

Turning Equality in Law into Equality in Fact

2007-2010 ACTION PLAN



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WRITING

Secrétariat à la condition féminine, with assistance from the
Direction générale des politiques
Ministère de la Famille, des Aînés et de la Condition féminine

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Introduction

The government's action plan stemming from its gender equality policy, entitled *Turning Equality in Law into Equality in Fact*, comprises actions that government departments and agencies will take over the next three years to meet the policy objectives.

The first part of this document discusses the main tools of governance that are in place or will be put in place to carry out government action relating to gender equality.

The policy guidelines and objectives follow. The measures that government departments and agencies have agreed to implement are described for each objective. Over 60 actions are thus presented.

Tools of Governance

The Government of Québec has fashioned a number of tools to facilitate and firmly establish its way of implementing the gender equality policy in the State apparatus.

First of all, the government reaffirms that it will maintain a group of **organizational structures** that are working for gender equality within the State: the *Ministère de la Famille, des Aînés et de la Condition féminine*, set up in June 2006; the *Secrétariat à la condition féminine*, which serves as facilitator and advisor for the network of officers in charge of gender equality in the government apparatus; and the *Conseil du statut de la femme* and its regional structure.

The government has adopted a series of **approaches** or **levers** to act as effectively as possible against discrimination and the different forms of inequality that women experience in Québec.

Since the time when over 180 countries adopted the Platform for Action at the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women, **gender-based analysis** is a management tool used more and more by governments when drawing up their policies as a whole. The Government of Québec undertakes to implement this management tool, in keeping with the cross-cutting approach. Thanks to this tool, it will learn of and understand the consequences for women or men of its policies, programs and measures as they are devised.

The government deems it essential, moreover, to introduce an **accountability system** in order to monitor and assess its action to promote gender equality.

It is also important, periodically, to monitor and **assess the progress** of gender equality by involving **legislators** and civil society **groups** in this process.

Although the State is a major player in acting on gender equality, it isn't the only one. For this value to become an issue for the whole of society, the government relies on a **wide range of partners** who can make a significant contribution because of the roles they play in society. Institutions and organizations in many fields, ranging from education and the work world to power circles, operate in spheres of influence that affect gender equality. They can be guided and urged to recognize this responsibility and take stock of what they can do to promote gender equality in their field.

Progress towards gender equality is also helped along by successes that serve as models and mark the path to follow. **By showcasing efforts and successes**, the government hopes to create examples for society to emulate, to the benefit of all.

1

Organizational Structures

Governments active in promoting gender equality earmark resources for setting up institutions in charge of supporting their actions, helping to coordinate policies on this issue and informing the population or different groups and raising their awareness. Since the 1970s, the government has had within its administration structures to assist it in its duty to further gender equality; it reasserts here its intention to keep them.

MINISTÈRE DE LA FAMILLE, DES AÎNÉS ET DE LA CONDITION FÉMININE

As stated in section 2 of the *Act respecting the Ministère de la Famille, des Aînés et de la Condition féminine*, adopted in June 2006, part of the Minister's mission is to foster the social, civic, economic and professional contribution of women to the development of Québec, as well as to promote their rights and actual gender equality. This is the first time in Québec that a twofold mandate regarding the status of women and equality has been enshrined in law.

SECRETARIAT À LA CONDITION FÉMININE

The *Secrétariat à la condition féminine*, which now reports to the *Ministère de la Famille, des Aînés et de la Condition féminine*, takes on administrative responsibility for gender equality. Its mission is to help develop government actions in this sphere and ensure their consistency. With the cooperation of central, regional and local authorities, it is working to implement the government's equality policy. It also sees to Québec's influence on the Canadian and international scenes where gender equality is concerned.

NETWORK OF OFFICERS IN CHARGE OF GENDER EQUALITY

For over 20 years, government departments and agencies have had one or more persons responsible for promoting women's rights and equality in their respective organizations and for advising the authorities in these matters. The network of officers in charge of gender equality will follow up on the realization of their organizations' commitments in relation to the government's policy and will help implement and evaluate this policy. In addition to leading and assisting the network, the *Secrétariat à la condition féminine* undertakes to provide the officers with training and accompaniment that will allow them to carry out their tasks or fuel their action on behalf of equality.

