

Young People Fully Involved in Their Own Success...

2006 • 2009 Youth Action Strategy


SHINE
AMONG THE BEST

Québec 

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MESSAGE FROM THE PREMIER



From generation to generation, our young people have served as an inspiration and as a foundation for the great reforms that have shaped Québec.

Embodying energy, hope and the determination of Quebecers to build a fairer, more open society, the young people of Québec have always been prime movers in the affirmation of our identity.

Today, the emerging generation continues to display values on which the Québec of tomorrow will be built: a universal conscience that carries hopes of a more humane form of globalization; a keen interest in sustainable development and environmental protection; legitimate concern about public debt and intergenerational equity; great openness of mind towards difference, and a thirst for discovery and success beyond our borders.


Young people, in all their diversity and with all their ideals, must be a central priority for all of us. We each have a role to play in making room for young people and ensuring that they can confidently take our place. We need our young people. In the context of an aging population, a fact that poses major challenges for the long-term survival of public services, it is our duty to

make sure that every young person can develop to their full potential. Since the task of furthering the progress of Québec society will soon fall to those who come after us, we must take action to prepare their future success right now.

The guiding spirit of the 2006-2009 Youth Action Strategy is to ensure that all young people play a full part and that each one of them follows a path that leads to their personal success as well as to our collective success.

Even though young people are energetic, determined and ambitious, the fact remains that they sometimes experience moments of pain and distress. Suicide, dropping out of school and eating disorders in young people are issues requiring that we provide them with better support.

The 2006-2009 Youth Action Strategy embraces all dimensions of youth. It is founded on the key notion that the support we give to young people must not stop at the implementation of a few isolated measures: instead, it must be coordinated at the highest level of government as a preoccupation that goes beyond the mission of individual government departments to rally the State and society as a whole. This is why I am taking personal responsibility of the youth file in the Government of Québec.



Our government intends to deploy the efforts required to ensure that young people are fully involved in their own success - whether at school in training projects, at work, or in community action. Our watchword: to achieve greater complementarity and better cohesion of youth services to make sure that no young Quebecker slips through the net.

The government shows great concern for Québec's young people and is taking major steps to support it. Most notably, we have invested an additional \$1 billion plus in education, set up the Québec Parental Insurance Plan, made child support more concrete, improved the assistance with homework provided to primary schoolchildren, and created the Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge. These examples testify to the government's will to foster young people's success at every stage of their growth and to ensure that they are fully involved in our society.

THIS NEW GOVERNMENT STRATEGY WILL HELP US TO DO EVEN BETTER, FOR THE BENEFIT OF YOUNG PEOPLE, AND FOR THE BENEFIT OF ALL QUÉBEC.



MESSAGE FROM THE PARLIAMENTARY ASSISTANT TO THE PREMIER FOR YOUTH



I am very happy to present our 2006-2009 Youth Action Strategy to the young people of Québec. It is the fruit of a major concerted process and of a broad consultation exercise that has taken place in two stages.

In the first stage, 423 persons and groups gave their comments and suggestions to the government, either by submitting a position paper or by completing an on-line questionnaire available at the youth portal, *Espace J*.

In the second stage, I had the good fortune to travel across Québec, often in the company of the Premier, to meet young people from every region in order to get a better picture of their reality, their ambitions and their needs.


From August 23 to October 24, 2005, we held 25 consultation days in all regions of Québec and heard close to 1,200 young people who had come forward to share their ideas and concerns. Groups from all sectors were also present to give their vision of youth and make

recommendations. More than 380 groups were heard, including 70 national groups and others from the Anglophone, cultural and aboriginal communities.

I feel that this exercise has enabled us to design a youth action strategy that largely meets the expectations and needs of young people in Québec. Developed in concert with the main government departments and organizations that work with young people, as well as many groups from civil society, this strategy puts forward a series of measures centred on five major orientations.

Thus, over the next three years, we aim to improve the health and well-being of young people, foster their success in education and facilitate their entry into the workforce, raise their profile in society and improve the support provided to them.

The 2006-2009 Youth Action Strategy demonstrates very strong concern for youth at risk, favouring a concerted approach to providing them with help as quickly as possible. Increasing the involvement of all young people



in democratic life, helping them stay in, return to or settle in the regions, as well as helping them to enter the job market, are also among the objectives to be attained.

I am convinced that the Youth Action Strategy will stimulate all actors concerned with the well-being of Québec youth to mobilize. I invite them to commit themselves fully, so that all young people may succeed and play an active part in building tomorrow's Québec – their Québec.



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INTRODUCTION

The 2006-2009 Youth Action Strategy is one of a series of government interventions designed to make Québec a fairer, more open and forward-looking society ready to meet the challenges of the 21st century. Young people, highly attuned to the shifting, changing nature of society, are central to this picture.

The aging of the population, the slowing of demographic growth and the burden of public debt are major challenges. Challenges that require us to adopt an approach that takes into account intergenerational equity, so that future generations will be able to live in a prosperous, dynamic Québec that provides them with a satisfying living environment. Repayment of the debt is an important issue facing Québec society today, all the more so because a marked drop in the active population will bring about a fall in available revenue for the State. This means we must concern ourselves with repayment of the public debt while the rate of activity of the population of Québec is at a peak and while we are living in a time of economic prosperity. To achieve this, the whole of society needs to be committed to assuming the public debt now, and to avoid unjustly saddling future generations with this burden. This is the rationale for the government's proposal to create a *Fonds des générations*.

In this context, and in the wake of the 2001 Québec Youth Policy and the 2002-2005 Youth Action Plan, the government is pursuing its efforts by proposing, in the 2006-2009 Youth Action Strategy, a series of measures that will foster the success of young people throughout Québec and, as a consequence, of society. The 2006-2009 Youth Action Strategy is designed to equip young people from all regions to become involved in Québec society in accordance with their values and aspirations. The government also hopes to give young people appropriate tools to build the future and shape the destiny of Québec.

In light of the wide-ranging consultation exercise of young people and various actors who work with or represent them, the Québec government's 2006-2009 Youth Action Strategy is intended as a support in meeting the challenges of today and tomorrow. It also takes into account the profile of Québec youth and government interventions aimed at young people set out in the consultation document. It is also the fruit of close collaboration between the Secrétariat à la jeunesse, eleven government departments and two government organizations¹.

1 The government departments and organizations are the following: Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport, Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale, Ministère de l'Immigration et des Communautés culturelles, Ministère de la Culture et des Communications, Ministère de la Famille, des Aînés et de la Condition féminine, Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux, Ministère de la Sécurité publique, Ministère des Affaires municipales et des Régions, Ministère des Relations internationales, Ministère du Développement économique, de l'Innovation et de l'Exportation, Ministère du Travail, Secrétariat aux affaires autochtones and Secrétariat aux priorités et aux projets stratégiques.

PUTTING YOUNG PEOPLE ON THE PATH TO SUCCESS

The 2006-2009 Youth Action Strategy is pursuing the objective of **fully involving young people in their own success**. It is aimed at people aged 35 and under and is designed to put in place the conditions necessary for every young person to be able to succeed in their own way. Whether at school as part of a training project, at work, or in community action, the government wishes to give all young people an opportunity to find their way forward in accordance with their ambitions and dreams.

The Strategy contains the following five orientations – each designed to support young people in achieving success – that will guide government action over the next three years:

- Improving the health and well-being of young people
- Fostering the educational success of young people
- Fostering young people's entry into the workforce
- Enhancing young people's participation in society
- Improving the support offered to young people

For each orientation, the government has made strategic choices, proposed targets and measures and designated those responsible for seeing the measures through and their main partners. The government has also set results indicators for a number of measures in order to assess their effectiveness.

“BEACON” MEASURES – LIGHTING THE WAY TO SUCCESSFUL INVOLVEMENT

Taking suggestions made by young people and groups that were consulted into consideration, the government is proposing some particularly mobilizing measures for each of the orientations. It is banking especially on a number of “beacon” measures to fully foster the success of all young people in Québec.

By improving the health and well-being of young people, the government will contribute to their success. In this regard, the government intends to **eliminate junk food in schools** by adopting a framework policy for nutrition. To combat youth suicide more effectively, it is counting on the **deployment of sentinel networks in youth communities**.

More than ever, the involvement of young people in Québec society is highly dependent on the acquisition of knowledge and appropriate qualifications. This makes it vital that the government should foster educational success among young people. To this end, it is relying on a **diversification of training paths in secondary education** in order to introduce greater flexibility into students' educational path.

Employment represents one of the main forms of young people's involvement in Québec society. To promote the success of their school-to-work transition, the government is **extending and enhancing the Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge**. It is also implementing a **support program that will foster the personal, social and professional autonomy of young people in the 16-24 age bracket who are facing**

particular difficulties. Moreover, the **Qualification des jeunes** program, which facilitates the social and professional integration of young people, will be implemented in all youth centres. Lastly, the deployment of the **Québec pluriel project in four new regions** will help young people from cultural communities and visible minorities to take their place in society and in the job market.

The government intends to enhance the participation of young people in society in order to help them succeed in finding their rightful place. To do this, it will create a position of **Citizen Participation Agent** in the regional youth forums. It also plans to set up a representation and joint-action committee of young people from cultural communities and visible minorities. The extension and enhancement of financial backing given to the **Place aux jeunes du Québec** program will at last provide support to communities most affected by the migration of young people.

Young people's success in Québec society depends not only on the government's ability to improve the complementarity and cohesion of services provided to them, but equally on other generations' involvement in their development. To improve support provided to young people, the government is relying particularly on the **implementation of Engagement jeunesse**, which will facilitate access to services that they need, as well as transition between such services. The **renewal and enhancement of the Fonds régionaux d'investissement jeunesse** is another beacon measure that will provide the regions with the financial resources to bring a variety of youth projects to fruition. **An on-line**

mentoring program, set up using new technology, will better equip young people to make enlightened career choices.

During the consultation exercise, young people showed a strong interest in sustainable development. The government has made this form of development one of its major priorities. To give concrete form to this shared commitment, the government will constitute, in collaboration with the private sector, an endowment fund to finance **bursaries for excellence in sustainable development** that will enable us to broaden our expertise in this field.

Lastly, collaboration with the various actors working with or representing young people is indispensable for putting into practice the measures outlined in the Strategy. To this end, the Government of Québec will create a committee of Youth Action Strategy partners to assess it in following up the Strategy's implication and evaluation.

A CONCERTED STRATEGY THAT TIES IN WITH GOVERNMENT INTERVENTION

Through the 2006-2009 Youth Action Strategy, the government will maintain, put in place and upgrade measures aimed at young people, for a total investment of more than \$1 billion. In addition to the 14 beacon measures, the Strategy contains 66 further measures aimed at young people. In a difficult budgetary context, the government's choice to prioritize young people is a measure of the great importance it attaches to youth. Furthermore, out of this amount, the efforts the government

is devoting to new or enhanced measures alone represent investments of more than \$110 million.

The consultation exercise also allowed the government to be certain of or pinpoint a number of important concerns for Québec youth. Among other issues that came up were sustainable development, family realities, equality of the sexes, and the financing of postsecondary education. These issues involve the government directly. In this respect, a number of measures have already been or will be implemented by various government departments.

Sustainable development

The Government of Québec has put forward a pragmatic, rallying approach in Québec's Sustainable Development Plan. This plan is based on an innovative legislative framework that commits all government departments and public organizations. It is action-oriented and involves adopting a sustainable development strategy that will bring the government to modify its practices and attain targets, while being accountable for the results obtained.

The government is counting on the involvement of young people in all regions in order to achieve Québec's Sustainable Development Plan. To discover and take account of their concerns and ambitions, the government met them during the public consultation tour on Québec's Sustainable Development Plan. Through this process, the government discovered a host of initiatives being carried out by young people who are contributing to improving the well-being of their community.

