

LEARNING

ABOUT QUÉBEC

2nd edition revised



Guide for my successful integration

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This guide was produced by the Direction de la gestion de la diversité et de l'intégration sociale of the Ministère de l'Immigration et des Communautés culturelles (MICC), with the participation of government departments and agencies. The section on employment was prepared in cooperation with Emploi-Québec – Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale.

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This guide is published by the Direction des affaires publiques et des communications of the MICC.

N.B.: To simplify the text, all terms concerning individuals are generic and refer to both male and female persons.

Important

The information and references in this guide were current in June 2010. They come from various sources and do not supersede the wording of laws, policy statements or official programs.

Any subsequent changes to the contents will first appear in the electronic version of the guide *Learning about Québec* at www.learningaboutquebec.gouv.qc.ca.

To order the guide:
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Ministère de l'Immigration et des Communautés culturelles
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Website: www.micc.gouv.qc.ca

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Aussi disponible en français
Existe una versión español en formato PDF

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Personal Information

Family name: _____

First name: _____

Address: _____

Number

Street

Apartment

City

Postal code

Telephone: _____

E-mail address: _____ @ _____

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By immigrating to Québec, you are carrying out one of the most important projects of your life. There are many challenges in adapting to a new society and taking your place in it. From the moment you arrive in Québec, you will experience many changes and have to try new ways of doing things.

To increase your chances of success, the Ministère de l'Immigration et des Communautés culturelles (MICC) is pleased to present you with this integration support guide. It outlines the most important steps for your successful integration into Québec society. From now on, it will help you make the transition to your new life in Québec.

Services provided by the MICC and community organizations that help new immigrants

The MICC is one of your primary sources of information. In Québec, Immigration-Québec provides welcoming and integration support services. Community organizations also help welcome and integrate immigrants. They are very familiar with the needs of newcomers and can provide substantial help. The MICC financially supports these organizations as partners in its activities.

Free services

The welcoming and integration support services provided by the MICC and partner community organizations are free of charge. Only the *Évaluation comparative des études effectuées hors du Québec* (comparative evaluation for studies done outside Québec) involves a fee.

Did you know?

In Québec, the term “community organizations” refers to nonprofit associations or organizations. Subsidized by the government, these associations or organizations are fully autonomous in their choice of practices and service offerings. Well established in their community, their mission is to support and assist newcomers in their settlement and integration steps.

The list of community organizations funded by the MICC can be found on the website www.immigration-quebec.gouv.qc.ca/en, link [*Ministerial partners*](#).

To reach us

There are several ways to reach the MICC:

Customer Contact Centre

Montréal region: 514 864-9191

Elsewhere in Québec (toll free):

1 877 864-9191

From abroad: + 1 514 864-9191

On line: www.immigration-quebec.gouv.qc.ca/courriel

Hours: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday: from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (UTC-5)

Wednesday: from 10:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (UTC-5)

Access by TDD device



(telecommunications device for the deaf or hard of hearing)

Montréal region: 514 864-8158

Elsewhere in Québec (toll-free):

1 866 227-5968

Information capsules

7 days a week, 24 hours a day

French, English and Spanish

Montréal region: 514 864-9292

Elsewhere in Québec (toll-free):

1 866 864-9292

From abroad: + 1 514 864-9292

For more information

On the mission, objectives, programs and services of the MICC

• www.micc.gouv.qc.ca

On the immigration, francization and integration process

• www.immigration-quebec.gouv.qc.ca

On intercultural relations

• www.quebecinterculturel.gouv.qc.ca

The *Learning about Québec* guide: a tool for you

Each immigrant follows a different path towards integration depending on personal needs and goals. Your guide will help you assess your needs, set realistic goals and choose effective strategies. It will be very useful in helping you prepare and carry out your immigration plan from the time you obtain your *Certificat de sélection du Québec – CSQ* (Québec selection certificate) until you achieve your integration goals in Québec. It will also be useful during your meetings with the welcoming and integration support agents of the Ministère de l'Immigration et des Communautés culturelles (MICC), community organizations providing services to new immigrants, and people assisting you in your job search.

How to use your guide

The guide is divided into sections, each covering one or more topics. For each topic, you will find essential information, references to complete your information search, resources to help you take the necessary actions, and sections for personal notes to record your progress. The steps you take will not necessarily follow the same order as in the guide.

To help you with your planning, each topic is associated with one or two pictograms:



To carry out or start preferably before leaving for Québec.



To carry out in the first days following your arrival in Québec.



To carry out during the course of your integration in Québec.

Starting your steps before leaving for Québec

For most immigrants, there is usually a gap of several months between the time they receive their *Certificat de sélection du Québec* and their federal immigration visa. You are encouraged to take advantage of this period to start preparing for your new life in Québec. Not only will you improve your chances for successful integration, you will also save a great deal of time and energy.

Use your *Learning about Québec* guide to plan the steps that may be taken before your departure.



This pictogram indicates the steps to carry out or start preferably before leaving for Québec.

- > Learn about welcoming and integration support services
- > Learn about the values and foundations of Québec society
- > Learn your responsibilities and those of Québec society
- > Begin learning French or improve your knowledge, where applicable
- > Decide in which region and city you will settle
- > Plan your budget (expenses related to settlement and your first months living in Québec)
- > Learn about housing, credit, opening a bank account, etc.
- > Assemble important documents
- > Learn about government programs and services
- > Start to build your network of contacts
- > Become familiar with the Québec labour market and the job search
- > Start your steps with a regulatory body if you wish to practice a regulated trade or profession
- > Request a *Évaluation comparative des études effectuées hors du Québec* (comparative evaluation for studies done outside Québec), when necessary

To learn more

Information on the regions and main cities of Québec

- **Ministère de l'Immigration et des Communautés culturelles:**
www.immigration-quebec.gouv.qc.ca,
 section *Where to settle*



Learning about the services and how to obtain them

Entry formalities

Entry formalities upon arrival are fairly short and simple with a valid passport and immigration visa. Canadian authorities are responsible for customs inspection and granting permanent resident status. These procedures can be performed at any Canadian border crossing.

Welcoming at the airport and in Immigration-Québec services

If you arrive at Montréal-Trudeau airport, proceed to the office of the Ministère de l'Immigration et des Communautés culturelles (MICC). A welcoming agent will give you useful information and arrange an appointment with the Immigration-Québec service covering your region of destination for a welcoming and settlement support interview or for a group

meeting on your first steps in getting settled.

If you were not greeted by this service upon arrival, contact the Immigration-Québec service located near your place of residence to make an appointment. You may also contact the Customer Contact Centre of the MICC by dialing 514 864-9191 in the Montréal region or 1 877 864-9191 in other regions of Québec.

Practical tip

Go to the MICC office even if you are being met by friends or a family member already living in Québec. A first contact with the service will help you avoid unnecessary steps and facilitate access to government services.

Contact information on Immigration Québec services can be found on pages 160 and 161 of your guide.

Your first meetings with an integration support agent will serve to:

- > register your arrival using your visa, passport and *Certificat de sélection du Québec* and confirm the information in your file (name, date of birth, etc.) if you were unable to do so at the airport;
- > help you determine your needs and, where applicable, those of your family, based on your guide;
- > provide you with information on obtaining official documents (Health Insurance Card, Social Insurance Number, driver's licence, etc.), on finding housing and the government services available (health and social services, public transit, etc.), on the formalities for registering in educational establishments, on day care services and the government resources available;
- > direct you to integration support services offered by the MICC, in particular with regard to French courses, information seminars, the handling of applications for an *Évaluation comparative des études effectuées hors du Québec* (comparative evaluation for studies done outside Québec), the steps to take with a professional order or other regulatory organization;
- > Refer you to the appropriate community organization or government service;
- > Direct you to the training course *S'adapter au monde du travail québécois – Vivre ensemble au Québec*. This course explains the mechanisms of the labour market, cultural codes on the job, the rules and functioning of corporations as well as the common values of Québec society and how they are lived from day to day.

To learn more

Information on welcoming and integration support services

- **Ministère de l'Immigration et des Communautés culturelles:**
www.immigration-quebec.gouv.qc.ca
- **Immigration-Québec service located near your place of residence** – contact information available on the MICC website, link [To reach us](#)
- **Community organizations that help new immigrants** – contact information available on the MICC website, link [Ministerial partners](#)

Notes on my progress

- I made an appointment with an Immigration-Québec service for an interview or a group session explaining the first steps in getting settled.

Contact information:

Appointment date:

Name of the agent:

- I made an appointment with a community organization that helps new immigrants.

Organization name:

Contact information:

Appointment date:

Name of the agent:



Understanding, respecting and sharing the common values of Québec society

Québec is a democratic, French-speaking, pluralist society based on the rule of law.

Knowledge of and respect for the values on which Québec society is founded are necessary for adapting to your new environment and fully participating in it.

By signing the *Declaration on the common values of Québec society*, you agree to respect the common values of Québec society and declare that you want to live in Québec within the framework of these values and to abide by them. You also declare that you want to learn French if you do not speak it already.

The common values of Québec society

In Québec: speaking French is a necessity

- > Québec society is governed by the Charter of the French Language which makes French the official language of Québec. French is the language of public institutions and the normal and usual language of work, instruction, communications, trade and business.
- > Québec cares about preserving and promoting its official language. French is not only an essential communications instrument, but also a common symbol of belonging to Québec society.

- > To integrate into their new living environment, immigrants who are not fluent in French must make an effort to learn it. To help them do so, the Québec government provides French courses.
- > The children of immigrants who settle permanently in Québec normally attend French school.
- > Candidates wishing to practice a profession regulated by a professional order must demonstrate sufficient knowledge of the French language to obtain a regular permit.

Québec: a free and democratic society

- > The political system of Québec is based on freedom of speech and the right to equality of individuals, as well as their participation in associations, political parties and administrative bodies such as boards of directors. Citizens can stand as candidates for election and have the right to vote in elections. They elect their representatives at all levels of government.
- > When the government plans to pass legislation, the public is generally invited to take part in consultations to express its viewpoints on matters of public interest.
- > Hateful behavior, whether political, religious or ethnic, is not tolerated. Québec society favors the resolution of conflicts by negotiation.

Québec: political and religious powers are separate

- > The Québec state and its institutions are secular. Their decisions and actions are independent of religious powers.
- > Québec has denominationalized its school system. Religious confessional instruction is not part of the public school curriculum.

Québec: a society enriched by its diversity

- > Québec is becoming more diverse. The Francophone majority, Anglophones and Aborigines live together with people of diverse cultures and origins from all over the world.
- > Québec encourages exchanges between cultures and closer relations between communities and recognizes that diversity is enriching. Moreover, everyone can freely choose their lifestyle, opinions and religion, while respecting the rights of others. Relationships between people are established with respect and tolerance in a climate of harmony.

Québec: a society based on the rule of law

- > Québec is a democratic society based on the rule of law. All persons are equal in value and in dignity and have the right to the equal protection of the law. They must obey all laws regardless of their beliefs.
- > It is prohibited to discriminate against individuals on the basis of reasons set forth in the Québec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms, specifically:
 - Race
 - Political convictions
 - Colour
 - Sex
 - Pregnancy
 - Sexual orientation
 - Civil status
 - Age except as provided by law
 - Religion
 - Language

- Ethnic or national origin
- Social condition
- Disability or use of a means to mitigate this disability

For example, a person cannot be refused housing due to ethnic origin, social condition or disability. Discrimination is prohibited in the workplace, specifically in job offers, the hiring process and working conditions. The law also prohibits harassment in all its forms. In this same spirit, homosexuals are recognized as having the same rights and responsibilities as all other citizens of Québec.

In Québec: men and women have the same rights

- > Women and men are equal. They have the same rights and the same obligations. Women can work in the trade or profession of their choice. They are present in decision-making positions such as members of a legislature, mayors, councilors, directors and managers of large companies. They can practice trades and professions traditionally reserved for men. Female workers must receive the same salary as male workers when their jobs, although different, have the same or equivalent value in the company.
- > This value of equality also permeates the types of unions recognized in Québec. Whether they are de facto spouses, married or joined in a civil union, spouses –be they of the same or opposite sex– are equal before the law. Parental responsibilities towards their children are the same.

- > In the event of divorce from a marriage or dissolution of a civil union, assets acquired during the union and constituting the family patrimony are shared equally between the spouses.
- > The law requires parents or guardians to give children the security and attention necessary for their development.

In Québec, the exercise of human rights and freedoms must respect the rights and freedoms of others and the general well-being

- > Fundamental rights and freedoms are exercised while respecting the rights and freedoms of others, public order, the general well-being of citizens and the democratic values of Québec. The use of violence is prohibited.

- > In summary, Quebecers attach great importance to maintaining a climate that fosters freedom of speech, the right to equality between individuals and respect for differences. These values and the laws of Québec society enjoy a consensus and ensure to everyone the right, among others, to free speech and the free choice of lifestyle, opinions and religion.
- > The Québec government condemns racism and discrimination and is committed to encouraging the full participation of everyone in the economic, social and cultural development of Québec. These principles are expressed in the *Déclaration du gouvernement du Québec sur les relations inter-ethniques et interraciales* (Québec government's Declaration on Ethnic and Race Relations).

The Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse (CDPDJ) ensures respect for and promotion of the principles of the Québec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms. It also protects the interests of the child and ensures respect for and promotion of the rights granted children under the Youth Protection Act and the Youth Criminal Justice Act.

The CDPDJ exercises its responsibilities by investigating on its own initiative or, when a complaint is addressed to it, by examining legislation and making recommendations to government, where necessary, by implementing information and education programs, by directing and encouraging research and publications, by cooperating with organizations dedicated to the promotion of individual rights and freedoms in Québec and elsewhere, and seeing to the implementation of access to equality programs.

Before leaving for Québec

Learn about the values of Québec society by visiting the website www.valeurscommunesduquebec.gouv.qc.ca and reading the documents provided.

In Québec

Once you are in Québec, the Immigration-Québec service located near your place of residence or a community organization that helps new immigrants will give you information and refer you to the appropriate resources.

Better understand the common values of Québec

Visit the website www.valeurscommunesduquebec.gouv.qc.ca.

You will find information on the common values of Québec and on actions by the Québec government to promote these values and highlight diversity.

Did you know?

- > Québec society today embraces more than 100 cultural communities. With their different languages, cultures and religions, they contribute greatly to the social, economic and cultural enrichment of Québec. They live peacefully and are encouraged to maintain harmonious intercultural relations.
- > Québec society favors accommodation, compromise and consensus. Openness to diversity, tolerance and respect are very important attitudes between persons.
- > Quebecers prefer a straightforward approach in forming relationships and communicating with each other. They generally communicate in a direct, precise and explicit manner. They usually maintain a certain physical distance between themselves and the person they are speaking to, out of respect for the other's personal space. In speaking French with persons younger or of the same age, the familiar "tu" form is widely used. However, the "vous" form is always correct in all circumstances, especially with an employer.
- > Quebecers generally take punctuality very seriously. It is very important to be on time for all appointments.
- > While waiting to be served in public, Quebecers generally follow the principle of "first come, first served." Whether it be in a store, bank, at a bus stop or at the theatre, each person awaits his or her turn. Those who fail to comply risk being called to order by their fellow citizens.

Notes on my progress

- The following values of Québec society are different from those of my country of origin:

- I would like to better understand the following values of Québec society:

To learn more

Information on the Québec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms, the Charter of the French Language, intercultural relations, the values and foundations of Québec society

- **Ministère de l'Immigration et des Communautés culturelles:**
www.valeurscommunesduquebec.gouv.qc.ca
www.quebecinterculturel.gouv.qc.ca
- **Immigration-Québec service located near your place of residence** – contact information available on the MICC website, link [To reach us](#)
- **Community organizations that help new immigrants** – contact information available on the MICC website, link [Ministerial partners](#)
- **Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse:** www.cdpcj.qc.ca

Information on québec's cultural communities and intercultural rapprochement

- **Ministère de l'Immigration et des Communautés culturelles:**
www.quebecinterculturel.gouv.qc.ca

Information on the rights and living conditions of women

- **Conseil du statut de la femme:**
www.csf.gouv.qc.ca
 Click on *Region* for contact information on regional offices.
- **Secrétariat à la condition féminine:**
www.scf.gouv.qc.ca

Information on services to handicapped persons

- **Office des personnes handicapées du Québec:** www.ophq.gouv.qc.ca

information on services to sexual minorities

- **Gai Écoute:** www.gaiecoutte.org
 Ligne Gai Écoute
 Everywhere in Québec (toll-free)
 1 888 505-1010

Information on the québec political system

- **National Assembly of Québec:**
www.assnat.qc.ca

Information on the québec justice system, your rights and responsibilities, legal publications for the general public, and contact information for organizations

- **Ministère de la Justice:**
www.justice.gouv.qc.ca
- **Éducaloi:** www.educaloi.qc.ca



Understanding my responsibilities and those of the host society

The government commitment

Québec is a pluralistic society that welcomes immigrants coming from the four corners of the earth with their know-how, skills, language, culture and religion.

In conjunction with public, private and community partners, the Québec government provides tools to guide and follow your progress and services tailored to your needs to help your social, linguistic and economic integration. They comprise welcoming services, help getting settled and personalized support, information sessions on living and working in the regions, training in workplace realities, French instruction, consulting to obtain recognition for

academic and vocational qualifications acquired outside Québec and a number of job integration measures.

My commitment

All Quebecers enjoy the rights and freedoms recognized by the Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms and other laws and are responsible for respecting the values set forth in them.

As an immigrant, you make a commitment to take responsibility for your integration and start the process as soon as possible using the means made available to you. You also undertake to know and respect the common values of Québec society and all of its laws, notwithstanding your beliefs.

The success of your integration process will depend largely on your efforts and your ability to adapt to Québec society. You have an active role to play at each stage of the process. This is your main responsibility.

Overcome adaptation problems

You may experience difficulties adapting to a new society with different ways of doing things.

They may be related to problems finding work, financial problems, or the burden of family responsibilities in a new social and cultural setting. In these circumstances, if you begin to isolate yourself, experience anxiety, feel ashamed about not having a job, or lose confidence in yourself, you must talk about it. Don't hesitate to call a trusted friend, family member or someone close in order to find the support and encouragement you need.

Also keep in mind that Québec offers various resources to help you overcome these difficulties. It is common practice in Québec to seek aid outside one's circle of family and friends when necessary. You can consult the host society's resources with complete confidence. If you need this outside support, contact a community organization that helps new immigrants.

It will support you throughout your integration process and help you determine the probable causes of your difficulties and adjust your goals as required. When applicable, the organization will refer you to the appropriate resource.

Children may also have adaptation problems, particularly at school. These problems may manifest themselves as learning difficulties or isolation. To address them, schools offer complementary professional services: support, supervision, psychology, health and social services. Do not hesitate to use them if needed. Your Centre de santé et de services sociaux – CSSS (Health and Social Services Centre) can also counsel you. Information on these centres can be found on page 60 of your guide.

Youth centres

If your child develops serious behavioral problems –committing crimes, running away, suicide attempts, drug abuse, etc.– the Centre jeunesse (Youth Centre) in your region can give you help and advice.

Located in all regions of Québec, youth centres provide specialized help to youth under age 18 who are experiencing serious difficulties that could jeopardize their safety and development. Help can also be extended to their families. They also offer services to young mothers with adaptation difficulties. Many of their workers are professionals in social work, psycho-education, criminology and psychology.

To learn more

welcoming and support services for new immigrants

- **Immigration-Québec service located near your place of residence** – contact information available on the Ministère de l'Immigration et des Communautés culturelles website: www.immigration-quebec.gouv.qc.ca, link [To reach us](#)
- **Community organizations that help new immigrants** – contact information available on the MICC website, link [Ministerial partners](#)

Information on services offered by health and social services centres

- **Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux:** www.msss.gouv.qc.ca, link [Youth](#)

information and contact information
for youth centres in québec

- Association des centres jeunesse
du Québec: www.acjq.qc.ca

Notes on my progress

Contact person

Name:

Name:

Contact information:

Contact information:

Name:

Name:

Contact information:

Contact information:



Choosing which region and city to live in

Québec covers a vast area. In addition to Montréal, Québec's metropolis, there are 16 other administrative regions that offer good employment or investment opportunities, an excellent quality of life, an affordable cost of living and a variety of services and recreational facilities. Before leaving your country of departure, learn what the regions of Québec can offer you.

What I should learn before leaving for Québec

Information on each region of Québec is given on the MICC website. It will allow you to learn about:

- > the territory and its major cities;
- > the economy and the job opportunities;
- > the services offered to immigrants;

- > the immigrant population, particularly the presence in its midst of a community from your country of origin.

In addition, links to resources such as municipalities or educational institutions will give you more information on:

- > the cost and availability of housing and transportation;
- > access to public transit, educational institutions, recreational activities and places of worship;
- > the presence of educational institutions;
- > cultural and outdoor activities.

To learn more about Québec's regions

You may now request information on Québec's regions by e-mail. A map of Québec along with Web links that give you access to information on each region is found on page 164 of your guide. If you do not have Internet access, you can reach an Immigration-Québec service by mail, telephone or fax. Contact information is to be found on pages 160 and 161 of your guide.

In Québec

If you are already in Montréal and want to learn more about Québec's regions, you can attend information sessions on living and working in the regions. They are given free of charge by Immigration-Québec services. You will meet resource persons and learn about job vacancies, business prospects, housing opportunities, and the services available in these regions: French courses, health and education services, etc.

Some partner organizations of the MICC, operating in Montréal, also specialize in supporting immigrants who wish to settle outside the Montréal region. Among services offered, they organize prospecting tours for you in the regions, match your skills with employment offers originating in the regions, and give you technical and financial support.

To learn more

Information on Québec's regions and principal cities, and information sessions on living and working in the regions

- **Ministère de l'Immigration et des Communautés culturelles:**
www.immigration-quebec.gouv.qc.ca, link [Where to settle](#)
- **Immigration-Québec service located near your place of residence –** contact information available on the MICC website, link [To reach us](#)

Other sites to visit to discover the regions and main cities of Québec

- **Regional portals:**
www.gouv.qc.ca
- **Ministère des Affaires municipales, des Régions et de l'Occupation du territoire:**
www.mamrot.gouv.qc.ca
- **Bonjour Québec:**
www.bonjourquebec.com

Notes on my progress

Before leaving for Québec:

- I explored the opportunities offered by the various regions of Québec.

In Québec:

- I obtained information from an MICC integration support agent.
- I attended one or more information sessions on living and working in the regions.

Date of the session(s):

- I contacted an organization specialized in supporting immigrants who wish to settle in the regions.

The regions and cities that interest me most are:

Region or city:

Advantages:

Region or city:

Advantages:

Disadvantages:

Disadvantages:



Planning my budget

There are significant costs to carrying out an immigration plan. Before leaving for Québec, it is important to estimate these costs and provide for an adequate budget. In addition to fees charged by the Québec government to process your application for a CSQ, you must plan for the costs of completing your immigration steps, getting settled and covering your needs during your first months in Québec.

