnes handicapées du Québec

RQ: Revenu Québec

SAJ: Secrétariat à la jeunesse

SHQ: Société d'habitation du Québec

APPENDIX 2

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE POVERTY REDUCTION TARGET: METHODOLOGY AND EVALUATION OF OBJECTIVE ATTAINMENT

In its Government Action Plan to Foster Economic Inclusion and Social Participation 2017-2023, the government made a commitment to lift 100,000 people out of poverty.

This target is consistent with the aims of the *Act to combat poverty and social exclusion*, which was adopted in 2002 and stipulates that the strategies used should:

- “progressively make Québec one of the industrialized nations having the least number of persons living in poverty, according to recognized methods for making international comparisons” (section 4);
- “[...] improve the economic and social situation of persons and families living in poverty and social exclusion [...]” (section 6) and “[...] strengthen the social and economic safety net [...]” (section 7) by “raising the level of income granted to persons and families living in poverty, having regard to their particular situation and the resources at their disposal to meet their essential needs [...]” (section 9);
- “[...] set targets to be reached, in particular to improve the income of recipients under the Employment-Assistance Program established under the *Act respecting income support, employment assistance and social solidarity* (chapter S-32.001), and the income of persons working full-time or on a sustained basis who live in poverty according to the indicators used by the Government.” (section 14).

Measuring Poverty

The Centre d’étude sur la pauvreté et l’exclusion (CEPE) recommends using the market basket measure (MBM) as the benchmark for monitoring poverty, as determined by how well Quebecers’ basic needs are covered⁵⁴.

According to Statistics Canada’s Canadian Income Survey, the low-income rate for Quebecers, according to the MBM, was 10.9% in 2015, similar to the rate for 2013 (10.8%).

Use of the low income measure (LIM) set at 60% of median national income, for its part, is recommended when making international comparisons⁵⁵.

- In 2013⁵⁶, the low-income rate for individuals was 17.6% in Québec, based on the LIM.
- Estimates for international comparisons are based on the most recent available data, which are for 2013⁵⁷.

54. CENTRE D’ÉTUDE SUR LA PAUVRETÉ ET L’EXCLUSION (2009), *Prendre la mesure de la pauvreté : proposition d’indicateurs de pauvreté, d’inégalités et d’exclusion sociale afin de mesurer les progrès réalisés au Québec*. [Online]. [https://www.mess.gouv.qc.ca/publications/pdf/CEPE_Avis.pdf] (Viewed on November 30, 2017).

55. European Union countries have chosen to use a LIM set at 60% of median income as the low-income threshold for the purpose of defining their low-income population.

56. The data for 2013 were the most recent data available at the time of the publication of the Québec Economic Plan in March 2017, which set the target used in this plan.

57. Between the publication of the 2017-2018 Budget and the publication of this plan, the low-income data used to establish international comparisons for 2014 were published. An analysis of these statistics shows that a 1.8-percentage-point reduction in the low-income rate would still allow Québec to join the group of industrialized countries with the fewest people in poverty.

These two low-income metrics are based on different concepts, and therefore give rise to measures of poverty that can vary.

With the MBM, a family unit is deemed to have a low income if its disposable income for consumption is less than the value of a basket of goods and services calculated for its community or for a community of the same size. The MBM is often considered an absolute measure of poverty.

In the case of the LIM, a family unit's income is deemed to be low if it is less than 50% or 60% of the population's median income, adjusted for the family unit's size.

The LIM is a relative measure of poverty, and there are certain limitations on the use of such measures. The well-known paradox is that income could double overnight, providing substantial relief to people in poverty, just as it could be cut in half, making their situation that much worse, but in both cases, the rate would remain unchanged because it is based on median income.

Although the Gouvernement du Québec has chosen to use the MBM as a means of tracking low-income situations, this metric is not used in the international arena. For that reason, it has chosen to use the LIM set at 60% of median income as the low income threshold, as per the CEPE's recommendation.

An analysis of the statistics for both measures of poverty (income dispersion for people under the low-income thresholds) shows that an initiative designed to increase the disposable income of low-income Quebecers should lead to a decrease, of the same order of magnitude, in the low-income rate calculated using these two low-income metrics. This is partly explained by the fact that these two measures of poverty tend to rise or fall together over time.

Attainment of this Objective

Based on an analysis of Québec's international ranking, the province's low-income rate has to be reduced by 1.4 percentage points if the province is to progressively join the ranks of the industrialized nations with the fewest people living in poverty.

Doing so entails lifting over 100,000 people out of poverty. (This number is based on the anticipated reduction in poverty, expressed as a percentage, multiplied by the population of Québec.)

This estimate takes account of the reduction in the low-income rate resulting from the introduction of the Canada child benefit (-0.4 percentage points). Without this measure, the low-income rate would have had to fall by 1.8 percentage points.

Québec's Track Record in regard to Poverty

Year in, year out, Québec ranks in the middle of the lead group when it comes to the fight against poverty (CEPE 2014, CEPE 2017)⁵⁸.