Family realities

To support families and young parents, in January 2006 the government introduced the Québec Parental Insurance Plan. Since then, parents have benefited from financial assistance at the time of a child's birth or adoption and can devote time to the child during the first months of life. This plan innovated by providing for leave exclusive to the other parent. More and more fathers, especially among younger parents, are involving themselves more fully in the education and care given to children.

The government has also passed the *Educational Childcare Act*. This act promotes the quality of services and fosters the harmonious development of the service offering by taking into account parents' needs, and by making it easier for them in particular to reconcile their parental and professional responsibilities. Temporary, contractual and atypical-hours jobs affect young people and create new childcare needs. Moreover, our objective of providing 200,000 subsidized daycare spaces will be attained by spring 2006.

The review of financial assistance provided to families has given rise to the Child Assistance Measure, designed to improve the living conditions of families and children and favouring equity between people with children and those without. This new universal measure contributes in concrete fashion to improving families' well-being. Other targeted fiscal and financial measures have been added, such as tax credits for childcare expenses and adoption expenses, and for infertility treatment. Although not addressed solely to families, the Work Premium is also contributing to improving the living conditions of low-or average-income families.

Equality between women and men

The full participation of all women and men in political, economic, social and cultural life must remain central to the government's preoccupations. In order to take account of the new, diversified realities of women and men of all ages, the Secrétariat à la condition féminine, attached to the Ministère de la Famille, des Aînés et de la Condition féminine, is developing a policy aimed at achieving equality between men and women and an action plan for implementing the policy. Youth represents one of the guiding principles that will steer its orientations.

Financing of postsecondary education

In concert with the Council of the Federation, the Government of Québec will continue its representations to the Government of Canada to restore funding for postsecondary studies to the 1995 level. The sums obtained through the government's action will go towards the financing of colleges and universities. The Québec government also committed in 2003 to maintaining the freeze on tuition fees in universities for the duration of the present mandate.

The actions of the Québec government set out above bear witness to its sensitivity to issues that affect youth. In this respect, its actions must be considered as an integral part of government intervention in youth issues. Combined with the 2006-2009 Youth Action Strategy, they will contribute to ensuring that young people are fully involved in their own success.

Young people fully involved in their own success

Improving the health and well-being of young people

Promoting improvement in the health and well-being of young people will, without a doubt, contribute to increasing their chances of success. Far too many young people still do not have the tools they need to grow, develop and achieve their full potential. Today, many young people are adopting harmful habits that threaten both their quality of life and life expectancy. Others cannot find the support they need in their environment to develop fully and, as a result, encounter difficulties fitting into society. Finally, some young people are so distressed that they decide to end their lives.

With its 2006-2009 Youth Action Strategy, the Government of Québec has made a commitment to improve the health and well-being of young people through actions intended to foster the development of personal and social skills as well as the adoption of healthy lifestyles, while providing more support to those who encounter difficulties fitting into society and continuing the fight against suicide.

PROMOTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF PERSONAL AND SOCIAL SKILLS AND THE ADOPTION OF HEALTHY LIFESTYLES

Too many young people do not take part in enough physical activity or do not eat the five portions of fruits and vegetables recommended every day. Many of them smoke or start drinking alcohol or taking drugs at an early age, while others become sexually active while still quite young. As a result, the government of Québec, in cooperation with all the stakeholders working with young people, has proposed measures to:

- Ensure that schools are more effective in promoting the adoption of healthy lifestyles and the development of personal and social skills by young people;
- Ensure better understanding of the phenomenon of hypersexualization.

Target: To ensure that schools more effectively promote the adoption of healthy lifestyles and the development of personal and social skills by young people.

MEASURE: ELIMINATE JUNK FOOD IN SCHOOLS.

The government will propose an overall nutrition policy for school boards, primary and secondary schools, as well as CEGEPs and universities that will enable them to adapt their procedures and offer young people healthy nutrition.

Sponsors: Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux; Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport.

Partners: Ministère de l'Agriculture, des Pêcheries et de l'Alimentation; Fédération des commissions scolaires du Québec; Institut national de santé publique du Québec; Fédération des cégeps; Conference of Rectors and Principals of Québec Universities.

Results indicators:

- Number of facilities that have taken measures to ensure healthy nutrition, including the adoption of a nutrition policy for the school environment;
- Percentage of young people with healthy eating habits (eating fruit, vegetables, cereals and whole grain products and meat or meat substitutes)

Target: To ensure that schools more effectively promote the adoption of healthy lifestyles and the development of personal and social skills by young people.

MEASURE: IMPLEMENT THE *ÉCOLE EN SANTÉ* "HEALTHY SCHOOL" APPROACH.

The "healthy school" approach is intended to ensure the consistency, complementarity and continuity of actions taken in primary and secondary schools to promote health and ensure prevention.

Thus, the government will focus on promoting healthy lifestyles in schools and, in keeping with the education reform, the development of personal, social and scholastic abilities. This is a joint approach involving the school, the family and the community.

Sponsors: Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux; Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport.

Partners: Institut national de santé publique du Québec; Association québécoise d'établissements de santé et de services sociaux; health and social services agencies; regional branches of the Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport; health and social services centres, school boards.

Results indicators:

- Number of schools that have implemented the "healthy school" approach;
- Number of young people who have adopted healthy lifestyles (nutrition, physical activity and no smoking).

In order to **better understand the phenomenon of hypersexualization**, the Minister of Families, Seniors and the Status of Women, Carole Thériault, has instructed the *Conseil du statut de la femme* to prepare an analysis of the situation. The Conseil must also suggest actions for supporting young people in their efforts to practice sexuality that is healthy, respectful, responsible and based on egalitarian relationships between the genders. The *Conseil permanent de la jeunesse* will take part in this analysis by sitting on the advisory committee established to do this work.

PROVIDING BETTER SUPPORT TO YOUNG PEOPLE HAVING DIFFICULTY INTEGRATING INTO SOCIETY

Many young people face problems related to violence, delinquency, behavioural problems and even homelessness. From the outset of their development, they encounter major difficulties that prevent them from fulfilling themselves. This is demonstrated by the large number of reports submitted in keeping with the *Youth Protection Act* and the numerous requests submitted to both health and social services centres and youth centres. Too many young people experience difficulties and do not receive the support they need to find fulfillment. In order to help them, the Government of Québec is proposing measures to:

- Improve the services offered to children and families under the *Youth Protection Act*;
- Better prevent the homelessness of young people.

Target: To improve services offered to children and families under the *Youth Protection Act*.

MEASURE: TO AMEND THE *YOUTH PROTECTION ACT*.

The government confirms its intention to amend the *Youth Protection Act* so as to improve the protection of children for which it assumes responsibility when their safety or development is threatened. Essentially, these amendments will:

- Ensure the exceptional character of the government's intervention, specifically by defining the grounds for intervention more precisely and by developing formal criteria to be used for assessing reports;
- Foster recourse to consensual approaches, in order to involve parents and children more in resolving their problems;
- Foster continuity and stability for the children placed in care to ensure that they do not have to deal with multiple moves;
- Reconcile the protection of children and the respect for privacy;
- Modernize judicial processes.

Sponsors: Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux and Ministère de la Justice.

Partners: Health and social services agencies; youth protection managers; youth centres; health and social services centres; Chambre de la jeunesse; Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse; Association des centres jeunesse du Québec; Association des établissements de santé et de services sociaux.

Results indicators:

- Number of reports retained;
- Number of moves experienced by children taken into care under the *Youth Protection Act*.

In order to **better prevent homelessness among young people**, during the 2006-2007 year, the government will propose a framework for preventing and eliminating homelessness. It will specifically deal with the question of homeless youth and youths at risk of becoming homeless. The measures adopted will be implemented by the various government departments and agencies that intervene with the young people in question.

COMBATING YOUTH SUICIDE MORE EFFECTIVELY

In Québec, suicide is one of the principal causes of mortality among young people between the ages of 15 and 29. Certain groups, such as young offenders and young people with mental problems, young people from certain Native groups and young homosexuals, are particularly affected by this problem.

The scope and complexity of the problem require an overall intervention based on the commitment of stakeholders in the health and social services as well as those who work with young people. Fortunately, the factors that predispose young people to suicide and the means for acting in a proactive manner are better known today. Thus, the Government of Québec intends to continue and enhance its efforts by proposing measures to:

- Further encourage those working with young people to get more involved in suicide prevention;
- Fight more effectively against suicide in the case of identified groups of young people at risk.

Target: To further encourage those working with young people to get more involved in suicide prevention.

MEASURE: TO DEPLOY SENTINEL NETWORKS.

The Government of Québec will invest \$2.4 million over the next three years to intensify the deployment of sentinel networks in youth environments.

Sentinels are individuals who, as a result of their work, their volunteer involvement or the place they hold in their community, maintain close relationships with young people. Young people are likely to trust these sentinels, who are thus in a good position to help them.

The training given to these individuals will enable them to recognize signs of distress in young people, identify those who are at risk and direct them to appropriate resources.

The environments targeted by these measures include: high schools, CEGEPs, universities, youth employment centres and organizations that deal with street kids.

Sponsor: Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux.

Partners: Health and social services agencies; health and social services centres; Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport; Fédération des commissions scolaires du Québec; Fédération des cégeps; Conference of Rectors and Principals of Québec Universities; schools; CEGEPs; universities; community organizations.

Results indicators:

- Number of sentinels trained for youth environments;
- Suicide rate of boys and girls.

Target: To more effectively combat suicide among young people at risk.

MEASURE: TO DEPLOY MULTIDISCIPLINARY SUICIDE PREVENTION TEAMS IN ALL YOUTH CENTRES.

The government will invest \$3 million over the next three years to ensure that each youth centre has a suicide intervention team in keeping with the suicide intervention protocol. The members of these teams are trained mental health professionals who specialize in evaluating suicide potential and intervening with young people at risk.

To date, almost half of the youth centres can rely on such a team.

Sponsor: Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux.

Partners: Health and social services agencies; youth centres.

Results indicators:

- Suicide rate of young people in youth centres;
- Number of youth centres with a multidisciplinary team.

In the case of young homosexuals and young Native people, the government is of the opinion that it is preferable to wait for the conclusions of certain work groups before proposing specific measures to fight against suicide.

Thus, it will study the recommendations of the *Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse* with respect to preventing suicide in young gays and lesbians. These recommendations will be based on studies of homophobia undertaken by representatives of the government and the community. It should be noted that this group has a specific mandate to examine existing institutional measures so as to find means to better respond to the needs observed. The Commission will release its report in 2006.

The government will also analyze the recommendations made by the *Forum sur le développement social et économique des Premières Nations* with respect to preventing suicide among young Native people. This forum will be held in 2006. The recommendations will be analyzed in partnership with the *Table de concertation sur les problématiques de crises sociales dans les communautés des Premières Nations du Québec*.

Young people fully involved in their own success

Fostering the educational success of young people

In order to preserve its rank among prosperous countries, Québec must offer every young Quebecer the possibility of acquiring training that is adapted to his/her needs or, in other words, which will enable the young person to develop his/her skills and hold highly qualified jobs in the knowledge economy. The educational success of our young people is, in this respect, a strategic issue for the future of Québec.

While most young people complete their schooling successfully, others encounter particular obstacles. In fact, some leave school before receiving their high school diploma or any other qualifications, which are essential if they are to enter the job market.

The educational success of young Quebecers depends on the concrete commitment of a number of stakeholders: first, the young people and their parents; then those working in the school network; finally, members of the community and the government. Everyone must work together to provide better chances of success in an environment where young people are encouraged to surpass themselves and knowledge is valued.

