

March 2026

BUDGET 2026-2027

A RESPONSIBLE BUDGET WITH TARGETED MEASURES FOR QUEBECERS

BUDGET

SPEECH



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Delivered before the National Assembly
by Eric Girard, Minister of Finance,
on March 18, 2026.

Budget 2026-2027
Budget Speech

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A RESPONSIBLE BUDGET WITH TARGETED MEASURES FOR QUEBECERS

Introduction.....	3
1. Québec’s economy	5
2. Accelerating Québec’s economic transformation	7
3. Bolstering infrastructure investment.....	11
4. Supporting the government’s main missions.....	13
5. Supporting Quebecers and communities with targeted action	15
6. Maintaining sound management of public finances.....	21
Conclusion	23

INTRODUCTION

Madam President,

Today, I am tabling the Québec government's Budget 2026-2027.

It's a responsible budget with targeted measures for Quebecers.

This is our government's eighth budget, my eighth as Minister of Finance, and the Premier's last.

First, I would like to pay tribute to the Premier for all the achievements he has helped us accomplish for Québec since 2018. We arrived with a new and ambitious vision: to make our nation prouder and to make Quebecers more prosperous.

It is this commitment that has guided us, despite a challenging context marked by several crises: the COVID-19 pandemic, inflation due to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the rise of protectionism in the United States and now the conflict in the Middle East. These events had global repercussions and put a severe strain on the public finances of every country.

Throughout these turbulent times, Quebecers have always been our top priority. Our budgetary choices have had a concrete and positive impact on prosperity and quality of life in Québec. While navigating an unstable economic situation, our government has reinvested in public services and infrastructure, returned money to Quebecers and supported our businesses.

Today, we can say that Québec has managed its public finances responsibly throughout these turbulent times. Not only has the debt burden declined since 2019, but we have also narrowed the wealth gap with other provinces. It had been a long-standing goal, and we have finally achieved it. We can be proud of that.

Budget 2026-2027 is intended to be sober. Given the current situation, Québec's finances are in good condition. We are choosing to:

- support businesses in adapting to the new economic climate;
- make strategic investments in infrastructure to stimulate the economy;
- prioritize funding for the government's main missions; and
- take targeted action to support the priorities of Quebecers and their communities.

Furthermore, our government reaffirms its commitment to staying on the path for returning to a balanced budget, with results that are better than expected. After a downward adjustment in 2024-2025, the deficits projected for 2025-2026 and 2026-2027 are reduced by \$3.8 billion and \$861 million, respectively. The net debt burden is also adjusted downward compared to Budget 2025-2026 for each year of the financial framework. We confidently recommit to our goal of achieving a balanced budget by 2029-2030.

I would like to point out that, for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2026, all Canadian jurisdictions reported a deficit. Québec's share accounts for 1.2% of its GDP, which is well below the Canadian average of 1.7% and less than half the federal government's share of 2.4%. When compared with other jurisdictions across Canada, and even internationally, Québec manages its public finances responsibly, during turbulent and challenging times for all governments.

Madam President, I am asking for the National Assembly's consent to present, in detail, a responsible budget with targeted measures for Quebecers.

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I am also asking for the National Assembly's consent to table the following documents:

- the tables presenting the preliminary results of the consolidated budgetary transactions for 2025-2026; and
- the forecasts for the 2026-2027 financial framework.

I am also tabling the March 2026 Budget Plan and the companion documents, which are an integral part of the budget.

A RESPONSIBLE BUDGET WITH TARGETED MEASURES FOR QUEBECERS

Given the economic uncertainty Québec is currently facing, our government is focusing on four key priorities: supporting businesses, infrastructure investments, the government's main missions and the well-being of Quebecers. To that end, we are announcing initiatives totalling nearly \$9.6 billion over six years.

80 • 03

1. QUÉBEC'S ECONOMY

The global economy is changing before our very eyes. For decades, economic growth has been built on globalization and free trade. Now, the rise of protectionism and geopolitical tensions is disrupting supply chains and creating a climate of uncertainty that undermines investment and international trade.

At the same time, the development of artificial intelligence is opening up avenues for significant productivity gains, fostering new hubs of innovation and creating new forms of global competition.