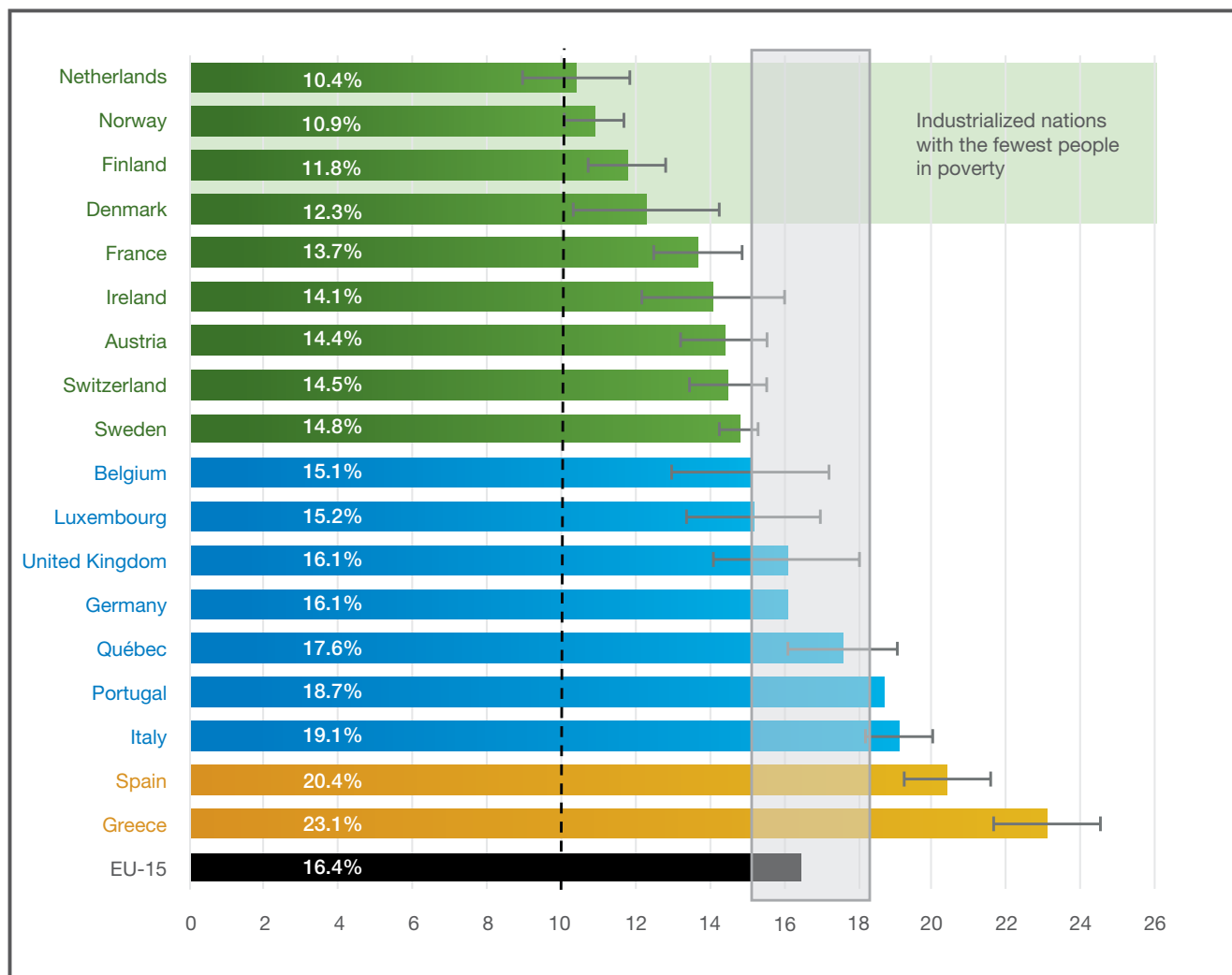
In 2013, Québec's low-income rate, as measured by the LIM, stood at 60% of median income, a rate similar to that of a group of countries including Belgium, Luxembourg, the United Kingdom, Germany, Portugal and Italy (shaded area in Figure A1). This group ranks second, by a statistically significant margin, after a lead group comprising all the Scandinavian countries, the Netherlands, Finland, France, Ireland, Austria and Switzerland.

As shown in Figure A1, the industrialized nations with the smallest number of poor people were defined as those that share the same confidence level (95%) as the Netherlands (dotted line). The lead group is therefore made up of the Netherlands, Norway, Finland and Denmark.

58. CENTRE D'ÉTUDE SUR LA PAUVRETÉ ET L'EXCLUSION (2014), *La pauvreté, les inégalités et l'exclusion sociale au Québec : état de situation 2013*, Québec, 75 p.; CENTRE D'ÉTUDE SUR LA PAUVRETÉ ET L'EXCLUSION (2017), *La pauvreté, les inégalités et l'exclusion sociale au Québec : état de situation 2016*, Québec, 75 p.

Figure
A1

**Personal Low-Income Rate (60% LIM) for Selected European Countries and Québec
with a 95% Confidence Interval Estimate, 2013
(in percentages)**



Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Income Survey: Public Use Microdata File; EU Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC). Canada (including Québec) ranks between Spain and Greece.

With a 1.8-percentage-point reduction in its low-income rate (1.4 percentage points resulting from this plan and 0.4 percentage points resulting from the Canada Child Benefit), Québec's low-income rate would be similar to those of the nations with the fewest low-income citizens and would meet the objective set out in the Act: it would join the lead group composed of Norway, the Netherlands, Denmark and Finland.

As shown in Table A2, a decrease on this scale in the low-income rate would bring the confidence interval⁵⁹ for Québec's low-income rate up to the level of the last country (Denmark) in the group of industrialized nations with the smallest number of people in poverty, mentioned above.

59. In statistics, a confidence interval is used to determine the margin of error between data taken from a survey (based on a sample) and data for the population as a whole.

Table
A2

Personal Low-Income Rate (60% LIM) for Selected European Countries and Québec, 2013 (in percentages)

Countries	Low-Income Rate	Low Limit 95%	High Limit 95%
Netherlands	10.4	8.9	11.9
Norway	10.9	10.1	11.7
Finland	11.8	10.8	12.8
Denmark	12.3	10.3	14.3
France	13.7	12.5	14.9
Ireland	14.1	12.2	16.0
Austria	14.4	13.2	15.6
Switzerland	14.5	13.5	15.5
Sweden	14.8	14.3	15.3
Belgium	15.1	13.0	17.2
Québec with this plan	15.8	14.3	17.3
Luxembourg	15.9	15.9	15.9
United Kingdom	16.1	14.1	18.1
Germany	16.1	NA	NA
Québec	17.6	16.1	19.1
Portugal	18.7	NA	NA
Italy	19.1	18.2	20.0
Spain	20.4	19.2	21.6
Canada	20.9	NA	NA
Greece	23.1	21.7	24.5
EU-15	16.4	NA	NA

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Income Survey: Public Use Microdata File; EU Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC). Canada (including Québec) ranks between Spain and Greece.

Since poverty is a multifaceted phenomenon, it can, despite government action, be influenced by:

- periods of sluggish economic growth and recessions (e.g., 2008-2009);
- increasing income inequality;
- structural changes in society, such as:
 - the increasing number of single people;
 - the greater participation of women in the labour market;
 - the rise in the general population's level of education;
- the measures implemented by countries to which Québec compares itself and which are designed to reduce poverty.

Industrialized nations with the fewest people in poverty

In short, even though poverty is influenced by factors other than government action, the government's objective of lifting 100,000 people out of poverty remains an ambitious one and marks a step forward for the most disadvantaged members of society.

Anticipated Number of Quebecers Exiting Poverty as a Result of Plan Measures

The measures set out in this plan take account of the anticipated impact of lifting Quebecers out of poverty.

The simulations conducted suggest that all these measures will contribute to meeting the target related to lifting people out of poverty. The effects of implementing the proposed measures will mutually reinforce one another. For this reason, the numbers of Quebecers exiting poverty are broken down by thrust (see Table A3).

Moreover, it is expected that other government actions and associated impacts, such as the anticipated successive increases in the minimum wage and economic conditions conducive to job creation over the years covered by the plan, will result in a further 62,000 people exiting poverty during the period in question.

Factors Able to Influence Changes in Poverty and Attainment of the Objective

The success of efforts to reduce poverty depends to a certain degree on:

- economic activity;
- government action.