CONSEIL DU STATUT DE LA FEMME

The *Conseil du statut de la femme*, set up in 1973, is another important government structure acting to foster gender equality. Its mandate is to do research and brief the Minister on any subject connected with equality and respect for women's rights and status. It may also inform the public about the same matters. Due to its regional structure, the *Conseil* was given the following mandates:

- » Inform and raise the awareness of regional branches of government departments and agencies concerned with implementing the policy; also to ensure that the regional conferences of elected officers are informed of the realities and problems surrounding the status of women so that all these bodies' initiatives contribute effectively to achieving gender equality in every region;
- » Urge interested regional partners to reach agreements on gender equality and support them in this endeavour;
- » Collect data on the results of implementing the policy in order to present the Minister with studies or research on the subject, if necessary.

2 Three Approaches to Foster Gender Equality

Implementation of the policy and the action plan is based on three main approaches, which are different ways of addressing the work to be done. The government intends to encourage its departments and agencies to use these approaches to act on all facets of gender inequality. It undertakes to promote the three approaches in the network of officers in charge of gender equality and among its partners.

TARGETED APPROACH

The targeted approach entails carrying out a series of coordinated, concrete actions focused on women and serving to prevent or correct instances of gender-based inequality and systemic discrimination, to which women are still subjected. Many government actions have drawn on this approach, for example, the application of the *Pay Equity Act*; assistance for teenage mothers; the contest called *Chapeau, les filles!*, aimed at diversifying female students' career choices; and the Equal Access to Decision Making program to support the introduction of women into decision-making circles. The government reiterates the importance of this lever in acting on areas of women's lives most marked by gender inequality; it can also be used to address instances of inequality that may appear in the new economic and social context.

CROSS-CUTTING APPROACH

The cross-cutting approach is aimed at preventing the introduction of new sources of inequality as new government policies and programs are drawn up. The goal is to pay particular attention to all phases of devising, implementing and evaluating policies to avoid reproducing sexist biases present in social institutions or former policies. This approach must therefore be used by the people working directly on different stages of policy formulation and implementation. Since 1997, the government has used it to set up coordinating structures and experimented with it on gender-based analysis projects in some government departments and agencies. The plan now is to extend the approach to government as a whole.

SOCIETAL APPROACH

Although the State plays a principal role in the effort to achieve gender equality, it cannot cover all spheres of society on its own. Many partners act in the field of education or regional development as well as in the media, workplaces and power circles. They can influence women's living conditions and the attainment of gender equality. Similarly, men as a social group can be encouraged to join the quest for equality. Many social partners and increasing numbers of men are engaging, in different capacities, in actions on behalf of equality. The government now intends to foster everyone's participation in building a more egalitarian society.

3 Gender-based Analysis

Since the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women was held in Beijing in 1995, many governments have undertaken to incorporate the concern over gender equality in their policies and programs. In Québec, the *Conseil des ministres* decided in 1997 to experiment with gender-based analysis (GBA) through a mobilizing project included in the *Programme d'action 1997-2000 pour toutes les Québécoises*. The project was continued in the following three-year action program, and seven government departments carried out nine projects in this period. The experiment brought to light some problems and some requisites for success.

Gender-based analysis is defined as a management approach that allows for an assessment, at the time a policy or measure is conceived, of the differential impact of the policy or measure on women and men given the different socio-economic conditions characterizing them. GBA should be used at the Québec-wide level by government departments and agencies and, similarly, by local and regional decision-making bodies, particularly regional conferences of elected officers, who enjoy all the autonomy needed to develop their territory. Although GBA does not bind government to policy decisions, it does provide essential clarification beforehand of the potential effects of government policies and decisions on women and men.

One of the requisites in GBA is the use of gender-disaggregated data. Government departments and agencies have made great progress in producing such data. The advent in November 2003 of the official statistics database, managed by the *Institut de la Statistique du Québec*, and to which many government departments contribute data on women and men in their sector, can only bolster the practice of GBA.

Then, when the realities of women and men are taken into account, it follows that government writings make them evident. Logically, in their public documents, departments and agencies will use inclusive language that allows women and men to recognize themselves as such in messages directly or generally directed at people of both sexes.