Québec is well positioned to deal with this new environment. Since 2018, it has outperformed the rest of Canada. Our economic initiatives have created more wealth than elsewhere.

- According to the most recent official statistics available, real GDP per capita increased by 4.9% in Québec between 2018 and 2024. For the same period, it fell by 0.3% in Ontario and 0.9% in the rest of Canada.
 - Québec's standard of living gap with Ontario narrowed from 15.9% in 2018 to a low of 10.2% in 2024. As for the gap with the rest of Canada, it fell from 20.2% to 13.6%.
 - We have never seen such small gaps since statistics began to be compiled in 1981. It was one of the Premier's main goals when we took office in 2018, and now, eight years later, the results are clear.
- At the same time, our government has done a better job than anywhere else in the country of protecting its citizens' finances. Between 2018 and 2024, household purchasing power, measured by real disposable income per capita, improved by 9.2% in Québec compared to 5.1% in Ontario and in the rest of Canada.

Québec's economy has withstood headwinds better and is adapting to the new geopolitical reality. There is still uncertainty around trade tensions and the review of the Canada-United States-Mexico Agreement, but it is expected to gradually subside. Therefore, following a 0.8% increase in 2025, real GDP growth is expected to reach 1.1% in 2026 and 1.4% in 2027.

2. ACCELERATING QUÉBEC'S ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION

Despite the uncertain global environment and tense trade relations with our U.S. partner, Québec is in an excellent position to meet these challenges, as it can count on many strengths, including a business climate conducive to investment and innovation, a diversified economy, and abundant natural resources.

To create more wealth and develop promising sectors, our government will use all the levers at its disposal. We will continue to invest in our economy and infrastructure. We will also continue to prioritize supporting our businesses, particularly our SMBs. The budget therefore provides for initiatives totalling more than \$1.9 billion over five years to accelerate Québec's economic transformation.

□ Supporting businesses in adapting to the new economic climate

To capitalize on the opportunities created by the new economic reality, Québec can rely on an innovative manufacturing sector and strategic industries such as aerospace, artificial intelligence, quantum computing, optics-photonics and life sciences.

- These are essential levers for increasing productivity, consolidating Québec's value chains and positioning Québec in the industries that will shape tomorrow's economy.
- Our government is therefore allocating nearly \$700 million in additional funding to help businesses adapt to the new economic reality.

Furthermore, the government is giving itself additional intervention capacity that can reach \$2 billion, through our various investment funds, to maintain head offices in Québec and to develop the critical and strategic minerals sector.

□ Fostering the conditions to grow our businesses

The government is sensitive to the realities of entrepreneurs and investors. Therefore, we have taken steps to foster the conditions necessary for innovation, investment, the acceleration of projects and the creation of quality jobs.

Our vision is simple: to foster a competitive business environment characterized by a simple and stable regulatory framework, accessible investment capital, competitive taxation, quality public infrastructure and a skilled labour pool.

Today, the resilience of our economy demonstrates that such a business environment acts as a bulwark against uncertainty and facilitates adaptation to global economic changes.

We have also seen that, by integrating innovations into their activities, our businesses differentiate themselves from the competition, whether by designing more innovative products or improving the efficiency of their production processes.

That is why, to encourage investment in research and innovation, the government is allocating \$283 million over five years for:

- supporting the innovation chain;
- supporting the growth of innovative industries and the adoption of cutting-edge technologies; and
- fostering innovation and productivity in the construction sector.

We also want to speed up the implementation of our large and strategic projects. That is why we introduced Bill 5, which will reduce the time required to obtain authorizations, to accelerate the implementation of projects of national interest and provide investors with greater predictability.

- Although there will be no compromise on rigour, the government is giving itself the necessary levers to ensure that major projects, given the current economic and geopolitical context, can be carried out without undue delay.

Although these new levers are significant, the success of these projects depends not only on private-sector leadership, but also on community support and the active involvement of partners such as municipalities and Indigenous nations.