Estimate of the Number of People Who Will Exit Poverty as a Result of the Measures Proposed in the Government Plan of Action to Foster Economic Inclusion and Social Participation 2017 to 2023

	Number of People Lifted out of Poverty
MEASURES PROPOSED IN THE ACTION PLAN	
Thrust 1.1 - Increase the disposable income of people living in poverty	73,000
Thrust 1.2 - Increase disposable income and create conditions favourable to labour market participation	12,000
Thrust 1.3 - Assist Quebecers in gaining access to training and employment	15,000
Subtotal – Number of Quebecers who will be lifted out of poverty as a result of implementation of the action plan	100,000
OTHER ACTIONS	
Increases in the minimum wage (2017 to 2020)	22,000
Economic conditions conducive to job creation	40,000
Subtotal – Number of Quebecers who will be lifted out of poverty as a result of increases in the minimum wage or favourable economic conditions	62,000
Total – Quebecers lifted out of poverty	162,000

Source: Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale.

Evaluation of Objective Attainment

The impacts of government action on the number of Quebecers lifted out of poverty as a result of this Government Action Plan to Foster Economic Inclusion and Social Participation will be measured by means of a simulation that determines what the low-income rate would have been had these measures to increase disposable income not been put in place.

The amounts resulting from these measures will therefore be subtracted from the income of family units eligible for these measures in order to determine what their disposable income would have been had they not benefited from these measures.

Without the effects of these measures, certain family units would find themselves under the poverty threshold.

A “simulated” low-income rate will therefore be calculated using this new income variable.

The same approach was also used to gauge the number of people exiting poverty by applying the measures designed to increase Quebecers' disposable income from the first two plans to combat poverty.

Whenever possible, these simulations take account of the impact of older measures that they replaced or of any improvements made to such measures. For example, the Child Assistance Measure's impact on low incomes was calculated based on the difference between, first, the amount of the Child Assistance Measure benefits received and, second, the sums received as a result of the transfers and tax measures in effect prior to implementation of these two action plans (Family Allowances).

As Table A4 shows, the low-income rate for all Quebecers in 2011 would have been 12.1% rather than 10.3% (+1.8 percentage points) if it were not for the relevant action plan measures, representing nearly 140,000 more Quebecers with low incomes.

Families with children have benefited the most from these action plans: without them, the low-income rate would have climbed by 6.9 percentage points for single-parent families, and 3.7 percentage points for couples with children.

These results should come as no surprise since the main income supplement measures, child assistance and the work premium, were designed specifically for families with children.

Table
A4

Impact of Certain Transformative Measures in the Last Two Action Plans to Combat Poverty and Social Exclusion on the 2011 Personal Low-Income Rate, Based on the Market Basket Measure (MBM, Baseline 2011), Québec

	Rate (%) PCP1 and PSSI	Rate (%) PCP1 Only	Increase in Low-Income Rate (Percentage Points)
Single persons	26.8	27.0	0.2
Single-parent families	27.2	34.1	6.9
Couples without children	3.6	3.7	0.2
Couples with children	5.3	9.0	3.7
Other	10.8	10.8	0.0
TOTAL	10.3	12.1	1.8
TOTAL (number)	802,377	941,870	139,493

Source: Statistics Canada, Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics (SLID).

Compilation: Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale.

Note: The low-income rates published here may differ from the official rates due to the use of the Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics: Public Use Microdata File (SLID). In calculating the estimates. The official rate is calculated on the basis of the SLID master file, to which the government did not have access for this study.

PCP1: Government Action Plan to Combat Poverty and Social Exclusion 2004-2010.

PSSI: Government Action Plan for Solidarity and Social Inclusion 2010-2027.

Changes in poverty over time can be affected by many factors in addition to government action.

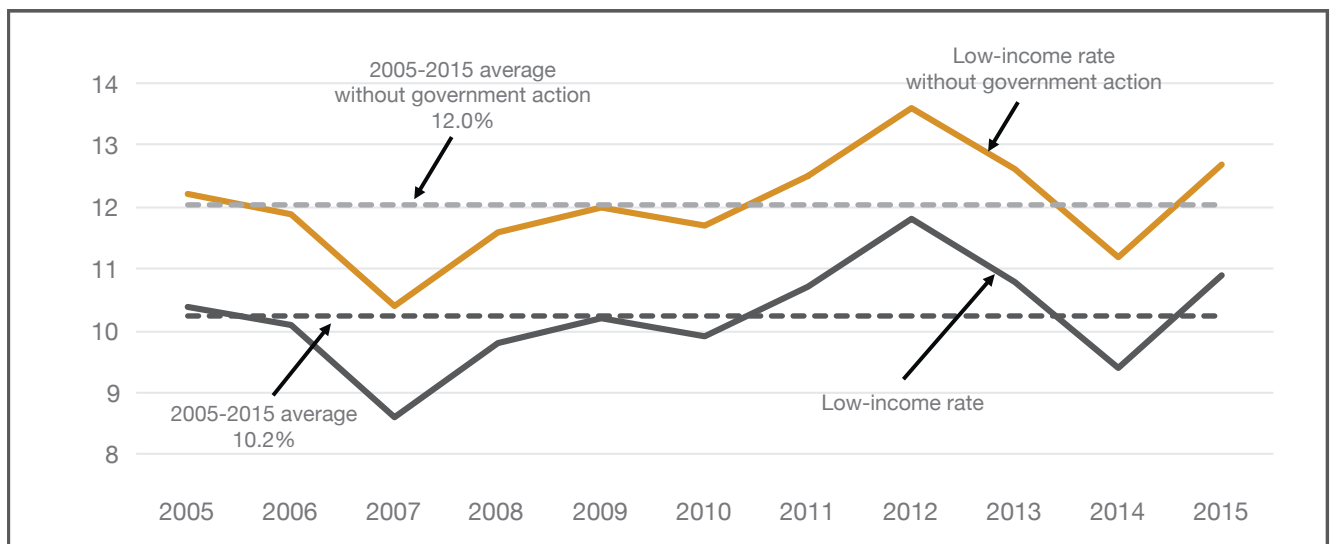
The Ministère has been assessing the impact of government policies on the fight against poverty for many years. The issue of sudden increases and decreases (volatility) in the low-income rate from one year to the next has been the subject of considerable discussion. Those discussions have led to the development of the approach presented earlier, by which fluctuations in the low-income rate may be contained.

In addition, the approach put forward negates the impact of certain variables that influence poverty rates and over which the government has little control. It also allows us to identify the general trend in low-income rates over the duration of the plan (dotted line in Figure A2).

Based on this approach, it is estimated that the main measures introduced in the last two plans to combat poverty and aimed at increasing family unit income (child assistance and work premium) have enabled 140,000 people to escape from poverty. In other words, these results show that had it not been for the recent action plans to combat poverty and various measures to increase the disposable income of low-income Quebecers, Québec's low-income rate would have been 1.8 percentage points higher than the current rate.