The government undertakes to introduce GBA in the government apparatus, particularly through the following actions:

- » Renew the mandates of the GBA steering committee and the interdepartmental committee;
- » Define an implementation strategy and adequate instrumentation to introduce GBA;
- » Ensure GBA training for State managers and officials, along with persons devising policies;
- » Propose the implementation of GBA at the regional level and in the largest cities in Québec, and offer training to elected officials, managers and analysts;
- » Apply GBS in at least 15 projects, programs or measures that have repercussions on gender equality;
- » Evaluate the introduction of this approach and its effects.

4 Accountability System

In keeping with the *Public Administration Act*, which establishes results-based management, and the *Act respecting the Ministère de la Famille, des Aînés et de la Condition féminine*, which confers on the Minister the responsibility of seeing to real progress towards gender equality, it is essential for the policy to be accompanied by measures to ensure effective implementation. Since the policy is horizontal in nature, the government is establishing an accountability system to ensure that the actions for which government departments and agencies are responsible are followed up. It intends therefore to:

- » Define indicators to measure the progress of commitments contained in the action plan;
- » Urge government departments and agencies to include in their annual management report their actions on behalf of gender equality;
- » Set up a follow-up committee, to be overseen by the *Secrétariat à la condition féminine*, to assist government departments and agencies in their accountability duties, particularly by charting the indicators;
- » At the end of the three-year action plan, write a report and analysis of the government actions taken.

5

Parliamentary Committee Every Three Years

Bringing about gender equality is a matter of prime social and political importance that warrants periodic examination by elected officers. At the present time, members of the National Assembly look at questions related to gender equality only when specific subjects arise. If equality were brought up regularly before a parliamentary committee, it would indisputably become a central, political issue. When a parliamentary committee sat to discuss the *Conseil du statut de la femme* brief entitled *For a New Social Contract of Equality Between Women and Men*, MNAs unanimously called for a parliamentary committee to examine, every three years, the progress of government action and the general development of gender equality in Québec.

- » The government has accepted the recommendation by the *Commission des affaires sociales* and undertakes to table in the National Assembly, every three years, a document on the changing situation of women and men in Québec.
- » The appropriate National Assembly committee may take over the document and study it. If necessary, the committee may proceed to hold public consultations to clarify some of the contents.

6 Partners Committed to Equality

To achieve such a major objective as gender equality, the State cannot act alone. Trade unions, businesses, educational institutions, regional and municipal entities, community-based organizations and political parties, in their respective spheres, play a crucial role in value change and the introduction of significant actions to bring about equality. Alliances with them must be voluntary and motivated by their sense of social responsibility as actors in Québec's development.

The Government of France equipped itself with an Equality Charter, which has been in effect since March 8, 2004, managing to federate close to 100 partners, many of them public authorities but also actors from the economic sphere and civil society.

Drawing from this initiative and the societal approach it advocates, the government intends to elicit commitments from all these partners, who could, in their respective fields, take action to advance gender equality in their environment.

7 Recognition Awards

In Québec there are organizations that are active day in, day out trying to bring about gender equality. Whether in the area of education, health, access to power, prevention of violence, balancing work and family or women's economic independence, people form ideas, take initiatives and work on them.

At times these actions are far-reaching and have clear effects on improving women's situation or moving gender equality forward.

The government intends to create recognition awards for promoting gender equality, since such actions deserve to be acknowledged publicly and underscored so as to serve as models for other organizations.

Guidelines and Actions

An analysis of women's socio-economic situation over time, coupled with different indicators of the gap between their living conditions and men's, provides the overall framework for government action. Contextual factors and new social phenomena, which represent either challenges or new obstacles to achieving equality, must also be taken into account.

The starting point for the government's action therefore will be six major guidelines that cover the gender equality issue as a whole:

1. Promoting egalitarian models and behaviour
2. Achieving gender equality in the economic arena
3. Achieving a better balance between responsibilities at home and at work
4. Achieving health approaches tailored to women's specific needs
5. Achieving respect for women's physical integrity and their safety in all spheres of life
6. Achieving greater participation by women in decision-making bodies

The objectives on which government action will focus are grouped under each one of the guidelines.