To learn more

Information on the minimum amount required to support your needs during the first three months in Québec

- **Ministère de l'Immigration et des Communautés culturelles:** www.immigration-quebec.gouv.qc.ca, link [Why choose Québec](#)

Information on the prices of different consumer goods and services

- **La toile du Québec:** www.toile.qc.ca

Important

If you were selected as a skilled worker, self-employed worker or entrepreneur, you made a commitment to have sufficient funds available to meet your needs and those of accompanying family members for the first three months of living in Québec. Remember that you must have this minimum amount when you arrive.

Main expenses i must consider in planning my budget

FEES AFTER OBTAINING MY CSQ

Cost

- Fees charged by Canadian authorities to apply for permanent residence
- Fees for the verification or translation of documents required for my integration process
- Fees for procedures with the regulatory body for a trade or profession, where applicable
- Fees to obtain an *Évaluation comparative des études effectuées hors du Québec* (comparative evaluation for studies done outside Québec), where applicable
- Tickets for plane, train, bus, etc.
- Travel insurance

EXPENSES UPON ARRIVAL AND DURING THE FIRST MONTHS IN QUÉBEC

- Accommodation during the first days (hotel)
- Renting an apartment
- Furnishing the dwelling (furniture, appliances, bedding, cookware and other essential items)
- Electricity
- Heating (gas, electricity, oil)

<input type="checkbox"/> Home insurance	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Telephone	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Warm clothing, if I arrive in Québec in the fall or winter	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation (taxi, bus, metro [subway], automobile)	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Health insurance for me and my family (recommended – See page 45 of the guide)	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Food	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Day care, if necessary	_____
OTHER (TELEVISION, CABLE, COMPUTER, INTERNET, RECREATION, ETC.)	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> _____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> _____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> _____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> _____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> _____	_____
	Total: _____



Starting to learn French or improving my knowledge

French: the official language

French is the official language of Québec. As the only majority Francophone community in North America, Québec society attaches the highest importance to the status of French as the common language of public life.

The government of Québec and the majority of Québec citizens consider that knowledge of French by immigrants is an essential condition for their integration. The French language represents not only a tool for communication, but also a common symbol of belonging to Québec society. It is at the heart of the Québec identity.

An essential condition for your social and occupational integration

Knowledge of French is indispensable for participating in cultural, civic and social life, functioning in daily life, making full use of your job skills and integrating more quickly into the labour market.

In your contacts with Quebecers, you will soon notice their openness, kindness and desire to communicate with you in their language. The ability to speak French will help you:

- > communicate with Quebecers;
- > develop networks of contacts;
- > better understand the culture and history of your host society;
- > help your children succeed at school.

Adequate knowledge of French will expand your job opportunities and help you in the job search process.

For example, you will be able to:

- > take part in job search assistance activities offered by employability organizations;
- > obtain authorization to work in a regulated trade or profession (licensure, certificate of competence or qualification);
- > access bridge training;
- > pass recruitment examinations;
- > find a job.

Before leaving for Québec

- If you are not fluent in French, make full use of the time while waiting for your visa to improve your French-language skills.
- Many of you will need advanced skills in oral and written French for your successful adaptation and socio-occupational integration in Québec. Efforts that you make in your country to learn French or improve your knowledge will therefore pay off.
- Immigrants who improved their French before leaving their country say they are very satisfied with having done so when they arrive in Québec. For their part, employees in government services or community organizations which help immigrants report that their work is facilitated when the immigrants are capable of expressing themselves in French when they arrive in Québec.
- Speaking French is the best way to integrate rapidly in Québec society.

Practical tips

- Find out about opportunities to take a French course in the country you are leaving. Québec immigration offices abroad can give you information on accredited French teaching establishments in your country.
- The MICC has reached agreements with language schools abroad including several Alliances françaises and Instituts français. These schools have document holdings on Québec and certain ones have developed language training adapted to persons destined for Québec. The agreements allow the MICC to offer you two levels of courses: beginner and intermediate. If you take courses in a partner institution, are over 16 years of age and hold a CSQ, your tuition fees may be reimbursed when you arrive in Québec. This refund of up to \$1,500 (Canadian) is made under certain conditions and upon presentation of supporting items. A complete list of MICC partner institutions and the reimbursement terms are given on the MICC website.
- Start to learn French or improve your communication skills. For example, learn to introduce yourself, ask for information or services, describe events, report what someone else said, express your opinion, talk about your work experience, your plans, etc.
- Individuals selected by Québec who have reached a level of proficiency corresponding to the start of the intermediate stage can register for the online French course FEL (*Français en ligne*). You will find on page 113 of your guide a description of the course along with information on the terms and conditions of registration.
- Since French is the official language of Québec, the children of immigrants, regardless of their mother tongue, must normally attend a school run by the Francophone school board in their area until the completion of their secondary studies.

When you arrive in Québec

If you do not speak French when you arrive in Québec or if you wish to improve your French proficiency, you can register for a course. The MICC, in partnership with public educational institutions and community groups, offers instruction free of charge in several formulas tailored to your needs. You can take full- or part-time courses or courses given in the workplace. Courses for beginners will introduce you to the practical aspects of daily life in Québec. Financial support may be available to help you cover the costs related to attending a French course.

For individuals with intermediate or advanced proficiency in French, the MICC also offers specialized courses on a part time basis: oral communication, written French and French courses adapted to certain occupational fields.

Full- and part-time French courses offered by the MICC last 11 weeks and start at fixed dates, generally every three months. You must therefore wait for a new session to start before you can begin a course.

Moreover, throughout Québec, most universities, general and vocational colleges (CEGEPs) and school boards' adult education centres offer French instruction.

Important

If you need to start learning French or complete your training in Québec, apply for courses in the first days of your arrival. Information on registering for full-time courses can be found on the Immigration-Québec website along with an *Application for admission to full-time French courses and financial aid*, which you can fill out and send to the address given at the end of the form. You can also obtain this document and information on other formulas for learning French by contacting the Immigration-Québec service located near your place of residence. To facilitate your registration process, you can apply online for admission to full-time French courses through the Immigration-Québec site.

“Québec French”

In your first contacts with Quebecers, you may need to make an effort to become familiar with the Québec accent that is unfamiliar to you or to certain words or expressions that you have never heard. However, you will get used to it without too much difficulty.

Practical tips

- In addition to taking courses, you can improve your French by watching television, listening to the radio, reading French publications, or taking part in activities with people who speak French.
- The MICC also provides a free bank of online French exercises.
- In Québec City and Montréal, two French self-instruction centres allow individuals to improve their French while working or looking for work.

To learn more

Before leaving for Québec

Organizations or establishments offering French courses

- **Bureau d'immigration du Québec abroad covering your territory** – contact information available on the MICC website: www.immigration-quebec.gouv.qc.ca, link [To reach us](#)

List of MICC partner establishments and conditions for reimbursement of fees for French courses taken in the country of departure

- www.immigration-quebec.gouv.qc.ca, section [French language](#), item [Learning French in your country of departure](#)

MICC free exercises database

- www.micc-francisation.gouv.qc.ca

MICC online French course

- www.francisationenligne.gouv.qc.ca

Other resources for learning French online

- www.immigration-quebec.gouv.qc.ca, section [French language](#), item [Learning French online](#)

On your arrival in Québec

Organizations or institutions offering french courses (admission requirements, registration, length of courses, teaching tools, location, schedule, financial aid, etc.)

- **Website of the Ministère de l'Immigration et des Communautés culturelles**, section [French language](#) and for online admission, [Online application for admission to a full-time French course](#)
- **Immigration-Québec service located near your place of residence** – contact information available on the MICC website, link [To reach us](#)

Notes on my progress

Before leaving for Québec

I identified the organizations and educational institutions that offer French courses.

I am taking a French course.

Name of the organization or institution:

Address:

My training begins or began on the following date:

I am registered for the MICC online French course.

On my arrival in Québec

I applied for admission to a French course.

Registration date:

Name of the organization or institution:

Address:

My training begins on the following date:



Learning about housing

Rental accommodation has been scarce in several Québec cities in recent years. This greatly complicates the search for an apartment. You will need to be patient, since finding the right apartment takes time and effort. You may have to live temporarily in a dwelling that does not fully meet your expectations.

The cost of an apartment varies according to, among other things, the number of rooms it contains, the city or neighborhood where it is located, supply and demand, and its proximity to services. Housing is generally cheaper outside of large cities. Before deciding where to settle, evaluate the advantages available in different regions across Québec.

Did you know?

Like a majority of urban Quebecers, most new immigrants are tenants. In Québec, the rental contract (called a “lease”) usually expires on June 30 of each year, so the best time to look for an apartment is in March, April and May. However, a lease can be signed at any time of the year and for any length of time.

Page 123 of your guide gives additional information on housing in Québec.

Practical tip

It is possible to rent an apartment over the Internet. However, if this option interests you, be very cautious before committing yourself in such a transaction. It is much better to wait until you are here so you can visit the apartment and observe its condition and the proximity of services before signing a lease.

Apartment terms

In Québec, if it says:

... it means:

2 1/2, 3 1/2, 4 1/2, etc.

number of rooms in the apartment (the 1/2 refers to the bathroom).

Semi-furnished

basic appliances (stove and fridge) are provided and included in the rent.

Heated or unheated

whether or not the cost of heating is included in the rent.

Hot water

the cost of energy for hot water is included in the rent.

Québec housing standards generally assume one room to be available per person, excluding the kitchen and bathroom. However, there is no specific legislation on this point. The Civil Code of Québec states that the occupants of a dwelling shall be of such a number as to allow each of them to live in normal conditions of comfort and sanitation. So you should evaluate the amount of the apartment rent based on the space observed during your visit, regardless of how the landlord calculates the number of rooms.

To learn more

Information on average rent and availability of apartments in different regions of Québec

- **Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation:** www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca
- **Ministère de l'Immigration et des Communautés culturelles:** www.immigration-quebec.gouv.qc.ca, link *Why choose Québec*

Notes on my progress

I have identified the apartment features that I am looking for.

Number of rooms:

Appliances: must be provided included

Proximity to public transit: metro (subway) bus suburban train



Finding my first place to live

When you arrive in Québec, unless you have significant financial means, you will probably not plan to stay in a hotel for very long. Your first priority will therefore be to find suitable lodging at an affordable price.

Lodging upon arrival

Initially, you would do well to temporarily rent furnished accommodation (an apartment or room) by the week or month. If possible, it should be centrally located to make your first steps easier. You might consider living with relatives or friends for a while. After a few weeks or months, you can look for housing better suited to your needs.

Looking for my first home

Before choosing a place to live, you should estimate the maximum rent that you can reasonably afford on top of your current expenses. When calculating the cost of apartment rental, take into account the cost of essential services (electricity, heat, insurance, telephone, transit) and other services such as cable TV and parking. Some apartments are equipped with a refrigerator and stove, but you must usually provide your own appliances.

Take the time to explore the surroundings and neighborhoods of the city where you chose to live. After determining which areas suit you, walk along residential streets looking for vacant apartments indicated by an "À louer – For rent" sign. You can also check the classified ad sections in newspapers and visit websites to find an apartment.

Practical tip

Ask staff at the Immigration-Québec service located near your place of residence which community organization can help you find an apartment and use the services of this organization.

How to choose an apartment

- > Visit apartments that you find most attractive, accompanied by another person if possible.
- > Inspect the condition of the premises and ask to see all rooms of the apartment.
- > Evaluate what repairs are needed.
- > Find out what services (heat, electricity, painting, plumbing maintenance, etc.), furniture and appliances are included in the rent, and ask about caretaker services and regulations regarding the enjoyment, use and upkeep of the apartments and common spaces.

- > Look at the dwelling in terms of safety, noise level and proximity to services like supermarkets, public transit, schools, day care, medical clinic, etc).
- > If you have any pets, make sure they are not prohibited by any building regulation or clause in the lease.

Practical tip

Carefully read the entire lease before signing it. Make sure that all conditions discussed with the landlord are included in writing, particularly those concerning repairs the landlord promised to make and the date for completing them. Also make sure that the dwelling indicated in the lease is really the one you visited and agreed to rent.

Useful information

- The Québec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms prohibits landlords from refusing to rent an apartment to a person based on discriminatory reasons such as ethnic or national origin, color, sex, pregnancy, sexual orientation, civil status, age, handicap or the use of a means to mitigate this handicap, the fact of having children or being a welfare recipient.
 - If you have reason to believe that you are being refused a dwelling due to discrimination, contact the Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse (CDPDJ).
 - Some neighborhoods have a tenants' association, often called a "housing committee," which can help you with all aspects of renting an apartment.
 - In Québec, the rental agreement normally takes the form of a written contract in prescribed form called the "lease," which both parties must sign and respect. This is an important formality, since it is a true contract defining the respective responsibilities and commitments of the landlord and tenant. The Régie du logement du Québec (RLQ) provides an official lease form widely used by apartment owners.
- Page 123 of your guide contains additional information on the lease.**

To learn more

Information and assistance to help you find a place to live

- **Ministère de l'Immigration et des Communautés culturelles:** www.immigration-quebec.gouv.qc.ca, link [Housing](#)
- **Immigration-Québec service located near your place of residence** – contact information available on the MICC website, link [To reach us](#)
- **Community organizations that help new immigrants** – contact information available on the MICC website, link [Ministerial partners](#)

Information on the rights and responsibilities of landlords and tenants with respect to apartment rental, main factors to consider while looking for an apartment, practices forbidden by law, the lease, co-leasing, your recourse if the landlord fails to respect the lease

- **Régie du logement du Québec:** www.rdl.gouv.qc.ca

- **Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation:** www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca

Information on human rights and youth rights and prohibited reasons for discrimination

- **Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse:** www.cdpdj.qc.ca

Notes on my progress

- Neighborhoods where I wish to look for an apartment:

- Amount that I can spend on rent:

Contact information and main features of apartments that I want to visit:

Address	Number of rooms	Heated or unheated	Distance from public transit	Distance from other services (supermarket, school, day-care, medical clinic, etc.)	Cost

I need help looking for an apartment. I was referred to a community organization that helps new immigrants.

Community organization name:

Name of contact person:

Contact information:



Gathering important documents

Bring all documents that will be useful during your first steps towards getting settled. You will need them to obtain a Social Insurance Number, Health Insurance Card, driver's licence, as well as to register your children in school, obtain recognition of your educational and professional qualifications, search for a job, open a bank account, apply for a mortgage, etc.

A checklist of the documents that you and your family members must bring to Québec follows. The list will vary depending on each individual situation.

- Certificat de sélection du Québec* – CSQ (Québec selection certificate)
- A valid permanent resident visa affixed to your passport (issued by Canadian authorities)

- Valid passport and other travel documents

- Other identity papers

• • •

- Act of birth, birth certificate, adoption papers

- Marriage contract, marriage certificate or contract of common-law relationship

- Civil union contract or certificate

- Separation or divorce papers and documents concerning child custody rights

- Family records, medical and dental records, vaccination booklet

- Proof of coverage by the social security plan of your country of origin, where applicable

• • •

- Diplomas, certificates and other attestations of education
- Academic transcripts
- Description of courses and internships completed, including the duration of each
- Attestations of continuing education
- Attestations issued by language schools
- Évaluation comparative des études effectuées hors du Québec (comparative evaluation for studies done outside Québec), where applicable (issued by the MICC)*
- Detailed proof of employment and work experience
- Proof of internship or upgrade training
- Reference letters from previous and current employers with information on their company's operations
- Permit to practice a trade or profession
- Certificate of occupational competency or qualification



- Credit history, bank references, bank statements, statements of personal or mortgage loans, bank cards
- Reference letters from former landlords or property title certificates
- Valid driver's licence, international driver's licence

All documents must be originals or certified true copies. If the original documents are in a language other than French or English, you must provide an official translation (by a certified translator, consulate, embassy) or one that has been authenticated by official authorities. The translation must accompany the original documents. Your documents should be translated into French as much as possible, but English translations are usually accepted if you already have them.

Practical tips

- Make sure that the information appearing on your CSQ is correct. Do the same for members of your family. On each document, carefully check the spelling of family and given names and the accuracy of birth dates.
- If possible, bring cash in Canadian funds with you.

Notes on my progress

- I have the originals and certified true copies of all documents to bring with me.
- I obtained official translations of all documents where necessary.



Obtaining essential and useful documents

Once in Québec, you should quickly obtain the various documents that will allow you to access government services and make your integration process easier. We recommend that you apply for them in the first days of your arrival. Correctly fill out the required forms and send them in as soon as possible. Do not hesitate to request help from the Immigration-Québec service located near your place of residence or a community organization that helps new immigrants.

Practical tip

Keep your confirmation of permanent residence. This document is required by certain government departments and organizations to determine your eligibility for programs or services.

Health Insurance Card

The Health Insurance Card allows you to receive health care –medical services and hospitalization– covered by the Québec Health Insurance Plan. Persons settling in Québec can benefit from the Health Insurance Plan after a waiting period of a maximum of three months after they register with the Régie d'assurance maladie du Québec (RAMQ). There are exemptions to the waiting period. The RAMQ will tell you if an exemption applies to you or a family member.

Individuals subject to the waiting period must pay for their own health services during this period or else buy private insurance.

Pre-registration is the first step in obtaining your Health Insurance Card. Call or visit an RAMQ office without delay to provide the information required for your registration. Depending on the situation, the RAMQ will give you or send you a registration form. Fill it out, making sure that all the information is correct, sign it and enclose the required documents. Persons aged 14 and over must have their application authenticated. The RAMQ will tell you what procedure to follow.

After processing your registration application, the RAMQ will send you a letter stating on which date you can start benefiting from the Health Insurance Plan, if you meet the eligibility conditions. You will receive your Health Insurance Card within two weeks after this date. Notify the RAMQ immediately of any change of address.

Until you receive the card, keep the letter stating that a waiting period applies. In fact, certain health services may be delivered free of charge, depending on a person's situation. These include necessary services for victims of conjugal or family violence or sexual assault; care and follow-up related to pregnancy, delivery or termination of pregnancy; services required by persons with infectious health problems having public health consequences and certain services offered at a CLSC such as vaccinations.

Each family member must have his or her own Health Insurance Card. The card bears its holder's photo and signature, except for persons under age 14. Always keep your Health Insurance Card with you and never lend it to anyone.

You will need your Health Insurance Card to register for the public Prescription Drug Insurance Plan.

Additional information on the Health Insurance Plan and Prescription Drug Insurance Plan can be found on pages 132 and 133 of your guide.

Don't delay!

- Contact the RAMQ in the first days following your arrival so as not to delay your eligibility for the plan.
- The RAMQ does not reimburse the costs of health care that you receive during the waiting period.
- If you are buying private insurance, do so within five days of your arrival in Québec. After this period, it will become more difficult to get insurance. For more information, contact the OmbudService for Life and Health Insurance.

To learn more

Information on government health and social services

- **Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux du Québec:**
www.msss.gouv.qc.ca
Consult the *Health Guide* on this site.

Information on the Health Insurance Plan and Card and the Prescription Drug Insurance Plan

- **Régie de l'assurance maladie du Québec:** www.ramq.gouv.qc.ca
- **OmbudService for Life and Health Insurance:** www.oapcanada.ca

Notes on my progress

- I contacted the RAMQ on my arrival to pre-register myself and my child or children, where applicable.
Telephone number:
Date:
- I completed my registration and that of my child or children, where applicable.
Date:
- I purchased private insurance, should I need it.
Date:
- I received my Health Insurance Card and that of my child or children.
Date:
- I completed my registration for the public Prescription Drug Insurance Plan.
Date:

Social Insurance Number (SIN)

The SIN is essential in many circumstances. You must provide it to your employer when starting a new job, to certain government agencies to receive benefits or compensation and to financial institutions for interest-bearing accounts. You should apply for one in the first days after your arrival in Québec.

Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) officials will give you a SIN application form on your arrival. It is also available at Service Canada Centres and Immigration-Québec services. You can also obtain it on the website of Service Canada.

To obtain your SIN, complete the Social Insurance Number application form. Don't forget to write on your form the postal address where the plasticized card bearing your SIN can be mailed to you in

the next few weeks. Bring this form and your identity documents to the Service Canada Centre nearest to where you live. This is the quickest, most efficient and most secure way of obtaining an SIN, since you are never separated from your identity papers. You can also apply by mail, but this method carries a risk since you must enclose your original identity papers.

Practical tips

- Memorize your SIN.
- Do not carry your Social Insurance Card with you, except on the day that you must show it to your employer. Keep it in a safe place.

Useful information

- By law, your employer must ask you to show your Social Insurance Card within three days after you start your new job. Only your employer has the right to see your card.
- Your SIN is confidential and is assigned to you alone. There are many situations where you are not required to provide it, such as when you fill out a job application form, negotiate a lease, fill out a medical questionnaire, etc. To learn more about protecting your SIN from theft, fraud and inappropriate use, as well as what to do in these circumstances, visit the website of Service Canada. You can also seek information at a Service Canada Centre.

To learn more

Information and advice on the SIN and contact information for the Service Canada Centre near you

- **Service Canada:**

www.servicecanada.gc.ca

Click on *Publications and reports* to consult *The Social Insurance Number Code of Practice*.

Information on privacy and how to lodge a complaint concerning protection of privacy

- **Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada:**

www.priv.gc.ca

Consult the guide for individuals entitled *Your Guide to PIPEDA* (Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act) and information on the protection of personal information such as your SIN.

Notes on my progress

I filled out my SIN application.

I submitted it to (address):

Telephone number:

Date:

I received my Social Insurance Card.

Date:

Permanent Resident Card

New immigrants are automatically issued a Permanent Resident Card by Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) as part of the immigration process.

This card confirms your permanent resident status. It gives you access to government services in francization, employment and education, for example, as well as support services offered by community organizations. You may be asked for the card to confirm your eligibility for the services.

If you travel outside Canada, you will need your Permanent Resident Card to re-enter the country on board of a commercial carrier (airplane, boat, train or bus). You must present your card and that of your children, if any, to the staff of the carrier.

The card will be usually mailed to you within four weeks after you entered Canada or from the time that you gave CIC your mailing address in Canada.

If you already know your mailing address when you land in Québec, give it to CIC during procedures for granting you permanent resident status. If you cannot give your mailing address at this time, you must do so within 180 days after your arrival. You can phone the Call Centre, or use the Internet. Make sure that the address you provide is valid for at least 30 days.

To learn more

Information on the permanent resident card

• **Citizenship and Immigration Canada:**
www.cic.gc.ca

- To send your address by Internet, click on *Change my address*.
- To obtain the Call Centre number, click on *Contact Us*, then on *Call Centre*.

Notes on my progress

- I gave the postal address where I will receive my Permanent Resident Card.

- I received my Permanent Resident Card and that of my child or children.

Driver's licence

To drive a vehicle on Québec roads, you must have a driver's licence of the appropriate class. If you have a valid driver's licence issued outside Québec, you may drive an automobile for six months after arriving in Québec without a Québec licence. After this period, you must have a Québec driver's licence.

If you do not have a licence and want one, you must first take a driving course, obtain a learner's permit and then go through a training period. The Société de l'assurance automobile du Québec (SAAQ) will tell you what steps to take.

Exchange of licence to drive a passenger car

The conditions for exchanging a driver's licence vary according to the country where you obtained your licence. If your licence was issued by a country with which the SAAQ has reached a reciprocity agreement, it may be exchanged for an equivalent Québec licence. This exchange is possible only for licences to

drive a passenger car. The countries are listed on the SAAQ website.