Figure
A2

Changes in the Personal Low-Income Rate according to the Market Basket Measure (MBM), with and without the Last Two Action Plans to Combat Poverty and Social Exclusion, Québec (in percentages)



Source: Statistics Canada, CANSIM Table 206-0041. Compilation: Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale.

APPENDIX 3

A SNAPSHOT OF POVERTY IN QUÉBEC⁶⁰

In Québec, poverty affects some 740,800 people⁶¹, 53.6% of whom are women and 46.4% are men. Single individuals make up 46.9% of all people living in poverty (Figure A3).

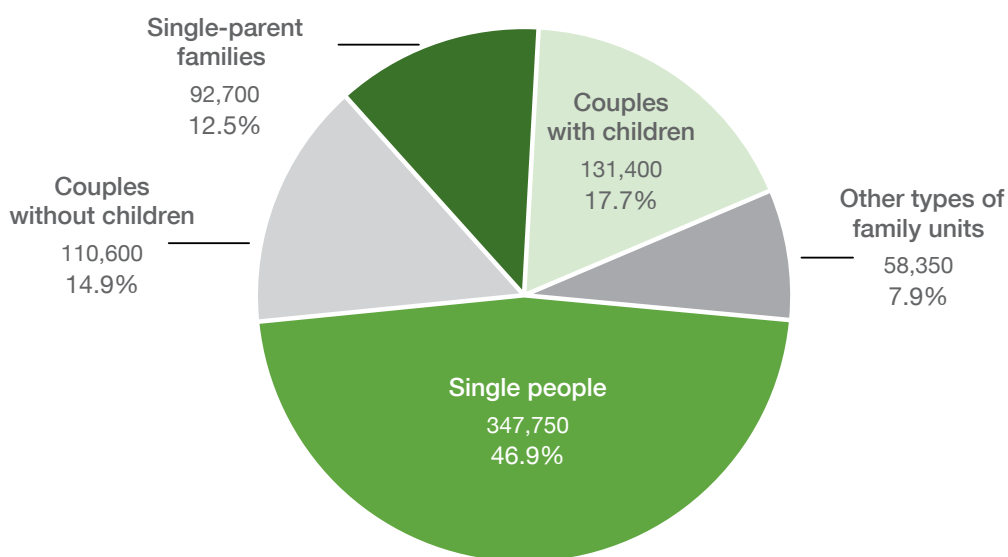
The measures presented in this plan will improve the situations of all households, with special attention being paid to single people and couples without children, who account for nearly two thirds of all people living in poverty.

The Low-Income Rate for Single People

From 2002 to 2015⁶², the low-income rate, calculated according to the Market Basket Measure (MBM), remained stable at close to 10.9% for all Quebecers (Figure A4). During this period, an overall decrease in the rate is observed from 2002 to 2007, followed by an increase in subsequent years, following the 2008 economic downturn. While the overall situation of families composed of at least two people⁶³ has improved, the low-income rate of single people is nearly four times higher than that of all economic families composed of at least two people, at 26.8% compared to 7.4%.

Figure
A3

Breakdown of People Living in Poverty in Québec
by Type of Household, 2014
(in numbers and percentages)



Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Income Survey: Public Use Microdata File. Compilation: Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale.

Note: Figures have been rounded and may not add up to 100%.

60. The data presented in this appendix are the most recent data available.

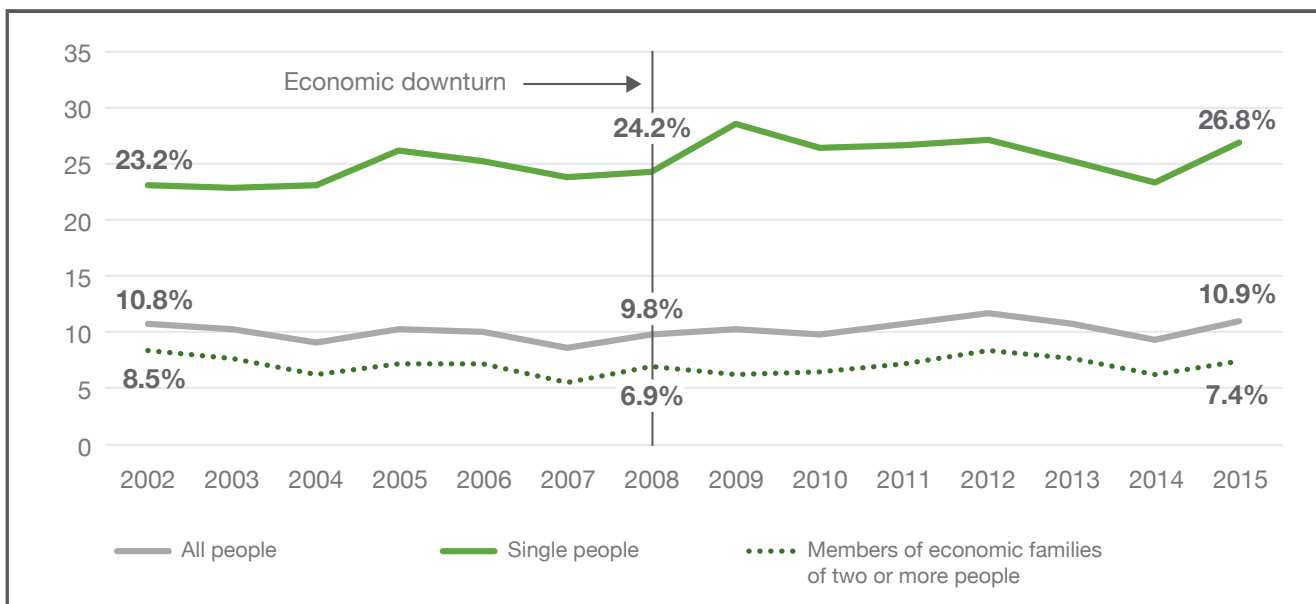
61. STATISTICS CANADA, Canadian Income Survey: Public Use Microdata File, Compilation by the Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale.

62. STATISTICS CANADA, CANSIM, Table 206-0042; CEPE (2017), *La pauvreté, les inégalités et l'exclusion sociale au Québec - État de situation 2016*. [Online]. [https://www.mtess.gouv.qc.ca/publications/pdf/CEPE_Etat_Situation_2016.pdf] (Viewed on August 1, 2017).