With its 2006-2009 Youth Action Strategy, the Government of Québec will increase its activities pertaining to the educational success of young people by proposing measures to further prevent dropping out, opening the school more to the environment and maintaining and developing the quality of postsecondary education.

BETTER PREVENTING STUDENTS FROM DROPPING OUT OF SCHOOL

Dropping out, lagging behind and discontinuity in schooling are all concerns. For example, in 2003 2004, 26.9% of the students in the general program at the secondary level were behind the other students in their age group.²

Moreover, there is still a gap between boys and girls when it comes to lagging behind, learning the language of instruction and obtaining a high school diploma.

Based on these observations, the government of Québec is proposing measures to:

- Adapt training to the needs of young people and provide more support for students with difficulties.

² Québec, Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport, *Indicateurs de l'éducation*, the Ministère, 2005, p. 65.

³ The fluctuation in the dropout rate cannot be attributed solely to the implementation of diversified paths. Rather, the dropout rate should be considered one index among several.

Target: To adapt training to the needs of young people and better support students with difficulties.

MEASURE: TO OFFER A DIVERSITY OF LEARNING PATHS IN HIGH SCHOOL.

The government diversifies the educational options in Cycle Two of high school to adapt them to the needs of young people.

Students can choose a learning path that focuses on employment or a general learning path.

The learning path that focuses on employment, which will start in September 2007, will include two components: training in preparation for work and training leading to a semi-skilled trade. The first type of training will extend over a period of three years, while the second will take only one year to complete. Both types of training, which are offered to young people 15 years or older, will take the form of alternating work-study programs. This will allow students to follow both general and practical training courses.

As for the general learning path, students will have to choose between the usual path and an "applied path," which offers an education focused primarily on concrete learning and that better meets the needs of some students. This new path will notably require that students embark on a mandatory career-orientation path, and that they undertake activities involving technological and scientific applications.

Optional courses, for their part, will allow students, for example, to explore vocational education and familiarize themselves with entrepreneurship. Accordingly, the tools developed in the context of the Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge will be among the strategies deployed.

Through these measures, the government will act on its objective to relax the school curriculum for students and offer them a greater range of choices.

Sponsor: Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport; school boards.

Results indicators:

- School dropout rate for boys and girls³;
- Percentage of students in general education at the secondary level leaving with a diploma or qualification.

Target: To adapt training to the needs of young people and better support students with difficulties.

MEASURE: TO PROVIDE GREATER SUPPORT TO STUDENTS WITH HANDICAPS, SOCIAL MALADJUSTMENTS OR LEARNING DIFFICULTIES.

Increased assistance to students with handicaps, social maladjustments or learning difficulties was the priority for the Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport during the latest round of negotiations on collective agreements with teachers. The agreement reached will allow these students to receive better support and, more importantly, speedier intervention.

At the end of the next three years, this agreement will have made it possible to recruit some 1,200 remedial and resource teachers, and to hire support professionals or keep them employed despite declining enrolment.

Sponsor: Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport; school boards.

Results indicator:

- Ratio personnel/students with handicaps, social maladjustments or learning difficulties.

Target: To adapt training to the needs of young people and better support students with difficulties.

MEASURE: TO INCREASE TEACHING TIME AT THE ELEMENTARY LEVEL.

The government has increased teaching time at the elementary level from 23 hours and 30 minutes to 25 hours per week. This will give students more time to learn English as a second language, beginning in the first grade. Time spent on physical education and health, and the arts, will also be increased.

Sponsor: Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport; school boards.

ENSURING THAT SCHOOLS ARE MORE OPEN TO THEIR COMMUNITIES

School is an important focal point for the vast majority of young people in Québec. Since it is often the hub of a community, a school's main mission is to provide young people with quality educational services which will allow them to develop to their full potential and acquire knowledge and skills. Schools must also be involved in the development of their communities.

Based on the 2003-2004 school year, it is estimated that young Quebecers spend an average of 15.6 years in school. This illustrates the importance of making the school a true "living environment." To this end, we must improve access to school facilities

outside normal class hours, whether for cultural, sporting or community-related purposes. This will strengthen the community's - and its young people's - attachment to the school and also contribute to young people's educational success.

In keeping with the spirit of the community-focused school and to advocate greater openness, the Government of Québec is proposing a measure to:

- Ensure that schools are more open to their community and that they become service hubs for young people.

Target: To ensure that schools are more open to their community and that they become service hubs for young people.

MEASURE: TO SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE COMMUNITY SCHOOL.

The government agrees to follow up on the report on the development of the community school as it relates to certain actions to help support the school environment in this sense. These include:

- The publication of a reference document designed to help schools and communities support the development of the community school;
- The production of an overview of the situation pertaining to the grouping of public services in educational institutions so as to better determine their benefits and limits and share positive experiences about the opening of a school to the community.

Sponsor: Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport.

Partners: Fédération des commissions scolaires du Québec; Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux; Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale; Ministère des Affaires municipales et des Régions; Ministère de la Culture et des Communications; Ministère de l'Immigration et des Communautés culturelles; municipalities; regional county municipalities.

ENSURING THE ACCESSIBILITY AND QUALITY OF HIGHER EDUCATION

During consultations conducted in the context of the Youth Action Strategy, young people repeatedly mentioned the importance they attach to the quality and funding of higher education, particularly as this pertains to a knowledge economy.

Indeed, the accessibility and quality of higher education are key factors of success for Québec's young people. Québec youth is evolving against a background of economic globalization whereby partners and competitors are found in every continent and where universities and colleges must compete with the best.

For this reason, it is crucial that we do everything, when it comes to higher education, to reinforce measures needed to ensure that young people are well-prepared for the job market and that they can maintain their professional qualifications. Higher education is an added value for young people. It's worth noting that more than 70% of the jobs to be created between now and 2007 will require a post-secondary diploma or degree⁴.

This is why the Government of Québec has made higher education one of its priorities. The government's commitment is well illustrated by the fact it has invested an additional \$457 million in higher education over the last three years, as well as funding capital investments that will total some \$1 billion by 2010.

In addition to this increased activity, the government, in concert with its student, college,

university, private and union partners, is fighting to have the federal government restore its contribution to funding for higher education. The renewed federal-provincial collaboration promoted by the Government of Québec aims to enable the government to increase the level of its activities by adopting new measures that would result in substantial investments in the following fields:

- Renewal of teaching staff in universities and colleges, leading to greater support for young people at, for example, the master's and Ph.D. levels;
- International recruitment by universities of outstanding academics, which would contribute to a thriving research culture and also enable young Québec researchers to make their mark, in turn, on the international scene;
- Increased school enrolment and, by extension, a larger student population, most notably at the bachelor's level in university;
- Updating of DEC technical programs, which require that equipment and infrastructure be upgraded;
- Increased enrolment in the field of health-care studies, particularly in medicine and nursing, which require significant resources, in reflection of the importance that Québec society places on health care;
- Linking of technical training and technological transfer, to the benefit of young people.

The implementation of such measures presupposes an appropriate recurring federal reinvestment within the framework of the Canada Social Transfer.

4 Government of Canada. *Job Futures: The World of Work* (2002) p. 9 (<http://www.jobfutures.ca/en/brochure/index.html>).

Young people fully involved in their own success

Fostering young people's entry into the workforce

Entering the job market is of particular importance to young people. For many young people, indeed, joining the workforce is one of the principal ways by which they can participate fully in the development of Québec society.

Over the next few years, the demographic challenge will transform the working world. A large segment of the population is poised to retire, and young people, who are fewer in number than previous generations, will be called upon to take their place.

By implementing the 2006-2009 Youth Action Strategy, the Government of Québec will be able to help young people better prepare for their participation in the job market and better support those experiencing difficulties in this regard.

HELPING YOUNG PEOPLE TO BE BETTER PREPARED FOR THE JOB MARKET

Obtaining a diploma or degree remains the best measure of a successful transition from school to work. For the years 2004 to 2008, Emploi-Québec forecasts show that 640,000 jobs will have to be filled. In this respect, professions requiring occupational or technical skills will provide excellent hiring potential.

It remains true, however, that vocational and technical training does not attract sufficient young people to meet the demands of the labour market. In order to correct this situation, many actors will be called on to play a part: first, young people, who must make a career choice; second, their parents, who exercise considerable influence over the their children's career choices; and, finally, school staff, who help guide young people through a range of possible career options.

Québec is also facing an entrepreneurial shortage. Since 2000, it has remained below the Canadian average in terms of business start-ups. This is true even though recent data shows that, since the Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge was launched, young people are showing an increasing willingness to become entrepreneurs. In this sense, better preparing young people for the transition to the labour market also involves fostering a culture of entrepreneurship and developing attitudes and skills that are profitable not only to the entrepreneurs of

tomorrow, but also to future employers and to all citizens.

Young people injure themselves more frequently than do other workers. For this reason, the government is more concerned about the health and safety of young workers than it is of older workers. Needless to say, employers have an important role to play in this respect, just as the educational system can help to better prepare young people.

Consequently, the Government of Québec is proposing measures to:

- Develop better vocational training;
- Reinforce a culture of entrepreneurship in Québec;
- Improve training in occupational health and safety.

Target: To develop better vocational training.

**MEASURE: TO BETTER PROMOTE THE VALUE OF VOCATIONAL TRAINING
AMONG YOUNG PEOPLE, PARENTS AND SCHOOL STAFF.**

The government will spend an additional \$1.2 million over the next three years to raise the profile of the various trades related to vocational education and related employment opportunities.

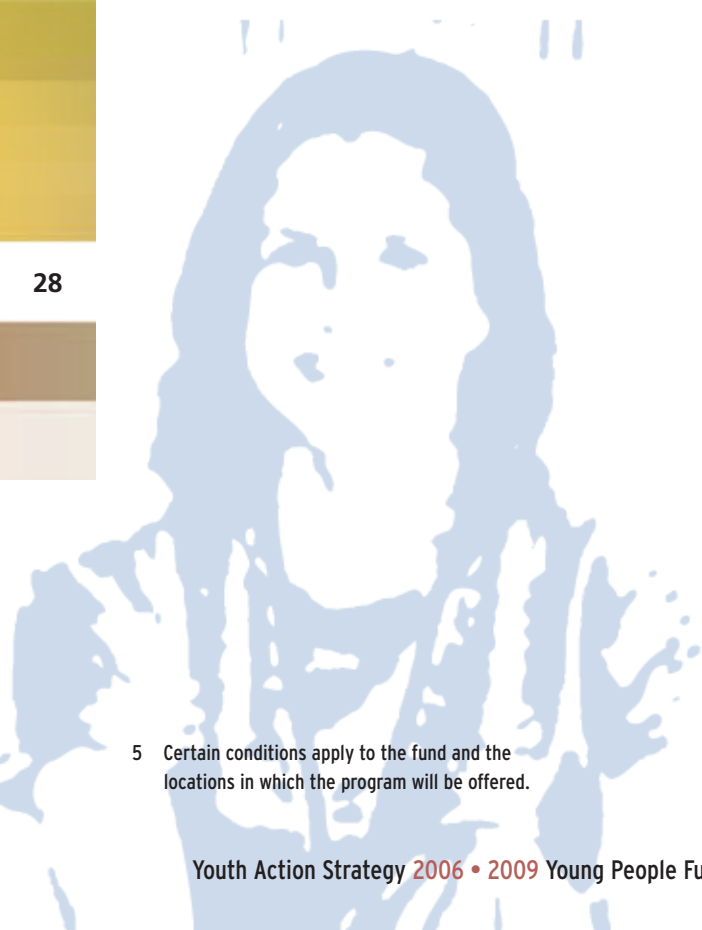
Activities undertaken for this purpose will more specifically target parents, young people and school staff. These activities will take a variety of forms, such as travelling theatrical shows about career choices and the possibility of practicing a specialized trade.