If you hold a driver's licence issued by another country at least one year prior to your arrival in Québec, you cannot exchange your licence but you can obtain a licence to drive a passenger car provided that you pass the knowledge and road tests.

If one of the two situations above applies to you, approach the SAAQ in the first days after you arrive in Québec, since it may take several weeks from the time you apply until the process is completed.

Other vehicles

If you want a permit to drive another type of vehicle (a heavy vehicle, for example), you must first obtain a Québec licence to drive an automobile. SAAQ customer information will tell you how to proceed. You may also visit the SAAQ website.

Important

You have 12 months from the date you settled in Canada to apply for a licence exchange. To apply to exchange your driver's licence or obtain a new licence, you must present your confirmation of permanent residence to the SAAQ along with other required documents. To avoid needless delays, provide originals of your documents.

To learn more

Information on the driver's licence and the Québec Automobile Insurance Plan

- **Société de l'assurance automobile du Québec:** www.saaq.gouv.qc.ca
For general information, telephone numbers and a list of service points, click on *To reach us*.

Notes on my progress

- I made an appointment with an SAAQ service centre.

Address:

Date of appointment:

- I must take the knowledge test.

Address:

Date of examination:

Cost:

- I must take the road test.

Address:

Date of examination:

Cost:

- I obtained my driver's licence.

Date:

Cost:



Learning about government programs and services and applying for them if needed

During your first weeks in Québec, you will have many steps to take to obtain services that you and your family need.

Before leaving for Québec, find out what programs and services might be most useful to you. When you arrive in Québec, a welcoming agent from the Immigration-Québec service located near your place of residence will guide you in your steps. If necessary, he will refer you to a community organization that helps new immigrants.

Act quickly so as not to delay your eligibility for different services.

Financial assistance for the family

Various financial aid programs are available to help parents meet their family responsibilities:

- > Child assistance (child assistance payment and supplement for a handicapped child);
- > Québec Parental Insurance Plan;
- > Reduced contribution program for day care places;
- > Canada Child Tax Benefit and child disability benefit;
- > Tax deductions for handicapped dependent child or for a handicapped person;
- > Universal Child Care Benefit.

Eligibility for these programs generally depends on family income, number and age of children, personal or family situation and other criteria. To find out if you qualify, contact the appropriate organization.

For information on all family assistance programs, visit the website of the Ministère de la Famille et des Aînés (MFA). An application form for Child Assistance can be obtained from the website of the Régie des rentes du Québec (RRQ). The form to apply for the Canada Child Tax Benefit is available on the Canada Revenue Agency site.

Additional information on the family can be found on page 134 of your guide.

To learn more

Information on allowances, benefits and other family support programs

- **Ministère de la Famille et des Aînés:**
www.mfa.gouv.qc.ca, link *Family*

Information on the child assistance payment and on the supplement for handicapped children

- **Régie des rentes du Québec:**
www.rrq.gouv.qc.ca

Information on the Québec Parental Insurance Plan

- **Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale:**
www.mess.gouv.qc.ca

Application for the Canada Child Tax Benefit, the Child Disability Benefit and the Universal Child Care Benefit

- **Canada Revenue Agency:**
www.cra-arc.gc.ca, link *Child and Family Benefits*

Information on tax deductions for a dependent handicapped child or a handicapped person

- **Revenu Québec:**
www.revenu.gouv.qc.ca
- **Canada Revenue Agency:**
www.cra-arc.gc.ca

Notes on my progress

- I took steps to find out whether I was eligible for the programs.

Program:

Date of eligibility application:

Program:

Date of eligibility application:

Program:

Date of eligibility application:

Program:

Date of eligibility application:

Day care services

Educational childcare services

In Québec, it is forbidden to leave children unattended. Parents must give their children the security and care necessary for their development.

Parents who work or study sometimes find it difficult to reconcile work and family or studies and family. To help these parents balance family and job responsibilities, the Québec government created a network of day care services comprising a variety of resources. It includes childcare centres, day care centres home childcare providers accredited by a coordinating office. They offer subsidized childcare services with priority given to children aged under five years and, in the absence of school childcare, to children aged from 5 to 12.

The MFA may grant supplementary financial assistance to childcare services that receive a handicapped child.

To this end, the childcare service, in cooperation with the parents, must complete a file including all necessary

information, including an assessment of the child's special needs and the means contemplated to help its integration.

Certain families may be reimbursed for their day care fees or be exempt for a certain number of hours. To learn more, contact the day care service that you chose or the MFA.

Since there is a great demand, it is advisable to register your child with the childcare service that interests you as soon as you arrive in Québec.

Additional information on educational childcare services can be found on pages 135 and 136 of your guide.

Day care services in schools

The schedules of preschool and primary school pupils rarely coincide with those of working parents. Moreover, school holidays such as professional days often fall on working days. Most schools provide day care facilities to take care of children before classes start in the morning, at noon and after class. Pupils who use these services after class can use the time to do their school work.

Daycare services in schools are also offered on professional days, school holidays, spring break week and other occasions as required.

Contact your child's school or your school board to find out which schools provide these services.

To learn more

Information on programs and services for families and children, québec family policy and day care services

- **Ministère de la Famille et des Aînés:**
www.mfa.gouv.qc.ca

Information on day care services in schools

- **Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport:** www.mels.gouv.qc.ca

Useful information

You can become involved in the board of directors of the childcare centre, the coordinating office for home day care and the advisory committee of the day care centre that your child attends.

Practical tip

Before choosing a childcare service, visit it and meet the staff.

Notes on my progress

- I registered my child or children in day care.

Child's name:

Name of day care centre:

Address:

Telephone number:

Registration date:

Child's name:

Name of day care centre:

Address:

Telephone number:

Registration date:

Educational services

The Québec school system is composed of a public education network extending from preschool education (kindergarten) up to university education. The Québec public school system is language-based –French and English– according to the language of instruction used in the schools. The majority of establishments teach in French.

Additional information on the Québec education system can be found on page 145 of your guide.

Measures to support French learning

Since the official language of Québec is French, children who do not belong to Québec's anglophone minority must, regardless of their mother tongue, normally attend a school under a French-language school board to the end of high school.

If your children do not speak French, they will have difficulty taking courses taught in French. To address this, non-francophone students at the preschool, primary and secondary education levels can take advantage of French learning support measures offered by the Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport (MELS). By teaching them the language of instruction, these measures help pupils integrate as quickly as possible in an ordinary class where French is used. The measures may vary from one school to another, but each must offer students the most appropriate support.

Parent participation at school

Like most parents, you want to follow your child's progress in school. School authorities encourage this practice. You will be invited to the school regularly to:

- > meet the teachers;
- > learn about school programs;
- > participate in recreational activities organized by the students.

These meetings will give you a chance to express your needs to the people taking care of your children, learn about your children's progress and difficulties, and meet other parents.

Practical tips

- By maintaining close and regular contact with your child's school, you will become more familiar with its resources and be able to call upon the services of its professionals when necessary.
- By participating in activities at your child's school and talking with his or her friends and other parents, you will get to know your neighbors, establish contacts and become integrated in the life of your neighborhood.

To learn more

Information on the québec education system and teaching institutions

- **Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport:** www.mels.gouv.qc.ca, link *Milieu scolaire* (school environment)

Notes on my progress

- I registered my child or children in school.

Child's name:

Name of the school:

Address:

Telephone number:

Registration date:

Child's name:

Name of the school:

Address:

Telephone number:

Registration date:

Child's name:

Name of the school:

Address:

Telephone number:

Registration date:

Health and social services

Medical treatment is available in private doctors' offices, private clinics or polyclinics, and *centres de santé et de services sociaux* (CSSS* – health and social services centres) facilities, namely, *centres locaux de services communautaires* (CLSCs – local community services centres) and hospitals. Always bring your Health Insurance Card or your child's card when you go to the doctor, clinic, hospital or CLSC.

Health and social services centres (CSSS)

CSSS facilities offer basic medical treatment and psycho-social services, with or without an appointment, to all segments of the population (children, youth, adults and the elderly).

Useful information

If you are concerned about your health or that of a loved one, call the Info-santé line by simply dialing 811.

This free telephone service is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. A health professional will give you advice and refer you to the appropriate resource.

CSSS services are generally free to persons with a Health Insurance Card. Barring certain exceptional cases, medical services require the Health Insurance Card. Vaccination and sample-taking services can be obtained in most CLSCs.

Practical tips

- Visit your local CSSS to learn what services it offers. If it cannot provide the help you need, its staff will refer you to the appropriate organization. Some CSSSs offer help in several languages.
- When you wish to obtain services for a health problem, particularly in a polyclinic or a CLSC, check the opening hours before going by calling the clinic or Info-santé.

To learn more

Information on government health and social services

- **Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux du Québec:**
www.msss.gouv.qc.ca
Consult the *Health Guide*.

Notes on my progress

- I learned about services offered by my neighborhood CSSS:

Telephone number:

Address:

Municipal services

Everywhere in Québec, municipalities are at the heart of community life. In addition to providing residents with public facilities such as sports centres, playgrounds, libraries, cultural centres, etc., they organize activity programs that vary with the seasons.

Public libraries are an attractive resource that you can use free of charge to read newspapers. You can also consult the Internet and borrow books and other documents as well as toys, CDs, electronic games, etc. You may have to pay for these services or become a library member.

Municipalities also provide a variety of other services including public transit, public security, fire protection and garbage and recyclables collection. Ask your municipality what services are offered and how to use them.

You can visit your municipality's website, telephone or go in person to the information office during business hours.

Government employment services

Government employment services are the responsibility of Emploi-Québec.

Pages 72 and 73 of your guide give a description of these services along with available information sources.

To learn more

Information on municipal services

- **Regional portals:** www.gouv.qc.ca
- **Ministère des Affaires municipales, des Régions et de l'Occupation du territoire:** www.mamrot.gouv.qc.ca

- **Bonjour Québec:**
www.bonjourquebec.com

Information on recyclable material

- **Recyc-Québec:**
www.recyc-quebec.gouv.qc.ca

Notes on my progress

- I learned what services are offered by the municipality.



Learning about banking services

You will definitely need a bank account for your day-to-day transactions. Find out about the different services provided by banks, credit unions (*caisses populaires*) and trust companies. Then decide which one offers an account that best suits your needs, pays the highest interest rate and charges the lowest service fees.

Before closing the bank account that you have in your country, wait until you are settled in Québec, since the opening of a new account in Québec may take some time.



Opening my bank account

To open a bank account, simply visit the branch of your choice. You will usually be asked to provide two documents proving your identity. In some cases, financial institutions will also accept sponsorship

by a customer they know. You can open a personal account even if you do not have a job. Moreover, you are not obliged to deposit money in a new account. All financial institutions offer a range of useful services such as foreign currency exchange, money transfers and safety deposit boxes.



Obtaining my bank debit card

Banking services are becoming increasingly automated. Automated teller machines can be found in most banks, credit unions and other public places such as *dépanneurs* (convenience stores) and shopping centres. These automated services allow you to perform most of your routine bank transactions (deposits, withdrawals, transfers, utility bill payment) at any time using a magnetic card called a “bank debit card.” You can also use it to pay for purchases at most supermarkets, gas stations, pharmacies

and other stores. The amount of your purchase is deducted directly from your account.

To obtain a bank debit card, you must ask for one. Before using your card, ask your bank or credit union what conditions apply. Service fees may be added to each transaction.



Learning about credit

Several forms of credit are available in Québec. They include credit cards, installment purchase plans offered by stores and bank lines of credit.

With credit so easily available, you must be extremely careful. You can buy all sorts of things immediately, but very high interest rates make credit expensive. Before buying a major item on credit, make sure you can meet the required monthly payments without difficulty. Keep your other financial obligations in mind when making your calculations.

Credit cards

Financial institutions, major stores, oil companies and other merchants offer a wide variety of credit cards. They often use very persuasive advertising and throw in gifts, bonus points and other incentives to recruit customers and keep them loyal. Examine your needs carefully before accepting a credit card and remember that it cannot be issued without your written consent.

A financial institution may also offer you a second credit card to be used by another person. Your written consent is required, but you will be fully responsible for charges on this card, regardless of the user. If you use your credit card to make purchases by mail, phone or over the Internet, first make sure that the merchant is trustworthy and the transaction is secure.

Practical tips

- Consumer associations can inform you about your rights when you open an account in a financial institution and can guide you through the process. They can also help you balance your personal or family budget.
- Keep your credit cards and bank debit cards in a safe place and never reveal your Personal Identification Number (PIN).
- If one of your cards is lost or stolen, notify the issuing institution immediately.

To learn more

Information on banking services: opening an account in a financial institution, credit, cards, interest rates

• **Office de la protection du consommateur:** www.opc.gouv.qc.ca

• **Financial Consumer Agency of Canada:** www.fcac-acfc.gc.ca

• **Option consommateurs:** www.option-consommateurs.org

Contact information for consumer associations in the regions

• **Réseau de protection du consommateur du Québec:** www.consommateur.qc.ca

Notes on my progress

I opened a bank account.

Institution:

Date:

I obtained my bank debit card.

Date:

I learned about credit.



Developing my network of contacts

You can start creating your network of contacts before leaving by talking about your plan to settle in Québec with friends and acquaintances who already live there. Another method is to join virtual communities through Internet chat rooms. Taking part in them can help you create a mutual help network.

Building a network of contacts is a normal part of the integration process for anyone in new surroundings. Although this approach takes patience and determination, your network will be a great advantage in helping you get settled and adapt to your new life in Québec. It could include an immigrant who is having similar problems, a member of your community who has already experienced the immigration process, or someone in the host society with whom you have an affinity. They can all give you support and encouragement in the various steps you will have to take.

There are different ways to build a network in Québec:

- > take part in neighborhood life by signing up for leisure, sports, social, cultural or community activities;
- > do volunteer work;
- > attend parent meetings at the day care centre or school;
- > take French courses or other courses and attend information seminars given by the MICC.

Practical tip

By integrating into francophone Québec society, you will increase your chances of making contacts that could lead to a job.

One effective way to find a job is through networking. For a person seeking work, networking is defined as resorting to one's network of acquaintances as a source of information and support. You can use your personal network –family, friends, neighbors, acquaintances– or your community network –school committees, volunteer activities and associations. Include as many people as possible, since they also have networks of contacts and could know about job opportunities and provide you with references. They may also have ties with certain employers. They may even offer to send them your curriculum vitae.

Networking is an excellent strategy for learning about the hidden job market. However, many people hesitate to use it for fear of imposing on people or asking for help. It also takes time and effort. Don't hesitate to talk about your work experience and mention specifically what type of job you want.

Employment fairs are excellent opportunities to meet employers, get information on jobs, and leave your curriculum vitae with companies that interest you.

Hidden jobs

About 80% of jobs are not advertised in newspapers or on the Internet. Recruitment for these positions is done by word of mouth.

Volunteer work

Volunteerism is voluntary unpaid work to improve the quality of life and well-being of fellow citizens. As a volunteer, you can choose which field you wish to work in, and decide how much time you will devote to the activity. Volunteer work can help you build your network of contacts while learning about and adapting to your new society.

If possible, do volunteer work in your own occupational field or in a related area. By doing so, you will become known in a work environment that interests you and learn about jobs. Employers may recognize volunteer work as valuable experience. However, it does not guarantee you a job. Fields such as engineering, architecture and law offer little opportunity for volunteer work, unlike the human or social sciences sectors which have a greater diversity of volunteer positions.

Practical tips

- Visit the website of the Secrétariat à l'action communautaire autonome et aux initiatives sociales. It contains useful information on volunteer work in Québec, including Québec legislation on individual rights and responsibilities and legislation that determines the rules of conduct of different organizations where you can do volunteer work.
- Learn about the professional associations and sectoral manpower committees. By doing so, you can meet people who work in your area of activity and broaden your professional network.
- The Immigration-Québec service located near your place of residence, or a community organization that helps new immigrants, will tell you about other opportunities to develop your network and refer you to appropriate resources as needed. Do not hesitate to use their services.

To learn more

Information on the features and advantages of networking and how to create, build, expand and maintain a network of contacts

- **Ministère de l'Immigration et des Communautés culturelles:** www.immigration-quebec.gouv.qc.ca, link [*Employment*](#)
- **Sectoral manpower committees:** www.emploi-quebec.net/entreprises/formation/comites-sectoriels
- **Emploi-Québec – Your Complete Job Search Guide:** www.emploi-quebec.net
- **Immigration-Québec service located near your place of residence** – contact information available on the MICC website, link [*To reach us*](#)
- **Community organizations that help new immigrants** – contact information available on the MICC website, link [*Ministerial partners*](#)

Information on volunteer work

- **Secrétariat à l'action communautaire autonome et aux initiatives sociales:** www.benevolat.gouv.qc.ca

Information on organizations where you can do volunteer work

- **Fédération des centres d'action bénévole du Québec:** www.fcabq.org
- **Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport:** www.mels.gouv.qc.ca, link [*Loisir et sport*](#) (Leisure and sport)
- **Immigration-Québec service located near your place of residence** – contact information available on the MICC website, link [*To reach us*](#)
- **Community organizations that help new immigrants** – contact information available on the MICC website, link [*Ministerial partners*](#)

Notes on my progress

- I choose the following ways to start building my network of contacts:

Activity:

Contact person:

Contact information:

Activity:

Contact person:

Contact information:

- I am interested in the following volunteer areas:

- I wish to contact the following volunteer organizations:

Organization name:

Contact person:

Contact information:

Organization name:

Contact person:

Contact information:

- I talk about my job search plans with my family, friends, neighbors, acquaintances.

I talk about my job search plans with persons I meet in the course of my different activities.

I wish to visit the following job fairs:

Name of event:

Date:

Place:

Contact information:

Name of event:

Date:

Place:

Contact information:



Seeking and finding work

Finding a job is a key factor in your successful immigration. Looking for a job can be quite demanding; you need to be prepared to learn and tackle new challenges. To enter the labour market, you may have to accept, initially at least, lesser responsibilities than you had in a previous job, or different responsibilities that could lead you to change your occupational field.

To conduct an effective job search, you must learn about the job market in the region where you want to work and take many other steps. Several factors contribute to a successful job search. Your guide contains information and suggestions for various things you can do to help you adapt to and successfully access the Québec labour market.

To start your process

We encourage you to start preparing your job search before leaving for Québec, if possible.



In the guide, this pictogram indicates steps to be carried out or started preferably before you leave for Québec.

Once in Québec, make an appointment with the Immigration-Québec service located near your place of residence. An integration support agent will help you take stock of your job situation. He will also give you information on the requirements of the Québec labour market and the services offered by the MICC and will refer you, based on your needs, to the appropriate government or community organizations.

Practical tips

- For most jobs, you must have sufficient knowledge of written and oral French. On page 30 of your guide, you will find a section on learning French or improving your proficiency.
- Before leaving, tell people in your network of Québec contacts what type of job interests you and what qualifications you have. The identification of work settings by your contacts will prove useful on your arrival.
- Before leaving your country, make sure you have all documents (originals and certified true copies) related to your educational and occupational background. You will find information on important documents to bring with you on page 43 of your guide.

Emploi-Québec online services

This section of the guide which focuses on work and the job search will invite you to use the online services offered by Emploi-Québec: *Labour Market Information (LMI) Online* and *Online Placement*. These services will enable you to obtain information on the job market through a single website: emploiquebec.net.

LMI Online

LMI Online features reliable and up-to-date information on the duties, salaries and job prospects in over 500 trades and professions. It also indicates which trades and professions are most in demand in every region of Québec and what employers require. You will find information specific to each region as well as information on training required to exercise trades and professions and educational institutions where training is offered. The business directory gives you information on companies in each region.

Online Placement

This computerized service available on the Emploi-Québec website gives you access to a range of services to help your job search, including the ability to consult job offers from all regions of Québec.

Online Placement is a tool on which employers and people seeking work can register and search for job offers, internship offers and candidacies, and also set up “alerts” that automatically report jobs, internships and candidacies that meet their criteria.

You can also consult *Your Complete Job Search Guide*, a tool to consult before, during and after your job searches. It gives advice, practical examples and ways to help you find a job.

Local Employment Centre

Emploi-Québec provides public employment services in all regions of Québec through a network of *centres locaux d'emploi* – CLES (local employment centres). The CLEs are equipped with a multi-service room where you will find:

- information on the labour market, useful documentation for planning and carrying out your job search and information on events such as employment fairs or salons;
- computers to consult job offers and prepare your applications (CV and letters of introduction);
- bulletin boards for posting job offers, practical job search advice and upgrading courses;
- personnel who can answer your questions and help you in your job search steps or using Emploi-Québec online services.

In addition, an employment assistance agent can meet you by appointment to conduct a preliminary assessment for employment assistance. Depending on your situation, the agent could also suggest an action plan tailored to your particular job market integration needs.

Useful information

Have you obtained a CSQ in the skilled worker immigration class? Find out about registering yourself in the Québec job applicant bank. This bank lets you post your occupational profile on the Emploi-Québec website. By making yourself known to Québec employers seeking candidates, you improve your chances of finding a job quickly from your country of origin. If a match is found between you and a Québec employer, an agreement will be reached between the employer and you, and your file will receive priority treatment.

Information on this service can be found on the MICC website at www.placementinternational.gouv.qc.ca.



Adjusting to the realities and values of the Québec labour market

During your job search, you will be using methods and resources that may be very unfamiliar to you. To increase your chances of success, you should also familiarize yourself with and adapt to the workings and values of the Québec labour market.

You may need support to ease your transition and adjustment to the labour market, to understand its mechanisms, rules, values, cultural codes, its mode of functioning as well as that of vocational and technical training in Québec, and how to effectively use public employment services.

Immigration-Québec services and community organizations that help new immigrants can:

- > assess your job market adjustment needs;
- > support your adaptation efforts, provide information and referral to appropriate resources, and help you monitor your integration progress.

Community organizations also offer the following services:

- > basic information on the Québec labour market and preparing for the job search: attitudes and qualifications desired by an employer, upgrade training, etc.;
- > information on the education system and social legislation;
- > familiarization with the tools and skills needed to conduct a job search in Québec;
- > job twinning opportunities to help you better understand how your trade or profession is practiced in Québec.

To learn more

Labour market adaptation services

- **Ministère de l'Immigration et des Communautés culturelles:**
www.immigration-quebec.gouv.qc.ca,
 link [Employment](#)
 - **Immigration-Québec service located near your place of residence** – contact information available on the MICC website, link [To reach us](#)
- Community organizations that help new immigrants
- Contact information available on the MICC website, link [Ministerial partners](#)

Notes on my progress

- I need support to adapt to the Québec labour market.
- I contacted an Immigration-Québec Service or a community organization that helps new immigrants.

- Immigration-Québec service

Name of integration support agent:

Contact information:

Date:

- Community organization

Organization name:

Name of contact:

Contact information:

Date:

- I took the training course *Adapting to the Québec workplace – Living together in Québec*

Name of the organization:

Date:

I was referred to the following resources:

Local employment centre (CLE)

Name of contact:

Contact information:

Educational institution

Name of institution:

Name of contact:

Contact information:

Other government services

Name of service:

Name of contact:

Contact information:

Assessing my professional profile in relation with the Québec labour market

To clarify and understand your situation in relation to the job market, it is very important to first assess your professional profile. This will help you evaluate how your education, training and work experience match up with job opportunities in Québec. You can then set realistic employment goals to facilitate your entry into the job market. This section explains the main elements to be included in your assessment.