The government intends to strengthen its mechanisms for collaborating and consulting with all partners. We want to ensure that they participate in projects that hold promise for the future and reap the associated economic and social benefits. This is true for municipalities, but also for Indigenous communities, with Québec paving the way by entering into historic partnership agreements such as the Paix des braves, the James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement and the Northeastern Québec Agreement.

Today, I am announcing the creation of a \$500-million fund that will provide loan guarantees to enable Indigenous communities to participate financially in economic projects.

In a spirit of collaboration and to ensure that the needs of Indigenous communities are met, discussions will be held with First Nations and Inuit representatives regarding the form and terms of this fund.

❑ **Supporting SMBs and strengthening our regions**

Small and medium-sized businesses are deeply rooted across Québec. They create jobs and vibrant communities. Their contribution remains more essential than ever to our collective wealth.

In the same way, Québec's regions are critical to our prosperity. They rely on important industries, such as agriculture and tourism, which draw on local expertise and enable these regions to grow and distinguish themselves both at home and abroad.

Our government will build on each region's strengths to help them thrive. We will also ensure that our SMBs can take advantage of new growth opportunities by leveraging their expertise.

— The government is therefore announcing more than \$216 million to fund regional economic initiatives and support the growth of the agri-food and tourism sectors, key drivers of economic development in our regions.

Throughout Québec, businesses in the forestry sector are a pillar of the economy. Silviculture, forestry, wood products and paper manufacturing provide a good livelihood for many Quebecers.

Unfortunately, the industry's economic conditions have deteriorated over the past year. The United States, our main trading partner, significantly raised its tariffs in summer 2025, to the point where the forestry sector now faces tariffs of over 45%.

Despite our significant efforts, the forestry sector continues to face considerable uncertainty due to these trade tensions. We will not give up, and we will continue to support this industry and its workers. That is why our government is providing an additional \$365 million to support forestry businesses and communities.

❑ **Promoting culture and addressing challenges in the audiovisual sector**

Québec has a unique culture. Our artists and their works reflect our values, our ambitions and our pride. Our cultural businesses enrich Québec, both culturally and economically.

This is reflected in the audiovisual industry, which lies at the heart of Québec's culture and economy. Our movies and television shows not only reflect who we are but also unite us. Over the years, shows like *Les filles de Caleb*, *La petite vie*, *La grande séduction* and *Empathie* have made us laugh and cry. That needs to carry on.

Our government recognizes that the audiovisual sector is currently facing new challenges, especially in terms of financing its production and marketing its content. We are operating in a different environment, where cultural consumption is dominated by global platforms.

The industry must adapt to new digital trends so that our local productions remain original and innovative, and above all, so that they can reach a wider audience, especially young people.

To address the challenges facing the audiovisual sector and ensure its long-term viability, our government is allocating a total of \$280 million for the purpose of:

- providing financial support to Québec’s audiovisual industry; and
- adjusting the tax credit for Québec film or television productions to reflect the new broadcasting and viewing realities.

These initiatives are the first actions taken by the government to follow up on the recommendations of the working group on the future of Québec’s audiovisual industry. The Minister of Culture and Communications will unveil the details of this new strategy and will continue to work with all stakeholders in the sector to implement it.

Furthermore, Québec is the only French-speaking state in North America, and as such, we have a responsibility to preserve and share our unique culture and heritage, especially with younger generations. That is what makes our identity so strong. The government is therefore allocating nearly \$220 million over five years for:

- maintaining funding for culture in schools and cultural field trips;
- supporting cultural bodies; and
- preserving our cultural heritage.

I would not want to overlook the role of our major museum institutions. These unique spaces located throughout Québec allow visitors to discover and marvel at the treasures they have to offer. Whether it is the first Musée national de l’histoire du Québec, the future Espace Riopelle at the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec, or the Biosphere, these institutions can all count on our government’s commitment.

3. BOLSTERING INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT

To provide quality public services, we must invest in infrastructure. As needs grow, particularly in health and education, we need schools and hospitals that are in good condition and in sufficient numbers, as well as transportation infrastructure and affordable housing. At a time when manufacturing jobs are being threatened by the protectionism of our southern neighbours, investing in infrastructure helps stimulate our economy and boost our long-term economic potential.