Sponsor: Fédération des commissions scolaires du Québec.

Partners: Secrétariat à la jeunesse; ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport.

Results indicator:

- Number of young people under age 20 enrolled in vocational education at the secondary level.



Target: To reinforce a culture of entrepreneurship in Québec.

MEASURE: TO EXTEND AND UPDATE THE YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP CHALLENGE.

Encouraged by the participation of some 50,000 young people and socioeconomic stakeholders in the Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge program, the government will invest more than \$17 million to extend and update the program through March 2009. It was originally meant to end in March 2007.

This money will primarily be used to:

- Add twelve youth entrepreneurship agents and seven agents to promote cooperative entrepreneurship, primarily in the regions;
- Develop pedagogical tools in entrepreneurship for the Anglophone educational network;
- Form partnerships with business networks to encourage the development of an entrepreneurial culture and foster the emergence of a new generation of entrepreneurs.

The Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge consists of a series of measures to develop a culture of entrepreneurship in young people. It is carried out in close collaboration with the leaders in the Québec youth entrepreneurship network.

Sponsor: Secrétariat à la jeunesse.

Partners: Organizations in the Québec youth entrepreneurship network; Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport; Ministère du Développement économique, de l'Innovation et de l'Exportation.

Results indicators:

- Number of young people reached;
- Number of teachers made aware of the entrepreneurship culture;
- Number of socioeconomic stakeholders met;
- Change in the intent of young people to become entrepreneurs

Target: To reinforce a culture of entrepreneurship in Québec.

MEASURE: TO HELP ESTABLISH A SUPPORT FUND FOR YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS⁵.

The government will work with Mouvement Desjardins to promote the *CRÉAVENIR DESJARDINS* program to support the projects of entrepreneurs aged 18 to 35 who are not eligible for traditional funding. Participating Caisses will make a limited fund available to these young people, which may lead to an interest-free loan or a grant to start or maintain the operating funds for their business. Other partners will become involved by providing promoters with the tools necessary to the success of their project. The government will contribute \$175,000 over the next three years.

Sponsor: Mouvement Desjardins.

Partners: Fédération des caisses Desjardins du Québec; Association des centres locaux de développement du Québec; Fédération des coopératives de développement régional du Québec; Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport; Secrétariat à la jeunesse.

Results indicators:

- Number of supported projects submitted by entrepreneurs aged 18 to 35.

Target: To improve training in occupational health and safety.

MEASURE: TO DEVELOP AN ACTION PLAN DESIGNED TO IMPROVE TRAINING IN OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY.

The government is announcing that it is forming a committee to develop an action plan to continue actions undertaken in elementary, secondary and college educational institutions related to occupational health and safety.

Sponsor: Secrétariat à la jeunesse.

Partners: Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport; Commission de la santé et de la sécurité au travail; union environment; employer environment; Institut de recherche Robert-Sauvé en santé et sécurité au travail.

5 Certain conditions apply to the fund and the locations in which the program will be offered.

BETTER SUPPORTING THE TRANSITION FROM SCHOOL TO WORK AMONG YOUNG PEOPLE EXPERIENCING SPECIFIC PROBLEMS ENTERING THE JOB MARKET

It is becoming increasingly necessary for young people to have a high school diploma in order to enter the job market. This situation is particularly worrisome given that many young people between the ages of 16 and 24 haven't obtained their diploma.

Some of them are experiencing specific problems. This is particularly true for young people in youth centres and those with disabilities.

Moreover, whether they have a diploma or not, young immigrants and young people from visible minorities also have problems making the transition from school to work, as illustrated by the fact that unemployment rates for these youths are higher than they are for other groups. Consequently, they must be able to count on better support for their transition to the labour market.

The Government of Québec will therefore propose measures to:

- Offer a range of cohesive and ongoing services for young people who are experiencing specific problems.

Target: To offer a range of cohesive and ongoing services to young people who are experiencing specific problems.

MEASURE: TO ESTABLISH A SUPPORT PROGRAM FOR YOUNG PEOPLE AGED 16 TO 24 EXPERIENCING SPECIFIC PROBLEMS.

The government will set up a large support system to focus on personal, social and professional autonomy for young people aged 16 to 24 who are at risk of dropping out, who have dropped out or who are unemployed.

Alternative Jeunesse

The *Alternative Jeunesse* program, the engine of this support system, will ensure that all young Quebecers with the required skills will be able to have a job, return to school or participate in activities in community organizations. This will make it possible to deploy a global intervention approach that focuses as much on measures, programs and services offered as on the needs and status of young people.

A support measure for young people aged 18 to 24

Based on experiences of participants in the *Solidarité jeunesse* program, the Government of Québec plans to apply a new support measure for young people aged 18 to 24 and to develop it in collaboration with the *Réseau des carrefours jeunesse-emploi du Québec* as part of this network. This measure will affect all young people in this age group who are fit to work, but are well outside the labour market, and those who have been receiving employment assistance benefits for several months. Special attention will also be paid to young single mothers in the same age bracket who are receiving employment assistance.

A support measure for young people aged 16 and 17

Still with the same objective of supporting young people, the government will develop an additional measure for 16 and 17 year olds in collaboration with the *Réseau des carrefours jeunesse-emploi du Québec*. To prevent students from resorting to employment assistance, the government will rely on intervention that focuses on keeping students in school, ensuring that students at risk of dropping out have a career path, and on motivating those who have already dropped out, by making various activities available to them (exploring the job market, first working experience, internship). The sum of \$10 million additional dollars will be invested in this project over the next three years.

Alliances between partners

To improve the continuity of public services available to young people, strategic alliances will be formed at the local level between government, public, private and community partners through *Engagement jeunesse*, an interdepartmental agreement coordinated by the Secrétariat à la jeunesse (see the *Improving the support offered to young people orientation*). In this context, the government will monitor the objectives defined in this agreement within the framework of the National Strategy to Combat Poverty and Social Exclusion. The government will also establish necessary links to measures or programs, such as *Qualification des jeunes* or *J'embarque quand ça me ressemble*, designed for young people aged 16 to 24.

Sponsor: Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale; Secrétariat à la jeunesse; carrefours jeunesse-emploi.

Partners: Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport; Community organizations; Fédération des commissions scolaires du Québec.

Results indicators:

- Number of young people receiving employment assistance benefits;
- Duration of employment assistance benefits for those aged 18 to 24.

Target: To offer a range of cohesive and ongoing services to young people who are experiencing specific problems.

MEASURE: TO DEPLOY THE QUÉBEC PLURIEL PROGRAM ACROSS FOUR NEW AREAS OF QUÉBEC.

Encouraged by the learning experienced gained through the *Québec pluriel* project, the Government of Québec has announced that it will invest \$1.2 million over three years to support the development of similar projects in the regions of Sherbrooke, Laval, Longueuil and Gatineau.

This investment is part of the interdepartmental agreement to encourage the integration of immigrants and people belonging to visible minorities into the labour market and results from the lessons learned from the *Québec pluriel* action research.

Québec pluriel, a service provided by Emploi-Québec, facilitates social integration and job entry for those aged 16 to 35 from cultural communities and those aged 16 to 24 from visible minorities. Implemented projects allow participants to receive the support of a regular or on-line mentor, receive advice on career choices and participate in job search workshops, personal or social training, and familiarize themselves with Québec life.

Sponsor: Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale; Emploi-Québec.

Partners: Secrétariat à la jeunesse; Community organizations.

Results indicator:

- Number of young people from cultural communities or visible minorities reached in these territories.

Target: To offer a range of cohesive and ongoing services to young people who are experiencing specific problems.

MEASURE: TO EXTEND THE *QUALIFICATION DES JEUNES* PROGRAM TO ALL YOUTH CENTRES.

The government will transform the *Qualification des jeunes* project into a regular program and extend it to all youth centres. The government will invest \$6.6 million to this end over the next three years. The program is designed for young people aged 16 years and over who have spent time in youth centres and who require special support to undertake a project of specific benefit to their future.

The program aims to prepare them to become self-sufficient and ensure that they are qualified to improve their chances of integrating harmoniously into Québec society. The support provided by people assigned to this three-year program will continue for up to one year after the targeted young person has left the youth centre.

To prevent any overlap, the government will ensure that measures designed to support youths aged 16 to 24 complement this program.

Sponsor: Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux.

Partners: Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale; Association des centres jeunesse du Québec.

Results indicators:

- Number of young people in youth centres participating in the program.

Target: To offer a range of cohesive and ongoing services to young people who are experiencing specific problems.

MEASURE: TO PROVIDE MORE EFFECTIVE SUPPORT TO YOUNG PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES.

The government wants to better plan the transition of young people with disabilities from school to working life and the labour market. By increasing these young people's potential for social and professional integration, the government will reduce the likelihood that parents of children with disabilities will be forced to quit their jobs to provide the necessary support to their children.

The *Entente de complémentarité des services entre le réseau de l'éducation et le réseau de la santé et des services sociaux* develops individual service plans to meet the needs of the individuals. These plans are special tools designed to facilitate the transition, and may involve such varied factors as the use of adapted transportation and recourse to various resources necessary for social participation of young people with disabilities.

Sponsor: Office des personnes handicapées du Québec; Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux; Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport; Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale.

Partners: Health and social service agencies; regional offices of the Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport; regional offices of the Office des personnes handicapées du Québec; health and social service centres; rehabilitation centres for people with intellectual impairments; rehabilitation centres for people with physical disabilities; school boards; local employment centres; youth centres.

Results indicator:

- Number of young people with disabilities supported during their transition from school to working life and the labour market.

Young people fully involved in their own success

Enhancing young people's participation in society

The active participation of young people in society is not only a measure of success for them, but also an asset for the community as a whole. Many young people are involved in the future of their community. They look for ways to contribute to the well-being and development of Québec and its regions, while working on projects that are close to their hearts. Many young people have been recognized for the excellence of their involvement and work in Québec and around the world.

To ensure that young people from the various regions in Québec can live in communities that meet their expectations, it is important that all areas of Québec be able to sustain a thriving population. The migration of young people from the regions to urban centres is a worrisome situation that requires a response on the part of the regions and the government.

It goes without saying that one's desire to be involved in one's home community goes hand in hand with a desire to be open to the world. Young people want to better understand international issues and participate in debates that concern them.

With the 2006-2009 Youth Action Strategy, the government hopes to increase the involvement of young Quebecers in their communities, encourage them to stay in, return to or settle in the regions, and also enhance their participation in the world at large.

ENHANCING YOUNG PEOPLE'S PARTICIPATION IN THEIR COMMUNITY

Young people's involvement in their communities can take many forms: volunteer work, participating in various support groups or sites of influence, such as pressure groups, advocacy groups and advisory bodies. In Canada, among all age groups, young people aged 15 to 19 are those who perform the highest rate of volunteer work. It should also be noted that, in Québec, voter turnout among young people has been declining steadily since 1960.

To enhance the participation of young people in their communities, the government must take a variety of actions. It must ensure that groups formed to represent young people are truly representative of their diversity, and it must ensure that youth involvement is better recognized. The government must also encourage young people to participate more fully as citizens by better coordinating the work of those involved with young people in the area of citizenship. Finally, it must ensure that information pertaining to the most meaningful of these interventions be more easily accessible.

In the aftermath of the consultation which it undertook, the government is particularly concerned about the involvement of young people from cultural communities and visible minorities in their communities. To this end, it wants to encourage fair representation of this group in youth and governmental decision-making groups.

The Government of Québec, in cooperation with all of the players involved in youth issues, is proposing measures to:

- Support the representation of Québec's young people;
- Better recognize the involvement of young citizens;
- Encourage young people to participate more actively as citizens.