GUIDELINE 1: Promoting Egalitarian Models and Behaviour

Gender-based roles and inequality are strengthened through stereotypes still present in people's minds, putting a brake on achieving equality in fact. The *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women* (CEDAW) recognizes governments' role in this endeavour and invites them to take every measure needed to change men's and women's socio-cultural patterns and models of behaviour in the direction of achieving gender equality. Although the range of social and occupational prospects has broadened for women in Québec, the process is far from over. This is especially so since the advent of new phenomena such as the sexualization of public space, which has an undeniable effect on young people's sexuality. Consequently, it is important to work towards the non-stereotyped socialization of youngsters and egalitarian parenting. Since they contribute to shaping young people's sexual identity, the education, culture, media and sports environments must participate in this effort. Following an intercultural approach, we must ensure the promotion of principles and values surrounding gender equality among Quebecers regardless of their background.

OBJECTIVE 1.1: Foster Young People’s Non-stereotyped Socialization

ACTIONS	In charge Collaborators	Partners
<p>1 Broaden our knowledge of the manifestations and effects of sexual and sexist stereotypes, male and female, and propose strategies to counter them.</p> <p>Sexual and sexist stereotypes affect the way we think and behave. They also have an effect on our expectations regarding women and men. They contribute to creating hierarchical differences between the sexes, which runs counter to the principle of gender equality. The government encourages a deeper understanding in this respect so that government departments and agencies can be better equipped to fight against stereotypes in their field of intervention and to promote egalitarian behaviour.</p> <p>TARGET GROUP: THE GENERAL PUBLIC</p>	<p>Conseil du statut de la femme</p>	<p>Departments and agencies</p>
<p>2 Issue a brief on the phenomenon of the sexualization of public space (hypersexualization) and its effects on young people.</p> <p>Our society tolerates the commercialization of sexuality, which at times reduces a person’s identity to the sexual dimension alone. This certainly has consequences for young people, who are exposed more and more to these images. One apparently growing media trend is to present younger and younger girls as sex objects. It would be timely to examine the trend’s effects on the rise in indices such as early pregnancy and abortion rates, and the increase in occasional prostitution among young people, especially those who are most vulnerable from the economic, socio-cultural and psychological standpoints. What to do to counter this new social phenomenon, which has repercussions on girls and boys? The government has asked the <i>Conseil du statut de la femme</i>, in collaboration with the <i>Conseil permanent de la jeunesse</i>, to conduct a study and issue a brief on the matter.</p> <p>TARGET GROUPS: YOUNG PEOPLE, GIRLS AND BOYS; THE GENERAL PUBLIC</p>	<p>Conseil du statut de la femme Conseil permanent de la jeunesse</p>	<p>Media Various institutions</p>
<p>3 Consolidate efforts already made to eliminate sexual and sexist stereotypes, and promote egalitarian relations at all education levels.</p> <p>In past years, the government and a number of partners examined ways to raise students’ awareness about adopting egalitarian behaviour. The idea is to update or present anew these actions to teachers wishing to raise young people’s awareness. The government intends to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Put out a directory of educational tools on gender equality for teachers; • Disseminate existing materials in the education system. <p>TARGET GROUPS: YOUNG PEOPLE, GIRLS AND BOYS; TEACHERS</p>	<p>Ministère de l’Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport Conseil du statut de la femme</p>	<p>Education system</p>

ACTIONS	In charge Collaborators	Partners
<p>4 Highlight the promotion of egalitarian models and behaviour based on reference points in the Québec Education Program.</p> <p>The educational reform provides opportunities to introduce concepts to fight stereotypes and promote gender equality in primary and high schools.</p> <p>TARGET GROUP: PRIMARY AND HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS</p>	<p>Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport</p>	<p>Education system</p>
<p>5 Provide school staff with training in egalitarian gender relations.</p> <p>The training currently provided to school staff on peaceful, equal gender relations will be revised to better meet the needs of schools, taking into account the perspectives in the Québec Education Program. Many dimensions will be addressed, among them the importance of including sex education in school programs and the need—starting in primary school—to guide students so they develop critical abilities with respect to models of sexuality presented to them.</p> <p>TARGET GROUP: SCHOOL STAFF</p>	<p>Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport</p>	<p>Education system</p>
<p>6 Design new tools to promote egalitarian relations in all educational settings, from day care centres to universities.</p> <p>People's identity is shaped and refined particularly by their relations with different institutions. At times institutions subtly reproduce traditional models of attributing social roles. The government intends to encourage all initiatives to find new ways and means to fight sexist stereotypes. It will also encourage the promotion of egalitarian models and behaviour with respect to sexuality as well as the way to envisage love relationships; career choices; and roles in the family, the workplace and society in general.</p> <p>TARGET GROUPS: YOUNG PEOPLE, GIRLS AND BOYS; TEACHERS; CHILDCARE EDUCATORS</p>	<p>Ministère de la Famille, des Aînés et de la Condition féminine</p> <p>Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport</p> <p>Conseil du statut de la femme</p>	<p>Childcare services network</p> <p>Education system</p>