Over the past eight years, the Québec Infrastructure Plan has thus been increased every year, rising from \$100.4 billion in March 2018 to \$167 billion today.

This increase of more than 66% was necessary to provide Québec with modern infrastructure and invest more in maintaining the building inventory. When we took office in 2018, there was a backlog of maintenance work that we had to catch up on. These investments were necessary to tackle this shortfall, which we are still making up for today.

In the uncertain economic climate, we announced an \$11-billion increase in infrastructure investments in the March 2025 budget.

The government currently plans to:

- increase infrastructure investments by more than \$5 billion over six years; and
- increase the 2026-2036 Québec Infrastructure Plan to \$167 billion.

By 2030-2031, these additional investments, along with the acceleration of certain projects, will represent, on average, annually:

- the preservation of more than 4 400 jobs; and
- a contribution of more than \$630 million to Québec's GDP.

I would also like to point out that 71% of the amounts invested will be allocated to maintaining existing infrastructure, as requested by several partners, including municipalities. This proportion was 65% in the previous Québec Infrastructure Plan. We are therefore talking about a significant increase aimed at reversing the disrepair of our public infrastructure.

4. SUPPORTING THE GOVERNMENT'S MAIN MISSIONS

In this budget, the government is setting aside nearly \$4.3 billion to support its main missions. In particular, these investments will provide the basic funding needed to meet the growing needs of the population, improve the accessibility and quality of services offered to citizens, and renew programs that are essential for the future of our public services.

- Nearly \$2.2 billion will help facilitate access to health care and social services, in particular by supporting access to medications, continuing efforts to reduce surgery wait lists, strengthening front-line access, and supporting initiatives for caregivers.
 - The latest agreement with general practitioners will help ensure that 500 000 Quebecers who are currently without a family doctor, including 180 000 vulnerable patients, will be covered by June 30, 2026. This is a great step forward for access to health care.
 - In addition, Santé Québec, a corporation established by our government, will continue its mission to modernize the governance of the network by streamlining the management of its operations to improve efficiency. Thanks to these gains, every dollar invested will lead to better delivery of care and services.
- Nearly \$640 million will be used to support students' educational success, meet urgent and temporary school space needs, and attract workers to the education network.
- The government is also setting aside nearly \$400 million to support higher education training and research, in particular to continue promoting the disciplines of engineering and information technology, extend employment assistance allowances and support research bodies.

□ Strengthening Quebecers' safety and access to legal services

Over the past several years, our government has invested to ensure the safety of Quebecers in the areas of civil protection, fire safety, correctional services and policing. In particular, we have taken action to help the population and municipalities affected by disasters. We have also increased our support for the fight against crime and enhanced security in detention facilities as well as courthouses.

- The government is providing more than \$1 billion to strengthen Quebecers' safety and access to legal services, particularly by investing in prevention and intervention, continuing to combat gun violence, and strengthening access to legal services.

When we talk about security today, we must include cybersecurity. Around the world, cyberattacks are becoming increasingly frequent, sophisticated and challenging to thwart, in particular because artificial intelligence accelerates the exploitation of vulnerabilities as well as their detection. The Québec government must invest in order to react more quickly to potential cyberattacks.

— To ensure government capabilities in cybersecurity, the government will maintain its financial support for the Ministère de la Cybersécurité et du Numérique.

I am proud of the government's choice to have invested so much in recent years in its main missions, foremost among which are the provision of health care and social services, education and higher education, and public safety and justice.

Upon taking office in 2018, we needed to reinvest in our public services to meet urgent needs. We have caught up significantly over the past eight years, and the foundations of the Québec government are now stronger than ever. All of Québec benefits from this.

5. SUPPORTING QUEBECERS AND COMMUNITIES WITH TARGETED ACTION

Since 2018, our government has honoured its promise to return money to Quebecers. In particular, we have:

- lowered the tax rates for the first two brackets of personal income tax;
- harmonized the school tax at the lowest rate among all regions of Québec and limited the average increase in school taxes to 3% since 2022;
- increased the Family Allowance, which now tops out at more than \$3 000 per child per year;
- restored the single rate for childcare services, which had been eliminated by the previous government;
- capped the increase in government rates at 3% per year since 2023; and
- introduced the senior assistance amount, which can reach up to \$2 000 annually for low- and middle-income individuals aged 70 or older.