Target: To support the representation of Québec's young people.

MEASURE: TO SUPPORT REGIONAL YOUTH FORUMS.

Regional youth forums are among the government's preferred intervening entities in matters related to youth. For this reason, the government is extending its partnership with these forums, which were initially to end in 2007, through 2009, and is earmarking \$5.8 million for this purpose.

Over the next few years, the Government of Québec wishes that:

- The relationships that exist between the youth forums and the regional councils of elected officials intensify to the extent that each of the organizations takes account of its actions in developing its action plan or its five-year development plan;
- Young people in Native, cultural or Anglophone communities have increased representation in the forums;
- Each forum includes young people from across the entire region.

Sponsors: Secrétariat à la jeunesse; regional youth forums

Partners: Regional councils of elected officials; Ministère des Affaires municipales et des Régions.

Results indicators:

- Representation of young people in regional youth forums;
- Number of aligned action plans and five-year development plans produced by regional councils of elected officials and the regional youth forums.

Target: To support the representation of Québec's young people.

**MEASURE: TO ESTABLISH TWO NEW REGIONAL YOUTH FORUMS
IN MONTRÉGIE.**

By investing \$795,000 over the next three years, the government will allow the regional councils of elected officials in Vallée-du-Haut-Saint-Laurent, Longueuil and Montérégie Est to form their own regional youth forums.

Sponsor: Secrétariat à la jeunesse.

Partners: Montérégie regional youth forum; regional councils of elected officials in Longueuil, Vallée-du-Haut-Saint-Laurent and Montérégie Est.

Target: To support the representation of Québec's young people.

**MEASURE: TO SET UP A COMMITTEE TO REPRESENT AND
CONSULT WITH YOUTH FROM CULTURAL COMMUNITIES
AND VISIBLE MINORITIES.**

By forming this representation and consultation committee, the government will make it possible for groups of young people to make their concerns and needs better known. It will also associate this working group to public debates and discussions that concern Québec youth. Finally, it will ensure that the committee reflects the different regional realities and that it forms relationships with organizations devoted to youth and those that help to integrate young immigrants and members of cultural communities. This will be achieved, most notably, through the organization of an intercultural event. In this way, it follows up the concerns raised in the report on the Consultation on the Full Participation of Black Communities in Québec Society.

Sponsor: Secrétariat à la jeunesse.

Partners: Ministère de l'Immigration et des Communautés culturelles; cultural community organizations ; youth organizations.

To support groups that represent young people from Québec, the government is mandating a working group to provide recommendations for modernizing the *Conseil permanent de la jeunesse*. Among others, the working group will consist of representatives from the *Conseil permanent de la jeunesse*, the *Secrétariat à la jeunesse* and groups that intervene with young people. It will primarily examine the composition of the Conseil, its representatives, the lengths of its members' mandates, its mandate and its mechanisms for renewal. If applicable, the government will make changes to the *Conseil permanent de la jeunesse*.

Target: To better recognize the involvement of young citizens.

**MEASURE: TO LAUNCH A CONTEST THAT RECOGNIZES YOUNG
PEOPLE'S INVOLVEMENT AS CITIZENS.**

The government will set up a contest to recognize the involvement of young people. Inspired by the *Envie d'agir* program in France, it expects to recognize the creativity, daring and talent of young people that are involved in their community. This contest will highlight the social or other accomplishments of general interest resulting from young people's involvement in their community.

The government will invest \$600,000 to set up this contest.

Sponsor: Secrétariat à la jeunesse; Regional youth forums.

Partners: Office franco-québécois pour la jeunesse.

Results indicator:

- Number of young participants by region.

Target: To better recognize the involvement of young citizens.

MEASURE: TO ENSURE THAT SCHOOLS BETTER RECOGNIZE THE INVOLVEMENT OF STUDENTS.

The government plans to develop a reference framework aimed at recognizing students' involvement in sporting, cultural, political and community activities.

High schools, CEGEPs and universities will be called upon to better recognize this involvement. The reference framework will complement existing tools, such as the *Guide de référence pour la reconnaissance de l'engagement des étudiants dans les collèges* prepared in collaboration with the Fédération des cégeps and the Fédération étudiante collégiale du Québec, and the *Politique de reconnaissance de la participation étudiante dans la communauté universitaire* adopted by the Université de Montréal.

Sponsor: Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport.

Partners: Secrétariat à la jeunesse; Fédération des commissions scolaires du Québec; Fédération des cégeps; Conference of Rectors and Principals of Québec Universities.

Target: To encourage young people to participate more actively as citizens.

MEASURE: TO CREATE A CITIZEN PARTICIPATION AGENT POSITION IN EACH REGIONAL YOUTH FORUM.

The government will create a Citizen Participation Agent position in each regional youth forum, whose mandate will be to:

- Help young people get involved in organizations and local and regional groups;
- Make organizations involved in the participation of young people aware of decision-making bodies;
- Help to implement the various Youth Action Strategy citizen-participation measures in the regions, including the Voters in Training project and the contest to recognize the involvement of young people;
- Strengthen the relationships between young francophones in Québec and elsewhere in Canada and in the Americas;
- Make young people aware of different global realities in order to encourage them to get involved at the international level.

Sponsors: Secrétariat à la jeunesse; regional youth forums.

Partners: Local and regional organizations.

Results indicators:

- Number of activities;
- Number of young people involved in organizations and groups at the local, regional or other level.

Target: To encourage young people to participate more actively as citizens.

MEASURE: TO SUPPORT THE VOTERS IN TRAINING PROJECT.

Voters in Training is a citizenship education project that teaches secondary school students about how democracy works through various pedagogical activities, including the simulation of a federal, provincial, municipal or school election.

Secondary schools, youth centres and other youth organizations will be asked to consider adopting this project so as to raise awareness of the electoral process, political institutions and the roles citizens can play in a democracy. The government will invest some \$240,000 to implement the project.

Sponsor: Forum jeunesse de l'Île de Montréal.

Partners: Secrétariat à la jeunesse; regional youth forums; Chief Electoral Officer of Québec; Fédération des commissions scolaires du Québec.

Results indicator:

- Number of schools and youth organizations participating in the project.

Target: To encourage young people to participate more actively as citizens.

MEASURE: TO SUPPORT THE PARLEMENTS AU SECONDAIRE PROJECT.

The *Parlements au secondaire* project allows high-school students to take part in mock parliamentary debates using an approach modelled on existing parliamentary institutions. Because a number of procedural rules specific to the parliament of Québec were adapted to the specific context of each of school, the project allows young people to debate issues that concern them, learn about the decision-making process and understand how our democratic institutions work.

Sponsor: Fondation Jean-Charles-Bonenfant.

Partners: Secrétariat à la jeunesse; Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport; Fédération des commissions scolaires du Québec.

Results indicators:

- Number of participating schools.

Target: To encourage young people to participate more actively as citizens.

MEASURE: TO CONSOLIDATE THE MAISONS DE JEUNES NETWORK OF YOUTH CENTRES.

Over the next three years, the government will allocate \$5 million to consolidate the network of youth centres by increasing their operating budgets. It also plans to consolidate the network before allowing new centres to open. With this in mind, the Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux will inform health and social service agencies of this orientation of the government.

Sponsor: Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux

Partners: Regroupement des maisons de jeunes; health and social services agencies.

ENCOURAGING YOUNG PEOPLE TO STAY IN, RETURN TO OR SETTLE IN THE REGIONS

Each year, some 84,000 young people migrate from the regions to large urban centres. According to a recent study by the *Groupe de recherche sur la migration des jeunes*, young people state that they are motivated to leave their home region so they can live their lives, continue their studies or enjoy a better quality of life⁶. This migration serves to weaken the regions by reducing their potential to renew their population; it also adversely affects Québec's ability to sustain a thriving population throughout its territory. To correct the situation, the government will study the issue of young people's presence in the regions through its work on the *Politique de développement des territoires* (territorial development policy). The government will also focus on the well-being of young people in the regions through the renewal of its *Politique nationale de la ruralité*.

The government will also maintain the tax credits available for on-the-job training and for new graduates working in remote resource regions. For 2003-2004 and 2004-2005, these tax credits required investments of \$103 million.

It is important, therefore, that young people be given every opportunity to return to their place of origin if they so desire and to ensure that a greater number of them settle in areas particularly weakened by the exodus of youth. In this respect, the Government of Québec is proposing a measure to:

- Better support communities most affected by youth migration.

Target: To better support communities most affected by migration.

MEASURE: TO EXTEND AND ENHANCE FUNDING TO THE PLACE AUX JEUNES DU QUÉBEC PROGRAM.

The government will enhance its support to *Place aux jeunes du Québec* by raising its base budget by 48%. This means it will grant nearly \$7.3 million for the duration of the 2006 to 2009 Youth Action Strategy.

This will allow the organization to expand its network of migration agents with *Place aux jeunes/Desjardins* in some 70 regional county municipalities in Québec which are among the most affected and concerned by the exodus of young people, and in those registering a net population loss due to migration. Various activities will make it possible to achieve the objectives set by *Place aux jeunes*, including "getting to know the region" trips, the www.accrodesregions.qc.ca site, PAJ-Ados, the individual support now provided on a permanent basis and the contributions to regional initiatives on employment, immigration, entrepreneurship, and community or political involvement.

Sponsor: Secrétariat à la jeunesse; Place aux jeunes du Québec.

Partners: Local and regional organizations; Mouvement Desjardins.

Results indicator:

- Number of young people returning to and settling in the regions.

6 M. Gauthier, P. LeBlanc, S. Côté, F. Deschenaux, C. Girard, C. Laflamme, M. O. Mignan and M. Molgat. *La migration des jeunes au Québec*. National report from a survey conducted in 2004-2005 with people aged 20 to 34, Observatoire Jeunes et Société, INRS Urbanisation, Culture et Société, January 2006, p. 16.

ENHANCING YOUNG PEOPLE'S PARTICIPATION IN THE WORLD AT LARGE

An growing number of young Quebecers are showing pronounced interest in international issues. The increased demand for cultural exchanges are proof of the growing desire of many young people to open themselves to the world at large. However, further efforts must be made to make young people aware of the positive aspects of international involvement.

Globalization is changing how we see the rest of the world, how we travel, how we conduct business; it is also fostering the creation of new intercultural partnerships in all sectors of activity.

Québec's young people do not simply want to be passive observers of changes brought about by globalization; they have their own opinions and concerns about poverty, the health of our planet, cultural diversity, and so much more. Their willingness to get involved and participate in the changes they see happening around them can be supported in a variety of ways. By providing support to young people who want to open themselves to the world, learn a foreign language, and live abroad for a while, the government also succeeds in fostering the development of their personal, professional, educational, linguistic, social and citizenship skills.

To this end, the Ministère des Relations internationales is currently developing an international business action plan designed to help young people prepare themselves for the challenges of a global environment. In addition, organizations like the Office franco-québécois pour la jeunesse, the Office Québec-Amériques pour la jeunesse and the Agence Québec Wallonie Bruxelles pour la jeunesse, as well as the Québec sans frontières program, make it possible for nearly 4,000 young people to travel abroad every year. Moreover, the new *Politique du Québec en matière de francophonie canadienne*, to be made public in 2006, will strengthen the relationships between francophone communities, and in particular strengthen ties between young people in Québec and in Canada.

The Government of Québec remains convinced that it is necessary to support young people in their desire to get involved in the world. To accomplish this, it is proposing measures to:

- Foster international business mentoring and expertise sharing between young people from Québec and elsewhere;
- Raise young people's awareness of issues related to international cooperation and sustainable development;
- Raise young people's awareness of diversity in their communities so they are better equipped to open themselves to the world.