ACTIONS

**In charge
Collaborators**

Partners

7 Understand girls' and boys' views and concerns about gender equality questions to better tailor actions aimed at them.

A working group made up of young people of both sexes was set up at the *Conseil du statut de la femme*. Its mandate is to consult young students and workers about their perception of equality in Québec society, the problems they must confront and the best strategies to speak to and interest them in achieving gender equality. It will be advisable to learn of the group's findings and draw on them to put together successful enabling strategies regarding the question of equality between young people, girls and boys.

TARGET GROUP: YOUNG PEOPLE, GIRLS AND BOYS

Conseil
du statut
de la femme

OBJECTIVE 1.2: Support the Teaching of Egalitarian Parenting Skills and Practices

ACTION	In charge Collaborators	Partners
<p>8 Conduct a study on the trends and determinants of fathers' involvement with their family and children.</p> <p>The most important changes that have occurred in recent years in Québec's social context gave rise to questioning fathers' traditional place and role in the family and child rearing. Although studies on fathers' situation are far less numerous than those on mothers, they have increased substantially in the recent past in Québec, Canada and elsewhere. After reviewing the literature on fathers' involvement and how it has changed recently—especially, the many determinants of the change—the study will focus on fathers' involvement when the union breaks down, a situation that raises particular problems.</p> <p>TARGET GROUP: YOUNG WOMEN AND YOUNG MEN</p>	<p>Ministère de la Famille, des Aînés et de la Condition féminine</p>	

OBJECTIVE 1.3: Encourage the Media, Cultural Enterprises, and Sports and Recreational Organizations to Promote Non-sexist Roles and Behaviour

ACTIONS	In charge Collaborators	Partners
<p>9 Organize a contest to promote egalitarian images in different media</p> <p>In the 1980s, efforts were made to sensitize industries that advertised and advertisers themselves to sexism. These efforts bore fruit generally speaking. Québec television productions—serials, for example—present more positive role-models of women and men than in the past. Nonetheless, there has been an upsurge of highly sexualized images of women in advertising and other means of communication such as magazines for young girls. Other media vehicles such as videoclips and video games, which are especially popular with youth, continue to present stereotyped images of women and men, even violent ones. It is important to remind the media of their role in representing women and men and encourage good practices in their respective sectors.</p> <p>TARGET GROUPS: YOUNG PEOPLE; THE GENERAL PUBLIC</p>	<p>Conseil du statut de la femme</p>	<p>Electronic and print media Advertisers Video and videoclip producers</p>
<p>10 As their members' voices, community media associations should be sensitized to the self-regulatory mechanisms that exist in the media industry to foster a positive, egalitarian representation of women and men.</p> <p>The media industry armed itself with self-regulatory mechanisms, including the Canadian Association of Broadcasters' <i>Sex Role Portrayal Code for Radio and Television</i> and the <i>Canadian Code of Advertising Standards</i>. The government will raise awareness in the institutions under its authority so that they promote an egalitarian representation of women and men.</p> <p>TARGET GROUP: THE GENERAL PUBLIC</p>	<p>Ministère de la Culture et des Communications</p>	<p>Community media associations</p>