In total, these measures represent nearly \$60 billion returned to Quebecers between 2018-2019 and 2028-2029.

They help make Québec the area within the G7 countries where families have best weathered the rising cost of living, as rightly pointed out by the Research Chair in Taxation and Public Finance at Université de Sherbrooke.

In 2026-2027, we will have returned \$7 billion more to Quebecers, for an average of \$961 more per citizen.

The government has also implemented measures to protect the most vulnerable Quebecers, particularly by promoting access to affordable housing and by addressing homelessness and domestic violence.

In Budget 2026-2027, the government is providing more than \$3.6 billion over six years to support Quebecers and communities, and to address these priority issues.

☐ **Supporting Quebecers**

■ **Helping families cope with the cost of living**

In order to continue helping families cope with the rising cost of living, the government is providing \$846 million over five years.

I am announcing the conversion of 5 000 non-subsidized childcare spaces into subsidized spaces as of 2026-2027.

— In addition, the government is capping the average increase in school taxes at 3% for 2026.

I would like to take this opportunity to remind you that, ultimately, the actions taken by the government since 2021 will have led to the creation of nearly 46 000 additional subsidized childcare spaces.

— This number is in addition to the nearly 16 000 non-subsidized childcare spaces to be converted.

These actions were made possible, in particular, by the unconditional agreement signed with the federal government when Ms. Freeland was Deputy Prime Minister of Canada and Minister of Finance.

This agreement is a good illustration that collaboration between the two levels of government can yield positive results when there is a willingness and when Québec's jurisdiction is respected.

It is my hope that this same spirit will enable us to quickly and unconditionally obtain the amounts due to Québec for health, infrastructure, and public transit under the federal government's latest commitments.

■ **Addressing homelessness and mental health challenges**

Madam President, homelessness and mental health problems are, unfortunately, becoming increasingly prevalent in our daily lives. Through services ranging from prevention to support, community organizations play a crucial role when the time comes to help our most vulnerable individuals.

— Budget 2026-2027 is providing an amount of \$264 million to help people who are experiencing homelessness and to better address mental health challenges.

■ **Combatting domestic and sexual violence**

Since taking office in 2018, we have stepped up our efforts to combat domestic and sexual violence. Whether it be funding for shelters, tracking bracelets, the court specialized in sexual violence and domestic violence, or awareness campaigns, our government is probably the one that has done the most to put an end to these tragedies and support victims. It is an issue on which there is a consensus in Québec.

We must not stop there. The tragic number of femicides in the first months of 2026 demonstrates the importance of continuing the fight against this violence.

To that end, the government is announcing an additional investment of \$260 million for:

- enhancing support for shelters for women who are victims of domestic violence;
- addressing the recommendations of the Select Committee on the Sexual Exploitation of Minors; and
- completing the deployment of the court specialized in sexual violence and domestic violence.

■ **Supporting access to housing**

The housing crisis is a reality that can be seen across Québec. It particularly affects the most vulnerable families and has unfortunately contributed to the increase in homelessness. Affordable housing is fundamental to living with dignity, and every Quebecer should have a roof over their head.

Since 2018, our government has taken action to increase the supply of social and affordable housing, make it easier for certain households to pay their rent, and keep the housing stock in good condition. Increasing the housing supply remains the most important solution to alleviating the crisis across Québec, and to enabling more families to find housing that fits their budget.

The government is therefore providing \$741 million for:

- building 1 000 new affordable housing units;
- ensuring that the most vulnerable households remain housed; and
- adapting and renovating the housing stock.

■ **Strengthening services for vulnerable individuals**

Community organizations play an essential role in helping vulnerable individuals, fostering social cohesion and building community resilience. In a context where their needs remain significant, the government intends to continue supporting them so that they can fulfill their mission.

The government is therefore announcing investments of \$257 million that will serve to strengthen services for vulnerable individuals, specifically for:

- supporting community organizations and providing services to vulnerable individuals; and
- supporting food bank supplies.

