

ELECTORAL
PLATFORM
2014 ELECTIONS

For the love of a fair Quebec

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For the love of a free Quebec

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INTRODUCTION

Québec Solidaire strives for social justice, equality, pluralism, and sovereignty. It is feminist, environmentalist, democratic, and alter-globalist. These principles, adopted democratically by party members, are detailed in our *Déclaration de principes*. They guide all the party's work and inspire this platform.

Québec Solidaire proposes:

- **A fair Quebec**
a society based on equal opportunity, and a quest for the common good.
- **A free Quebec**
a society in which the population is given every possible means to freely choose for itself.
- **A green Quebec**
an economy which respects the environment and serves the people.

COMMITMENTS

FOR THE LOVE
OF A **FAIR** QUEBEC



In more egalitarian societies, people are happier. However, in Quebec, social inequalities are increasing. They harm everyone, rich and poor alike. Far from being natural, these inequalities are a result of the choices we make as a society.

To build a fairer society, Québec Solidaire proposes policies and services that reduce inequalities and allow us to better live together.

Equalizing Opportunities

1.1 TAXATION

To return to a fairer taxation system, Québec Solidaire will:

- a. add tax brackets to better take into account income disparities;
- b. apply these tax brackets to all income, with certain exceptions;
- c. revise corporate tax rates to ensure that they pay their share of the state's funding;
- d. ensure that tax incentives conform to Québec Solidaire's priorities;
- e. fight tax avoidance and evasion;
- f. restore capital tax on financial institutions;
- g. set up a new tax regime for municipalities that will make them less dependent on property taxes by allowing them to generate more own-source revenues.

Measures for a more Egalitarian Society

1.2 EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES

To meet the different needs of families with diverse backgrounds, Québec Solidaire will develop the childcare centre network, and to this effect, will:

- a. evaluate the childcare needs in each region;
- b. create all necessary public daycare spaces;
- c. give public daycares adequate funding;
- d. establish a travelling commission on early childhood;
- e. gradually remove for-profit daycare funding;
- f. allow for-profit daycares to transform into public daycare;
- g. revise funding rules and regulations to:
 - take into account diverse realities;
 - support community innovation;
 - develop various forms of daycare.

1.3 INCOME SUPPORT SYSTEM FOR FAMILIES

To give families an adequate income, Québec Solidaire will ensure that there is:

- a. a universal family allowance program;
- b. benefits for low-income or special needs families;
- c. expanded parental insurance to include individuals currently excluded;
- d. and will exclude child support from income considered in calculating various forms of financial assistance.

1.4 FREE AND ACCESSIBLE EDUCATION

To ensure accessible and free education for the entire population, Québec Solidaire will:

- a. eliminate all fees charged to attend a public school, a college, or a university, in order to institute entirely free education within 5 years;
- b. improve funding for schools in disadvantaged neighbourhoods;
- c. develop free extracurricular activities in all public elementary and secondary schools;
- d. improve the student financial assistance system.

1.5 EDUCATIONAL SUCCESS

To fight against inequalities, to tackle the dropout rate, and to make public schools more attractive for all, Québec Solidaire will:

- a. encourage educational projects democratically designed by communities and open to all students;
- b. reduce the number of students per class and enhance student services;
- c. help families, schools, and community organizations carry out projects together.
 - to encourage the completion of studies,
 - to fight against intimidation and violence;
- d. organize and fund a provincial literacy training plan with schools and community organizations;

- e. grant financial and professional assistance to young people and adults returning to school;
- f. improve support for teachers and support staff.

1.6 INCREASED SUPPORT FOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Public schools must be valued because they allow young people from various backgrounds to learn to live together and develop their skills. To help public schools fulfil their mission, Québec Solidaire will:

- a. transfer to the public system, by 2020, all subsidies given to private schools, and allow these schools to integrate into the public system with their staff;
- b. adopt a provincial plan to renovate and maintain public schools by prioritizing the health and safety of staff and students.