Exploring opportunities to practice my trade or profession in Québec

Since the job market is always evolving, the employment situation may have changed between the time you were selected and your arrival in Québec. Therefore, it is important to stay informed about job market developments in your field of work.

You may have been selected by Québec because of your socio-occupational profile. This does not necessarily mean

that you will be able to find a job in your field immediately after you arrive. In many cases, you should anticipate the possibility of working in another trade or profession, at least at first.

Before leaving, seek information on job prospects in your field, labour market requirements and conditions for practicing your trade or profession in Québec. Several elements should be considered:

- > the need to understand and speak French and, if necessary, English;
- > problems having your diplomas or work experience recognized;

- > whether or not your trade or profession is governed by a regulatory body;
- > lack of work experience in Québec;
- > possibility of the need to take training;
- > job prospects in your trade or profession;
- > the possibility of practicing your trade or profession as a self-employed worker.

MICC and Emploi-Québec websites contain a great deal of useful information. Once in Québec, contact an Immigration-Québec service located near your place of residence. Depending on your needs, an integration support agent will direct you to a community organization that helps new immigrants, your nearest local employment centre or another specialized resource.

To learn more

Information on opportunities to practice your trade or profession in Québec

- **Ministère de l'Immigration et des Communautés culturelles:**
www.immigration-quebec.gouv.qc.ca,
link [Employment](#)
You will find many sites on the labour market.

- **Immigration-Québec service located near your place of residence** – contact information available on the MICC website, link [To reach us](#)
- **Community organizations that help new immigrants** – contact information available on the MICC website, link [Ministerial partners](#)

- **Emploi-Québec:** emploi.quebec.net
- **Local employment centre nearest you** – contact information available on the Emploi-Québec website
Information on Québec's job market and recommendations on job searching are found in multiservice rooms.

Notes on my progress

- I read about the main factors to consider in exploring opportunities to work in my trade or profession.
- I expect to have the following problems integrating into the job market:



Learning the titles of my trade or profession in Québec

A trade or profession can have different titles from one country to the next. To effectively use the information and job market entry services offered in Québec, it is important to know the different titles of the trade or profession that you wish to practice.

To find these titles, consult the emploi.quebec.net website, select *LMI Online* and click on *Explore a trade or occupation*. Enter the name of your trade or profession and you will obtain the complete list of titles corresponding to it in Québec. The number in parentheses is the National Occupational Classification (NOC) code. It gives a precise description of a trade or profession. Write down the number for each title corresponding to your trade or profession.

The NOC lists the most common job titles in Canada. The title you want may not be there. In Québec, if you need help to find these titles or to validate your selection, contact the local employment centre nearest you or, online, the Centre d'assistance au placement (Placement help centre) at the e-mail address: centre.assistance.placement@mess.gouv.qc.ca.

To learn more

Information on the titles of trades and professions in québec

- **Emploi Québec:** emploi.quebec.net
- **Local employment centre nearest you** – contact information available on the Emploi-Québec website
- **Human Resources and Skills Development Canada:** www.rhdcc.gc.ca
Click on *A to Z Index*, then on *National Occupational Classification (NOC)*.

Notes on my progress

- The titles of my trade or profession in Québec are:

Title:

NOC code:

Title:

NOC code:

Title:

NOC code:

Title:

NOC code:



Learning about the conditions for practicing a regulated trade or profession

In Québec, the practice of some trades and professions is regulated. For example, the engineering and nursing professions are governed by professional orders, while various other regulatory bodies govern the electrician and painter trades, and the occupations of tree pruner and driller are governed by other regulatory bodies. These bodies, whose mission is to protect the public, have the authority to set admission conditions and practice standards, evaluate skills and diplomas, and issue a certificate or permit to qualified candidates.

In other trades and professions, conditions of admission and practice are determined by regulatory requirements. This is true for instance for certain activities and disciplines in the financial sector and in the teaching profession. See page 82 for the websites where you can obtain information on these trades and professions.

Getting information before leaving for Québec

Check before you leave to see if your trade or profession is governed by a regulatory body or subject to regulatory requirements. For information on regulated trades and professions, visit the websites of the MICC and competent organizations.

You will learn what conditions you must meet to practice your trade or profession and assess the steps to take with the regulatory body to present an application for the study of your file. In some cases, you can, prior to your departure, begin your procedures for admission with a regulatory organization. This preparation will speed up your entry into the job market. Also, check which documents are required by the regulatory bodies.

Useful information

Admission fees to a professional order can be very high, ranging from several hundred to several thousand dollars, depending on circumstances and the particular order. The fees cover processing the equivalence file, examinations, issuing the permit, admission to the order, etc. Training or internship fees are additional, where applicable.

Applying to a regulatory organization

If you plan to practice a regulated trade or profession in Québec, you must obtain a permit or certificate from the competent body. The conditions for obtaining this document vary from one organization to another. In all cases, however, you must meet the educational requirements. Other conditions may be required, such as an internship, examination, training course or work experience.

To find out what conditions apply to your situation, you must apply to the organization regulating your trade or profession. Make sure to supply all required documents so as not to delay or prevent the study of your application. To save time and avoid having to repeat certain courses, you should have a detailed official description of courses and internships you have completed and their duration.

Some regulatory bodies provide material to help candidates, before leaving for Québec, prepare for examinations required in the admission process. There may be a fee for this material.

Information on regulated trades and professions

You can obtain information on the regulatory situation in Québec, the process leading to the right to practice a regulated trade or profession, and required documents and fees. You can also obtain help to prepare your application to the body that regulates your trade or profession in Québec and to examine your options to facilitate your occupational integration. For more information, contact the Customer Contact Centre or an Immigration-Québec service. They will direct you to the person able to give you information.

Pages 158 and 159 of your guide list the main regulated trades and professions in Québec.

To learn more

General information on access to regulated trades and professions and contact information for regulatory bodies

- **Ministère de l'Immigration et des Communautés culturelles:**
www.immigration-quebec.gouv.qc.ca, link [Regulated trades and professions](#)

Information and submission of an application for authorization to practice

Professions regulated by professional orders

- **Professional order responsible for your profession** – contact information for orders is available on the www.immigration-quebec.gouv.qc.ca website, link [Regulated trades and professions](#)

Teaching profession

- **Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport:** www.mels.gouv.qc.ca

Regulated trades in the construction industry

- **Commission de la construction du Québec:** www.ccq.org

Regulated professional qualifications

- **Guide de la qualification professionnelle** (Guide to professional qualifications): emploi-quebec.net
- **Local employment centre nearest you** – contact information on the Emploi-Québec website: emploi-quebec.net

Professions in the financial industry

- **Autorité des marchés financiers:**
www.lautorite.qc.ca

For more information on regulated trades and professions

Greater Montréal

MICC Customer Contact Centre

Elsewhere in Québec or from abroad

Immigration-Québec service covering your settlement region

www.immigration-quebec.gouv.qc.ca,

link [To reach us](#)

Notes on my progress

- I contacted the Customer Contact Centre or an Immigration-Québec service for help approaching the regulatory body, if needed.

Date:

- I contacted the organization that governs my trade or profession.

Organization name:

Contact information:

Contact person:

- I submitted my application to the regulatory body.

Date:

Cost:

- I received an answer to my application.

Date:

- I must meet the following requirements to obtain a permit to practice or certificate of competency or qualification:



Planning to ask for an *Évaluation comparative des études effectuées hors du Québec*

An *Évaluation comparative des études effectuées hors du Québec* (comparative evaluation for studies done outside Québec) is a general comparison between two official educational systems. It indicates a correlation between the Québec education system and its main diplomas, on the one hand, and the education received outside Québec, on the other. It also provides a general description of the education documents (diplomas and academic transcripts) and studies done in a school system officially recognized by authorities responsible for education in a country or province other than Québec.

The *Évaluation comparative* can be useful in your job search, in applying for admission to a program of study, or in applying to certain regulatory bodies (when required). The *Évaluation comparative* issued by the MICC is neither a diploma nor is it binding on any person, educational institution, professional order, or any other body governing a profession or trade. These entities determine their own evaluation criteria. There is a fee to apply for an *Évaluation comparative*.

Education documents

To avoid unnecessary delays, you must provide the original diplomas and transcripts or copies certified as true by the educational institution you attended or by the government educational authorities responsible for the training received.

Before leaving for Québec

- If you want to work in a regulated trade or profession, you should contact the competent regulatory body before asking for an *Évaluation comparative des études effectuées hors du Québec*.
- You can apply for an *Évaluation comparative* to avoid delays should you be required to produce one at a later date. Information documents and the application form are available on the Immigration-Québec website or at the Bureau d'immigration du Québec covering your area.

In Québec

- You can obtain these documents at the Immigration-Québec service located near your place of residence.

To learn more

Information on the *Évaluation comparative des études effectuées hors du Québec* and the request form

- **Ministère de l'Immigration et des Communautés culturelles:**
www.immigration-quebec.gouv.qc.ca,
link [Employment](#)
- **Bureau d'immigration du Québec abroad covering your territory –**
contact information available on the
MICC website, link [To reach us](#)
- **Immigration-Québec service located near your place of residence –**
contact information available on the
MICC website, link [To reach us](#)

Notes on my progress

- I checked whether I should apply for an *Évaluation comparative des études effectuées hors du Québec*.

Name of the agent with whom I discussed this:

Name of the organization:

- I requested the *Évaluation comparative*, where applicable.

Date:

- I obtained my *Évaluation comparative*.

Date:



Understanding the Québec labour market

The following aspects should be taken into consideration to understand the Québec labour market:

- > current labour market conditions;
- > working conditions associated with a trade or profession;
- > trades and professions in which labour demand is highest, by region and for Québec as a whole;
- > job prospects by trade, profession or activity sector, in coming years;
- > list of Québec corporations by industry sector and by region;
- > how employees are selected in Québec;
- > skills in demand by employers;
- > ways to prove your worth with future employers;
- > how to act during a job interview;
- > labour standards (pay, vacation, etc.), occupational health and safety, the situation of working women.

To learn more

Information on the Québec labour market

- **Ministère de l'Immigration et des Communautés culturelles:**
www.immigration-quebec.gouv.qc.ca, link *Employment*
You will find many sites on the labour market.
- **Community organizations that help new immigrants** – contact information available on the MICC website, link *Ministerial partners*
- **Emploi-Québec:** emploiquebec.net
Labour standards, recourse available
for pecuniary complaints, prohibited practices, etc.
- **Commission des normes du travail:**
www.cnt.gouv.qc.ca

You will find a wealth of information on the emploiquebec.net site, which links you to *LMI Online* and *Online Placement*. Other sites also provide pertinent information and post job offers. We urge you to visit them. In Québec, you may also visit the local employment centre nearest you.

Notes on my progress

- I wish to learn more about the following aspects of the Québec labour market:



Learning about job opportunities in different regions of Québec

Québec's many regions offer an excellent quality of life, diversified and dynamic economies, and many job opportunities.

Regional job prospects available on the Emploi-Québec website provide information on the specific economic characteristics of Québec regions and jobs available in the regions. You can also request information on each region by e-mail; a list of Québec regions is provided on page 164 of your guide.

In Québec, you can learn about job prospects in regions other than Montréal by attending information sessions on living and working in the regions given in French by Immigration-Québec services in the metropolitan area and their partners.

Also visit the websites of the MICC, Emploi-Québec and the Ministère du Développement économique, de l'Innovation et de l'Exportation.

To learn more

Job prospects in Québec's regions

- **Ministère de l'Immigration et des Communautés culturelles:** www.immigration-quebec.gouv.qc.ca, link *Employment* and *Where to settle*
- **Immigration-Québec service located near your place of residence –** contact information available on the MICC website, link *To reach us*
- **Emploi-Québec:** emploiquebec.net
Click on *LMI Online* or *Online Placement*.
- **Ministère du Développement économique, de l'Innovation et de l'Exportation:** www.mdeie.gouv.qc.ca

Notes on my progress

- I have identified job opportunities in different regions.

Region:

Region:

Job opportunities:

Job opportunities:

Region:

Region:

Job opportunities:

Job opportunities:



Learning about self-employment and starting a business

Becoming an entrepreneur or a self-employed worker in Québec

If you have a certain amount of capital available, you may want to create your own job, start up your own business or join an existing business. To succeed, you must have a good understanding of the Québec business environment and prepare a business plan that includes a serious market study. If this option interests you, a number of resources are available to assist you.

Before leaving for Québec, you can start learning about the Québec business environment by visiting the Immigration-Québec website. You can also consult the section *Créer son entreprise* (starting up guide) on the government portal for services to business. All Québec regions

have a network of government services for anyone interested in becoming a self-employed worker or an entrepreneur in Québec.

To learn more

Information on self-employment and information resources to help you successfully implement your project in Québec

- **Immigration-Québec service located near your place of residence** – contact information available on the MICC website, link [To reach us](#)
- **Québec's business start-up portal:** www.entreprises.gouv.qc.ca
- **Ministère du Développement économique, de l'Innovation et de l'Exportation:** www.mdeie.gouv.qc.ca
- **Revenu Québec:** www.revenu.gouv.qc.ca

Notes on my progress

- Resource person to contact

Name:

Contact information:

- Resource person to contact

Name:

Contact information:

- Resource person to contact

Name:

Contact information:



Identifying my occupational and personal skills

Anyone wishing to enter the labour market should first take stock of his or her skills. This process will enable you to emphasize your strengths, knowledge, abilities and personal qualities.

Take into account the following elements when drawing up your assessment. They are the main factors considered by Québec employers in hiring.

Once in Québec, if you need assistance in preparing or completing your assessment, contact the Immigration-Québec service located near your place of residence, a community organization that helps new immigrants or the local employment centre nearest you.

My occupational skills

- List your specific knowledge: spoken and written languages, computer skills, etc.
- List your jobs starting with the most recent. Concentrate on your most important work experience. It may help if you try to summarize a normal work week. For each job, indicate:
 - > its duration in months or years;
 - > the title of your position and company name;
 - > your tasks and responsibilities in order of importance;
 - > your accomplishments, your “big hits”;
 - > the personal skills you developed on the job (e.g.: leadership, teamwork, etc.).
- List your education and training, indicating:
 - > the diplomas earned, in what year and your specialization, if any;
 - > the skills acquired through this training;
 - > other training – on-the-job training, seminars, conferences, etc. (e.g.: computer training, sales training programs, project management, marketing seminars, etc.).
- List your most recent volunteer work (e.g.: member of a school committee).
- List your leisure activities and interests, if you wish. Be aware that your hobbies can say a lot about you. For example, participation in a team sport may convey that you like teamwork.

A “big hit”

A “big hit” is an accomplishment on the job. It could be a document you produced, an improvement in the company, an award you won, an increase in sales, etc.

My personal skills

The personal skills listed below are particularly valued by companies. Carefully read the statements and check off the four or five qualities that best characterize you. This exercise will help you determine your strong points, making it easier to mention them in your cover letter or at job interviews.

- Ability to detect problems:** You quickly recognize problems in a given situation. You detect situations where important information is lacking.
- Assertiveness:** You are capable of expressing and defending your opinions.
- Clarity in communications:** You explain or write ideas in a way that others can easily understand.
- Cooperation:** You work effectively with others.
- Deductive skills:** You can predict how others will react to a situation.
- Efficiency:** You find faster ways to perform tasks. You find ways to achieve the expected results.
- Flexibility:** You alter your methods and behavior to adapt to new situations. You quickly integrate into a new work team.
- Initiative:** You take action when the situation demands it without waiting for your supervisor's approval.
- Leadership:** You have the ear, respect and confidence of others. You can convey your ideas and convince other people to adhere to them.
- Listening skills:** You take the time to listen to people around you. You are attentive to the needs of others.
- Methodical mind:** You tackle tasks step by step. You establish priorities based on objectives expected.
- Perseverance:** You try hard to overcome obstacles. You make an effort to obtain the information or help you need despite difficulties.

- ❑ **Precision:** You pay special attention to details. You verify the accuracy of information you are given.
- ❑ **Reliability:** You get things done on time. You meet expectations that others set for you.
- ❑ **Self-control:** You can control your emotions when you are angry. You weigh things carefully before you speak or act.
- ❑ **Self-sufficiency:** You perform tasks with little or no assistance.
- ❑ **Teamwork:** You respect roles and responsibilities of team members and you cooperate to reach target objectives.

To learn more

Information and tools to help you identify your skills

- **Immigration-Québec service located near your place of residence** – contact information available on the MICC website, link [To reach us](#)
- **Emploi-Québec:** emploiquebec.net
- **Local employment centre nearest you** – contact information available on the Emploi-Québec website
- **External manpower resource of Emploi-Québec** – contact information available at your nearest local employment centre



Determining my employment plan

After conducting your search for information and preparing your professional skills assessment, you will be able to target realistic objectives. These objectives should take into account recognition of your diplomas, your job experience and labour market needs.

My employment file

Your employment file should highlight your experience and aptitudes that make you stand out from the crowd. It should emphasize your initiative, organizational abilities and capacity to work in a team. It is very important to have all the necessary documents confirming your experience and qualifications. The file should contain:

- > a curriculum vitae presenting your skills and achievements;

- > originals or certified true copies of:
 - your diplomas, academic transcripts, certificates and other attestations of education,
 - your attestations of continuing education, internships or professional development training,
 - description and duration of courses and internships,
 - permits to practice a trade or profession and certificates of competency or qualification,
 - attestations of employment and job experience, task descriptions and letters of recommendation from former employers;
- > an *Évaluation comparative des études effectuées hors du Québec*, if needed;

- > a portfolio including productions, documents and photographs of achievements, where applicable.

Finding a job in your chosen trade or profession takes time, preparation and adjustment to corporate requirements. If your trade or profession is regulated, you must fulfill the requirements of the relevant regulatory body.

In Québec, if you need help setting your occupational goals, consult the Immigration-Québec service located near your place of residence, a community organization that helps new immigrants or the local employment centre nearest you. Their staff can help you formulate these goals, explore methods to attain them and refer you to appropriate resources, if necessary.

To learn more

Assistance to help you define your employment plan

- **Immigration-Québec service located near your place of residence** – contact information available on the MICC website, link [To reach us](#)
- **Local employment centre nearest you** – contact information available on the Emploi-Québec website
- **External manpower resource of Emploi-Québec** – contact information available at the local employment centre nearest you.

Notes on my progress

- I need help to prepare my employment plan.

Organization name:

Contact information:

Resource person to contact:

- I have prepared my employment plan.

Targeted job(s):

Implementing a realistic action plan to obtain a job that matches my occupational skills

Preparing a realistic action plan will help you organize your approach properly and avoid disappointment and wasted time and money when implementing it.

Obtaining a first work experience in Québec

Your first job—even if it is part-time—will familiarize you with working practices in Québec and give you Québec job experience to put on your curriculum vitae. It can also expand your network of contacts and may perhaps even lead to a promotion within the company if you prove your skills.



Learning job search techniques

Job search techniques are excellent tools for entering the labour market. They will enable you to:

- > increase your chances of getting a job interview by helping you use tools that present your strong points (curriculum vitae, portfolio, cover letter, job application form, electronic application, professional card, etc.);
- > learn where to look for job vacancies;
- > pay attention to the news (headlines announcing corporate openings or major investments in a given industry);

- > learn to create a network of contacts and use it carefully in your job search;
- > prepare your interviews and anticipate questions that employers could ask;
- > plan and carry out your job search as effectively as possible, including your contacts with employers;
- > follow up on your job steps.

To determine your needs with regard to job search techniques, contact the local employment centre nearest you or an external manpower resource of Emploi-Québec.

To learn more about these techniques, contact your integration support agent at the Immigration-Québec service located nearest your place of residence or a community organization that helps new immigrants.

To learn more

Information on job search techniques

- **Emploi-Québec:** emploiquebec.net
Read the *Complete Job Search Guide*.
- **Local employment centre nearest you** – contact information available on the Emploi-Québec website
- **External manpower resource of Emploi-Québec** – contact information available at your nearest local employment centre
- **Ministère de l'Immigration et des Communautés culturelles:**
www.immigration-quebec.gouv.qc.ca,
link [Employment](#)
You will find many sites on the labour market.

Notes on my progress

- I read Emploi-Québec's *Complete Job Search Guide*.
- I need to learn job search techniques.

- I contacted the local employment centre nearest me or an external manpower resource of Emploi-Québec.

Contact information:

Contact person:



Finding a first job

It is very important to make contact with the Québec labour market quickly and understand how it works. Public and private resources throughout Québec can help either plan and carry out your job search or offer your services to employers in the most favorable light. However, they cannot guarantee you a job.

You may be overqualified for your first job or it may not match your qualifications. Depending on your situation, you may want to keep this job while starting or continuing a training course, or else use it to pay your way while you look for something better.

Finding a job in Québec is essentially an individual responsibility that takes personal effort. The key to success is to invest time and energy in your job searches and, above all, to be well prepared. Do not neglect any resource and use every means available:

- > Use your network of contacts to mention that you are looking for work and what type of job you want, and ask them to let you know if they hear about a job offer.
- > Go to your local employment centre nearest you to obtain services appropriate to your situation.
- > Find out about the conditions and services of private placement agencies.
- > Consult the classified ad sections in newspapers under the headings *Help wanted* and *Careers*.
- > Visit the various job search websites. You can search for offers by region, employer, job title, field of work and keyword.
- > Visit employment fairs.

When you start a new job, your employer will ask for your SIN. Apply for one in the first days after your arrival in Québec.

Information on the SIN can be found on page 48 of your guide.

Practical tips

- Learn about the business of companies where you plan to apply and ask their human resources department for an interview.
- Apply for several jobs at the same time. This will increase your chances of finding one quickly.
- Contact employers directly, in person or by telephone, e-mail or postal mail.

Did you know?

- The Québec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms prohibits refusing a job to a person based on discriminatory reasons such as ethnic or national origin, color, sex, pregnancy, sexual orientation, civil status, age, disability or the use of a means to mitigate this disability, having children or receiving social assistance.
- If you have reason to believe that you are being refused a job due to discrimination, contact the Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse (CDPDJ).
- The dominant values in Québec companies are generally equality, cooperation, flexibility and participation. Québec managers value employee involvement in the company. They do not hesitate to consult their subordinates when needed, although this is not done on a systematic basis. They expect frank communication and constructive comments.
- In Québec, hiring and promotions are generally based on skills, achievements and individual performance of employees. Even if you come from an upper socio-economic milieu and hold diplomas from top schools in your country of origin, you must, like any Quebecer, demonstrate your professional and personal skills to the employer. Québec employers often also take into account the person's capacity to integrate in the work team.
- To ensure equality of opportunity and have a workforce more representative of the population, many employers have established equal opportunity programs that enable them, among other things, to hire persons from target groups of equal skills. These target groups include ethnic and visible minorities. Persons qualified to benefit from this program are encouraged to identify themselves as such. These programs have positive impacts for everyone.
- In Québec, what is written in an employment contract is more important than the relationship you can establish with your employer. Although job duties are generally precisely defined, there is room for personal initiative by employees. If a dispute arises with your employer, it will generally be settled according to the terms of the contract rather than any relationship you formed with the employer.
- Québec employers value adherence to work schedules and meeting deadlines. Work meetings have a fixed agenda that fosters structured and orderly discussions based on the meeting's objectives.
- Women are very present on the Québec labour market. Just like men, they work in the trade or profession of their choice. They hold a variety of positions at all levels of the corporate hierarchy.