ACTIONS	In charge Collaborators	Partners
<p>11 In the guidelines prescribed for Télé-Québec, specify the expectations about its contribution to the fight against sexual and sexist stereotypes.</p> <p>The media play a role in establishing and perpetuating certain values and standards. They still carry many stereotyped images and views that contribute to fanning prejudice and inequality. The government cannot take the place of existing regulatory structures, but it can act on institutions under its authority.</p> <p>TARGET GROUP: THE GENERAL PUBLIC</p>	<p>Ministère de la Culture et des Communications</p>	<p>Télé-Québec</p>
<p>12 Take action to learn more about the situation of women in sports, recognize women athletes, and bring about an increase in the numbers of women in responsible, executive and supervisory positions in sports federations.</p> <p>Sports and recreational activities are occasions to shape one's sexual identity, particularly because the body is at play here. By the same token, these activities tend to perpetuate gender differences and inequality, along with unequal social relations between the sexes. The distribution of women and men in sports, the sports they choose to play, their degree of commitment and their preferences in sports reflect the gender-based division of society. The government intends to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a survey with sports federations, student sports associations, regional recreation and sports units and recreation directors on the place of women in sports; • Organize an annual event to acknowledge women athletes; • Work with recognized sports federations within the three-year program to help advance the place of women in sports with the aim of increasing the number of women coaches, qualified judges, participants and women in decision-making positions; • Continue implementing the <i>Le leadership au féminin</i> training program. <p>TARGET GROUPS: WOMEN INTERESTED IN SPORTS; THE GENERAL PUBLIC</p>	<p>Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport</p>	<p>Sports federations Regional recreation and sports units Student sports associations Égale Action</p>

OBJECTIVE 1.4: Support Gender Equality in a Context of Growing Cultural and Religious Diversity

ACTIONS	In charge Collaborators	Partners
<p>13 Conduct a study and issue a brief on the question of religious diversity and women's rights.</p> <p>Opening up to diversity must be addressed. It is important to recognize that although diversity is full of promise, at times it gives rise to tension. That is why the host society must assert the values it would like to see shared by all communities, and it must provide guidelines on what is and is not negotiable. The government is responsible, through its institutions, to spell out the standards and values that must prevail in Québec society, and it must make them explicit to newly arrived immigrants and also to the general public.</p> <p>TARGET GROUP: THE GENERAL PUBLIC</p>	<p>Conseil du statut de la femme</p>	<p>Departments and agencies</p>
<p>14 Include information on gender equality in welcome sessions for newly arrived immigrants and in personalized support services.</p> <p>Sharing values related to gender equality with the immigrant population is of great importance since the identity of Québec women and men is shaped by the contribution and activity of the members of cultural communities.</p> <p>TARGET GROUP: NEWLY ARRIVED IMMIGRANTS</p>	<p>Ministère de l'Immigration et des Communautés culturelles</p>	

GUIDELINE 2: Achieving Gender Equality in the Economic Arena

Over the past 40 years, Québec has passed a number of laws and measures to democratize education and improve workers' conditions and women's economic security. Women have become increasingly highly educated and expanded their presence in the labour market to such a degree that they should soon reach parity. However, the status of women in employment remains problematic: despite the advances, they are still confined to a limited range of trades and occupations and are more numerous in the part-time work force where they hold precarious jobs and their earnings remain lower than those of men. Last, more women than men live in conditions marked by precariousness and poverty, with this risk being higher for certain more vulnerable groups of women. To improve women's economic self-sufficiency, it is important to diversify their training options, encourage academic perseverance, support their occupational integration and job retention, pursue efforts to reduce wage inequity, support women entrepreneurs and take measures to improve women's economic security throughout their lives.

OBJECTIVE 2.1: Foster a Broader Scope of Training Options as Well as Academic Success and Perseverance

ACTIONS	In charge Collaborators	Partners
<p>15 Maintain and intensify efforts to increase girls' access to training in emerging fields, particularly in the sciences and technology.</p> <p>For two decades now, much effort has been devoted to raising the awareness of girls and women about the possibility of diversifying their career choices, particularly to give them access to high-paying emerging trades in the field of sciences and technology. The government recognizes the importance of ensuring the vocational diversification of women and men and continuing to promote non-traditional emerging occupations and trades with women. More specifically it commits to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • continue organizing the <i>Chapeau, les filles!</i> contest, with its <i>Excelle Science</i> component, and associated activities (promotion, distribution, awareness-raising, training sessions, etc.); • continue financially supporting innovative projects in the school boards and CEGEPs; • continue participating and financially supporting the event, <i>Les filles et les sciences, un duo électrisant</i>. • foster greater participation of girls in activities connected with the project entitled <i>Science, on tourne</i>. <p>TARGET GROUPS: GIRLS; YOUNG WOMEN.</p>	<p>Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport</p> <p>Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale</p> <p>Ministère du Développement économique, de l'Innovation et de l'Exportation</p>	<p>School boards</p> <p>CEGEPs</p> <p>Universities</p>