Target: To foster international business mentoring and expertise sharing between young people in Québec and elsewhere.

MEASURE: TO CONTINUE THE PROGRAMME SYNERGIE ENTREPRISE AND DEVELOP OTHER ACTIVITIES OF A SIMILAR NATURE.

In addition to extending the entrepreneurial-culture awareness component of the *programme Synergie entreprise*, the government will expand the component to cover territories served by the Office Québec-Amériques pour la jeunesse and the Agence Québec Wallonie Bruxelles pour la jeunesse. This component, which was set up when the Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge was extended, is offered by the Office franco-québécois pour la jeunesse. The component aims to foster, through the experiences young people acquire abroad, knowledge acquisition and the transfer of expertise, not to mention the exchange of practices pertaining to activities carried out by young people working to develop entrepreneurial culture. During the next three years, the government will contribute \$840,000 to support this project.

Sponsor: Secrétariat à la jeunesse.

Partners: Office franco-québécois pour la jeunesse; Office Québec-Amériques pour la jeunesse; Agence Québec Wallonie Bruxelles pour la jeunesse; ministère des Relations internationales.

Results indicator:

- Number of young people participating in the program.

Target: To foster international business mentoring and expertise sharing between young people in Québec and elsewhere.

MEASURE: TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF MENTORING WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF TRADE MISSIONS BY CREATING "JUNIOR QUÉBEC TEAMS."

The government will offer young graduates or students about to graduate the opportunity to gain professional experience abroad by travelling with business people on trade missions headed by the premier or government ministers. This project was modeled on a concept developed by the Office Québec-Amériques pour la jeunesse. The relevant trade missions are those sent to territories covered by the Office Québec-Amériques pour la jeunesse, the Office franco-québécois pour la jeunesse and the Agence Québec Wallonie Bruxelles pour la jeunesse. The government will invest \$120,000 in this project over the next three years.

Sponsor: Secrétariat à la jeunesse.

Partners: Office Québec-Amériques pour la jeunesse; Office franco-québécois pour la jeunesse; Agence Québec Wallonie Bruxelles pour la jeunesse; ministère des Relations internationales.

Results indicator:

- Number of young people participating in the program.

Target: To raise young people's awareness of issues pertaining to international cooperation and sustainable development.

MEASURE: TO CREATE AN ENDOWMENT FUND FOR SCHOLARSHIPS IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT.

The government is announcing that it will set up an endowment fund to award scholarships of excellence to young university students. The awards will provide recipients with financial support needed to stimulate their pursuit of high-level expertise in the field of sustainable development. Through this initiative, the government hopes to encourage young people to help the government achieve its sustainable development objectives by supporting their efforts to improve their knowledge of the issue and help them follow through on their commitment to sustainable development.

The government will invest \$5 million to this end and will take steps to set up a partnership with the private sector to enhance this investment. The scholarships will be used to fund two kinds of activities:

- Internships or short-term training and development programs to be carried out in countries or international organizations recognized for their expertise and progress in the field of sustainable development;
- Internships with private companies or public organizations which allow the recipient to acquire expertise and tools, as well as knowledge of standards and practices, in the field of sustainable development in Québec.

Sponsor: Secrétariat à la jeunesse.

Partners: Ministère du Développement durable, de l'Environnement et des Parcs; private sector; university representatives; student association representatives.

Target: To raise young people's awareness of issues pertaining to international cooperation and sustainable development.

MEASURE: TO SUPPORT QUÉBEC CITY'S HOSTING OF THE WORLD YOUTH CONGRESS IN 2008.

The government will provide \$450,000 in financial support to the organization of the 2008 World Youth Congress in Québec City. Young people from Québec and around the world will gather in Québec City in August 2008 for the fourth edition of this event. At the same time, Québec City will be celebrating its 400th anniversary. The selection of Québec City as the site of the congress was initiated by the *Forum jeunesse de la région de Québec*. The congress will enable young participants, working within the framework of the UN's Millennium Development Goals, to develop skills in the fields of sustainable development, the environment, humanitarian action, education and the fight against poverty.

Sponsor: Secrétariat à la jeunesse; Forum jeunesse de la région de Québec.

Partners: World Youth Congress 2008; ville de Québec; ministère des Relations internationales; Peace Child International.

Target: To raise young people's awareness of diversity in their communities so they are better equipped to open themselves to the world.

MEASURE: TO IMPLEMENT AN ACTION PLAN AIMED AT PROMOTING INTERCULTURAL UNDERSTANDING IN SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN.

In supporting this initiative, the government aims to help young Quebecers from all backgrounds have a greater understanding of one another. The steps taken under the action plan will target young people from all regions of Québec and will aim to help them to become more open to ethno-cultural diversity, to fight against discrimination, and to become more involved in their community. As such, they will have the chance of developing the skills they need to live in an inclusive Québec. Intercultural understanding is at once a learning tool and an agent of social change that can help build a society that is inclusive, multiethnic and open to the larger world.

Sponsor: Ministère de l'Immigration et des Communautés culturelles; ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport; ministère de la Culture et des Communications; ministère de la Famille, des Aînés et de la Condition féminine.

Results indicators:

- Number of participating schools and young people;
- Number of projects undertaken.

Young people fully involved in their own success

Improving the support offered to young people

The various support services and programs offered to young people must be tailored to the regional, social and other realities of their lives. This is a precondition of their success.

The vast majority of young people manage to develop to their full potential and successfully undertake projects and activities that interest them. Young people who do not have the same chance to do so must be able to seek help, notably by accessing services offered by numerous organizations and agencies. It is important to ensure, therefore, that there be greater cohesion and complementarity of services offered to young people.

Furthermore, no matter what the circumstances of their lives, young people need to have greater contact with adults able to act as role models. As such, it's worth underlining the crucial role that parents play, not to mention the roles that may be played by other adults: a teacher, a coach, an older person who has the same kind of job, and a supervisor in a group home for youth. All of these adults can help young people make the right choice and can provide support when needed.

With the 2006-2009 Youth Action Strategy, the government of Québec aims to ensure that support services for young people are more coherent and that they better complement one another, and that bonds between the generations are strengthened.

ACHIEVING GREATER COMPLEMENTARITY AND BETTER COHESION OF YOUTH SERVICES

It is the government's wish that services targeted at young Quebecers be designed, applied and implemented in such a way as to meet the specific needs of every young person. This objective can only be achieved if there is better knowledge and awareness of, as well as easier access to, available services.

A number of non-governmental organizations and agencies already offer services tailored to the everyday realities of young people's lives. These organizations also work to ensure that available services are more cohesive. Indeed, throughout the consultation period, young people and youth groups reminded the government that they place a high value on, and have great confidence in, local and regional initiatives.

Fully aware that multi-sectorial approaches are those that work best for young people, the government of Québec is proposing measures to:

- Tailor services to the everyday realities of young people's lives;
- Better support local and regional youth initiatives;
- Better inform young people and youth service providers of available government services.

Target: To tailor services to the everyday realities of young people's lives.

MEASURE: TO IMPLEMENT THE *ENGAGEMENT JEUNESSE* INITIATIVE.

The government will spend \$3.5 million over the next three years to implement the *Engagement jeunesse* initiative.

The various government ministries that offer services to young people will therefore commit themselves to ensuring that certain measures or programs better complement one another so as to make it easier for young people to transition from one program or service to another. To achieve this, the ministries will pool their programs and actions/input. By doing so they will be better able to meet the needs of young people. In addition, partners at the local level will be invited to participate in the joint action and support local initiatives.

As a result of the implementation of *Engagement jeunesse*, young people will be able to, among other things, more easily access certain services, move seamlessly from one initiative or government program to another, and benefit from better support throughout their endeavours. In particular, the government will:

- Mandate the *Comité interministériel de la Stratégie d'action jeunesse* to inform the government of the principal changes that must be made in order to enhance the cohesiveness and complementarity of services available to young people, more specifically by:
 - Establishing a support program for young people aged 16-24 who are facing particular difficulties;
 - Implementing the *Qualification des jeunes* program throughout all youth centres;
 - Deploying the *Québec pluriel* program in four new regions;
 - Developing initiatives designed to help young people with disabilities make the transition from school to society and enter the job market;
- Put in place a mechanism that will allow regional and local youth service providers to contribute actively to the process of enhancing the cohesiveness and complementarity of services offered to young people.

Sponsor: Secrétariat à la jeunesse.

Partners: Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport; ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale; ministère de l'Immigration et des Communautés culturelles; ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux; local and regional organizations.

Target: To better support local and regional youth initiatives.

MEASURE: TO RENEW AND ENHANCE THE *FONDS RÉGIONAUX D'INVESTISSEMENT JEUNESSE*.

The government is announcing that it will put \$30 million into the *Fonds régionaux d'investissement jeunesse* (FRIJ) over the next three years. This will provide regions and municipalities with adequate resources to implement a variety of projects tied to the 2006-2009 Youth Action Strategy. The FRIJs will be used primarily to fund structural youth-action projects that enable young people to meet the challenges they face. These actions will be defined in specific reference to the vision expressed by regional youth forums and the various regional councils of elected officers on matters of regional development (*conférences régionales des élus en matière de développement régional*).

Each youth forum will set up a project awarding committee. The committee membership will be made up primarily of young people representing specific areas of activity in their region, such as community organizations, cooperatives, student groups, environmental organizations, employment organizations and workers' associations.

Sponsors: Secrétariat à la jeunesse; regional youth forums.

Partners: Regional councils of elected officials.

Results indicators:

- Number of structural youth-action projects and funded projects;
- Number of young people affected by the projects or the structural youth-action projects supported by the FRIJs;
- Leverage effect of investments.

Target: To better inform young people and youth service providers of available government services.

MEASURE: DEVELOP PHASE II OF THE *ESPACE J* YOUTH PORTAL.

It is the government's intention to leverage modern communications methods favoured by young Quebecers, who regularly surf the Web. As such, the *Espace J* youth portal will be the primary source of information for young people for matters pertaining to the 2006-2009 Youth Action Strategy. Work on phase II of this portal will focus on enhancing government and interdepartmental information offered to young people. Young people will be able to use *Espace J* to access information about government programs and services as well as topics of interest to them. The portal will also link users to the government's Services Québec Web site of services offered to citizens and businesses. *Espace J* will also provide users with easy access to on-line government services for young people, thereby contributing to the growth and development of e-government.

Sponsor: Secrétariat à la jeunesse.

Partners: Services Québec; persons responsible for the youth file in ministries and organizations.

Results indicator:

- Number of *Espace J* portal visitors/users.

Target: To better inform young people and youth service providers of available government services.

MEASURE: TO IMPROVE SINGLE-WINDOW ACCESS TO A RANGE OF YOUTH SERVICES.

Services Québec's mission is to offer citizens and businesses throughout Québec a single window for simplified access to a range of public services. As it carries out this mission, Services Québec will add, to its collection of "life events" publications, a brochure which focuses on life events of specific relevance to young people. In addition, as part of its deployment throughout Québec, Services Québec will study the possibility of setting up a on-line service specifically for young people. This may be done within Services Québec service centres or through community organizations working with young people, depending on the availability of computer equipment in these organizations as well as the training that service providers in these organizations have received. Finally, Services Québec will undertake a pilot project with the Université du Québec à Chicoutimi (UQAC) and the Cégep de Jonquière to set up a Services Québec branch office tailored to a student clientele.

Sponsor: Services Québec.

Partner: Secrétariat à la jeunesse.

Results indicators:

- Number of brochures distributed;
- Number of young people using computer equipment.