63. These are couples without children, single-parent families and couples with children.

Figure
A4

Low-Income Rate according to the Market Basket Measure, Single People and Families Composed of at least Two People, Québec (in percentages)



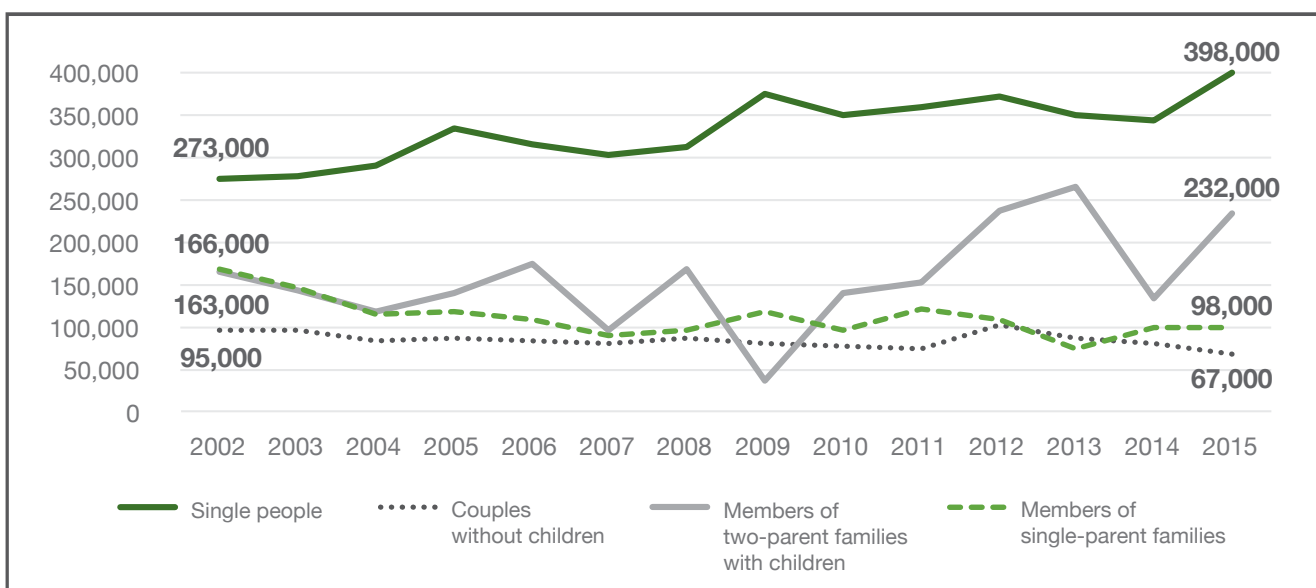
Source: Statistics Canada, CANSIM, Table 206-0042.

The low-income rate for couples without children is on the decline (from 8.9% to 5.6%). The low-income rate for all single-parent families dropped from 32.4% in 2002 to 23.8% in 2015 (see Table A5).

The number of Quebecers in single-parent families in situations of poverty has declined by just over 40% since 2002 (Figure A5). Roughly 90% of these families are headed by women.

Figure
A5

Changes in the Number of People and Families in Situations of Poverty in Québec, 2002 to 2015 (in numbers)



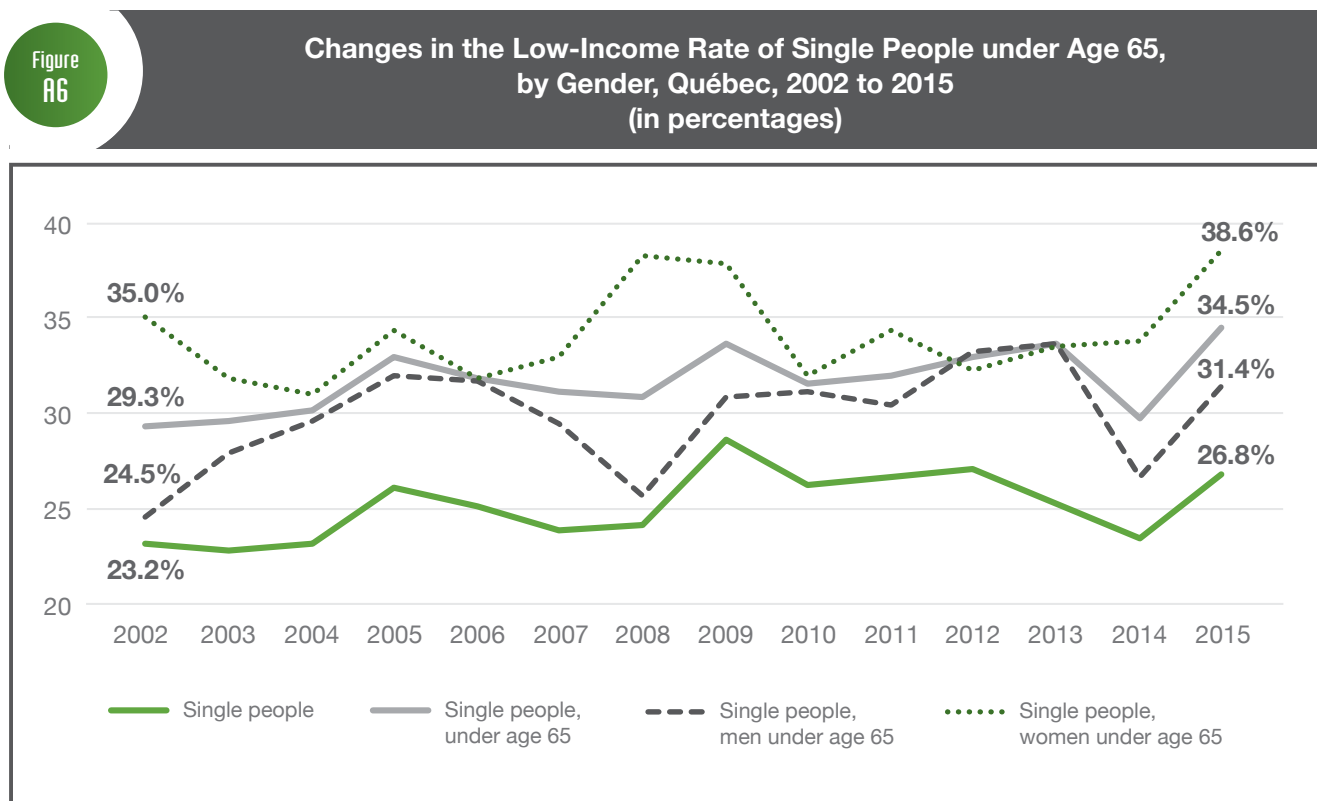
Source: Statistics Canada, CANSIM, Table 206-0042.

The low-income rate is rising among single women and single men aged 18 to 64

In 2015, single adults under the age of 65⁶⁴ (Figure A6) are some of the most economically disadvantaged adults, with a low-income rate of 34.5% (38.6% for women and 31.4% for men). The rate for single people aged 65 or more is lower, with public retirement benefits often set above the low-income threshold. The July 2016 increase in the Guaranteed Income Supplement for seniors who live alone⁶⁵ should help lower the low-income rate for eligible adults in the years ahead, especially senior women.