ACTIONS	In charge Collaborators	Partners
<p>16 Diversify the choice of programs of study.</p> <p>Although large numbers of young women are pursuing an education today, many still hesitate to go into the traditionally male fields for vocational or technical training. To this end, the government commits to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • set up new training initiatives and programs of study like the <i>Projet personnel d'orientation et l'exploration de la formation professionnelle</i>; • support the contribution of all actors involved in the guidance approach strategy with a view to increasing students' success and qualifications. <p>Further, it is important to encourage men to be more present in certain sectors like early and primary education, health and social services.</p> <p>TARGET GROUPS: HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS, GIRLS AND BOYS.</p>	<p>Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport</p> <p>Ministère de la Famille, des Aînés et de la Condition féminine</p>	<p>Occupational guidance staff</p>
<p>17 Conduct research on the occupational integration of women graduates in traditionally male trades.</p> <p>To contribute to a comprehensive strategy aimed at fostering women's entry into non-traditional trades and ensuring their job retention, the government intends to find out more about female graduates' entry into these jobs.</p> <p>TARGET GROUPS: GIRLS; YOUNG WOMEN; EMPLOYERS IN NON-TRADITIONAL TRADES.</p>	<p>Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport</p>	

ACTIONS	In charge Collaborators	Partners
<p>18 Enable the <i>Comité interministériel pour la progression des femmes dans les sciences et les technologies</i> (interdepartmental committee for women's advancement in science and technology) to carry on its work.</p> <p>The government recognizes that it is important to simultaneously continue promoting emerging careers in the fields of science and technology to women and ensuring governmental consistency in terms of the different departmental initiatives in this respect.</p> <p>TARGET GROUPS: GIRLS; YOUNG WOMEN.</p>	<p>Ministère du Développement économique, de l'Innovation et de l'Exportation</p> <p>Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale</p> <p>Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport</p> <p>Ministère de la Famille, des Aînés et de la Condition féminine</p> <p>Ministère de l'Agriculture, des Pêcheries et de l'Alimentation</p> <p>Ministère des Ressources naturelles et de la Faune</p> <p>Ministère des Transports</p> <p>Ministère du Développement durable, de l'Environnement et des Parcs</p>	<p>Employer and trade union associations</p> <p>Women's groups</p>

ACTIONS	In charge Collaborators	Partners
<p>19 Institute new measures and make better known existing measures regarding the academic perseverance and success of young mothers.</p> <p>It is not uncommon for girls to drop out of school due to a pregnancy or for family reasons. Studies reveal that teenage maternity reduces the probability of continued studies and finding employment. In addition, teenage and young mothers are more likely to become single parents and poor. The government recognizes the importance of young mothers' academic perseverance and success. More specifically, it commits to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • propose a professional development program for academic personnel; • propose legislative and regulatory changes with a view to establishing a procedure for the exemption of young mothers from the required legal age limit for eligibility to adult education (in cases where the return to the regular school program seems impossible or inappropriate); • analyze the needs of young mothers registered in the <i>Ma place au soleil</i> job entry program in terms of access to adult and continuing education programs. <p>TARGET GROUPS: YOUNG MOTHERS; ACADEMIC PERSONNEL.</p>	<p>Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport</p> <p>Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale</p>	<p>School system</p> <p>Adult education and continuing education network</p> <p>Vocational training centres</p>
<p>20 Under the <i>AccèsLogis Québec</i> program, reserve two housing projects of roughly 15 units each for teenage single mothers in two regions of Québec.</p> <p>Housing and services to facilitate the return to school and encourage academic perseverance can have an impact on the academic success of teenage single mothers. To the extent that it helps these mothers to succeed, this measure is likely to have an impact on their living conditions and in the long term on their income.</p> <p>TARGET GROUP: TEENAGE SINGLE MOTHERS.</p>	<p>Société d'habitation du Québec</p>	<p>Sector agencies</p>

OBJECTIVE 2.2: Offer Specific Support for Women's Job Integration and Maintenance