FOSTERING STRONGER INTERGENERATIONAL BONDS

In light of the fact that Québec's population is getting older, Québec's demographic reality will undergo significant change in the years to come. Indeed, forecasts indicate that the number of people of working age will begin to decline in 2011. This prognosis raises two important issues that should be of concern to all members of Québec society: the transfer of knowledge from one generation to another, and repayment of the public debt.

Québec risks having to confront a loss of knowledge and know-how following the retirement en masse of older workers. This looming reality affords the government a welcome opportunity to invite active citizens, especially those who are about to retire, to get more involved in youth development and support young people as they undertake their various projects. To this end, it is worth considering the practice of mentoring which, throughout history, has proven to be an effective means of transferring knowledge from one person to another or from one generation to another. Indeed, this notion inspired the government's decision to support the practice of business mentoring of young entrepreneurs, within the framework of the Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge.

There's little doubt that mentoring is an approach worth pursuing. Mentoring - a relationship in which a seasoned professional offers his wisdom and experience to another person just starting out in his career - is an effective method of helping someone acquire

knowledge and attain given objectives. As the Government of Québec demonstrated recently through its initiative to promote entrepreneurship among young people, it is possible to better mobilize the resources needed to help a mentoring culture grow and develop.

The impact of debt on Québec's public finances and the increasing costs of government programs are issues of serious concern, ones that are forcing us to make social choices which must be handled responsibly and fairly for all age groups in our society.

In order to foster stronger intergenerational ties, the government of Québec is proposing measures to:

- Foster intergenerational exchange and facilitate the transfer of knowledge;
- Foster intergenerational dialogue on repayment of the public debt.



Target: To foster intergenerational exchange and facilitate the transfer of knowledge.

MEASURE: TO ESTABLISH AN ON-LINE MENTORING PROJECT TO PROVIDE YOUNG PEOPLE WITH SUPPORT WHEN MAKING CAREER CHOICES AND DECIDING ON A PROFESSIONAL DIRECTION.

The government will phase in an on-line mentoring program, which relies on information technology, in order to better support young people in their career choice and professional direction. Modeled on the *Academos* program, this program will enable Cycle 2 high-school students (in secondary 3, 4 and 5) to form mentoring relationships by communicating safely via e-mail with adults working in a variety of occupations and professions. Special efforts will be made to recruit men and women working in non-traditional fields. Young people will thereby have the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the particular characteristics, challenges and limits of these occupations and professions, to validate their career choice, and forge sustained ties with people who work in a profession of interest to the student.

The service will be available to all targeted students in August 2008. The government of Québec will invest almost \$2.7 million to launch the program.

Sponsor: Corporation Éducentre de Bois-de-Boulogne.

Partners: Secrétariat à la jeunesse; ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport; Fédération des commissions scolaires du Québec; Conseil du patronat du Québec; Fédération des Chambres de commerce du Québec; Mouvement Desjardins.

Results indicators:

- Number of young people registered for the on-line mentoring program;
- Satisfaction rates of young people who have used the service;
- Number of mentors recruited into the program.

In the aim of **promoting intergenerational exchange and facilitating the transfer of knowledge**, the government intends to contribute to the development of a mentoring culture in Québec. In a first phase, the government will support efforts to inventory all current mentoring initiatives in Québec. This process will ensure that there is no overlapping of activities, and will also serve to reinforce existing initiatives, as the case may be, and promote new ones. Finally, the Secrétariat à la jeunesse will present a work plan to the government outlining steps needed to make this culture a reality.

Target: To foster intergenerational dialogue on repayment of the public debt.

MEASURE: TO MANDATE THE CONSEIL PERMANENT DE LA JEUNESSE TO PROMOTE INTERGENERATIONAL DIALOGUE ON REPAYMENT OF THE PUBLIC DEBT.

The government is mandating the *Conseil permanent de la jeunesse*, in partnership with the *Conseil des aînés*, to recommend and implement a specific action, such as organizing a forum, which would allow for the exchange of ideas and opinions on the public debt and the future of Québec, all the while taking into account the strong ties that exist between generations. This mandate is a continuation of initiatives begun with a symposium organized by the *Regroupement des jeunes gens d'affaires du Québec* and *Force jeunesse* on the subject "today's issues for tomorrow's leaders." The mandate also follows up on a news conference convened by the *Coalition des jeunes pour le remboursement de la dette publique*.

Sponsor: Conseil permanent à la jeunesse, in partnership with the Conseil des aînés.

Partners: Secrétariat à la jeunesse; organizations representing young people and the elderly.



Creating a committee of 2006-2009 Youth Action Strategy partners

Wishing to pursue its partnership with young people, youth workers and others who represent youth, the government of Québec is announcing the creation of a committee of Youth Action Strategy partners. Reporting to the minister in charge of youth issues, the committee will be made up of representatives of the principal groups playing a major role in implementing this strategy.

The government will mandate the committee to:

- Support the Secrétariat à la jeunesse as it follows through on the 2006-2009 Youth Action Strategy;
- Support the implementation of the 2006-2009 Youth Action Strategy in respect of the field of expertise of each partner who will be asked to help the government achieve its targeted results;
- Support the government in order to ensure that this strategy meets the needs of young people to the greatest extent possible;
- Study the possibility of creating an endowment fund to support youth initiatives.

Evaluating the 2006-2009 Youth Action Strategy

The government wants to ensure that the 2006-2009 Youth Action Strategy meets the needs of young people. To this end, the government is announcing the creation of a \$5.75 million funding envelope. The money will also be used to fund, among other things, Québec-wide projects or to respond to needs that are defined at a later date, such as those that may be occasioned by the *Forum sur le développement social et économique des Premières Nations*. To this end, youth representatives may be called on to help define the major areas of action devolving from the various Québec-wide projects. This envelope will also be used to evaluate the Strategy upon completion.

The Secrétariat à la jeunesse is the government's primary point of contact on youth issues. The Secrétariat, therefore, will be responsible for coordinating the implementation and evaluation of the Youth Action Strategy. The Secrétariat will be assisted in this task by the 2006-2009 Youth Action Strategy partners committee as well as the Youth Action Strategy interdepartmental committee. It should be noted that the interdepartmental committee, which was instrumental in developing the Strategy, is

made up of representatives from government ministries and organizations that provide the most important youth services.

The designation of ministries and organizations responsible for the measures to be implemented, as well as the identification of results indicators used to determine the effectiveness of the measures, constitute the first phase of the follow-up and evaluation process for the 2006-2009 Youth Action Strategy. In the months following the launch of the Strategy, the Secrétariat à la jeunesse will draft a budget covering the evaluation of all measures contained in the Strategy.

Conclusion

The 2006-2009 Youth Action Strategy is the outcome of a vast consultation process with young people and groups representing or working with youth and of a major concerted effort on the part of government. Within the framework of intergenerational equity, the Strategy will offer all young Quebecers the means to become fully involved in their own success. Indeed, the Québec of tomorrow will be built upon the overall achievements occasioned by the Strategy. The five directional trends, the strategic choices, the set targets and the recommended measures to achieve them are all instrumental in the drive to reach this ambitious objective.

The 2006-2009 Youth Action Strategy is of significant importance. Despite the budgetary constraints it faces, the government is announcing that it is maintaining, implementing or enhancing the value of numerous measures. Representing a total investment of more than \$1 billion over the next three years, these measures will help improve the lives of young people in a variety of ways. The government has listened to young people as they expressed their hopes and needs, and as a result has decided to inject an additional \$110 million to implement the Strategy.

The 2006-2009 Youth Action Strategy does not represent the final step in a process. On the contrary, its launch marks the first step in a continuous process aimed at improving the situation of Québec's young people and ensuring that they are fully involved in their own success.

In implementing the 2006-2009 Youth Action Strategy, the government is hoping to mobilize all those who work with young people, helping them to grow and develop and participate fully in society. More than ever, the contribution that young people bring to Québec society is priceless, and it must be both preserved and nurtured. Furthermore, the contribution that young people make is particularly crucial to Québec's future, as it will allow Québec to maintain its status as one of the world's most advanced societies and allow it to more easily take on the challenges that lie ahead.

Complementary measures

Improving the health and well-being of youth people

The government of Québec is maintaining its commitment to young people and extending several measures designed to help young people develop healthy lifestyles as well as personal and social skills; better support those who have trouble integrating into society; and combat youth suicide more effectively.

PROMOTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF PERSONAL AND SOCIAL SKILLS AND HEALTHY LIFESTYLES

Promoting physical activity and proper nutrition

- The promotional campaign *Vas-y, fais-le pour toi!* is designed to inform young people, adults and families of the benefits of healthy living by encouraging them to do at least 30 minutes of physical activity a day and to make sure that their daily food intake includes at least five servings of fruits and vegetables.
- The *Journée nationale du sport et de l'activité physique* encourages the young and not-so-young to take part in sports and physical activities. Each year, on the Friday before Thanksgiving, partners in schools, towns, and cities, and from the worlds of business, sports and leisure, invite Quebecers to take part in one or several sports activities.
- The *Équipe-Québec* program offers financial support and vocational training to Québec athletes who compete regularly at the international level, with a view to helping these athletes improve their chances of success.
- The *ISO-Actif* program of the *Fédération québécoise du sport étudiant* promotes the value, within schools, of physical activity, good nutrition and a non-smoking lifestyle.
- The *Kino-Québec* program contributes to the well-being of Quebecers by promoting the virtues of a physically active lifestyle. Most notably, the program aims to increase by 10% between now and 2008 the proportion of Quebecers who are sufficiently active during their leisure time.

- The *Québec en forme* project promotes and supports the organization of physical activities, sports and outdoor activities for children aged 4 to 12 who come mainly from disadvantaged backgrounds. The project is a joint undertaking of the government of Québec and the Fondation Lucie et André Chagnon.
- The Wellness-Oriented School Program is intended to support schools in implementing school projects designed to help Elementary Cycle Three and Secondary Cycle One students develop a healthy lifestyle that includes regular physical activities and good nutrition. This program can also fall within the framework of the *École en santé* approach, given its contribution to helping students acquire healthy lifestyles.

Combating smoking

- The *Plan québécois de lutte contre le tabagisme* is intended primarily to deter young people from smoking, to encourage smokers to quit, and to protect society, including its youngest members, from the dangers of second-hand smoke.
- The *Tobacco Act*, among its other provisions, prohibits the sale of tobacco to minors and prohibits smoking on school grounds.

Combating drug addiction

The *Plan d'action interministériel en toxicomanie 2006-2011* will make it easier to detect drug addiction and promote early intervention within various clienteles, such as children of alcoholic parents, adolescents and young adults.

PROVIDING BETTER SUPPORT TO YOUNG PEOPLE HAVING DIFFICULTY INTEGRATING INTO SOCIETY

Providing more effective support to young people and their families

- Through its *Services de soutien aux jeunes parents* program, the *Services intégrés en périnatalité et pour la petite enfance* ensures that young pregnant women and mothers who are under 20 when they give birth, as well as their families, are monitored regularly. The goal of the program is to reduce the chance that health and social problems, such as abuse, negligence and violence against children, are not passed down from one generation to another. Available services aim to:
 - Prevent and reduce problems related to social adjustment difficulties and delayed development in children;
 - Reduce incidents of abuse, negligence and violence against children;
 - Promote optimal development of children under five;
 - Help young parents develop their parenting skills and fulfill their roles as parents;
 - Improve living conditions for families.
- The *Équipes d'intervention jeunesse* intervene with young people suffering from multiple and complex health and social problems who need help from a variety of institutional sources. The teams help young people, as well as their families, to access the health and social services they need, and ensure that they and their parents obtain coordinated and complementary services.

Preventing young people from joining street gangs

- Projects aimed at preventing young people from getting involved in gang activity, funded by the Funding Program Stemming from Sharing of Proceeds of Crime (*Programme de financement issu du partage des produits de la criminalité*) raises awareness among young people of the dangers of joining street gangs.