Let me highlight the central role played by Food Banks of Québec in supporting families facing food insecurity. This budget is strengthening support for this organization, particularly for the purchase of food and the development of its network's capacity throughout Québec.

Madam President, all of this support will have a concrete effect, but people still need to be able to access it. As of next year, Revenu Québec will automatically file tax returns for certain vulnerable clientele so that they can receive the tax assistance to which they are entitled, including the solidarity tax credit.

□ Ensuring community resilience and supporting adaptation to and the fight against climate change

In all regions of Québec, citizens rely on quality local infrastructure and sports facilities, healthy natural environments and services adapted to local realities. The disruptions linked to climate change, such as shoreline erosion and wildfires, require us to anticipate risks and adapt to them to protect municipalities across Québec.

At this moment, several of them are on alert due to spring flooding. This situation clearly demonstrates the urgent need for action. I am therefore announcing measures of more than \$1 billion over six years to ensure community resilience.

- Of this amount, the government is providing more than \$445 million to address five key priorities:
 - ensuring the sustainable maintenance of local and regional infrastructure;
 - contributing to the growth and vitality of the metropolitan area and the territories;
 - improving public services for Indigenous people;
 - encouraging participation in indoor and outdoor sports and recreation; and lastly,
 - continuing environmental protection initiatives.

In this regard, an amount of nearly \$584 million will be used to implement additional measures to help households adapt to and fight climate change.

This amount will come from investments of \$8.2 billion earmarked as part of the Implementation Plan of the 2030 Plan for a Green Economy.

- Funded primarily by revenue from the carbon market, this plan includes various initiatives to benefit households, businesses and communities. These initiatives will enable Québec to adapt to the growing impacts of climate change, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, accelerate the energy transition and support the transformation of the economy.

The 2026-2031 Implementation Plan will be announced in the coming weeks by the Minister of the Environment, the Fight Against Climate Change, Wildlife and Parks.

6. MAINTAINING SOUND MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC FINANCES

Madam President, through responsible expenditure management and stronger-than-expected nominal GDP growth in 2024 and 2025, this budget presents a better budgetary situation than the one forecast in March 2025.

I am announcing today that the government is taking another step toward a balanced budget by reducing the deficits projected for 2025-2026 and 2026-2027.

On a comparable basis to the budgetary balances of other Canadian provinces and the federal government, the accounting deficit has been adjusted downward by nearly \$3.8 billion in 2025-2026, bringing it to \$7.7 billion, or 1.2% of GDP.

- This result is better than that of the vast majority of provinces, whose accounting deficits average 1.7% of GDP.
- The accounting deficit is also half that of the federal government's, which stands at 2.4% of GDP.

In 2026-2027, Québec's accounting balance shows a deficit of \$6.3 billion, or 0.9% of GDP, representing an improvement of \$861 million compared to the deficit forecast when Budget 2025-2026 was tabled.

Given the economic environment, the government is maintaining an \$8-billion contingency reserve over the period covered by the financial framework, including \$2 billion for 2026-2027 alone.

- This reserve could, in particular, mitigate the effects of more-moderate-than-expected economic growth due to the trade dispute or the consequences of a prolonged increase in oil prices.

Madam President, I would like to point out that the reserves set aside in 2024-2025 and 2025-2026 were not utilized, which is a testament to the resilience of our economy and has helped improve our financial situation.

❑ **The Québec government's debt**

Despite the difficult environment, Québec has continued its efforts to reduce its debt load.

I am announcing that, as at March 31, 2026, Québec's net debt will represent 38.8% of GDP, a decrease of 4.1 percentage points from the level of 42.9% as at March 31, 2019.

Meanwhile, both in Canada and internationally, other governments have generally seen their indebtedness rise in relation to the size of their economy.

— Québec is one of the only provinces, along with Ontario and New Brunswick, that reduced its indebtedness during this period.

The government remains committed to reducing long-term debt and is continuing to make its deposits in the Generations Fund. It will achieve its debt reduction targets.

In Québec, we have equipped ourselves with two very important tools to manage our finances responsibly: the *Balanced Budget Act* and the *Act to reduce the debt and establish the Generations Fund*.