1.7 THE MISSION OF CEGEPS AND UNIVERSITIES

To support CEGEPs and universities in their mission to teach, research, and engage with the wider community, Québec Solidaire will:

- a. improve student services and library resources;
- b. hire at least 1,000 professors in universities;
- c. improve the status and working conditions of sessional lecturers;
- d. reinvest in Quebec's research funds.

1.8 UNIVERSITY TRAINING QUALITY

To ensure the quality of training all across Quebec, Québec Solidaire will:

- a. review universities' funding formula to take into account considerations such as accessibility and activities;
- b. support the *Université du Québec* network to improve services in remote areas, when needed;
- c. establish a Consultative University Commission to:

- examine the training offered by universities,
- come up with recommendations to rectify interregional discrepancies and prevent doubling up or unfair competition between institutions.

1.9 HEALTH CARE AND SOCIAL SERVICES

To improve everybody's health and reduce health inequalities, Québec Solidaire will guarantee public, universal, free, quality, local health care and social services, 24/7, thanks to:

- a. an entire network of multidisciplinary clinics including strengthened CLSCs;
- b. an expanded homecare system;
- c. a family physician for each individual;
- d. a midwife for all women who would like one;
- e. concrete measures to end privatization in the healthcare system (e.g., ending reliance on private agencies to provide services; eliminating ancillary fees).

1.10 PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

Québec Solidaire will limit prescription drug costs and make them accessible to all through:

- a. a universal public drug insurance plan;
- b. Pharma-Quebec, a public prescription drug acquisition and production centre.

1.11 FREE PUBLIC TRANSIT WITHIN 10 YEARS

To facilitate passenger transport and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, Québec Solidaire will develop:

- a. a plan to increase and electrify public transportation and make it free of charge within 10 years;
- b. alternatives to compensate for passenger transport in less densely populated regions.

(see also 3.1, 3.2)

1.12 MINIMUM WAGE

Québec Solidaire will increase the minimum wage so that it matches the low-income cut-off.

1.13 EMPLOYMENT EQUALITY

To fight discrimination in the workplace, Québec Solidaire will:

- a. raise standards to prevent all disparities based on employment status;
- b. strengthen the *Pay Equity Act* and extend its application to all workplaces;
- c. adopt incentives and affirmative action plans for women.

1.14 UNION RIGHTS

Québec Solidaire will guarantee trade union rights and, to this effect, will:

- a. allow multi-employer certification;
- b. strengthen anti-scab legislation;
- c. ban lockouts and the use of injunctions against picketing.

1.15 LABOUR STANDARDS – HOLIDAYS

Québec Solidaire will amend the *Act respecting labour standards* to ensure all workers have:

- a. longer annual paid holidays;
- b. a half-day of paid sick leave per month;
- c. two days of personal leave without pay per year;
- d. paid holidays for International Women's Day (March 8) and International Workers Day (May 1st);
- e. five paid days of parental leave out of the 10 days allowed by law.

1.16 LABOUR STANDARDS – ENDING UNSTABLE EMPLOYMENT

Québec Solidaire will fight unstable employment by amending the *Act respecting labour standards* to:

- a. widen the definition of employee;
- b. establish a simple presumption of employee status;

- c. make layoff pay mandatory;
- d. require that the rights and protections afforded by the *Act respecting labour standards* be displayed in the workplace;
- e. remove the employer's right to require overtime;
- f. grant employees the right to stop working during
 - their meal period,
 - a paid 15-minute health break every 3 hours of work.

1.17 UNIVERSAL PUBLIC PENSION PLAN

Québec Solidaire will turn the Quebec Pension Plan into a universal public pension plan.

- a. This plan will cover self-employment and the invisible work performed primarily by women.
- b. Funding will be provided by employers, the state, and workers.
- c. Workers will have at least 50% of seats at the plan's decision-making authority.
- d. Pensions will be predetermined and indexed to the cost of living.