Improving services available to young victims of sexual assault

- The government maintains its commitment to the *Centre d'expertise en agression sexuelle Marie-Vincent*, renowned for its cutting-edge expertise in the field of health, psychosocial, police and legal services designed for young sexual-assault victims and their families. The Centre aims to support not only the development, but also the integration, diffusion and application of information and research. The Centre will act as an educative pillar for students and those involved in intervention, and will continue to innovate and lead in the development of science-based knowledge in sexual-assault issues.

COMBATING YOUTH SUICIDE MORE EFFECTIVELY

- The *Plan d'action en santé mentale 2005-2010* ensures that young people at risk of suicide have access to appropriate services, no matter where they live in Québec. The action plan also ensures that those who work in the field of youth suicide have access to best-practices methods and to the most effective tools they need.
- The *Programme national de santé publique 2003-2012* provides for a global approach to suicide prevention, and includes activities related to raising awareness of certain risk factors (for example, drugs, firearms), access to a sentinel network, early detection by doctors and other health-care professionals of suicide risk, as well as joint efforts on the part of partners in the health and social services network and those working in other sectors.

Complementary measures

Fostering the educational success of young people

The government of Québec is maintaining its commitment to and extending several measures aimed at reducing school drop-out levels and maintaining and improving the quality of post-secondary education.

MORE EFFECTIVELY PREVENTING STUDENTS FROM DROPPING OUT OF SCHOOL

- The intervention strategy *Agir autrement* implements customized measures aimed at improving educational success rates for high school students living in disadvantaged communities.
- The Homework Assistance Program is designed to boost the motivation of primary school students to carry out their school work.
- The *Programme de recherche sur la persévérance et la réussite scolaire* focuses, among other things, on developing knowledge that would provide educational professionals with improved programs and tools to better help young people stay in school and pursue their studies successfully.
- In collaboration with the school system and community partners, two projects aimed at ensuring that young people stay in school are currently being conducted in the Montréal area. The two projects were

initiated in response to the *Québec pluriel* program. The *Québec pluriel* initiative is designed to help visible minority youths aged 16 to 24 from immigrant families to stay in school and continue their studies. The idea of extending similar projects to other regions of Québec is being considered.

- Over the next three years, the government will continue its partnership with the *Centre de transfert pour la réussite éducative*. This partnership will make it possible to both consolidate and pursue activities related to the production and distribution of intervention tools tailored to educational professionals.

MAINTAINING AND DEVELOPING THE QUALITY OF POST- SECONDARY EDUCATION

- The *Programme de promotion de l'enseignement collegial* : production étudiante promotes the undertaking of special extracurricular projects, thereby encouraging students' contribution and involvement (for example, *Cégep en spectacle*, *Science, on tourne!*).
- Under the *mesures de soutien à la réussite au collegial*, funding will be made available to targeted educational institutions so that they may implement measures aimed at ensuring that students succeed academically and continue to pursue their studies.

Complementary measures

Fostering young people's entry into the workforce

The government of Québec is maintaining its commitment to and extending several measures aimed at improving young peoples' preparedness for the job market.

HELPING YOUNG PEOPLE TO BE BETTER PREPARED FOR THE JOB MARKET

The government of Québec is proposing the following measures to help young people become better prepared for their entry into the workforce.

- The government is acting to bridge the gap between vocational development and technical training, in response to arguments in favour of this approach raised during the *Forum des generations*. Job sites and workplaces, together with their partners, will try to ensure that young people can more easily move from vocational training in high school to technical training at the college level, without having to duplicate the training they receive. Also to be encouraged is a partnership between school boards and CEGEPs, whereby, most notably, the entities will undertake joint pedagogical activities that bring together students pursuing vocational training and those pursuing technical training. In addition, the government is promoting a more flexible approach to the management of vocational and technical training, principally so that young people may take the maximum number of qualifying courses they can in their home regions.
- In order to foster the development of the next generation of agricultural workers, and to support young people wishing to pursue a career in this economic sector, the ministère de l'Agriculture, des Pêcheries et de l'Alimentation has committed to develop the second component of its *Politique jeunesse consacré aux pêches et à l'aquaculture*. This component follows on the ministry's first policy, adopted in March 2005, which focused more specifically on issues pertaining to building a career in agriculture and developing the next generation of agricultural workers.
- The government is pursuing measures aimed at renewing the public service workforce within the framework of the *Plan de gestion des ressources humaines 2004-2007*. The government reaffirms its belief in the importance of rejuvenating the public service. Since April 2005, 33% of overall recruitments for permanent or part-time positions have involved those under the age of 35. In vocational and technical job categories, where recruitment efforts have been most active, 55% of those hired were in the younger age bracket.
- The government will continue its annual campaign of promoting the value of vocational and technical training courses aimed at the media and the Internet in order to highlight the diversity, availability and quality of such training in Québec.

Complementary measures

Enhancing young people's participation in society

The government of Québec is maintaining its commitment to and extending several measures aimed at increasing young people's involvement in their community; encouraging young people to stay in, return to or settle in the regions; and raising the profile of young people in the world at large.

ENHANCING YOUNG PEOPLE'S PARTICIPATION IN THEIR COMMUNITY

The government of Québec is proposing the following measures to help young people become more involved in their community.

- The government reaffirms its financial support to the *Conseil des jeunes des Premières Nations du Québec et du Labrador* and to Québec Native Women Inc. The mission of the *Conseil des jeunes des Premières Nations du Québec et du Labrador* is to promote ties among Native youth and to represent Native youth throughout their communities. The Québec Native Women organization, for its part, supports the active participation of young women in their community and helps them improve their living conditions by promoting non-violence, justice, equal rights and health issues.
- In order to ensure that young people's interest are represented in local and regional elections, the ministère des Affaires municipales et des Régions intends to:
 - Pursue its strategy of improving the way young people's interests are represented in local elections;
 - Ensure that the regional councils of elected officials, in drafting their five-year development plan to identify general and specific objectives for regional development, makes youth participation in a region's democratic life a priority.
- The Chief Electoral Officer of Québec, for its part, intends to continue activities it has undertaken for more than 10 years designed to help schools set up, and provide support to, student councils. To this end, the Chief Electoral Officer will continue to provide relevant educational and electoral materials and offer training sessions for young elected representatives and the adults who support and advise them. The Chief Electoral Officer will also maintain and enhance the *Young Voters* Web site.
- In order to encourage young people to get involved in activities related to sustainable development, the ministère du Développement durable, de l'Environnement et des Parcs will continue to:

- Consult young people as it formulates and implements a made-in-Québec strategy for sustainable development;
- Support initiatives in educational institutions pertaining to sustainable development and environmental protection;
- Support Brundtland Green School trainers.
- The *Secondaire en spectacle* program enables high schools to organize artistic and cultural events likely to foster self-development among their students.

ENCOURAGING YOUNG PEOPLE TO STAY IN, RETURN TO OR SETTLE IN THE REGIONS

The government of Québec is proposing the following measures to encourage young people to stay in, return to or settle in the regions:

- Tax credits for internships will be granted, under certain conditions, to eligible taxpayers who incur allowable expenses to hire a student under a training program.

- Recent graduates working in remote resource regions are eligible for tax credits, on the condition that they hold a specialized job related to their area of training and development.

ENHANCING YOUNG PEOPLE'S PARTICIPATION IN THE WORLD AT LARGE

The government of Québec is proposing the following measures to enhance the participation of young people in the world at large:

- Young people will continue to have access to internship programs offered by the ministère des Relations internationales, the ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport, the Office franco-québécois pour la jeunesse, the Office Québec-Amériques pour la jeunesse and the Agence Québec Wallonie Bruxelles pour la jeunesse.



Complementary measures

Improving the support offered to young people

The government of Québec is maintaining its commitment to and extending several measures aimed at achieving greater complementarity and better cohesion of youth services.

ACHIEVING GREATER COMPLEMENTARITY AND BETTER COHESION OF YOUTH SERVICES

The government of Québec is proposing the following measure to ensure greater complementarity and cohesion of youth services:

- Partnership agreements between the government and the regions, aimed at ensuring that the regions tailor their activities to the needs of young people, remain in effect. These activities focus largely on reducing school drop-out rates and ensuring that students succeed academically, as well as issue related to youth migration and the continuation of services.

Summary table

ORIENTATIONS	STRATEGIC CHOICES	PRINCIPAL MEASURES
IMPROVING THE HEALTH AND WELL-BEING OF YOUNG PEOPLE	Promoting the development of personal and social skills and the adoption of healthy lifestyles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eliminate junk food in schools • Implement the <i>École en santé</i> "healthy school" approach
	Providing better support to young people having difficulty integrating into society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amend the <i>Youth Protection Act</i>
	Combating youth suicide more effectively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deploy sentinel networks • Deploy multidisciplinary suicide prevention teams in all youth centres
FOSTERING THE EDUCATIONAL SUCCESS OF YOUNG PEOPLE	Better preventing students from dropping out of school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer a diversity of learning paths in high school • Provide greater support to students with handicaps, social maladjustments or learning disabilities • Increase teaching time at the elementary level
	Better preventing students from dropping out of school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the development of the community school
FOSTERING YOUNG PEOPLE'S ENTRY INTO THE WORKFORCE	Helping young people to be better prepared for the job market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better promote the value of vocational training among young people, parents and school staff • Extend and update the Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge program • Help establish a support fund for young entrepreneurs • Develop an action plan designed to improve training in occupational health and safety
	Better supporting the transition from school to work among young people experiencing specific problems entering the job market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a support program for young people aged 16-24 experiencing specific problems • Deploy the <i>Québec pluriel</i> program across four new areas of Québec • Extend the <i>Qualification des jeunes</i> program to all youth centres • Provide more effective support to young people with disabilities

ORIENTATIONS	STRATEGIC CHOICES	PRINCIPAL MEASURES
<p style="text-align: center;">ENHANCING YOUNG PEOPLE'S PARTICIPATION IN SOCIETY</p>	<p>Increasing young people's participation in their community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support regional youth forums • Establish two new regional youth forums in Montérégie • Set up a committee to represent and consult with youth from cultural communities and visible minorities • Launch a contest that recognizes young people's involvement as citizens • Ensure that schools better recognize the involvement of students • Create a Citizen Participation Agent position in each regional youth forum • Support the Voters in Training project • Support the <i>Parlements au secondaire</i> project • Consolidating the <i>Maisons de jeunes</i> network of youth centres
	<p>Encouraging young people to stay in, return to or settle in the regions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extend and funding to the <i>Place aux jeunes</i> du Québec program
	<p>Enhancing young people's participation in the world at large</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue the <i>Synergie entreprise</i> program and develop other activities of a similar nature • Contribute to the development of mentoring within the framework of trade missions by creating "Junior Québec Teams" • Create an endowment fund for scholarships in sustainable development • Support Québec City's hosting of the 2008 World Youth Congress • Implement an action plan aimed at promoting intercultural understanding in school-age children.
<p style="text-align: center;">IMPROVING THE SUPPORT OFFERED TO YOUNG PEOPLE</p>	<p>Achieving greater complementarity and better cohesion of youth services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement the <i>Engagement jeunesse</i> initiative • Renew and enhance the <i>Fonds régionaux d'investissement jeunesse</i> • Develop phase II of the <i>Espace J</i> youth portal • Improve single-window access to a range of youth services
	<p>Fostering stronger of intergenerational bonds</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish an on-line mentoring project to provide young people with support when making career choices and deciding on a professional direction • Mandate the <i>Conseil permanent de la jeunesse</i> to promote intergenerational dialogue on repayment of the public debt