- In Québec, it is believed that young persons can be competent even if they have little experience. As a result, they sometimes supervise fellow workers who are more experienced than they are.
- Québec managers generally seek consensus and resolve disputes through negotiation and compromise.

To learn more

Information on job searches, job vacancies and job search assistance

- **Ministère de l'Immigration et des Communautés culturelles:**
www.immigration-quebec.gouv.qc.ca, link *Employment*
 You will find many sites on the labour market.
- **Emploi-Québec:** emploiquebec.net
 Click on *LMI Online* or on *Online Placement*.

- **Local employment centre nearest you** – contact information available on the Emploi-Québec website
- **External manpower resource of Emploi-Québec** – contact information available at the local employment centre nearest you

Information on labour relations in Québec, unions, collective agreements

- **Ministère du Travail:**
www.travail.gouv.qc.ca
- **Commission des relations du travail:**
www.crt.gouv.qc.ca

Information on labour standards that all employers must respect, questions on working conditions, paid holidays, vacations, etc.

- **Commission des normes du travail:**
www.cnt.gouv.qc.ca

Information on the Québec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms (including questions concerning discrimination, harassment, etc.) and on equality of opportunity programs

- **Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse:**
www.cdpedj.qc.ca

Information on the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (including rights of newcomers)

- **Department of Justice Canada:**
www.justice.gc.ca
 Click on *Search Canada's consolidated statutes and regulations*, then on *Constitutional Documents* and *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.

Notes on my progress

List of employers who interest me, including their addresses, with the name of persons to contact and their telephone numbers:

List of steps that I have already taken and those still to come:

- > Telephone calls
- > Interviews
- > Company visits
- > Follow-up

Websites and newspapers consulted:



Proving myself in my job

You have accepted a job. Here are some tips to help you integrate in your workplace:

- > Keep a positive attitude. Accept criticism and take heed of suggestions for improving your work. In Québec, acknowledging that there is room for improvement is generally well regarded.
- > Be on time and stick to your work schedule. In Québec, time is considered to be money. If you cannot arrive on time, tell your employer that you will be late. The employer may request a reason for your lateness. It would be preferable to respond to his or her inquiry, even if it may seem to you like an invasion of privacy.
- > Dress appropriately in accordance with the company's dress code.
- > Accept responsibilities. Make sure that you are up to the task. Understand what your employer expects of you. Don't hesitate to ask questions.
- > Treat everyone with respect. This is the key to a healthy work climate. Respecting colleagues implies maintaining egalitarian relations with both men and women, whatever their status within the company. Although a friendly work environment is often desirable, avoid familiarity that could be deemed inappropriate.
- > Show initiative. Don't always wait until you are told to do something. If you see that a job needs to be done, offer to do it!
- > Be reliable. If you say you are going to do something, do it. If you are no longer able to do it, tell your employer or else you risk being seen as unreliable.
- > Support your colleagues. In Québec, while personal achievement is valued, harmony with one's fellow workers is also sought.
- > Control your emotions. Don't let little misunderstandings blow out of proportion. Settle differences calmly and objectively.

To learn more

Information and advice on attitudes and behavior to prove yourself on the job

- **Ministère de l'Immigration et des Communautés culturelles:**
www.immigration-quebec.gouv.qc.ca, link [Employment](#)
You will find many sites with information on this subject.
- **Community organizations that help new immigrants** – contact information available on the MICC website, link [Ministerial partners](#)
- **Immigration-Québec service located near your place of residence** – contact information available on the MICC website, link [To reach us](#)
- **Local employment centre nearest you** – contact information available on the Emploi-Québec website

Notes on my progress

I want to know more about how to prove myself on the job.

Contacts:

Name:

Name:

Contact information:

Contact information:

Continuing my steps

Depending on the trade or profession that you wish to practice, a certain amount of preparation may be needed for you to reach your employment goals.



Meeting regulatory body requirements, where applicable

After applying to the relevant regulatory body, you will learn what requirements you will need to satisfy to work in your trade or profession. Page 80 of your guide gives information on the regulatory bodies and access to a regulated trade or profession.

The MICC can help you apply for admission to a regulatory body.

For more information or to make an appointment, contact the Customer Contact Centre if you live in the greater Montréal region. If you live elsewhere in Québec, contact the Immigration-Québec service covering your region of settlement.

Admission to a professional order

The procedure for admission to a professional order is sometimes long and complicated. In addition to the time the order takes to process your file, you must consider the availability and duration of courses or internships that you are required to follow, the frequency of examinations held by the order and the Office québécois de la langue française (OQLF), and delays due to other necessary administrative steps such as obtaining academic transcripts, additional papers, etc.

To learn more

Conditions and steps to obtain a permit to practice or a certificate of competency or qualification

- **Regulatory body for your trade or profession**
Most regulated trades and professions are listed on the MICC website: www.immigration-quebec.gouv.qc.ca, link [*Regulated trades and professions*](#)

Information and help in seeking admission to a professional order or other regulatory body

Greater Montréal

- **Customer Contact Centre of the MICC**

Elsewhere in Québec

- **Immigration-Québec service covering your region of settlement** – contact information available on the website www.immigration-quebec.gouv.qc.ca, link [*To reach us*](#)

Notes on my progress

The steps that I may need to take to obtain a permit to practice or certificate of competency or qualification are:

Examination

Place of the examination:

Date:

Cost:

Interview

Place of interview:

Date:

Internship

Place of internship:

Start date:

Training

Place of training:

Start date:

Cost:

Examination of the OQLF

Place of the examination:

Date:

Cost:

I obtained my permit to practice or certificate of competency or qualification.



Seeking training if necessary

The labour market is always changing, particularly in areas of rapid technological progress such as information technology, high tech and the health sciences. To remain competitive, you need to update your knowledge and keep up with the latest technological developments. This is just as true for people educated in Québec as it is for newcomers.

Furthermore, for many trades and professions, the qualifications required and work methods vary from one country to another. Newcomers must therefore make a special effort to adapt their knowledge and skills in order to integrate in the labour market of the host society.

Adult education or continuing education

There are several reasons for starting courses or completing your education:

- > You may need training to improve your skills or become familiar with different aspects of practicing your trade or profession in Québec: learning new technologies, understanding the laws and regulations applicable to the trade or profession you wish to practice, adapting to different ways of relating with customers, etc.
- > If you wish to practice a regulated trade or profession, additional training may be required by the regulatory body to obtain authorization to practice. The regulatory body will tell you what training is required.
- > You may have to acquire new general or vocational training following a professional reorientation.

In Québec, if you need help defining training needs for your desired employment, contact the local employment centre nearest you or an external manpower resource of Emploi-Québec. Their staff will help clarify your choices and refer you to appropriate resources.

To learn more about training opportunities related to your desired employment, contact your integration support agent at the Immigration-Québec service located near your place of residence or a community organization that helps new immigrants.

About education

Adult education takes several forms, including courses given in adult education centres, vocational training centres, college and university courses, training by the regulatory bodies, on-the-job workshops or training, and distance education. These options vary in duration from a few days to more than a year.

The fees charged are generally quite high. Although you will probably have to pay them yourself, you may also receive student aid in the form of loans or bursaries or both from the Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport (MELS), or a loan from a financial institution (line of credit for studies). In some cases, following an evaluation of your situation by an agent from your local employment centre, you could receive an employment assistance allowance (financial help from Emploi-Québec).

Educational institutions in Québec offer full-time or part-time day or evening programs. Many Quebecers prefer to work and study at the same time. Taking part-time or evening courses can round out your education, while allowing you to work at the same time.

With the exception of distance education, admission to courses is generally not on an ongoing basis and places are often limited. Waits can therefore be expected. Since the availability of courses may vary, you should seek information from

educational institutions, regulatory bodies or Emploi-Québec.

Offered in certain fields, distance education has several advantages if you want to take training at your own pace and in your own home. Available on line or by correspondence, it is an attractive option to help you gain certain skills related to the practice of your trade or profession, even before you arrive in Québec.

Useful information

Admission to courses requires a sound knowledge of French. This is another good reason to start learning French before your departure. Before you register, find out about education offered in private institutions. Their costs vary from one institution to another and can sometimes be high. The public system often offers free education similar to that of the private network. Your agent at the MICC or local employment centre can help you make the right choice.

Additional information on adult education and continuing education can be found on page 149 of your guide.

To learn more

Description of initial vocational and technical training

- **Inforoute site of the Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport:** www.inforoutefpt.org

Information on continuing education in Québec

- **Directory of continuing education:** www.training.jobboom.com

Training recommended for working in your trade or profession and how to obtain it

- **Immigration-Québec service located near your place of residence** – contact information available on the MICC website: www.immigration-quebec.gouv.qc.ca, link [To reach us](#)

- **Community organizations that help new immigrants** – contact information available on the MICC website, link [Ministerial partners](#)

- **Professional orders** – contact information available on the MICC website, link [Regulated trades and professions](#)

- **Commission de la construction du Québec:** www.ccq.org

- **Emploi-Québec:** emploi-quebec.net

- **Educational institutions** – list available on the website of the Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport: www.mels.gouv.qc.ca

- **Local employment centre nearest you** – contact information available on the Emploi-Québec website

Distance education, resources and courses offered

- **Téléuniversité:** www.telug.quebec.ca

- Network of francophone distance education of Canada: www.refad.ca

- **Le-Formateur/Portal for Online training** (information technology and languages) offered by 16 CEGEPs in Québec: www.le-formateur.com

- **Société de formation à distance des commissions scolaires du Québec:** www.sofad.qc.ca

- **Cégep@distance:** www.cegepadistance.ca

Financial planning for studies and assistance

- **Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport:** www.afe.gouv.qc.ca

- **Canlearn:** www.canlearn.ca
The *Financing* link gives pertinent information on financial planning for education, bank loans, bursaries, etc.

- **Student awards.com:** www.studentawards.com

Notes on my progress

- I identified a resource person to help me assess my job situation and training needs if any.

Name of resource:

Address:

Name of contact:

Telephone:

- I need training.

Name of training or program:

- I will take this training offered by the following educational institution or organization:

Address:

Registration date:

Start date:

Cost:

I will take this training at a distance, with the following educational institution or organization.

Address:

Registration date:

Start date:

Cost:



Learning English, in addition to French, if the job requires it

Employers may require you to know English to be able to practice your trade or profession in certain jobs, areas of economic activity or regions.

In this case, you must acquire an adequate knowledge of the language. There are different methods for learning English. Educational institutions and language schools offer courses on their premises or distance programs.

If you already have advanced knowledge of French, find out about opportunities to take English courses in your country of departure.

To learn more

information on school boards and educational institutions

- **Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport:** www.mels.gouv.qc.ca

Online training – educational institutions, resources and courses offered

- **Téléuniversité:** www.telug.quebec.ca
- **Le-Formateur/Portal for online training (information technology and languages) given by 16 CEGEPs in Québec:** www.le-formateur.com

- **Regional centre for distance education of Greater Montréal:** www.cspi.qc.ca
- **Société de formation à distance des commissions scolaires du Québec:** www.sofad.qc.ca

Notes on my progress

I need to learn or improve my English.

I am interested in the following educational institutions that offer English instruction:

Name of institution:

Contact information:

Contact person:

Name of institution:

Contact information:

Contact person:

I am registering for an English course.

At the following institution:

Address:

Registration date:

Start date:

Cost:

I am registering for a distance English course.

With the following educational institution or organization:

Address:

Registration date:

Start date:

Cost:

Following up on my action plan

The successful completion of your professional integration is a demanding process. Use all methods available to you to conduct your search and don't hesitate to ask for help if needed.



Finding a job related to my occupational skills

Since arriving in Québec, you may have been working in a job other than the one you had hoped for. It often takes time and much effort to find a job in which you can fully use your occupational skills. Your guide suggests several activities to help you prepare and implement a realistic action plan. You have probably already started or completed several steps of the plan. If you need to revise your goals or specify them further, do not hesitate to ask for help from competent resources to give you the best possible chances of success.

Throughout your process, a guidance agent from the Immigration-Québec service located near your place of residence, or from a community organization that helps new immigrants, can help you determine the probable causes of your difficulties and direct you to appropriate resources.

To learn more

Information and assistance to help you in your integration process

- **Ministère de l'Immigration et des Communautés culturelles:** www.immigration-quebec.gouv.qc.ca, link [Employment](#)
You will find many sites on the labour market.
- **Immigration-Québec service located near your place of residence** – contact information available on the MICC website, link [To reach us](#)

- **Community organizations that help new immigrants** – contact information available on the MICC website, link [Ministerial partners](#)

Information on the job search and job vacancies

- **Emploi-Québec:** emploi-quebec.net
Click on *LMI Online* or on *Online Placement*.
- **Local employment centre nearest you** – contact information available on the Emploi-Québec website

Notes on my progress

- Resource person to contact

Name:

Contact information:

- Resource person to contact

Name:

Contact information:



Online French course offered by the MICC

Persons selected by Québec who have attained a competency level corresponding to the beginning of the intermediate stage can register free of charge for *Francisation en ligne* (French online).

Course objectives

Using a variety of online training tools, this course allows you to:

- > learn online French as written and spoken in Québec;
- > practice French with other students;
- > discover Québec, its culture and common values.

Course content

It consists of four course packages varying in duration from 15 to 23 weeks depending on the package, with six hours of instruction a week. Each package includes an introduction, a summary and four modules. Each module corresponds to one of the following themes: housing, education, employment, tourism and recreation, health and public services, media and culture, consumer and business affairs, democratic life in Québec. The themes are dealt with in two course packages to allow a deeper treatment of the subject.

Training methods

- > Self-learning – various exercises conducted at the student's convenience (60% of the course)
- > Offline learning, in small groups with an instructor (25% of the course)
- > Live classes led by an instructor (15% of the course)

This course gives access to personalized follow-up by an instructor who leads classes online and who corrects the assignments. It also offers technical support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

This course is also offered on a self training basis, without virtual classes and without compulsory work.

Conditions of eligibility

- > Hold a CSQ for at least two months.
- > Speak and understand French.
- > Have access to a computer and an Internet connection.
- > Be aged 16 or older.

Tips on submitting your application for admission

To submit an application for admission, visit the website www.francisationenligne.gouv.qc.ca and:

- > Click on *Demande d'admission*.
- > Take the technical test.
- > Complete all the boxes on the form.
- > Make sure to write your individual reference number on the form. This number, found in the upper right of your CSQ, begins by one or two letters.

To learn more

Guided visit of *francisation en ligne*

- www.francisationenligne.gouv.qc.ca

Information on the online french course

- **Ministère de l'Immigration et des Communautés culturelles:**
www.immigration-quebec.gouv.qc.ca,
link [Learning French online](#)
- **Immigration-Québec service located near your place of residence** – contact information available on the MICC website, link [To reach us](#)

Arrival and first days

To reach my destination

You will find an information counter at all airports, railway stations and bus terminals where you will be told about the best way to reach your destination. The different ways to travel are:

To Montréal:

- > by shuttle bus, from Montréal-Trudeau airport, for a reasonable price;
- > by taxi, from an airport, railway station, or marine or bus terminal. The fare is government-regulated and determined by a meter that the driver starts when departing. A flat rate can be negotiated for long distances;
- > by rental vehicle.

To areas outside the Montréal region:

- > by train or bus. For similar prices, the bus has more varied schedules and routes than the train. Railway stations and bus terminals are generally located near the city centre;
- > by rental vehicle;
- > by plane. Flying can save you a lot of time, but will cost much more than other types of transportation.

Practical tip

If you have the time and means, use your first days in Québec to get to know your new surroundings. Pretend that you are a tourist and visit the attractions and main streets of the city where you are living.

Important documents to keep in my possession

You become eligible to apply for Canadian citizenship after living in Canada for at least three years as a permanent resident. Keep the originals of the following documents in a safe place:

- > your passport or travel document;
- > your *Certificat de sélection du Québec* (CSQ);
- > your valid permanent resident visa affixed to your passport (issued by Canadian authorities);
- > your Confirmation of Permanent Residence (issued by Canadian authorities).

The latter two items confirm your permanent resident status. You will need them for most of the steps you will have to take. Make sure the information is correct, particularly your date of birth and the spelling of your name. Always use copies (certified, if necessary) when you are required to submit proof of identity for an official application.

Telephone directories

As heavy telephone users, Quebecers use telephone directories as a source of information. That way they can get a lot done without having to go from one place to another. All telephone subscribers receive directories free of charge. The front pages explain how to use them.

Practical tips

- When you reach an employee of the MICC or another organization, write down his or her name and phone number and the name of a department where he or she works. This will make future contacts easier.
- Before going to the MICC or another government office, check their business hours. In many cases, you will need to make an appointment beforehand.
- If you cannot yet communicate easily in French, bring someone along to interpret for you.

Postal services

Canada Post offices provide ordinary postal services (mailing of letters, parcels, money orders). On weekdays, they provide mail delivery either to your home or to a post office box allotted to you.

When sending a letter or parcel, clearly indicate the postal code (six characters), affix sufficient postage and drop the mail in letter boxes found in easily visible locations in all municipalities. The postal code facilitates and hastens delivery of your mail to Canadian addresses.

Canada Post offices also offer a range of other services: general, priority and express delivery; insurance on the value of mailed items; registered mail, holding and forwarding of mail when changing address; postal money order, etc.

Postal counters located in stores, convenience stores and pharmacies are authorized to offer the same complete range of postal services as those offered in Canada Post offices. Rapid private messenger services are also available.

Canadian currency

The currency used in Québec is the Canadian dollar (\$). It is divided into 100 cents (¢) and comes in the following denominations:

- > Coins: 1 ¢, 5 ¢, 10 ¢, 25 ¢, 50 ¢ (rarely used), \$1 and \$2;
- > Bank notes commonly used: \$5, \$10, \$20, \$50 and \$100.

If you have no Canadian currency on you when you arrive, you can buy some at foreign exchange bureaus found in most large airports. Elsewhere, the service is available from foreign exchange dealers and some credit unions and bank branches.

Sales taxes

Almost all goods and services are subject to consumption taxes imposed by the federal and provincial governments. The federal Goods and Services Tax (GST) is 5% and the Québec Sales Tax (QST) is 7.5%. These taxes are not usually included in the tag prices.

Income taxes

Revenue from income tax and other taxes is used to finance public services. Consequently, every individual is responsible for filing an income tax return.

The tax system is based on the principle of self-assessment. You must declare your income and deductions, then calculate the share of tax you will have to pay each year. The amount of tax you owe depends on your income and specific situation, both personal and familial. This is called an “individual income tax return.”

You are required to file two income tax returns, one to the government of Québec and the other to the government of Canada, using the forms prescribed for this purpose.

The tax year runs from January 1 to December 31. Income tax returns must generally be sent to both governments no later than April 30 of the following year.

In addition to reporting your income, deductions and calculation of taxes payable, your income tax return enables governments to determine your eligibility for various social programs.

Practical tips

- If you have difficulty with your income tax return, contact Revenu Québec and the Canada Revenue Agency. Their customer service agents can give you all the information you need to complete your tax forms, free of charge. You can also contact tax experts (specialized agencies, accountants), but you must pay for this service.
- Do not neglect your tax obligations. By filing your income tax return on time and declaring all your income, you will avoid having to pay interest and penalties if you have amounts owing.

Useful information

- The brochures entitled *New Residents and Income Tax* and the *Guide to the Income Tax Return* for individuals are available free of charge in any Revenu Québec office and on its website.
- Provincial and federal income tax forms for individuals are available respectively at:
 - Revenu Québec, Services Québec and credit unions;
 - Canada Revenue Agency, the offices and website of Service Canada, and post offices.

To learn more

Information on postal services, products and rates

- **Canada Post:** www.canadapost.ca

Information on the tax system

- **Revenu Québec:**
www.revenu.gouv.qc.ca
To consult the brochure entitled *New Residents and Income Tax*, click on *Individuals*, then *Your situation* and on *New Residents*.
- **Canada Revenue Agency:**
www.cra-arc.gc.ca
To consult information intended for new residents, click on *Individuals*, then on *International and non-resident*, again on *Individuals* and on *Newcomers to Canada*.

Business hours

The law allows most stores to stay open to the public from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. from Monday to Friday, and from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays.

More flexible hours are allowed for supermarkets, neighborhood convenience stores (called “dépanneurs”), pharmacies, stores in airports, air terminals and hospitals, bookstores, service stations and leisure or tourist businesses such as restaurants, cinemas, museums, hotels, etc.

Consumer issues

Settling here means that you will engage in consumer activity. You will probably deal with goods and services providers. To carry out these transactions, you will often have to sign a contract.

Contracts – The Office de la protection du consommateur (OPC) is the government body responsible for enforcing the Consumer Protection Act. This Act governs certain types of contracts such

door-to-door selling, credit, sales or lease of a new or used automobile. Before signing a contract, it is very important to read all the clauses carefully and pay special attention to the small print. It is also possible to reach a contract agreement over the telephone. In this case, you must be very vigilant.

Car lease or purchase – If you wish to lease an automobile long term or buy a used car, first learn about precautions to take. For example, a salesman is required to provide the information written on the label affixed to the car. He must also give you a warranty on the proper functioning of the car, subject to certain reservations.

Warranties – The Consumer Protection Act states that goods purchased from a merchant are covered by a legal warranty on their quality. The warranty covers normal usage of the asset for a reasonable time period, based on the price paid, the contract signed and conditions of use. Make sure that you properly understand the warranty coverage.

To learn more

Information on consumer matters

- **Office de la protection du consommateur** : www.opc.gouv.qc.ca

Practical tip

After you are settled, take the time to discover how Quebecers live and become familiar with the price of goods and services. Plan your budget carefully taking into account essential expenses such as housing, food, transportation, etc. It is preferable to use your savings carefully and gradually adjust your budget.

Public transit

Most large cities offer a public bus system. Montréal is the only city with a metro (subway), which is particularly appreciated in winter. With four lines and 68 stations, the underground train serves the heart of Greater Montréal and connects the south shore of the Saint Lawrence River to the city centre. Five suburban train lines provide connections between the urban zone of Montréal and surrounding suburbs.

Fare payment methods vary according to municipality. You can generally pay for your trip in cash in the metro and on buses and certain suburban trains. Exact change is required on buses. You can obtain single tickets. The date and time are printed on the back of the ticket. They are good for one trip and serve as transfers. Keep it for the duration of your trip as proof of payment.

If you use public transit often, purchasing an OPUS card will be more economical. You must “load” it with transit tickets,

based on your needs, at authorized merchants, in a metro station or in a railway station. Keep your receipt. It constitutes your proof of purchase and will be necessary if you are entitled to a tax credit. Certain categories of persons such as children, students and the elderly aged 65 and over can benefit from reduced fares.

For information on fares, schedules, routes and itineraries to get from one point to another, call the telephone information service of your city's public transit commission.

Police services

Relations between the police and citizens of Québec are based on trust and marked by mutual respect. In all situations requiring police assistance, you can call on them without fear.