1.18 GUARANTEED MINIMUM INCOME

To end poverty, Québec Solidaire will replace welfare by a guaranteed minimum income (GMI). This income will be allocated to everyone who is entitled, regardless of their situation. To this effect, the GMI will:

- a. be fixed initially at \$12,600 and will be increased gradually afterwards;
- b. make up the difference between a person's income and \$12,600;
- c. be paid on an individual basis starting at age 18.
- d. At first, students will not receive the GMI, but it will later replace financial assistance for education.

1.19 HOUSING

To ensure access to housing for all, Québec Solidaire will:

- a. carry out the construction of 50,000 environmentally-friendly social housing units for all segments of the population;
- b. in rural regions, facilitate access to individual or collective ownership;
- c. adequately fund the *Régie du logement* and establish reasonable time limits for processing claims by tenants;
- d. create a national lease registry;
- e. fight speculation on land and other real estate, which increases the cost of housing.

1.20 HOMELESSNESS POLICY

Québec Solidaire will adopt a comprehensive homelessness policy, which will include urban indigenous people. Notably, this policy will:

- a. allocate adequate funding to enable the government to act in all relevant areas, including every person's right to move and live freely in cities;
- b. eliminate the criminalization of homelessness;
- c. require ministries:
 - to study the impact of their policies on those who are most vulnerable,
 - to ensure that no one is excluded from available programs.

1.21 SUPPORT FOR NATIVE WOMEN

Québec Solidaire will support native women in their struggle to have their fundamental rights (including their right to security) respected and will increase funding for organizations which assist them.

1.22 IMMIGRANT INTEGRATION

To facilitate the integration of immigrants and ethnic minorities, Québec Solidaire will:

- a. improve access to jobs in the public service and in private companies with more than 50 employees;

b. facilitate the updating of their knowledge and experience and recognize foreign diplomas;

c. help immigrant women to learn French, study and gain access to the labour market;

d. increase funding to associations and community organizations working with ethnic minorities and immigrants;

e. repeal the waiting period required of newcomers for last resort assistance and health insurance.

1.23 RIGHTS OF TEMPORARY FOREIGN WORKERS

To protect the rights of foreign workers, Québec Solidaire will:

- a. give foreign workers the right to change employers and to choose their place of residence;
 - b. allow foreign workers to stay and work in Quebec should their stay need to be prolonged due to a complaint;
 - c. provide necessary support in the event of a violation of labour rights or an employment injury;
 - d. require employers to give foreign workers an employment contract in their native language;
 - e. ensure that employers and workplaces are automatically inspected;
 - f. allow foreign farm workers* access to community-based hospitality, support, French-language instruction and training as well as integration programs;
- * Family helpers already have access to these programs.
- g. comply with the international *Convention Concerning Decent Work for Domestic Workers*.

1.24 SUPPORT TO COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

To acknowledge the essential role of community organizations, Québec Solidaire will:

- a. respect their organizational autonomy;
- b. gradually increase the funding of their basic mission.

1.25 CULTURAL CREATION AND PRODUCTION

To allow everyone in Quebec to take part in the arts and support professional artists in their creation and production activities, Québec Solidaire will:

- a. increase funding for professional artistic projects and support emerging and alternative practices throughout Quebec;
- b. support the international presence of Quebec artists and artisans;
- c. ensure access to at least four professional cultural events per year for elementary and high school students;
- d. support amateur artistic activities for the entire population, especially in the regions.

1.26 DIGITAL CULTURE

To foster digital culture, Québec Solidaire will:

- a. support new cultural and economic models based on Internet sharing and collective creation, in particular when Creative Commons and other free licenses are used;
- b. adapt current funding programs for culture so that they apply to digital projects;
- c. diversify software used in teaching and place a greater emphasis on open-source software.

FOR THE LOVE
OF A **FREE** QUEBEC



Like all nations in the world, the people of Quebec have the right to make decisions regarding their own future. Quebec has the right to freely choose its political status, and to preserve its language, its culture, and its diversity. It will do so whilst also respecting the rights of First Nations and by fostering solidarity within its international relations.