— Over time, these laws supported by parliamentarians from across the political spectrum, have enabled us to stay the course toward sound public finances by imposing a plan to restore fiscal balance over five years and setting targets for reducing debt to GDP. These have enhanced our financial credibility and created a significant legacy for ensuring the sustainability of our public finances.

— This year also marks the 20th anniversary of the Generations Fund. Since its creation, more than \$37 billion has been deposited into it. This fund is dedicated to reducing the debt burden, ensuring that future generations inherit a financially sound Québec.

❑ **Returning to a balanced budget**

In Budget 2025-2026, the government presented the plan to restore fiscal balance by 2029-2030. This budget confirms that the established trajectory is being respected.

— The budgetary balance according to the *Balanced Budget Act*, that is, after deposits in the Generations Fund, shows a deficit of \$9.9 billion in 2025-2026, or 1.5% of GDP, and \$8.6 billion in 2026-2027, or 1.3% of GDP.

As a result, in accordance with the *Balanced Budget Act*, a balanced budget will be achieved by 2029-2030 at the latest.

CONCLUSION

Madam President,

The last few years have not been easy for our economy, our businesses and our families. Between the pandemic, geopolitical tensions and protectionist threats, we are experiencing a period of instability that has put our public finances, and Quebecers' purchasing power, to the test.

Like many governments around the world, Québec has chosen to support its economy and its citizens' finances during these challenging times. This choice commits us to making every effort to return to a balanced budget as quickly as possible, thereby safeguarding our public finances in the long term.

When we take a step back and compare ourselves to other jurisdictions, we can see that Québec has managed its finances responsibly, despite the turmoil.

It is worth noting that our efforts have already paid off. First and foremost, we have narrowed our wealth gap with the rest of Canada. In addition, the debt-to-GDP burden has declined, and our financial situation is better than the provincial average, as the deficits for both the year ending and next year are smaller than expected. Québec is on the right track to return to a balanced budget by 2029-2030.

We have also reinvested in public services, with increases of more than 58% in health care and education since 2018, to meet ever-growing needs. We have taken action to address the infrastructure investment deficit by increasing the Québec Infrastructure Plan by more than 66% since 2018.

Ultimately, we have reduced the tax burden on Quebecers, in particular by lowering taxes, harmonizing the school tax, reinstating the single rate for childcare services and introducing a recurring amount for low-income seniors.

After eight years, our government is proud of the work it has accomplished. Our economy is catching up to that of our neighbours, we have reinvested in the government's main missions and we have returned money to Quebecers. Despite the crises and challenges, we are on track to return to a balanced budget by 2029-2030.

As you will have noticed, Madam President, this budget is sober and focused. It is not filled with pre-election gifts or frivolous promises. It is a deliberate, responsible choice, and I invite all political parties in this chamber to demonstrate the same responsibility in the run-up to the October elections. Our efforts to return to a balanced budget will require discipline in the years ahead.

Québec has every reason to be optimistic about the future. Although we are facing significant challenges, the people of Québec have an exceptional strength that has enabled us to overcome adversity for more than 400 years.

We have incredible economic assets that will help us succeed in the current environment. I am thinking of, among other things, our clean and renewable energy, our expertise in fields such as aerospace and artificial intelligence, as well as the high quality of our universities and our workforce. We have everything we need to continue thriving in the new economic landscape.

Our entrepreneurs, artists, athletes, researchers, workers and young people, to name just a few, prove to us year after year that Québec is a dynamic, innovative, modern and thriving nation.

And today, we are giving ourselves the means to go further with a responsible budget with targeted measures for Quebecers.

In closing, I would like to commend the Premier for his outstanding achievements since 2018. As Québec weathered several crises, he was a strong and reassuring leader who worked tirelessly to make our nation more prosperous. He has every reason to be proud of his legacy to our nation, and I am honoured to have served as Minister of Finance alongside him for the past eight years.

Thank you, Madam President.

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I propose that the National Assembly approve the government's budgetary policy.

Thank you.