Community-based policing has emerged in recent years. It was introduced with several goals, including strengthening public trust in police organizations and concretely improving the safety of

individuals in their neighborhoods. By moving closer to citizens, community-based police aim to better understand and meet their needs and expectations with regard to public security.

The police are there to serve you, so do not hesitate to seek their help in case of need.

Police forces

Police forces ensure the security of citizens and see that laws are obeyed. There are three main types of police force in Québec:

- > municipal police in most large cities;
- > Sûreté du Québec (SQ), present throughout the province, in particular on highways and in rural regions with no municipal police;
- > the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), which enforce federal laws.

You can ask the police to intervene in many situations:

- > emergencies of all kinds;
- > road accidents;
- > if you are a victim of theft, assault or fraud;
- > if a person under your care disappears;
- > if you witness a crime, etc.

The police are required to respond in a judicious manner without using abusive force. They must also tell you the reasons for their action, unless they catch you committing an offence, and respect your right to a lawyer's assistance.

Practical tips

- If you are arrested, do not resist the police. You will subsequently have the right to challenge their reason or lodge a complaint if you consider the arrest abusive. In the Greater Montréal area, the Barreau du Québec offers a 24 hour telephone consultation service. The telephone number is generally posted in police stations. If not, it will be given to you on request.
- If you wish to make a complaint about police conduct, contact the Police Ethics Commissioner. The complaint form is available on the Commissioner's website. If you need help, its staff can answer your questions by phone or in person and advise you on how to formulate your complaint.

In an emergency

Dial 9-1-1.

Otherwise, you can call the nearest police station directly. Is a good idea to keep this number near your telephone.

To learn more

Information on civil security, crime prevention and community police

- **Ministère de la Sécurité publique:**
www.securitepublique.gouv.qc.ca

Mission and role of the Sûreté du Québec

- **Sûreté du Québec:**
www.suretequebec.gouv.qc.ca

Information on police duties and standards of conduct and on how to file a complaint

- **Police ethics commissioner:**
www.deontologie-policiere.gouv.qc.ca

Climate

Because of its geographic location, Québec has a continental climate characterized by harsh winters and relatively hot summers. Although seasonal temperatures vary by region, they reach an average 22° Celsius (°C) in summer and -10 °C in winter. Most new immigrants underestimate the severity of Québec winters. In fact, temperatures of -25 °C to -30 °C are quite common and snow is generally abundant. In contrast, the mercury often exceeds 27 °C in summer. Despite these extremes, winter and summer can be very pleasant as long as you dress appropriately.

Houses have heating systems that provide all the necessary comfort during the cold season. For your health and well-being in winter, do not try to save money on clothing or heating. It is generally recommended that you keep the temperature of your dwelling at a minimum of 20 °C during the day and 18 °C at night.

Useful information

- Dress adequately in winter when going outdoors by wearing a sweater, warm coat, scarf, gloves or mittens, and warm waterproof boots. Keep your head well covered with a hat, tuque or hood.
- All the time and especially in summer, you are strongly advised to protect yourself against ultraviolet rays by limiting your exposure to the sun. You can do so by wearing tinted glasses and clothing that covers you and using sun screen cream if needed.

To learn more

Information on the dangers of exposure to the sun and protection methods

- **Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux:** www.msss.gouv.qc.ca
You can read the publication *Le bronzage pourrait avoir votre peau!*

Housing

The lease

After you visit an apartment and express interest in renting it, the landlord may sometimes ask you to fill out a form in which you give information and references enabling him to check your tenant record (your behavior in a previous apartment and your ability to pay the rent). This form, called an "Offer to Lease," often contains a clause giving the landlord a few days to check your record before telling you whether he accepts you as a tenant. Since acceptance by the landlord leads to the signing of the lease, it is very important to not sign several offers to lease at a time and instead wait for the answer to one offer before making another. You will thus avoid being bound by more than one lease.

If you have a verbal agreement, you have the right to request written confirmation of this agreement. If the landlord does not want to use the official form of the

Régie du logement du Québec (RLQ), he must still give you, within 10 days after the agreement was reached, a document with the following information:

- > name and address of the landlord;
- > your name;
- > amount of the rent;
- > exact address of the apartment that you are renting;
- > obligatory annotations required by law.

When the landlord uses the official RLQ lease form, he must complete it in French unless you have an agreement with him to the contrary.

The landlord must give the tenant a copy of the lease within 10 days of its signature. The lease must also indicate whether the dwelling is located in a new building or in a building recently converted to residential use, in which case the RLQ may not establish the rent for the first five years. At the time of signing the lease, the owner may demand advance payment only for the first rental period, which is usually one month. He cannot require a deposit for returning the keys or to cover the cost of possible damages. He must then deliver your apartment on the date stipulated in the lease.

The lease can be terminated only with the agreement of both parties or in certain exceptional cases prescribed by law. For example, a victim of domestic violence or sexual assault may obtain the cancellation of her lease when her security or that of her child who lives with her are threatened.

If you expect to leave your apartment, you must give your landlord advance notice. For a one-year lease, notice must be given between three and six months before the end of the lease or else it will be automatically renewed under the same conditions. For a shorter lease, the notice period may also be shorter.

Right of access to an apartment

– Under the Civil Code of Québec, a landlord may not refuse an apartment to a person or impose more onerous conditions on the person for the sole reason that the person is pregnant or has one or several children, unless the refusal is warranted by the size of the dwelling.

- Under the Québec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms, it is prohibited to refuse to rent an apartment to a person for discriminatory reasons such as ethnic or national origin, colour, sex, pregnancy, sexual orientation, civil status, age, disability or the use of means to mitigate this disability, the fact of having children or receiving social assistance.
- Consult the *Guide anti-discrimination pour louer un logement* and the *Logement et droits guide* on the website of the Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse (CDPDJ).
- If you have reason to believe that you are being refused an apartment due to discrimination, contact the CDPDJ.

Useful information

- The Régie du logement du Québec (RLQ) is a special court that enforces legislation concerning residential rental housing. It rules on disputes concerning a residential lease, informs citizens about the rights and obligations arising from a residential lease, and promotes conciliation between landlords and tenants.
- The RLQ also applies regulations on the criteria for setting rents in cases submitted to it when the parties could not agree on the conditions of lease renewal. It is also responsible, in certain circumstances, for overseeing the conservation of the housing stock and, in these cases, protecting the rights of tenants.

Housing assistance programs and services

The Société d'habitation du Québec (SHQ) is the government agency responsible for housing in Québec. It works to improve housing conditions by supporting residential construction, renovation and adaptation projects. It works in collaboration with partners such as municipalities, housing offices, non-profit organizations, housing cooperatives, the private sector and the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC).

The SHQ has established several programs intended mainly for low-income people. They address people with special housing needs such as families or seniors with a slight loss

of autonomy. A program to adapt residences for the handicapped is also available.

Visit the SHQ site for information on assistance available.

Useful information

- Are you having difficulty finding an affordable apartment? Do you need help getting into social or community housing or adapting your apartment to your needs? You may be eligible for financial support to help pay your rent. You may also obtain financial assistance to perform the work required to adapt your apartment or make it accessible.
- To find out if you are eligible for a program and learn about the conditions and documents required to present an application, contact your municipality or regional county municipality (municipalité régionale de comté – MRC).

- For information on your eligibility for a low-rent apartment, contact your municipal housing office. For all other information, contact the SHQ.

Rent

As a tenant, you must pay the full rent on the date indicated in your lease, which is generally the first day of the month. If your rent is more than three weeks late, the landlord may obtain a termination of your lease to evict you from the apartment at any time of the year. If your rent is often late, causing the landlord serious prejudice, he may also apply to the RLQ to terminate your lease.

If you do not receive notice of a rent increase and you intend to leave your apartment at the end of the lease, you must notify the landlord or else your lease will be automatically renewed.

Recycling of household waste

Québec municipalities encourage their residents to contribute to the recycling of household waste by participating actively in the separate collection of recyclable matter. For this purpose, the municipalities provide recycling bins to residents for the disposal of recyclable matter such as paper, cardboard, glass, plastics and metal.

Contact your municipality to learn more about reduction at source, the re-use and recycling of waste matter, and to obtain a recycling bin.

Use and upkeep of the apartment

In signing a lease, the landlord agrees to deliver a clean dwelling in good condition. As a tenant, you agree to maintain it in this condition. However, you are not responsible for changes in its condition due to normal use or aging. Throughout the lease period, neither the

tenant nor the landlord may alter the structure of the apartment, for example by knocking down a wall to make a room bigger, without mutual consent to do so.

The landlord and tenant must comply with laws and regulations concerning the safety and cleanliness of the apartment. To maintain an apartment in good condition, you must:

- > place the household garbage and recycling bins where indicated (usually on the sidewalk) on garbage and recyclable matter collection days, and not let it accumulate inside the building;
- > not keep animals in the apartment if it is prohibited by a municipal by-law, building regulation or the lease;
- > maintain and regularly clean the sanitary facilities (sinks, toilet, shower and bathtub) and appliances (refrigerator, stove, washer and dryer) included with the apartment;

- > not use the apartment for purposes other than that for which it was rented, namely, to live there;
- > not allow an excessive number of persons to live there, given Québec standards of comfort and public health or municipal by-laws.

The tenant must also take care to not disturb the normal enjoyment of the premises by other occupants of the building.

Buying property

If finding the right apartment to rent takes time, buying a house requires even more care, given its more permanent nature. You will notice that some owners sell their houses themselves, but most real estate transactions are carried out through a real estate broker. After choosing the house you want to buy, make the owner an offer to purchase. To be prudent, make the offer conditional on obtaining a mortgage or on having the building inspected by an expert. If the seller accepts your conditions, you have

to follow through with your purchase offer. The transaction will be completed by signing a deed of sale before a notary.

If you buy a property to live in from a building contractor or real estate promoter, that person must give you a preliminary contract containing information on the building and a clause that allows you to change your mind within 10 days of signing your purchase offer. Such cancellation may involve a penalty, which must be specified in the contract and may not exceed 0.5% of the selling price.

Co-ownership

You might wish to buy an apartment rather than a house. Divided co-ownership apartments, called condominiums, are increasingly popular in Québec. Under this formula, a building is divided into exclusively-owned areas (the apartments themselves) and common areas (yard, lobby, elevators, steps, parking space, etc.)

shared between all co-owners. The condominium corporation (called a "syndicate") administers the building and maintains the common areas.

A more economical path to property ownership could be the purchase of an undivided share in a multi-unit building. This means buying a fraction of a building without owning any portion exclusively. However, this kind of purchase involves forming a group of individuals to carry out the project or joining an existing group. This rather complex process usually requires expert advice. After having lived in Québec for some time, you might want to consider this option.

However, it is important to note that when the apartments are occupied by tenants, the owner of an undivided share of a building cannot take back any apartment in it, unless there is only one other owner who is his or her spouse. Contact the RLQ to learn your rights and obligations in this case.

Useful information

By becoming a member of a cooperatively owned building, you can house yourself at a good price, since this is a form of collectively shared property. However, the RLQ cannot determine the rent for your apartment while you remain a member of the co-op.

Furnishing

When you immigrate to Québec, your personal and household effects are exempt from customs duties. However, certain conditions apply and shipping may be expensive. Moreover, it may be preferable to buy items such as electrical appliances here, so they will conform to Canadian standards. Once you move into your new home, you will need basic furniture. Since new furniture is costly, you will do best to proceed gradually. Renting a furnished apartment constitutes an immediate and economical solution.

Useful information

You can buy furniture inexpensively by going to sales and consulting classified ads in newspapers. Second-hand furniture can be bought at garage sales (also called yard sales) or from volunteer organizations. For more information, contact community organizations that help new immigrants.

Telephone

In Québec, several telecommunications companies provide residential phone service. To obtain telephone service, simply contact the customer service department of a company covering your municipality. Telephones and directories are also available from these companies. You will probably have to pay a deposit to connect the service, which generally takes a few days.

Telecommunications companies normally charge a monthly subscription fee that allows an unlimited number of local calls of any duration. They also offer monthly flat-rate plans for unlimited long-distance calling between certain hours. Do some research to find the plan that best suits your needs. Calling cards may also prove useful.

Useful information

- The front pages of your telephone directory explain what you need to know as a telephone subscriber (rates,

use, etc.). They also give the addresses of service counters near your home.

- Telephone numbers that start with 1-800, 1-888, 1-877 and 1-866 allow you to call long distance toll-free.

Insurance

Although you are not obliged to insure your furniture, apartment or house, you are strongly advised to do so. Otherwise, you could find yourself in a difficult situation if your belongings are lost in a fire or theft. Moreover, if you are responsible for a fire in the building where you live, you could be required to pay the cost of damage caused to the building and the belongings of other tenants. If you take out a mortgage loan, the lender will demand that the building be insured.

Private brokers and insurance companies offer a wide range of coverage against fire, theft and public liability. Before committing yourself, find out about the different formulas from insurers and your circle of friends and acquaintances.

Premiums can vary greatly for the same coverage. However, it is possible to reduce premium costs by asking for a higher deductible*. Your home insurance policy covers you for public liability even outside your home.

Energy costs: gas, electricity, heating oil

These costs are generally paid by the tenant unless the lease states that the landlord will pay them. In each region, electricity and natural gas are each supplied by a single provider. To find out the monthly cost and become a customer, simply call the Customer Service department of the local electric power company (usually Hydro-Québec) or natural gas company (usually Gaz Métropolitain). There are many oil companies and independent distributors for heating oil. Take the time to select the company that offers the best price and a good maintenance program for the heating system.

Since energy costs vary substantially from one season to the next, most suppliers let you spread out your total bill over the year. These equal monthly payment plans have the advantage of sparing you high bills in the winter. Although Québec law prohibits certain service interruptions in winter, failure to pay your bills on time could create problems for you.

The installation of electrical and gas heating equipment is governed by Québec legislation and municipal by-laws and must generally be done by professionals. Do not try to save money by doing this work yourself. If your system were to cause a disaster or damage, your insurer could refuse to compensate you.

Practical tips

- Before moving, give your new address to natural gas, electricity and heating oil suppliers so they do not bill you for costs you did not incur.
- Be very careful using auxiliary heating systems (wood or kerosene stoves, portable electric heaters, etc.). They can be extremely harmful to your health and constitute serious fire hazards.

Preventing and fighting fires

You must take a few basic precautions to prevent fires, particularly in winter when heating systems are working at full capacity. For example, do not place clothing, furniture or objects too close to baseboard electrical heaters or wood stoves. If you are responsible for maintaining your heating system, have it checked and have your chimney cleaned by a competent firm at least once a year.

Your municipal fire department can recommend such companies. Many fires are also caused by the unsafe use of stoves or by careless smokers. Be very careful when using cooking oils and never smoke in bed.

Smoke detectors

Most municipalities require rental building owners and home owners to install smoke detectors. These inexpensive devices make it possible for occupants of apartments and houses to exit quickly before the smoke spreads. They can save your life and that of your family, particularly when the fire breaks out at night when everyone is sleeping, and prevent extensive damage to you and your neighbours.

Fire extinguishers are also strongly recommended and sometimes required by municipal by-laws. Firefighting services are provided free of charge by municipalities.

If a fire breaks out

- Trigger the building's fire alarm system, if it has one.
- Notify the fire department immediately by calling 9-1-1.

Consult your municipal fire department for further information on fire prevention and what to do in case of a fire.

Practical tips

- Check the operation of your smoke detectors regularly and replace the batteries periodically. The best times to do this are when the clock changes, in March and November, and when your smoke detector emits an intermittent beeping signal that indicates a low battery. When moving, check all smoke detectors in the new apartment or house.
- For more information on smoke detectors, contact the fire department in your municipality or consult the website of the Ministère de la Sécurité publique.

To learn more

Information on recyclable matter

www.recyc-quebec.gouv.qc.ca

Information on forms of housing assistance and available resources

• **Société d'habitation du Québec:**

www.habitation.gouv.qc.ca

You can consult the *Resources directory*.

Information on smoke detectors and fire prevention

• **Ministère de la Sécurité publique:**

www.msp.gouv.qc.ca, link *Fire safety*

You will find lots of advice on fire prevention.

Information on human rights and youth rights and prohibited reasons for discrimination

• **Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse:**

www.cdpcj.qc.ca

You will find the *Guide anti-discrimination pour louer un logement* and the guide *Logement et droits*.

Information on the rights and responsibilities of landlords and tenants in housing matters

• **Régie du logement du Québec:**

www.rdl.gouv.qc.ca

• **Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation:** www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca

• **Portal Québec – Services to citizens:**

www.logement.info.gouv.qc.ca

You can consult the guide *Vivre en logement*.

The Québec health system

Québec Health Insurance Plan

Medical care and hospitalization are provided throughout Québec. These services are covered by a universal health insurance plan, administered by the Régie de l'assurance maladie du Québec (RAMQ), and the Québec Hospitalization Insurance Plan. All Québec residents* are eligible for the Health Insurance Plan. They must obtain a Health Insurance Card by registering with the RAMQ.

This plan covers all essential medical care, but not special treatments such as cosmetic surgery or so-called natural or alternative medical treatment. Before consulting a doctor or other health specialist, make sure that he or she practices under the Québec Health Insurance Plan. Otherwise, you will have to pay for the visit yourself.

Eligibility for the plan

Health care and hospitalization are covered for everyone who lives in Québec at least 183 days a year, has a Health Insurance Card, and has completed any applicable waiting period. The waiting period is a maximum period of three months during which new arrivals who come to settle in Québec are not covered by the Health Insurance Plan. However, depending on a person's situation, certain health services may be provided free during the waiting period. These include necessary services to victims of domestic or family violence or sexual assault; care and follow-up related to pregnancy, delivery or interruption of pregnancy; necessary services for persons with infectious health problems that affect public health; and certain services offered in CLSCs, such as vaccination.

Immigrants from countries that have a reciprocity agreement on social security with Québec are generally exempt from this waiting period. In this case, proof of insurance from the social security plan

of the country of origin will be required when registering with the RAMQ.

Countries that have reached such an agreement with Québec are Denmark, Finland, France, Greece, Luxembourg, Norway, Portugal and Sweden.

Transport by ambulance

Unless you have private insurance covering ambulance service, you must usually pay for it. You will be billed in the days following the trip. However, ambulance transportation is generally free for victims of road or workplace accidents, persons already hospitalized who must change health establishments, employment assistance recipients, and persons aged 65 and over.

In an emergency

Dial 9-1-1 or call your nearest police station directly. Keep the numbers near your telephone.

Visiting a doctor

You must clearly describe your symptoms to the doctor to help him make a correct diagnosis. In turn, the doctor must give you a clear description of your state of health, the treatment he recommends and the drugs he prescribes. Do not hesitate to ask him questions.

Public Prescription Drug Insurance Plan

The public Prescription Drug Insurance Plan is administered by the RAMQ. This government plan guarantees that Québec residents* without a private drug insurance plan can obtain the drugs required by their state of health. To this end, the plan calls for public contributions that take into account an individual's situation. Access to the RAMQ-administered Prescription Drug Insurance Plan is granted to Québec residents who do not have access to a group insurance plan.

To register, have your Health Insurance Number handy and call the RAMQ. Persons aged 65 and over are automatically registered. They must notify the RAMQ without fail if they wish to have their prescription drug purchases covered by their group insurance plan, where applicable.

Dental care and oral surgery

To obtain dental care, make an appointment with one of the many dentists in private practice. Only children under 10 years of age and, in certain cases, employment assistance recipients, may receive most treatments free of charge upon presentation of their Health Insurance Card. Unlike health care, dental care is not free for other types of clients.

Certain oral surgical procedures performed in facilities operated by a hospital or university are free for all Québec residents* covered by the Québec Health Insurance Plan.

Useful information

You can receive dental care at a reduced price by going to a university clinic. However, because these clinics are very busy, you can rarely make an appointment on short notice.

Emergency care

If you or someone close to you needs immediate medical care, go to the nearest hospital emergency clinic. However, if you cannot move the person, call 9-1-1 for emergency medical service.

The telephone directory front pages give the phone numbers of other emergency services such as assistance to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault, young people and suicidal or depressed persons, gas odor detection, poison control, etc.

* Within the meaning of the Health Insurance Act.

Practical tips

- Make sure you understand how each prescription drug should be taken. The pharmacist can advise you.
- Do not stay alone in an emergency situation. Call your friends or neighbors who you know. They can help you, look after your children in your absence, or accompany you to the hospital.

The family

Registration of a birth

The birth of every child in Québec must be declared to the Directeur de l'état civil (Registrar of Civil Status), who will enter the birth in the register of civil status of Québec. Once registered, the child will be able to:

- > establish his or her identity;
- > obtain a Health Insurance Card and Social Insurance Number;
- > obtain a birth certificate and other civil status documents.

The parents, of the same or opposite sex, must declare the birth of their child within 30 days following the birth.

Two documents are required to enter a birth in the register of civil status:

- > the Attestation of birth, completed and signed by the person who assisted the delivery;
- > the Declaration of birth, completed and signed by the child's parents before a witness.

If the parents are not married to one another, they must both sign the Declaration of birth to establish their maternal and paternal filiation.

To register your child, you can take the Declaration of birth to the Registrar of Civil Status yourself. The Attestation of birth will then be sent to the Registrar directly by the doctor. However, we recommend that you leave the Declaration of birth with hospital staff, who will send it along with the Attestation of birth to the Registrar of Civil Status within the deadline prescribed by law.

After entering the child's birth in the register of civil status, the Registrar of Civil Status will confirm the registration by letter. Once the child is entered in the register of civil status by the prescribed deadline, and the RAMQ has verified the child's eligibility, the parents will automatically receive the child's Health Insurance Card.

The Québec educational childcare network

Educational childcare services governed by law

Subject to provisions of the Educational Childcare Act, educational childcare services offered by childcare centres, day care centres and recognized home childcare providers are intended primarily for children under five years old and, if educational childcare services are not available in a school setting, to children up to the end of primary education.

These providers of childcare services apply an educational program that fosters the overall development of the child on several levels: emotional, social, moral, physical, language, etc.

- > A childcare centre (Centre de la petite enfance – CPE) is either a not-for-profit organization or a cooperative. It offers reduced-contribution places in one or more facilities with a maximum capacity of 80 children.

- > A day care centre is generally a for-profit business that provides day care services in a facility with a maximum capacity of 80 children. A majority of day care centres offer reduced-contribution places. Unsubsidized centres set their own rates charged to parents.
- > A home childcare provider is a person accredited by a coordinating office who provides childcare service in a private home and receives up to six children or, if assisted by another adult, up to nine children. Most home childcare providers accredited by a coordinating office offer reduced-contribution places.

Seeking an educational childcare place

For a good choice of educational childcare services, it is advisable to start your search early. Regional access “windows” to childcare places centralize the registration of parents seeking a place in all administrative regions of Québec. In a single step, generally over the web or telephone, a parent can thus be registered with several childcare services that belong to the “window” of their region.

On the website of the Ministère de la Famille et des Aînés, you can consult the list of regional “windows” and the childcare service locator designed to help you identify the CPEs, day care centres and home daycare coordinating office located near your home or workplace. If you are looking for a home childcare service, the coordinating office can give you information on the delivery of home childcare services.