Québec Solidaire proposes to rethink democracy to make it easier for people to take part in decisions made within their cities, villages, neighbourhoods, regions, etc. Certain powers of the State will need to be created or consolidated in order for us to make our own decisions.

Sovereignty

2.1 CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY

Québec Solidaire recognizes Quebecers' right to choose their institutions and Quebec's political status.

On the day it takes office, Québec Solidaire will launch a constituent assembly process. Throughout, it will defend the objective of making Quebec into a country, while guaranteeing that the Constituent Assembly remains independent. The Assembly will:

- a. be elected by popular vote, be composed of an equal number of women and men, and will represent Quebec society in all its diversity;
- b. conduct a far-reaching, participatory democratic process to consult the population of Quebec on:
 - the values, rights, and principles upon which community life should be based;
 - the political status of Quebec;
 - the definition of its institutions;
- c. draft, from the outcome of the consultation, a constitution which will be put to the population via referendum.

2.2 FIRST NATIONS' RIGHTS

First Nations have never given up their sovereignty. To acknowledge their rights, Québec Solidaire will:

- a. have the National Assembly pass the *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UNDRIP) and apply it;
- b. bind all development projects on First Nations lands to a written agreement with these communities to ensure that the project suits them;
- c. help First Nations preserve their traditional languages.

(see also 1.20, 1.21)

2.3 QUEBEC AND THE WORLD

Québec Solidaire wants to work towards building a world in which the rights of peoples and individuals are respected, a world which has the means to fight poverty and pollution.

With this objective, Québec Solidaire will:

- a. develop international relations based on fairness, solidarity, and respect for the environment;
- b. seek to replace current free trade agreements (e.g., NAFTA*) with agreements based on individual and collective rights, respect for the environment and to further democracy;
- c. oppose signing any new trade agreements which would not meet these conditions, including the CETA* with the European Union;

(* Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement)

d. set up an international solidarity agency to promote peace, human rights, and fair and ecological development, as well as gender equality.

2.4 WORKING FOR PEACE

A Québec Solidaire government will defend peace and fight against imperialism.

With this aim, Québec Solidaire will:

- a. reject any and all Canadian and foreign militaristic policy;
- b. promote conversion of the military industry;
- c. ban Armed Forces advertising or recruitment in educational institutions.

2.5 FRENCH LANGUAGE

To ensure that Quebec's official language is the common language in public life, Québec Solidaire will:

- a. strengthen the enforcement of the *Charter of the French Language* in all work environments;
- b. broaden its scope to encompass companies with 10 employees or more;
- c. ban recourse to "bridge schools";
- d. recognize the right for every Quebec resident to receive support from public authorities to improve his or her French language skills.

Democracy

2.6 ELECTORAL REFORM

In order to foster real democracy and political participation, Québec Solidaire will:

- a. implement a new voting system to better reflect the proportion of votes cast for each party:
 - 60% of members of the National Assembly (MNAs) will be elected as they currently are to represent a riding;
 - the other 40% will be divided between regions to ensure that the total number of MNAs follows the ratio of votes cast for each party at both the regional and the national levels.
- b. create a Commission on Democratic Life and Citizenship.

Its mandate will be to study issues including parliamentary accountability, the possibility to recall MNAs, and gender parity in the National Assembly.

2.7 MUNICIPALITIES' AND REGIONS' POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The development of towns, cities, and regions must aim first and foremost at improving the living conditions of their residents. Decisions in this regard must rest with people who live there.

To this effect, Québec Solidaire will:

- a. render municipal and regional bodies more democratic, in part through:
 - popular vote election of wardens of Regional county municipalities (RCM),
 - direct democracy mechanisms such as participatory budgeting;
- b. transfer powers, responsibilities, and resources from the state to municipal or regional bodies;
- c. consult cities and municipalities on any resource development project within their boundaries.