Lower education levels for people living in poverty

There is a greater percentage of individuals with low levels of education among people in situations of poverty than among the population as a whole (Figure A7). Any measure that serves to augment the skills of people with low education levels is therefore likely to help lift them out of poverty.



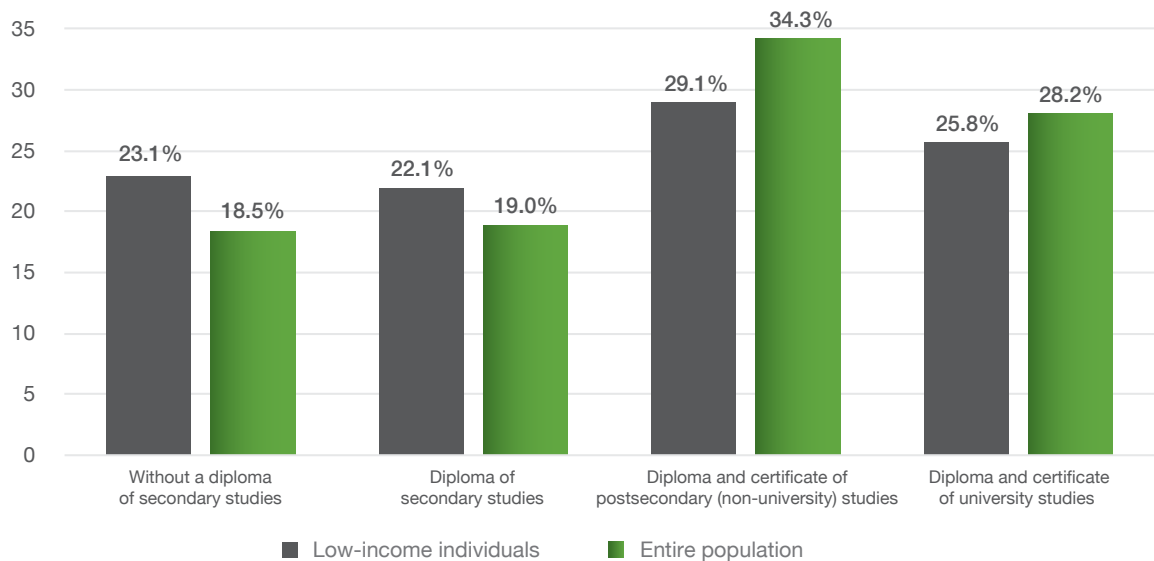
Source: Statistics Canada, CANSIM, Table 206-0042.

64. Between 2002 and 2015, the low-income rate calculated according to the MBM increased slightly for adults aged 18 to 64, from 12% to 12.8% (rising from 10.2% to 12.7% for men while falling from 13.7% to 13% for women). In 2015, the low-income rate gap between men and women aged 18 to 64 was very small.

65. GOVERNMENT OF CANADA (2016), *Growing the Middle Class. 2016 Budget*. Chapter 5 – “An Inclusive and Fair Canada”, [Online]. [<http://www.budget.gc.ca/2016/docs/plan/ch5-en.html>] (Viewed on August 2, 2017).

Figure
A7

Breakdown of People Aged 25 and Over by Level of Education Completed Low-Income Individuals Compared to General Population, 2014 (in percentages)



Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Income Survey. Compilation: Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale, based on the public use microdata file.

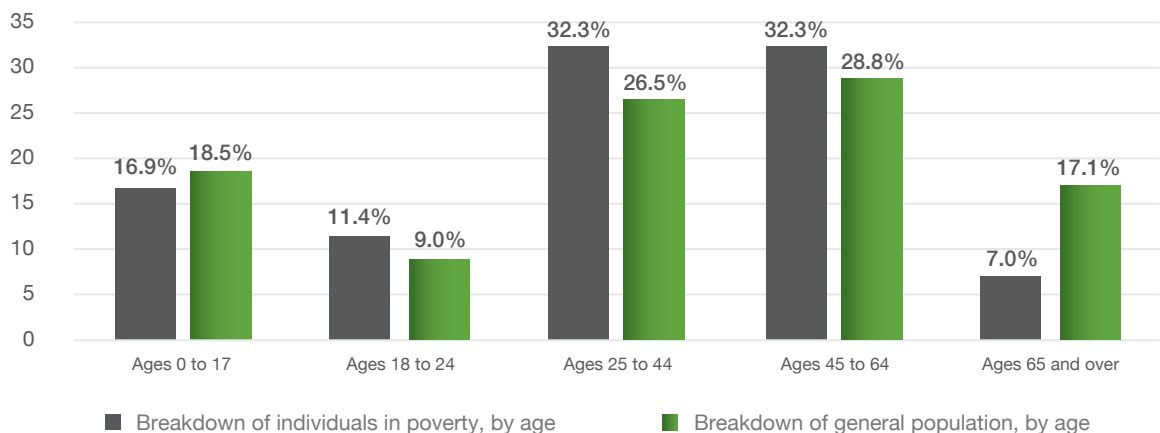
Individuals aged 25 to 64 are more likely to be in situations of poverty

The distribution of poverty depends on age (Figure A8). Most people living in poverty are between 25 and 64 years of age (64.6%), while this segment of the

population makes up 55.3% of the population as a whole. The opposite is true for seniors. Young people under age 25 are more likely to be in school and often live in temporary situations of poverty that are resolved once they enter the workforce.

Figure
A8

Breakdown of People in Situations of Poverty and the Québec Population as a Whole by Age, 2014 (in percentages)



Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Income Survey. Compilation: Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale, based on the public use microdata file.

Young people between the ages of 15 and 29 are often in a period of socio-professional transition

Individuals aged 15 to 29 tend to experience major life transitions as they form couples, become parents, go to school or join the workforce for the first time.

Dropping out of school is a major challenge for Québec. In 2013-2014, the dropout rate stood at 14.1% (17.4% for boys and 11% for girls)⁶⁶.

Moreover, in 2014-2015, some 182,500 young people were not in education, employment, or training (NEET). One third of these young people in the 15-to-29 age group were receiving last-resort financial assistance (54.8% had no employment limitations while 26.4% had a severely limited capacity for employment) and were at risk of experiencing social exclusion and persistent poverty⁶⁷.

Historically, the unemployment rate has been higher for the 15-to-29 age group than for any other age group (10.5% in 2016 vs. 7.1% for the entire population aged 15 or over). The unemployment rate for men aged 15 to 29 (12.4%) is higher than the rate for women (8.6%) in the same age group⁶⁸.