Childcare services not governed by law

Certain childcare services are not subject to the Educational Childcare Act. The act does not apply to:

- > a person who offers or provides occasional organized childcare services, in a health or social services institution, in a commercial establishment, at a fair or exhibition or during a special event, to children whose parents are on site and can be reached if needed;
- > a person who operates a day camp or vacation camp;
- > a school board or private educational institution that provide childcare at school;
- > a drop-in day care centre, meaning a public or community body that provides support and assistance to families as part of its mission, or that provides temporary childcare as part of a specific activity involving parents or children.

Under the law, no one may offer or provide childcare in Québec to more than six children unless the person holds a childcare centre or day care centre permit or is a home childcare provider recognized by an accredited home childcare coordinating office. Accordingly, a person who is not accredited by a coordinating office may receive up to six children.

Measures promoting access to childcare services

Quality educational childcare services are offered in childcare centres, subsidized day care centres and home childcare services recognized by a coordinating office:

- > in exchange for a parental contribution of \$7 a day per child, giving priority to children under five years old;
- > or free of charge for two and a half days a week and, under certain conditions, for a longer period for children aged under 5 whose parents

receive benefits under the social assistance program or the social solidarity program provided in the Individual and Family Assistance Act.

Other measures promoting access to childcare services, in addition to reduced-contribution places, include the refund of childcare fees to parents eligible for:

- > any employment assistance measure;
- > financial assistance for studies;
- > full-time French courses and financial aid from the MICC.

The fees paid for childcare give a right to a refundable Québec income tax credit to parents whose children do not benefit from a reduced-contribution place and, under certain conditions, they can receive this tax credit in the form of early installments. Fees paid for childcare, including amounts paid for reduced-contribution places, are eligible for the federal childcare deduction. For more information, contact Revenu Québec.

Leaves and absences for family or parental reasons

The Act respecting Labour Standards grants full-time or part time employees a certain number of days of paid and unpaid leave for family-related events. At the end of such leaves, the employer must re-integrate the person in his or her usual position and pay the salary and benefits to which the person would have been entitled had he or she stayed at work.

Find out the terms and conditions for obtaining these leaves from your employer or your union. The Commission des normes du travail (CNT) can tell you the minimum conditions set by law concerning the right to these leaves.

Québec Parental Insurance Plan (QPIP)

This plan pays financial allowances to eligible workers, either wage-earning or self-employed, who take advantage of a maternity, paternity, adoption or parental leave.

Maternity leave

An employed pregnant woman may take maternity leave with the assurance of returning to her job with no reduction of benefits. This unpaid maternity leave lasts 18 consecutive weeks during which it is possible, under certain conditions, to receive benefits from the QPIP.

The employer may also grant unpaid leaves related to prenatal pregnancy examinations, interruption of pregnancy or a special maternity leave.

Paternity leave

The law also provides for an unpaid paternity leave of five consecutive weeks for a salaried worker upon the birth of his child. This leave may not be transferred to the mother and may not be shared with her. During this period, the worker may receive benefits under the QPIP if he is eligible.

Parental leave

This unpaid leave of up to 52 consecutive weeks is granted to each parent, of the same or opposite sex, of a newborn child or to a person who adopts a minor child. This leave is added to the maternity and paternity leaves. During this period, benefits may be paid under the QPIP to support the income of the parents.

Absence for family or parental reasons

The law also allows employees to take days off from their job, without pay, for their marriage or civil union and the marriage or civil union of a family member, in the event of death or funeral services of a family member, to meet obligations related to the care, health or education of their child or the child of their spouse, or when their presence is required by a family member because of an accident, criminal act or serious illness.

To learn more about paid or unpaid leaves to which you may be entitled, contact the CNT or your union.

Useful information

- If you are pregnant and your job or work environment presents dangers to your health or that of your unborn child, you can ask your employer for a transfer or take precautionary pregnancy leave. Ask the Commission de la santé et de la sécurité du travail (CSST) about this option.
- If you are pregnant, your CSSS can provide a great deal of support throughout your pregnancy and after you give birth (medical help, nursing care, pre-natal classes). CSSS personnel can also advise you on family planning at any time.
- You will find information on all steps to take upon the birth of a child at the Services Québec website under *Citizens, Life Events, Becoming a Parent*.

Child social services

Under the Civil Code of Québec and other legislation, Québec society does not regard children as the “property” of their parents, but rather as persons in their own right. Society wants them to receive a good education. It also wants them protected in many respects, particularly through vaccination against certain childhood diseases.

Likewise, it wants to shelter them from physical, psychological and sexual abuse. If you know of any children you believe are being abused, mistreated or neglected, contact the youth protection centre in your region and ask to report the situation to the Directeur de la protection de la jeunesse (DPJ).

Domestic violence and sexual assault

Although Québec society disapproves of violence against any person, women and men are still victims of domestic violence, and women and children are victims of sexual assault, within and outside the family environment. The law encourages you to not tolerate such situations.

You will not lose any of your rights if you leave the family home to escape mistreatment. On the contrary, you and your children are protected by law from such abuse, which is considered a serious crime. You should therefore not be afraid to call the police. They will give you shelter and, in collaboration with social services, refer you to resources that will help you: women's shelter, sexual assault centre or crime victims assistance centre.

Domestic violence

As defined in Québec, domestic violence includes psychological, verbal, physical and sexual assault as well as acts of domination at the economic level. It is not the result of a loss of control, but on the contrary, constitutes a means chosen to dominate the other person and affirm one's power over him or her.

Sexual assault

Sexual assault is an act of a sexual nature, with or without physical contact, committed by an individual without the consent of the person targeted or, in certain cases, notably that of children, by emotional manipulation or blackmail. It is an act aimed at subjecting another person to one's own desires through an abuse of power, use of force and constraint, or under an implicit or explicit threat. Sexual assault violates fundamental rights, specifically the physical and psychological integrity and security of the individual.

Useful information

- Many organizations can give you information, advice and comfort. Some offer free telephone crisis lines open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- A list of these organizations is available from a Crime Victims Assistance Centre (CAVAC).

In case of emergency, request police assistance immediately by dialing 911 or the CSSS nearest your home.

You can call at any time (toll free):

- S.O.S. domestic violence:
> 1 800 363-9010
- CAVAC line:
> 1 866 532-2822
- Line for victims of sexual assault, their relatives and support workers
> 1 888 933-9007

Marriage

You must be at least 16 years old to marry in Québec. However, anyone under age 18 must have the consent of their parents or guardians. Marriage may join two people of the same or opposite sex. The procedures for getting married are simple. The future spouses may opt for:

- > a religious marriage performed by a minister of religion authorized by the Minister responsible for civil status;
- > a civil marriage performed by a notary or any other person designated by the Minister of Justice.

In either case, the officiating parties must be authorized to perform weddings by the Ministère de la Justice (MJ).

A marriage has the same value whether it is religious or civil. The spouses enjoy the same rights and have the same obligations.

In either case, the law provides that both spouses:

- > are fully equal;
- > are required to live together;
- > owe one another mutual respect, loyalty, help and assistance;
- > jointly assume the moral and material direction of the family;
- > jointly exercise parental authority and perform the ensuing tasks such as feeding, maintaining and educating the children;
- > jointly choose the family home;
- > both contribute to household expenses;
- > are jointly responsible for debts contracted for current household needs;
- > keep their own name and exercise their civil rights under this name.

The law also provides that a joint family patrimony is constituted, that includes homes, furniture, automobiles used for family travel, and some private retirement plans.

In Québec, only a divorce granted by a civil court can legally terminate a marriage. When spouses divorce, they must divide the value of the family patrimony equally. The repudiation of one spouse by the other has no legal effect. Similarly, polygamy and polyandry are illegal.

Matrimonial regimes

The law gives a choice among three matrimonial regimes – partnership of acquests, separation as to property and community of property.

Except for the partnership of acquests, which applies automatically to couples without a marriage or civil union contract, the other regimes involve signing a contract before a notary. The regime selected will go into effect when the marriage or civil union is celebrated.

However, the matrimonial regime or marriage or civil union contract can always be changed. Both spouses must consent and obtain the services of a notary. In this case, the new matrimonial regime goes into effect when the contract is signed.

Civil union

Two persons at least 18 years of age, of the same or opposite sex, may contract a civil union before an officer authorized to perform marriages. A civil union has essentially the same effects as a marriage.

Only a notarized joint declaration or a court judgment can terminate a civil union where the interest of children is at stake. If the spouses do not agree on the consequences of their breakup, one of them may petition the court for a dissolution of the civil union. The dissolution of the civil union will have the same consequences as a divorced.

Common-law marriages

Two persons may also decide to live in a common law relationship (“free union”), meaning they live together without getting married. Common-law relationships are recognized regardless of the sex of the spouses.

The Civil Code of Québec confers no particular status on common-law spouses. If they sign a co-habitation agreement, preferably before a notary or lawyer, common-law spouses may obtain certain guarantees offered by marriage. This legal document sets out the conditions that they agree to obey. Children born of this type of union are protected by law and enjoy the same rights as children of a married couple. In the event of death, surviving common-law spouses are not legally recognized as heirs. Therefore, common-law spouses who wish to bequeath belongings to one another should do so through a notarized will. Similarly, the surviving common-law

spouse may receive life insurance proceeds on the deceased spouse only if he or she was named a beneficiary.

The elderly

Most elderly persons who immigrate do so to join a son or daughter. They often feel uprooted, therefore most of them appreciate meeting fellow-countrymen in a community setting. Whether or not they are immigrants, elderly persons sometimes need special care and attention because of their state of health or the loss of financial or physical autonomy.

A CSSS is the gateway to a number of services intended for the elderly, such as home support. The elderly are entitled to these services once they become eligible for the Régime d'assurance maladie du Québec. They may also receive financial benefits:

- > certain services are free or at reduced rates;
- > government pension and retirement plans or benefits, under certain conditions.

In different ways, the Régie des rentes du Québec (RRQ) and the income security programs of Human Resources and Skills Development Canada help ensure a decent minimum income to the elderly or retired persons. If you or your spouse paid into a pension plan in a country that has signed a social security agreement with Québec, you may be entitled to a retirement, disability, survivor or orphan's pension from that country. Find out about this from the RRQ.

Practical tip

Ask organizations from your community of origin about organized activities for the elderly. Visit your nearest CSSS to learn about services available to seniors.

To learn more

Information on registering a birth and on acts of civil status

- **Directeur de l'état civil:**
www.etatcivil.gouv.qc.ca

Information on programs and services for families, children, Québec family policy and day care services

- **Ministère de la Famille et des Aînés:**
www.mfa.gouv.qc.ca
A locator for day care services can be found under the link *Services de garde*. Click on *Parents* to consult the document *À la recherche d'un service de garde éducatif pour votre enfant* (seeking educational child care for your child).
- **Association québécoise des centres de la petite enfance:** www.aqcpe.com
- **Association des haltes-garderies communautaires du Québec:**
www.ahgcq.org

Information on leaves and absences for family or parental reasons

- **Commission des normes du travail:**
www.cnt.gouv.qc.ca, link *Leaves and absences*
Click on *Publications* for access to information documents available.

Information on the Québec Parental Insurance Plan

- **Régime québécois d'assurance parentale:** www.rgap.gouv.qc.ca

Information on workplace prevention for pregnant workers and preventive withdrawal in case of pregnancy

- **Commission de la santé et de la sécurité du travail:** www.csst.qc.ca
Consult the publication *Travailler en sécurité pour une maternité sans danger*.

Information on international social security agreements

- **Régie des rentes du Québec:**
www.rrq.gouv.qc.ca

Information on services and programs to assist seniors

- **Ministère de la Famille et des Aînés:**
www.mfa.gouv.qc.ca
- **Services Québec:**
www.aines.info.gouv.qc.ca
- **Human Resources and Skills Development Canada:**
www.rhdcc.gc.ca
- **Service Canada:**
www.servicecanada.gc.ca

Information on the rights and living conditions of women

- **Conseil du statut de la femme:**

www.csf.gouv.qc.ca

Click on *En région* for contact information for regional offices.

- **Secrétariat à la condition féminine:**

www.scf.gouv.qc.ca

Information on the Québec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms (including questions concerning discrimination, harassment and the exploitation of elderly or disabled persons) and on the Directeur de la protection de la jeunesse

- **Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse:**

www.cdpedj.qc.ca

Information on aid services or how to contact a crime victims assistance centre (CAVAC)

- **Compensation for victims of criminal acts:** www.ivac.qc.ca

In an emergency, you can also call the following crisis lines directly. They are free of charge and operate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

- **CAVAC line**

> Everywhere in Québec (toll-free):
1 866 532-2822

- **Parents Line**

> Montréal region:
514 288-5555
> Elsewhere in Québec (toll-free):
1 800 361-5085

- **S.O.S. Domestic violence**

> Everywhere in Québec (toll-free):
1 800 363-9010

- **Tel-Jeunes**

> Montréal region:
514 288-2266
> Elsewhere in Québec (toll-free):
1 800 263-2266

- **Gai Écoute**

> Everywhere in Québec (toll-free):
1 888 505-1010

- **Suicide Prevention Line**

> Everywhere in Québec (toll free):
1 866 277-3553

- **Bilingual and confidential telephone service for listening, information and referral offered to elderly victims of psychological, financial or physical abuse**

Monday to Thursday from
9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Friday from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
> Montréal region: 514 489-2287
> Elsewhere in Québec (toll free):
1 888 489-2287

The Québec education system

Education is free in the public system for all Québec residents from kindergarten to the college level inclusively*. The Québec public education system is secular and language-based, French and English, according to the language of instruction used in the schools.

Useful information

Since French is the official language of Québec, the children of immigrants, whatever their mother tongue, are normally required to attend a school under a francophone school board in their area until the completion of their secondary studies.

The Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport du Québec (MELS) also recognizes a network of private establishments that also teach the official school curriculum. To attend these private schools, students must pay tuition fees and meet their individual entrance requirements.

School attendance is compulsory for all children from age 6 to 16. The school year begins in late August or early September and usually ends before June 24. It includes at least 180 class days. Mixed classes (boys and girls) are the norm at all levels of study.

Preschool education

Preschool education (kindergarten) prepares children for primary school. They receive supervision that promotes their development, introduces them gradually to a stimulating learning environment and teaches them the skills they need to succeed in school. Although

kindergarten is not compulsory, 98% of eligible children are enrolled in it.

Preschool education is provided:

- > to children aged four, half time, in some schools;
- > to children aged five, full time, during the school year;
- > throughout Québec, in the public school system and some private schools.

Primary education

Regardless of whether they attended kindergarten, all six-year-old children must be enrolled in primary school. Children aged five can be enrolled provided they turn six before October 1 of their first school year. Primary education extends over six years, divided into three cycles of two years each.

Pupils with adjustment problems can benefit from services that take their learning difficulties into account.

Useful information

The Québec school system encourages parents to participate actively in their children's education by becoming involved in the school's governing board and parent participation organization and, at the school board level, the parents' committees, the advisory committee on services for handicapped students and students with social maladjustments or learning disabilities, and the advisory committee on transportation.

Secondary education

After six years of primary education, students must continue their education at the secondary level in a general or vocational program:

- > The general program, lasting five years, leads to higher education. Successful completion of this program confers a Secondary School Diploma (SSD).

- > The vocational program, lasting on average a year and a half, begins after the 3rd, 4th or 5th year of secondary studies, depending on the requirements of the various study programs. Successful completion leads to a Diploma of Vocational Studies (DVS).
- > About 50 programs are offered to DVS holders in certain training areas. An Attestation of Vocational Specialization (AVS) is conferred following training that lasts 6 or 12 months.
- > The Attestation of Vocational Education (AVE) is issued after a training period that lasts a maximum of 900 hours. Undertaken after the second year of secondary studies by a student at least 15 years of age, this training program takes place in a company setting and prepares students to practice a semi-skilled trade.

Important

Under the Québec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms, everyone must have equal access, without discrimination, to services ordinarily offered to the public. As such, a child may not be excluded from ordinary school solely because he or she suffers from behavioral problems or a disability. In such cases, the child's needs must be studied more closely with the school or school board. If this process produces no result, an appeal is possible to the CDPDJ, which can take action in matters of integrating pupils into ordinary classes.

College education

A general secondary education leads to college, which is the first stage of higher education. General and vocational colleges known as CEGEPs (*collège d'enseignement général et professionnel*) and certain private colleges offer students a choice between:

- > pre-university studies, lasting two years, that prepare students for university;
- > technical studies, lasting three years, that lead to jobs as technicians or technologists. Under certain conditions, technical studies can also lead to university.

Whatever their choice, students must take general education courses, some of which are common to both programs. The Diploma of College Studies (DCS) recognizes the education acquired in pre-university and technical studies programs.

It is also possible to obtain an Attestation of College Studies (ACS) following technical training of variable duration (up to a year and a half) that leads to the job market.

CEGEPs offers a wide variety of pre-university programs including natural sciences, social sciences, dance, music, fine arts, liberal arts, science, history and civilization. Some CEGEPs also offer an international baccalaureate. The numerous technical programs are divided into five fields: biological technology, physics technology, social technology, administrative technology and arts. In fact, they cover all sectors of the economy. Specialized educational institutions such as institutes and conservatories also offer diverse training programs in disciplines such as circus training, music, agri-food technology, tourism and hotel industry, fashion design, horticulture, etc.

University education

University education represents the second stage of higher education. The duration of study varies depending on the discipline and level. There are three study cycles in university education.

The first cycle of university studies leads to either a Bachelor's degree (three to five years of study) or a certificate or diploma (one or two years of study). Education at this level leads either to the job market or to the second and third study cycles.

At the second (graduate) level, studies lead to either a Master's degree (generally two years of study) or a certificate or diploma (generally one year of study).

Study at the third (doctoral) level leads to a Ph.D. after three years or more.

As independent entities, universities determine their own courses of study, teaching and research programs, entrance and registration requirements,

and grant their own degrees. Québec's various universities, higher learning centres and research institutes are concentrated in Montréal, Québec City and Sherbrooke. However, university education is available in most regions through the Université du Québec network with campuses located in Rouyn-Noranda, Saguenay, Gatineau, Montréal, Rimouski and Trois-Rivières.

Useful information

Québec educational institutions have the sole authority to assess academic equivalences for purposes of admitting an applicant to their programs after examining the applicant's academic record.

School boards

School boards are in charge of public schools from preschool to secondary levels, as well as vocational and adult education centres.

The boards are administered by councils of commissioners elected by universal suffrage for a four-year term and by parent representatives who are elected for one year. They are responsible for organizing and providing quality education services that effectively meet the educational needs of young people, adults and local organizations, particularly businesses. They must also adapt educational services to meet the needs of students with disabilities or adjustment and learning difficulties.

School boards determine which educational services are offered by each school, vocational centre and adult education centre. They provide day care services for preschool and primary school pupils and can organize school transportation, meals and accommodation to make educational services more easily accessible. The majority of school boards are francophone and some are anglophone.

Admission and registration

Preschool, primary and secondary school

In order for your child to attend school, you must first apply for admission to the school board in your locality. Depending on the situation, either the parents or the school board will register the child. The school board may, where applicable, send you the necessary registration documents together with contact information for the school.

Each year, all school boards issue a public notice concerning admission applications. The admission period starts in February or March to be ready for the return to school a few months later, usually in late August. Although you can apply for admission at any time, it is generally recommended that you register your child for preschool (kindergarten) before the end of June.

College and university

To apply for admission to a CEGEP, contact the institution you wish to attend. If it belongs to a regional admission service, you will be referred there. For the fall term (beginning at the end of August), applications must be handed in before March 1. For the winter term (beginning in January), the deadline is November 1. Colleges may charge an admission fee. As for universities, you must send your application and the required fee to the institution you wish to attend. Deadlines vary by institution and education program.

Practical tip

Do not hesitate to seek advice from officials at your child's school when the time comes to choose his or her course of study at the high school or college level. Even though your child can change direction at a later date, an unfortunate first choice can limit future vocational or educational options.

Adult or continuing education

Adult education centres, which fall under the school boards, offer literacy programs, pre-secondary studies and general and vocational education. Colleges and universities also offer adult education programs.

Before admitting you into a general, vocational or technical education program, school boards and colleges must make sure that your studies done outside Québec meet the minimum entrance requirements to your program. For this purpose, they may ask you to provide an *Évaluation comparative des études effectuées hors du Québec*.

Page 84 of your guide has a section on the *Évaluation comparative*. The school board or college can also tell you how to secure recognition for knowledge and skills acquired outside an educational establishment.

School governing board

Each school, vocational training centre and adult education centre has a governing board. Composed of an equal number of parents and school employees, it has a decision-making role in several areas:

- > development, implementation and evaluation of the school's educational project;
- > methods of implementing legislation and regulations respecting education and student support policies;
- > time allotted to each school subject.

This governing board also determines the policies, action plans and periodic evaluations of vocational centres and adult education centres.

To learn more

Information and advice on structures of parental participation, information on the rights and interests of parents of pupils in public primary and secondary schools

- **Fédération des comités de parents du Québec:** www.fcpq.qc.ca

Information on the recognition of prior learning through adult general education and vocational and technical training

- **Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport:** www.mels.gouv.qc.ca

Employment

The labour market

Here are some characteristics of the Québec labour market:

- > The minimum education requirement for most jobs is 11 years of schooling, which corresponds to a secondary school diploma (SSD).
- > Written and spoken knowledge of French and English will greatly influence your chances of professional advancement.
- > A good knowledge of the written language is highly valued throughout the professional job market.
- > Québec offers good opportunities for self-employment.
- > The Québec labour market offers jobs on a full-time, part-time, temporary or contractual basis.
- > Most workers are hired by small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

- > It may be easier to obtain an interview with potential employers outside the summer vacation period.

Women at work

An immigrant woman who settles in Québec has the same rights and responsibilities as any other Québec woman. In Québec, women have the same rights as men. A majority of women hold paid employment even when they have a family. Men, like women, are encouraged to share professional and family responsibilities. Women can work in any trade or profession they choose. Consequently, an employer who refuses to hire a woman for a job for which she is qualified, solely because she is a woman, commits an offence punishable by legal prosecution and penalties.

Despite these equal rights, women have long been confined to jobs traditionally held by women, which are generally underpaid. To redress these injustices inherited from the past, the government, parapublic organizations and many

employers have set up access to equality programs. Québec also passed a Pay Equity Act. Under this legislation, a female worker must receive the same pay as a male worker when their jobs, although different, have the same or equivalent value within the company.

Practical tip

If an employer refuses you a job because you are a woman, contact the CDPDJ.

Minimum working conditions

Before you accept a job offer, have the employer give you a description as precise as possible of working conditions such as salary, working hours, supervision, duration and status of the position (permanent or temporary) and vacation. In most cases, you will not have to sign a contract. The Act respecting Labour Standards establishes the minimum working conditions in Québec, including:

- > minimum hourly wage;
- > 50% markup over the ordinary hourly wage for hours worked in addition to the normal work week;
- > vacations, statutory holidays, paid non-working days, absence and leave for family or parental reasons;
- > the rules that employers must follow in the event of termination of employment, dismissal, etc.

Salary

Wages are generally paid weekly or every two weeks. No benefit having a monetary value (car, housing, transportation, etc.) should result in an employee receiving less than the minimum wage. The minimum wage rate –whether it is paid as regular salary, tips, commissions or for piece work– is set by the Québec government and is subject to change. Its application is supervised by the Commission des normes du travail.