2.8 CEGEP AND UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATION

To ensure that CEGEPs and universities truly respond to the priorities of their communities and society as a whole, Québec Solidaire will:

- a. democratize CEGEP and university administration;
- b. entrust the Auditor General of Quebec with the mandate to periodically verify universities' books and accounts.

2.9 OPEN AND ACCESSIBLE DATA

To foster democracy through open and accessible data, Québec Solidaire will:

- a. create an interdepartmental digital committee for open data;
- b. develop a comprehensive strategic plan regarding the various aspects of open data and digital culture.

The Powers of the State

2.10 STATE FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

To foster an economy which serves the public good, Québec Solidaire will:

- a. make the *Caisse de dépôt et placement du Québec* (CDPQ) accountable to the National Assembly and increase citizen representation on its board of directors;
- b. review the role of the CDPQ to support economic development based on social and environmental values, and on Quebec job creation;
- c. provide *Investissement Québec* with the necessary funding to efficiently support new companies, especially small businesses, cooperatives, and social economic bodies;
- d. in the event a company shuts down or relocates,
 - take over facilities in a proper state of repair to hand them over to a new

company;

- e. in the event of massive layoffs,
 - impose a victim surcharge to the company to help those who are laid off,
 - nationalize a solvent company or one which is a persistent offender;
- f. in the event a company shuts down, relocates, or lays off a massive number of employees, ensure that:
 - the company pays back state funds and complies with its obligations to its workers and Quebec,
 - the CDPQ supports the creation of workers cooperatives if the business is sustainable.

2.11 CREATING A PUBLIC-SECTOR BANKING UNIT

In an independent Quebec, Québec Solidaire will:

- a. create a public bank to provide banking services to public institutions and offer them to households and businesses;
- b. regulate the banking sector, notably to ban currency speculation and control banking fees charged to customers.

2.12 ENERGY, CLIMATE, AND TRANSPORTATION-RELATED TOOLS

To meet its goals regarding energy, climate, and transportation, Québec Solidaire will:

- a. create *Énergie-Québec* to oversee all energy-related issues;
- b. bring energy-related companies under public control and nationalize wind power development;
- c. restore *Transports Québec's* expertise and mission to serve the public.

2.13 PUBLIC CONTRACTS

Québec Solidaire will give back to ministries the necessary personnel and know-how to better fight corruption, reduce overbilling, and stop collusion in public contracts.

2.14 SURVEILLANCE AND CONTROL OVER POLICE ACTIVITIES

To prevent police abuse, Québec Solidaire will:

- a. create an independent, impartial, and transparent watchdog for the police;
- b. repeal:
 - article 500.1 of the *Highway Safety Code*,
 - municipal by-laws abusively limiting the freedom of peaceful public assembly protected by law (including by-law P-6 in Montréal).

FOR THE LOVE
OF A **GREEN** QUEBEC



For Québec Solidaire, economic growth is not an end in and of itself. The economy must be based on solidarity, democracy, and respect for the environment. It must foster collective wellbeing, ensure that rights are respected, and preserve the planet in a viable state now and for generations to come.

An Economy in Harmony with our Values

3.1 ENERGY AND CLIMATE

Québec Solidaire will reduce greenhouse gas emissions by at least 40% compared to 1990 levels by 2020, and by 95% by 2050 thanks to:

- a plan to stop using fossil fuels by 2030;
- a ban on fossil fuel exploration and production as well as on nuclear power and opposition to any transportation of shale oil, shale gas, or oil produced from tar sands in Quebec;
- an expansive energy efficiency program, including renovations in existing buildings and more ambitious standards for new buildings.

(see also 2.12)

3.2 TRANSPORTATION

Québec Solidaire will prioritize access to public transit through:

- a plan to increase and electrify public transportation and make it free of charge within 10 years;
- alternatives to compensate for passenger transport in less densely populated regions.
- support for freight traffic by rail or by waterway.

3.3 FOOD SOVEREIGNTY

Québec Solidaire will establish a food sovereignty policy to support and foster:

- access to healthy and locally produced foods in all neighbourhoods,

- villages, and regions;
- the promotion and labelling of local products;
- the introduction of an ethical and ecological rating system to inform people regarding local and foreign agricultural products, including the presence of GMOs;
- fair trade.