People with a disability tend to have incomes lower than the Québec average

In 2011, Quebecers with a disability⁶⁹ had lower incomes (37% had an annual income of less than \$15,000 in 2010, compared to 29% of Quebecers without a disability) and were more often part of a household living under the low-income threshold (17%, compared to 12% for Quebecers as a whole).

They were also more likely to live alone (27% vs. 15% for Quebecers without a disability). In addition, those in the 15-to-64 age group were less likely to be employed than those without a disability (39% vs. 72%). When they did hold a job, they were more likely to hold part-time employment (27% vs. 19%).

In 2011 the disability rate was considerably higher for women than for men (10.4% vs. 8.7%)⁷⁰.

Quebecers with a disability depend more often on the income support measures put in place by the government.

Immigrants tend to report lower incomes than non-immigrants

The proportion of immigrants (people born outside Canada) in Québec was 12.6% in 2011⁷¹. In 2006, the low-income rate for immigrant workers was 11%, compared to 4% for people born in Canada (“native-born”). The unemployment rate⁷² in 2016 was also higher for immigrants as a whole (9.8%) than for native-born Canadians (6.5%).

For immigrants, this unemployment rate falls off as the number of years of residency climbs: it was 15.1% for people admitted to Québec in the previous five years and 8.3% for people admitted more than 10 years earlier.

The employment rate for immigrants as a whole is 59.5%. The rate for immigrants admitted to Québec 5 to 10 years earlier is higher (at 69.4%) than for native-born Canadians (60.2%) and immigrants admitted to Québec in the last 5 years (57.7%). Roughly 38.1% of all immigrants who arrived in Québec 15 years or more before report holding a university degree, vs. 18.8% of native-born Canadians.

66. Taux de décrochage annuel au Québec (2013-2014). [Online]. [<http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/references/publications/resultats-de-la-recherche/detail/article/taux-de-decrochage-annuel/>] (Viewed on October 2, 2017).

67. *Politique québécoise de la jeunesse 2030 [2030 Québec Youth Policy]* (2016). [Online]. [<https://www.jeunes.gouv.qc.ca/publications/documents/pqj-2030.pdf>] [English version: <https://www.jeunes.gouv.qc.ca/publications/documents/pqj-2030-en.pdf>] and [<https://www.jeunes.gouv.qc.ca/politique/travail-economie/figure10.asp>] (Viewed on October 2, 2017).

68. STATISTICS CANADA, CANSIM, Table 282-0002.

69. According to the Canadian Survey on Disability (2012), there are 11 types of disabilities that limit a person's day-to-day activities (e.g., vision, mobility, learning, memory and development). A single individual may have more than one disability at a time.

70. OFFICE DES PERSONNES HANDICAPÉES DU QUÉBEC (2017), *Les personnes avec incapacité au Québec : Une collection en 8 volumes d'un portrait fait à partir des données de l'Enquête canadienne sur l'incapacité de 2012*, [Online]. [<https://www.ophq.gouv.qc.ca/publications/statistiques.html?L=0>] (Viewed on September 27, 2017).

71. MINISTÈRE DE L'IMMIGRATION, DE LA DIVERSITÉ ET DE L'INCLUSION (2017), *2015 Immigration et démographie au Québec*, [http://www.midi.gouv.qc.ca/publications/fr/recherches-statistiques/Pub_Immigration_et_demo_2015.pdf] (Viewed on September 28, 2017).

72. STATISTICS CANADA, CANSIM, TABLE 282-0102.

Table
R5

Changes in the Low-Income Rate according to the Market Basket Measure in Québec, 2002-2015, by Family Situation and Age (in percentages)

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Entire Population	10.8	10.2	9.1	10.4	10.1	8.6	9.8	10.2	9.9	10.7	11.8	10.8	9.4	10.9
Individuals under age 18	11.6	9.8	8.3	9.3	9.8	6.9	9.1	9.5	8.1	10.2	11.5	11.1	8.7	11.2
Individuals aged 18 to 64	12.0	11.8	10.8	12.2	11.7	10.4	11.6	11.4	11.3	12.0	13.5	12.7	11.0	12.8
Individuals aged 65 or over	3.5*	1.9*	1.5*	2.9*	2.6*	2.6*	2.9*	5.7*	6.2	5.7	5.1	3.1*	4.0*	3.6
Men	10.0	10.0	9.3	10.1	10.0	8.4	9.6	10.3	10.4	10.6	11.9	11.1	8.8	10.9
Men under age 18	12.6	10.5	9.4	9.1	9.4*	7.1*	9.5*	10.4*	8.9*	10.9*	10.1	11.4	8.3	11.2*
Men aged 18 to 64	10.2	11.2	10.6	11.9	11.5	9.8	10.9	11.5	11.9	11.8	14.0	13.0	10.1	12.7
Men aged 65 or over	3.4*	NR	NR	1.7*	NR	NR	NR	3.9*	5.0*	4.5*	4.8*	2.5*	4.2*	3.2*
Women	11.7	10.4	8.9	10.7	10.2	8.9	10.1	10.1	9.5	10.8	11.7	10.5	10.0	11.0
Women under age 18	10.7	9.1	7.2	9.6*	10.1*	6.6*	8.6*	8.6*	7.3*	9.5*	13.1	10.7*	9.2*	11.3*
Women aged 18 to 64	13.7	12.5	11.0	12.6	12.0	11.1	12.2	11.3	10.7	12.3	13.1	12.5	12.0	13.0
Women aged 65 or over	3.7*	2.5*	1.6*	3.8*	2.6*	2.8*	3.2*	7.2*	7.1*	6.6*	5.4*	3.5*	3.8*	3.9*
Single People	23.2	22.8	23.2	26.1	25.1	23.9	24.2	28.6	26.3	26.6	27.1	25.3	23.4	26.8
Single people – men	21.8	24.3	25.9	28.0	28.4	25.4	23.0	28.7	28.1	26.5	29.9	28.5	23.7	26.9
Single people – women	24.4	21.4	20.5	24.2	22.1	22.5	25.4	28.5	24.5	26.7	24.2	22.2	23.1	26.7
Single People, Seniors	5.5	2.7	2.5	5.3	6.1	4.6	6.6	14.8	12.9	12.5	11.7	6.6	7.7	8.5
Single people – senior men	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	15.3*	12.9*	6.8*	13.5*	NR	NR	9.1*
Single people – senior women	5.4*	NR	2.1*	6.3*	NR	NR	5.7*	14.6*	12.9*	15.1*	10.8*	6.5*	6.4*	8.2*
Single People, under 65	29.3	29.6	30.2	33.0	31.8	31.1	30.9	33.6	31.5	32.0	32.9	33.6	29.7	34.5
Single people – men under 65	24.5	27.9	29.6	32.0	31.7	29.5	25.7	30.9	31.1	30.4	33.3	33.7	26.7	31.4
Single people – women under 65	35.0	31.8	31.0	34.4	31.8	33.0	38.3	37.8	32.0	34.3	32.3	33.5	33.8	38.6
People in Economic Families of Two People or More	8.5	7.7	6.3	7.2	7.1	5.5	6.9	6.3	6.4	7.3	8.5	7.6	6.3	7.4
Couples without children (under 65)	8.9	8.8	7.4	7.5	7.1	7.1	7.6	7.1	7.1	6.4	8.6	7.2	6.9	5.6
Two-parent families	6.1	5.3	4.4	5.3	6.3	3.5	6.0	4.9	4.9	5.4	8.6	10.0	4.8	8.3
Single-parent families	32.4	29.5	23.6	22.8	23.8	19.7	20.0	25.9	25.2	30.4	29.7	14.4	29.5	23.8
People in single-parent families headed by a man	14.8*	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
People in single-parent families headed by a woman	37.3	34.2	27.5	26.9	28.6*	21.5*	22.7*	28.6	26.6*	35.0	35.6	16.8*	35.0	28.0*