80 • 03

TABLE 1

Québec government
Summary of budgetary transactions
Preliminary results for 2025-2026
(millions of dollars)

	2025-2026
REVENUE	
Own-source revenue	129 952
Federal transfers	30 577
Total	160 529
EXPENDITURE	
Portfolio expenditures	-158 029
Debt service	-10 155
Total	-168 184
ACCOUNTING SURPLUS (DEFICIT)⁽¹⁾	-7 655
BALANCED BUDGET ACT	
Deposits of dedicated revenues in the Generations Fund	-2 289
BUDGETARY BALANCE⁽²⁾	-9 944

(1) Accounting surplus (deficit) refers to the surplus (deficit) from operations as presented in the public accounts.

(2) Budgetary balance within the meaning of the *Balanced Budget Act*.

TABLE 2

Québec government
Summary of budgetary transactions
Forecasts for 2026-2027
(millions of dollars)

	2026-2027
REVENUE	
Own-source revenue	134 361
Federal transfers	32 131
Total	166 492
EXPENDITURE	
Portfolio expenditures	-160 489
Debt service	-10 268
Total	-170 757
Contingency reserve	-2 000
ACCOUNTING SURPLUS (DEFICIT)⁽¹⁾	-6 265
BALANCED BUDGET ACT	
Deposits of dedicated revenues in the Generations Fund	-2 347
BUDGETARY BALANCE⁽²⁾	-8 612

(1) Accounting surplus (deficit) refers to the surplus (deficit) from operations as presented in the public accounts.

(2) Budgetary balance within the meaning of the *Balanced Budget Act*.

TABLE 3

**Québec government
Revenue
Forecasts for 2026-2027**

(millions of dollars)

	2026-2027
OWN-SOURCE REVENUE	
Income and property taxes	
Personal income tax	50 800
Contributions for health services	9 412
Corporate taxes	14 527
School property tax	1 311
	76 050
Consumption taxes	
Sales taxes ⁽¹⁾	26 349
Fuels	2 097
Tobacco products	830
Alcoholic beverages	574
Other ⁽²⁾	158
	30 008
Revenue from government enterprises	
Hydro-Québec	2 445
Loto-Québec	1 557
Société des alcools du Québec	1 406
Investissement Québec	292
Société québécoise du cannabis	146
Other	7
	5 853
Duties, permits and royalties	6 542
Miscellaneous revenue	15 908
TOTAL OWN-SOURCE REVENUE	134 361
FEDERAL TRANSFERS	
Equalization	13 907
Health transfers	9 265
Transfers for post-secondary education and other social programs	1 392
Other programs	7 567
TOTAL FEDERAL TRANSFERS	32 131
TOTAL REVENUE	166 492

(1) Sales taxes, within the meaning of the public accounts, include, in particular, the QST, the tax on insurance premiums, the tax on lodging and the specific duty on new tires.

(2) These amounts include revenue from the Québec component of the excise duty on vaping products, the Québec component of the excise duty on cannabis sales and pari-mutuel.

TABLE 4

**Québec government
Expenditure
Forecasts for 2026-2027**
(millions of dollars)

	2026-2027
PORTFOLIO EXPENDITURES	
National Assembly	200
Persons appointed by the National Assembly	297
Affaires municipales et Habitation	5 608
Agriculture, Pêcheries et Alimentation	1 531
Conseil du trésor, Administration gouvernementale et Efficacité de l'État	3 361
Conseil exécutif	630
Culture et Communications	2 054
Cybersécurité et Numérique	353
Économie, Innovation et Énergie	4 511
Éducation	24 075
Emploi et Solidarité sociale	5 952
Enseignement supérieur	11 749
Environnement, Lutte contre les changements climatiques, Faune et Parcs	2 004
Famille	10 009
Finances	4 087
Immigration, Francisation et Intégration	756
Justice	2 039
Langue française	81
Relations internationales et Francophonie	148
Ressources naturelles et Forêts	1 521
Santé et Services sociaux	68 708
Sécurité publique	2 876
Tourisme	552
Transports et Mobilité durable	7 739
Travail	248
Reallocation of government expenditures during the fiscal year	-600
TOTAL	160 489
DEBT SERVICE	10 268
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	170 757

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding.

[Québec.ca/en-budget](https://quebec.ca/en-budget)



Finances

Québec