3.4 FARMLAND, LAND USE, AND RURAL COMMUNITIES

To guarantee the protection and the dynamic use of farmland, Québec Solidaire will:

- acknowledge the economic, social, and environmental functions of agriculture, and establish a new social contract between Quebec society, farmers, and rural communities;
- prevent all speculation on farmland;
- develop a rural policy based on collaboration between entities and respect for ecosystems;
- encourage farmer landownership.

3.5 NEXT GENERATION OF FARMERS AND INNOVATION

To support the next generation of farmers, Québec Solidaire will :

- encourage small, diversified and innovative production;
- support cultivation of smaller parcels;
- provide the next generation of farmers with:
 - long-term capital to acquire farmland,
 - better financial support to start up farming businesses;

- more flexibility in the eligible-costs criteria in the establishment grant;
- amend legislation to encourage trade union pluralism;
- enable collective ownership of farmland and farms;
- ensure fair distribution of production quotas with the next generation of farmers.

3.6 REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

To foster diversified economic activity in all regions, Québec Solidaire will:

- increase funding for democratic regional bodies dedicated to social and economic development;
- support local businesses processing in Quebec resources and products from regions;
- support First Nations entities dedicated to economic and social development;
- support the next generation locally;
- support socially and environmentally responsible businesses, notably small businesses;
- foster the emergence of worker-managed and employee-owned businesses.

In rural areas, Québec Solidaire will:

- maintain services at existing levels and adopt a demographic policy to increase population outside of major cities;
- support rural municipalities in their development efforts.

3.7 NATURAL RESOURCES

To ensure Quebec regains control over its resources, Québec Solidaire will:

- a. nationalize production of strategic resources, including energy;
- b. enter into majority partnerships with companies exploiting other resources;
- c. set up an adequate system of royalties to be fairly distributed between regions and the State;
- d. ensure that secondary and tertiary processing takes place mainly in the regions where the resources were extracted;
- e. eliminate the supremacy of the *Mining Act* and grant a veto on mining permits to the affected communities;
- f. require an environmental assessment and a public consultation before granting a permit for exploration or exploitation;
- g. implement ecosystem-based forest management to maintain biodiversity;
- h. plan logging operations in accordance with other uses of the forest.

3.8 INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC RELATIONS

To develop international economic relations based on fairness, solidarity, and respect for the environment, Québec Solidaire will:

- a. seek to replace current free trade agreements (e.g., NAFTA*) with agreements based on individual and collective rights, respect for the environment and to further democracy;

(* *North American Free Trade Agreement*)

- b. oppose signing any new trade agreements which would not meet these conditions, including the CETA* with the European Union;

(* *Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement*)

3.9 ECONOMIC CHOICES BASED ON SOLIDARITY

For the economy to favour collective well-being and respect for rights, Québec Solidaire will:

- a. encourage businesses that create jobs for both women and men and that respect the environment and social values;
- b. gradually eliminate noxious, obsolete, or useless operations;
- c. promote conversion of the military industry.

Protecting the Environment

3.10 BIODIVERSITY

Québec Solidaire will protect biodiversity by bringing protected areas up to 20% of the territory.

3.11 RIGHT TO WATER

Québec Solidaire will acknowledge the human right to water and sanitation.

3.12 ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

In accordance with its decentralization policy, Québec Solidaire will prepare land use planning region by region.

To limit and, if possible, reduce our ecological footprint and to protect farmlands, forests, and wetlands, this planning will:

- a. encourage maximum use and increased density of already build-up areas;
- b. encourage quality of life, the creation of green spaces and healthy living spaces;
- c. authorize new residential developments or revitalization provided that efficient and accessible transportation are made available;
- d. establish a green belt around major cities;
- e. encourage urban and local agriculture.

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Québec Solidaire
7105, Saint-Hubert Street, Suite 304
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