Source: Statistics Canada, CANSIM, Table 206-0042.

*: To be interpreted with caution.

NR: Non-reliable data.

APPENDIX 4

USING GENDER-BASED ANALYSIS TO BUILD A FAIRER AND MORE INCLUSIVE QUÉBEC SOCIETY: ISSUES SPECIFIC TO WOMEN

The realities of poverty and social exclusion are very different for men and women. A number of factors appear to influence the dynamics of entering and exiting poverty (e.g., access to a job, family situation, income and education), and some of these are specific to women.

1. Family Situation, Poverty and Sharing Household Tasks

- Single-parent families headed by a woman are more likely to be poor than those headed by men. While the low-income rate for all single-parent families is 23.8%, it is 28% for those headed by a woman. (There are no reliable data for single-parent families headed by a man.)⁷³
- In addition to participating in the labour market in greater numbers in recent decades, women tend to spend more time than men on housekeeping and caring for children⁷⁴ or other family members⁷⁵. In 2015, however, Québec fathers were more likely than fathers in other provinces to take part in housekeeping duties (e.g., cleaning and washing dishes)⁷⁶.
- Women are more likely to find a job that is compatible with their family responsibilities, and as a result spend fewer hours on paid employment.

2. Income⁷⁷ and Employment⁷⁸

- In 2010, more men aged 15 or over (72%) than women in the same age group (62.8%) reported earning work income (especially as employees), while more women (73.4%) than men (63.3%: employment insurance) with low incomes were receiving government transfers (for children and retirement). Women were less likely to receive employment-insurance benefits because more of them had not worked the minimum number of hours required.
- Even if they have equivalent training and work in the same industry, women are disadvantaged in terms of their wages⁷⁹ in relation to men.

73. STATISTICS CANADA, CANSIM, Table 206-0041.

74. “Temps consacré à certaines activités, partage des tâches et difficultés associées à la conciliation travail-famille”. [Online]. [https://www.mfa.gouv.qc.ca/fr/Famille/chiffres-famille-quebec/chiffres-famille/Pages/temps-consacre-partage-taches-ctf.aspx] (Viewed on August 1, 2017).

75. “Proches aidants”. [Online]. [https://www.mfa.gouv.qc.ca/fr/aines/chiffres-aines/Pages/proches-aidants.aspx] (Viewed on August 1, 2017).

76. P. HOULE, M. TURCOTTE and M. WENDT (2017), *Changes in Parents' Participation in Domestic Tasks and Care for Children from 1986 to 2015*, Statistics Canada, Social and Aboriginal Statistics Division, [Online]. [http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/89-652-x/89-652-x2017001-eng.htm] (Viewed on October 2, 2017).

77. CONSEIL DU STATUT DE LA FEMME (2016), *Portrait statistique Égalité Femmes Hommes. Ensemble du Québec*, chapitre 5: “Le revenu”. [Online]. [https://www.csf.gouv.qc.ca/wp-content/uploads/portrait_national_egalite_2016.pdf] (Viewed on August 2, 2017).

78. CEPE (2015), *La persistance du faible revenu au Québec*, p. 12, [Online]. [https://www.mtess.gouv.qc.ca/publications/pdf/CEPE_Persistance_faible_revenu.pdf] (Viewed on July 31, 2017).

79. INSTITUT DE LA STATISTIQUE DU QUÉBEC (2016), *L'emploi moins qualifié chez les travailleuses et les travailleurs québécois ayant des enfants : l'analyse d'une cohorte sur une période de 20 ans*, [Online]. [http://www.stat.gouv.qc.ca/statistiques/travail-remuneration/bulletins/flash-info-201602.pdf] (Viewed on August 1, 2017).

- Women are more likely to work part-time than men⁸⁰ and to hold a minimum-wage job⁸¹. The employment rate gap between men and women persists but narrows as education levels climb.
- Economic inequalities are greater among certain groups of women, such as immigrants, the elderly, those with disabilities, Native women and women who head single-parent families.

3. Student Retention

Girls and women who drop out of school suffer greater socioeconomic repercussions than boys and men who do so, and are more likely to experience precarious employment⁸².

As a result, it is very important to take action to ensure greater equality between men and women. In reporting on the various measures and initiatives and their impact, we will be able to monitor the situation from a gender perspective wherever possible, with a view to adjusting the implementation process as required.

80. [http://www.stat.gouv.qc.ca/statistiques/travail-remuneration/lien-statut-emploi/emploi_scol_sexe_age.html] (Viewed on August 1, 2017).

81. INSTITUT DE LA STATISTIQUE DU QUÉBEC (2017), *Les travailleurs rémunérés à moins de 15 \$ l'heure au Québec et au Canada*, [Online]. [<http://www.stat.gouv.qc.ca/statistiques/travail-remuneration/bulletins/cap-remuneration-201704-8.pdf>]; ISQ (2016), *Comment ont évolué l'emploi à bas salaire et celui mieux rémunéré au Québec chez les travailleuses et les travailleurs?*, [Online]. [<http://www.stat.gouv.qc.ca/statistiques/travail-remuneration/bulletins/cap-remuneration-201604.pdf>] (Viewed on August 1, 2017).

82. MINISTÈRE DE L'ÉDUCATION ET DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT SUPÉRIEUR (2017), *Politique de la réussite éducative : Le plaisir d'apprendre, la chance de réussir*, p. 13, [Online]. [http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/fileadmin/site_web/documents/PSG/politiques_orientations/politique_reussite_educative_10juillet_F_1.pdf] (Viewed on August 1, 2017). [English version: *Policy on Educational Success: A Love of Learning, a Chance to Succeed*, p. 13 [Online]. [http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/fileadmin/site_web/documents/PSG/politiques_orientations/politique_reussite_educative_10juillet_A_1.pdf].