Black market work and tax evasion

The Québec tax system is based on self-assessment. Each taxpayer is responsible for declaring his or her income annually in an income tax return. Most taxpayers adequately fulfill their obligations. However, some taxpayers do not declare all their income.

Did you know?

- Black market work is work for which a person receives money that he or she does not declare as income to Revenue Québec or the Canada Revenue Agency, contrary to what should be done.
- Tax evasion is an illegal method used by a person to avoid paying income or other taxes or to claim deductions to which he or she is not entitled.

The result of tax evasion and black market work is that the state does not receive all taxes and income taxes that should be paid to it. To compensate for this shortfall, the government must raise the contribution from all citizens or reduce its services.

Consequently, the entire population is affected by tax evasion and black market work and must suffer the consequences:

- Government: These losses directly affect its capacity to provide services and finance programs to meet the constantly changing needs of society.

- Citizens: Individuals who fulfill their obligations see their tax load unjustly raised because they must compensate for individuals who engage in tax evasion and black market work.
- Workers: Black market workers do not enjoy any of the protection provided by the Commission de la santé et de la sécurité du travail (CSST) and public plans such as the RRQ and employment insurance.
- Businesses: Tax evasion and black market work constitute unfair competition to businesses which obey the law and are aware of their social responsibilities.

Avoiding tax evasion and black market work is therefore a matter of fairness.

Unions

In Québec, like everywhere else, unions are entities that organize workers to defend their interests with their employers. Through negotiations with employers, they establish common working conditions that are stipulated in a contract called a “collective agreement.” About 40% of workers in Québec belong to a union.

Québec law recognizes the right of all workers to belong to a union. If there is a union in the company where you find work, you can choose whether or not you wish to join. However, the Québec labour code requires your employer to deduct union dues from your wages whether or not you are a union member.

Useful information

When an employee association is recognized by your employer, your working conditions could be governed by a collective agreement. For details, ask your union representative.

Workplace health and safety

Under certain conditions, victims of industrial accidents or occupational illness are entitled to receive income replacement benefits, compensation for bodily injury, and physical, social and occupational rehabilitation services. This public program to protect workers is administered by the CSST.

Employment insurance

People who lose their jobs may, under certain conditions, be eligible for the Employment Insurance Plan and have a right to receive benefits. All employers and employees must contribute to this public insurance program. When you receive employment insurance benefits, you are paid a percentage of your salary for a limited time and must prove that you are looking for work.

If you are unemployed, you must take all relevant papers, including the record of employment that must be given to you by your last employer, to a Human Resources Canada Centre.

Last-resort financial aid programs

If, despite your efforts, you cannot find a job and you have no income, you can turn to social assistance programs (social solidarity or social aid programs) as a last resort. You can apply for this form of financial assistance at the local employment centre nearest you.

However, if you were admitted to Québec as a sponsored immigrant, you must first approach your sponsor, who is committed by contract to provide for your essential needs and those of family members accompanying you (housing, food, clothing and personal necessities).

If you were selected as a skilled worker, self-employed worker or entrepreneur, you made a commitment to have sufficient funds to meet your needs and those of accompanying family members for your first three months in Québec.

Accordingly, you and your accompanying family members are not eligible for last-resort financial assistance during the first three months following your arrival in Québec as a permanent resident.

To learn more

Information on the Québec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms (including questions related to discrimination, harassment, etc.) and on access to equality programs

- **Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse:** www.cdpdj.qc.ca

Information on pay equity

- **Commission de l'équité salariale du Québec:** www.ces.gouv.qc.ca

Information on black market work and tax evasion

- **Revenu Québec:** www.revenu.gouv.qc.ca
Click on *Tax evasion*.
- **Canada Revenue Agency:** www.cra-arc.gc.ca
Click on *Tax alert*.
- **Commission de la santé et de la sécurité du travail:** www.csst.qc.ca
Consult the brochure *Au Québec, vous êtes protégés en cas d'accident ou de maladie du travail!*

The Québec justice system

Québec is a democracy characterized by the separation of powers:

- > legislative, exercised by elected parliamentarians to pass laws;
- > executive, exercised by the government to execute laws;
- > judicial, exercised by the courts to secure respect for the laws while maintaining the balance between individual rights and responsibilities.

The judicial power has complete independence from the legislative and executive power.

The courts

The Québec judicial system is composed of different courts. Their role is determined by law based on factors such as the nature of the case, the geographic location and the amount in dispute.

Courts of first instance

Cases are first heard before a court of first instance, where evidence and witnesses are produced. Québec courts at this level include municipal courts, the Court of Québec, Superior Court, Federal Court and the Human Rights Tribunal.

Small Claims Division

The Court of Québec includes a small claims division. It deals with claims up to \$7000. The procedure is simple and informal. Claimants are not represented by a lawyer.

A mediation service is offered free of charge to help individuals resolve their disputes before the case is heard. Interested parties can seek information from courthouse (*palais de justice*) personnel on the subject.

Appeal Courts

The appeal courts hear appeals of judgments made by the courts of first instance. Only questions of law may be invoked. The evidence may not be presented again. The appeals courts are the Court of Appeal of Québec, the Federal Court of Appeal and the Supreme Court of Canada.

Specialized organizations

Québec also has several organizations that exercise judicial power on the rights of individuals but in specific areas. They include the Régie du logement du Québec (RLO) that deals mainly with questions related to an apartment lease. The Tribunal administratif du Québec (TAQ), for its part, allows citizens to assert their rights when they believe they have been aggrieved by a decision of a government authority including a ministry, board, commission or a municipality.

Useful information

- An interpretation service may be provided, sometimes at no charge, to individuals who have not mastered French or English.
- Most Québec cities have a Legal Aid office where low-income persons may retain the services of a lawyer free of charge or for a minimal fee.

Actors in the judicial system

Several actors occupy specific functions within the Québec judicial system:

- > The judge is appointed for life by the government. He hears cases in complete neutrality and adjudicates disputes (challenges giving rise to a trial).
- > Employees of the Ministère de la Justice du Québec assist the judge during the hearing and in the court office (service responsible for issuing court orders and keeping records).

- > The lawyer defends, counsels and protects the interests of his client. He represents his client before the courts in order to assert his rights. He can also negotiate an agreement with the opposing party in order to avoid a trial.
- > The Crown prosecutor in criminal and penal cases is a lawyer in the service of the government. He or she presents criminal charges on behalf of society.
- > The notary counsels his client in certain areas of law, but does not represent him before the courts. He also acts as a public officer recognized by the State. In this role, he writes and conserves documents (marriage contract, will, immovable act, etc.) which are considered authentic.

The mission of the Ministère de la Justice du Québec is to secure the rule of law within Québec society and maintain a justice system with integrity and worthy of confidence.

Crime victims assistance centres (CAVAC)

CAVACs exist to help victims of criminal acts, their immediate family and witnesses, overcome the physical, psychological and social consequences of a crime. The crime could be assault, theft, harassment, threats or any other criminal act.

There is a CAVAC in each region of Québec. Assistance can take different forms including assistance during the judicial process before, during and after a trial. Its services are free and confidential.

Practical tips

- Several organizations can provide assistance if you have a problem of a judicial nature or you wish to assert your rights. Do not hesitate to seek information.
- There are also numerous ways at your disposal to prevent and settle disputes. For example, mediation has the benefit of being more flexible and rapid than a trial. Very often, it will spare you the imposition of a decision. Moreover, it encourages the maintenance of relations between the parties to a conflict.

To learn more

General information and available resources

- **Ministère de la Justice du Québec:** www.justice.gouv.qc.ca
- **Éducaloi:** www.educaloi.qc.ca

Recourse to a lawyer or notary

- **Commission des services juridiques:** www.csj.qc.ca
- **Barreau du Québec:** www.barreau.qc.ca
- **Chambre des notaires:** www.cdnq.org

Assistance to victims of criminal acts

- **Crime victims assistance centres:** www.cavac.qc.ca

List of main regulated trades and professions in Québec

Professions governed by professional orders

- > Acupuncturist
- > Advocate
- > Agrologist
- > Architect
- > Audiologist
- > Bailiff
- > Certified general accountant
- > Certified human resources Professional
- > Certified industrial relations Counsellor
- > Certified interpreter
- > Certified management accountant
- > Certified terminologist
- > Certified translator
- > Chartered accountant
- > Chartered administrator
- > Chartered appraiser
- > Chemist
- > Chiropractor
- > Dental hygienist
- > Dental technician
- > Dentist
- > Denturologist
- > Dietician
- > Dispensing optician
- > Engineer
- > Forest engineer
- > Geologist
- > Guidance counsellor
- > Hearing-aid acoustician
- > Land surveyor
- > Marital and family therapist
- > Medical technologist
- > Midwife
- > Notary
- > Nurse
- > Nursing assistant
- > Occupational therapist
- > Optometrist
- > Pharmacist
- > Physical rehabilitation therapist
- > Physician
- > Physiotherapist
- > Podiatrist
- > Professional technologist
- > Psychoeducator
- > Psychologist
- > Radiology technologist
- > Respiratory therapist
- > Social worker
- > Speech therapist
- > Town planner
- > Veterinary surgeon

The teaching profession (pre-school education and primary and secondary teaching)

- > General education teacher
- > Vocational education teacher

Regulated trades in the construction industry

- > Boiler maker
- > Bricklayer-mason
- > Carpenter-joiner
- > Cement finisher
- > Crane operator
- > Electrician
- > Elevator mechanic
- > Fire-protection mechanic
- > Heavy equipment mechanic
- > Heavy equipment operator
- > Installer mechanic (glazier)
- > Insulator
- > Interior systems installer

- > Millwright
- > Ornamental iron worker
- > Painter
- > Pipe fitter
- > Plasterer
- > Refrigeration mechanic
- > Reinforcing steel erector
- > Resilient flooring layer
- > Roofer
- > Shovel operator
- > Structural steel erector
- > Tile setter
- > Tinsmith

Qualifications of regulated professions

Certificates of qualification cover the following fields (for work done outside the construction industry).

- > Blaster (mining exploration and seismic surveys)
- > Drinking water
- > Elevator Mechanic
- > Electricity

- > Gas
- > Halocarbons
- > High pressure vessel inspection
- > Piping
- > Stationary engines
- > Welding

Regulated professions in the financial sector

- > Claims Adjustment
- > Damage Insurance
- > Financial Planning
- > Group Insurance for persons
- > Group Savings Plan Brokerage
- > Insurance of persons
- > Investment Contract Brokerage
- > Scholarship Plan Brokerage

Note: Depending on the discipline, a person may act as an adjuster, an advisor, an agent, a broker or a representative.

Contact information for Immigration-Québec services

Information on services to immigrants

The MICC provides a general information service by telephone or in person. It can give you the information you need or refer you to appropriate resources in either public services or community organizations that help new immigrants.

For the Montréal region:
514 864-9191

Toll free in other regions:
1 877 864-9191



Access by TDD device
(telecommunication device for the deaf
or hearing-impaired)

Montréal region:
514 864-8158

Toll free in other regions:
1 866 227-5968

In Montréal

- **Immigration-Québec**
Édifice Caron
2050, rue De Bleury, 4^e étage,
bureau 450
Montréal (Québec) H3A 2J5
Telephone: 514 864-9191
[www.immigration-quebec.gouv.qc.ca/
courriel](http://www.immigration-quebec.gouv.qc.ca/courriel)

- **Immigration-Québec**
6900, boulevard Décarie,
bureau 250
Montréal (Québec) H3X 2T8
Telephone: 514 864-9191
[www.immigration-quebec.gouv.qc.ca/
courriel](http://www.immigration-quebec.gouv.qc.ca/courriel)

Outside Montréal

- **Immigration-Québec –
Capitale-Nationale et Est-du-Québec**
Édifice Bois-Fontaine
930, chemin Sainte-Foy, rez-de-chaussée
Québec (Québec) G1S 2L4
Information and customer service
Telephone: 1 877 864-9191
[www.immigration-quebec.gouv.qc.ca/
courriel](http://www.immigration-quebec.gouv.qc.ca/courriel)

- **Immigration-Québec –
Estrie, Mauricie et Centre-du-Québec**
Bureau de l'Estrie
202, rue Wellington Nord
Sherbrooke (Québec) J1H 5C6
Information and customer service
Telephone: 1 877 864-9191
[www.immigration-quebec.gouv.qc.ca/
courriel](http://www.immigration-quebec.gouv.qc.ca/courriel)

- **Immigration-Québec –
Estrie, Mauricie et Centre-du-Québec**
Bureau de la Mauricie et
du Centre-du-Québec
100, rue Laviolette, rez-de-chaussée 26
Trois-Rivières (Québec) G9A 5S9
Information and customer service
Telephone: 1 877 864-9191
[www.immigration-quebec.gouv.qc.ca/
courriel](http://www.immigration-quebec.gouv.qc.ca/courriel)

- **Immigration-Québec – Outaouais, Abitibi-Témiscamingue et Nord-du-Québec**
227, rue Montcalm, bureau 100
Gatineau (Québec) J8Y 3B9
Information and customer service
Telephone: 1 877 864-9191
www.immigration-quebec.gouv.qc.ca/courriel
- **Immigration-Québec – Laval, Laurentides et Lanaudière**
1438, boulevard Daniel-Johnson,
bureau 200
Laval (Québec) H7N 1B3
Information and customer service
Telephone: 1 877 864-9191
www.immigration-quebec.gouv.qc.ca/courriel

- **Immigration-Québec – Montérégie**
2, boulevard Desaulniers, 3^e étage
Saint-Lambert (Québec) J4P 1L2
Information and customer service
Telephone: 1 877 864-9191
www.immigration-quebec.gouv.qc.ca/courriel

Quality services: our commitment

Declaration of Client Services

The *Declaration of Client Services* lists the principal services offered by the MICC and gives hyperlinks that take you directly to the desired information on the MICC website.

Our commitments:

- > Courteous personnel who listen to you
- > Accessible services
- > Quality information
- > Meeting promised processing and response times
- > Protection of your personal information
- > Continuously improving services

The Commissaire aux plaintes et à la qualité des services

The Commissaire receives and handles complaints and comments on services provided by the MICC. If you have a complaint concerning our services, address the person responsible for the

service as a first step. If you do not obtain satisfaction, contact us:

Commissaire aux plaintes et à la qualité des services

Ministère de l'Immigration et des Communautés culturelles
Édifice Gérald-Godin
360, rue McGill, rez-de-chaussée
Montréal (Québec) H2Y 2E9
Montréal region: 514 873-3533
Elsewhere in Québec (toll free):
1 800 771-0464
www.micc.gouv.qc.ca/fr/ministere/ecrire.html

To learn more

- **Ministère de l'Immigration et des Communautés culturelles:**
www.micc.gouv.qc.ca
- **Déclaration de services à la clientèle:**
www.micc.gouv.qc.ca/fr/ministere/declaration-services/index.html
- **Information on how to lodge a complaint:**
www.micc.gouv.qc.ca/fr/ministere/commissaire-plaintes.html

Information on Québec government programs and services

Contact Services Québec if you cannot find the government agency you want or if you need information on Québec government laws, programs and services (conditions of eligibility, opening hours, etc.). Its free telephone service is available in all regions of Québec.

Services Québec

For the Montréal region:
514 644-4545

For the Québec City region:
418 644-4545

Toll free in other regions:
1 877 644-4545



Access by TDD device
(telecommunication device for the deaf or hearing-impaired)

Montréal region: 514 873-4626

Toll free in other regions:
1 800 361-9596

List of main websites

- Canada Revenue Agency:
www.cra-arc.gc.ca
- Citizenship and Immigration Canada:
www.cic.gc.ca
- Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse: www.cdpcj.gc.ca
- Commission des normes du travail:
www.cnt.gouv.qc.ca
- Conseil du statut de la femme:
www.csf.gouv.qc.ca
- Édcaloi: www.edcaloi.qc.ca
- Emploi-Québec: emploiquebec.net
- Financial Consumer Agency of Canada: www.fcac-acfc.gc.ca
- Gouvernement du Québec:
www.gouv.qc.ca
- Ministère de la Culture, des Communications et de la Condition féminine: www.mcccf.gouv.qc.ca
- Ministère de la Famille et des Aînés:
www.mfa.gouv.qc.ca
- Ministère de la Justice:
www.justice.gouv.qc.ca
- Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux: www.msss.gouv.qc.ca
- Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport: www.mels.gouv.qc.ca
- Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale:
www.mess.gouv.qc.ca
- Ministère de l'Immigration et des Communautés culturelles:
www.micc.gouv.qc.ca
www.immigration-quebec.gouv.qc.ca
www.quebecinterculturel.gouv.qc.ca
- Ministère des Affaires municipales, des Régions et de l'Occupation du territoire: www.mamrot.gouv.qc.ca
- Human Resources and Skills Development Canada:
www.rhdsc.gc.ca
- Ministère du Développement économique, de l'Innovation et de l'Exportation: www.mdeie.gouv.qc.ca
- Ministère du Travail:
www.travail.gouv.qc.ca
- Office des personnes handicapées du Québec: www.ophq.gouv.qc.ca
- Office de la protection du consommateur: www.opc.gouv.qc.ca
- OmbudService for Life and Health Insurance: www.oapcanada.ca
- Option consommateurs:
www.option-consommateurs.org
- Régie de l'assurance maladie du Québec: www.ramq.gouv.qc.ca
- Régie du logement du Québec:
www.rdl.gouv.qc.ca
- Services Québec: www.gouv.qc.ca
- Société de l'assurance automobile du Québec: www.saaq.gouv.qc.ca

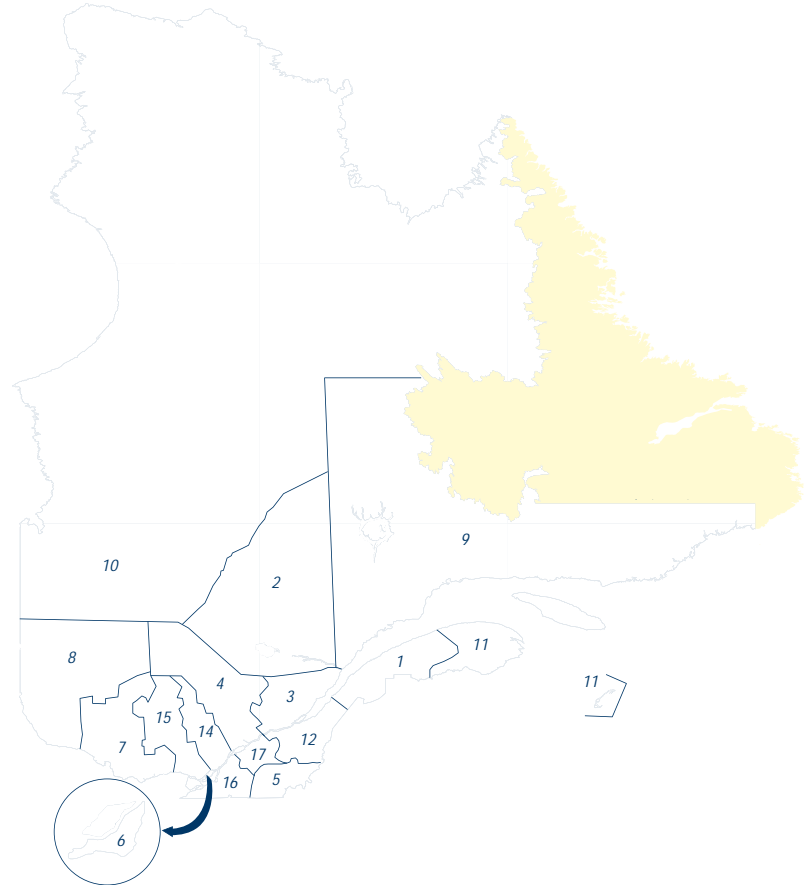
Administrative regions of Québec

1. [Bas-Saint-Laurent](#)
2. [Saguenay–Lac-Saint-Jean](#)
3. [Capitale-Nationale](#)
4. [Mauricie](#)
5. [Estrie](#)
6. [Montréal](#)
7. [Outaouais](#)
8. [Abitibi-Témiscamingue](#)
9. [Côte-Nord](#)
10. [Nord-du-Québec](#)
11. [Gaspésie–Îles-de-la-Madeleine](#)
12. [Chaudière-Appalaches](#)
13. [Laval](#)
14. [Lanaudière](#)
15. [Laurentides](#)
16. [Montérégie](#)
17. [Centre-du-Québec](#)

For more information

On the regions of Québec:

- www.immigration-quebec.gouv.qc.ca/courriel



A	AEC :	Attestation d'études collégiales	MDEIE :	Ministère du Développement économique, de l'Innovation et de l'Exportation
	AFP :	Attestation de formation professionnelle	MELS :	Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport
	ASP :	Attestation de spécialisation professionnelle	MFA :	Ministère de la Famille et des Aînés
C	CAVAC :	Centre d'aide aux victimes d'actes criminels	MICC :	Ministère de l'Immigration et des Communautés culturelles
	CDPDJ :	Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse	MJ :	Ministère de la Justice
	CHSLD :	Centre d'hébergement et de soins de longue durée	MRC :	Municipalité régionale de comté
	CIC :	Citoyenneté et Immigration Canada	MSSS :	Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux
	CLE :	Centre local d'emploi	N	NAS : Numéro d'assurance sociale
	CLSC :	Centre local de services communautaires		NIP : Numéro d'identification personnelle
	CNP :	Classification nationale des professions	O	OPC : Office de la protection du consommateur
	CNT :	Commission des normes du travail		OQLF : Office québécois de la langue française
	CPE :	Centre de la petite enfance	P	PME : Petites et moyennes entreprises
	CSQ :	Certificat de sélection du Québec	R	RAMQ : Régie de l'assurance maladie du Québec
	CSSS :	Centre de santé et de services sociaux		RLQ : Régie du logement du Québec
	CSST :	Commission de la santé et de la sécurité du travail		ROAP : Régime québécois d'assurance parentale
D	DEC :	Diplôme d'études collégiales		RRQ : Régie des rentes du Québec
	DEP :	Diplôme d'études professionnelles	S	SAAQ : Société de l'assurance automobile du Québec
	DES :	Diplôme d'études secondaires		SCHL : Société canadienne d'hypothèques et de logement
	DPJ :	Directeur de la protection de la jeunesse		SHQ : Société d'habitation du Québec
F	FEL :	Francisation en ligne		SQ : Sûreté du Québec
G	GRC :	Gendarmerie royale du Canada	T	TAQ : Tribunal administratif du Québec
I	IMT :	Information sur le marché du travail		TPS : Taxe sur les produits et services
M	MAMROT :	Ministère des Affaires municipales, des Régions et de l'Occupation du territoire		TVQ : Taxe de vente du Québec
			U	UTC : Temps universel coordonné



The *Learning about Québec* guide was designed to help you start your integration steps in the country you are leaving and continue them after you arrive in Québec and during your integration path.

In order to better understand your needs and improve this guide, we invite you to tell us how you learned about the guide and indicate at what stages the different sections of the guide were most useful to you. Your comments and suggestions for improving the *Learning about Québec* guide are also welcome.

Do you want to send us your opinion? Nothing could be easier!

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Thank you for giving us a few minutes of your time.

**Immigration
et Communautés
culturelles**

Québec 