ACTIONS	In charge Collaborators	Partners
<p>21 Update the women's work force intervention strategy</p> <p>The government recognizes the importance of continuing to promote women's integration into the labour market and women's job retention by updating its strategy in this area. It also recognizes the specific nature of problems facing certain groups of women in the labour market, notably Native and immigrant women, women from visible minority groups, single mothers, pregnant teens, teenage mothers and women with disabilities. These women have a great potential that it is essential to develop the enrichment of Québec society.</p> <p>The strategy will be updated following an assessment of actions already undertaken and take into account new aspects of the labour market. The evaluation reports of the <i>Women's Workforce Strategy</i> for the fiscal years 2004-2005 and 2005-2006 will constitute a major source of information for this purpose.</p> <p>In addition to the complete range of its interventions, 46% of which are addressed to women, <i>Emploi-Québec</i> invests in specific service agreements aimed at the women's work force in most regions of Québec. For the next financial year, a significant investment is also planned in specific intervention costs with Native women living off reserve.</p> <p>TARGET GROUPS: WOMEN, PARTICULARLY THOSE BELONGING TO THE MOST VULNERABLE GROUPS.</p>	<p>Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale</p> <p>Ministère de l'Immigration et des Communautés culturelles</p> <p>Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport</p> <p>Ministère du Développement économique, de l'Innovation et de l'Exportation</p> <p>Ministère de la Famille, des Aînés et de la Condition féminine</p>	<p>Agencies specialized in women's work force development</p>
<p>22 Update the Government Policy on Adult Education and Continuing Education and Training and draft a new five-year plan that takes women's specific situation into account.</p> <p>The five-year plan associated with the first policy on adult education and continuing education concludes in 2007. The government intends to update this policy and propose a second action plan so that, together with its partners, it can pursue existing efforts with a view to fostering lifelong learning.</p> <p>These measures will specifically take into account:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the scope and nature of the problem of limited basic education acquired by certain women; • the extent and nature of training activities of women in small and medium businesses. <p>TARGET GROUP: WOMEN NEEDING TO DEVELOP THEIR SKILLS.</p>	<p>Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport</p> <p>Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale</p> <p>Ministère de l'Agriculture, des Pêcheries et de l'Alimentation</p> <p>Ministère de l'Immigration et des Communautés culturelles</p> <p>Ministère de la Famille, des Aînés et de la Condition féminine</p>	<p>Education system</p> <p>Commission des partenaires du marché du travail (Council of labour market partners)</p>

ACTIONS	In charge Collaborators	Partners
<p>23 Offer vulnerable women more extensive support to improve their economic condition throughout the Québec territory.</p> <p>The government recognizes the importance of continued efforts to ensure gender equality in the economic sphere. For some women, the process of achieving economic self-sufficiency involves more extensive support and a consideration of all dimensions of their lives. Drawing on the expertise and interventions of agencies specialized in developing the women's work force that are operating throughout Québec, the government therefore intends to offer increased support to women grappling with major problems impeding the improvement of their living conditions, and consequently, their capacity for self-sufficiency.</p> <p>To this end, the improvement of women's economic situation is linked:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to the creation of a support network for women in economic difficulty; • to more intensive support for women in their efforts to resolve personal problems that prevent them from achieving economic self-sufficiency; • to the proposal of means for sensitizing society to persisting problems faced by women. <p>Currently, 15 agencies specialized in developing the women's work force are operating in over 11 regions of Québec. Elsewhere on the territory, other agencies offer services to the whole population, with some reserved to women.</p> <p>TARGET GROUP: WOMEN WHOSE ECONOMIC SITUATION IS PRECARIOUS.</p>	<p>Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale</p>	<p>Agencies specialized in women's work force development</p>

ACTIONS**In charge
Collaborators****Partners****24 Increase the hiring of women and facilitate their job retention in emerging sectors and non-traditional trades.**

The government recognizes the needs to expand its efforts in the area of employment training and occupational diversification. The promotion of non-traditional and emerging trades to women is still an effective means of encouraging them to choose these trades and professions, which can often guarantee better working conditions. Through the intermediary of the network of agencies specialized in developing the women's work force, this consists of measures aimed at:

- sensitizing businesses regarding the hiring of women;
- offering support and mentorship to women holding traditionally male jobs who are experiencing difficulty integrating into their work place;
- offering accompaniment and support to businesses wishing to integrate women into their predominantly male workplace.

Emploi-Québec has committed to reporting on the state of interventions associated with orienting women toward non-professional trades and professions, maintaining and consolidating existing interventions that are deemed most useful to women's advancement in these occupations and trades, and, if appropriate, proposing new initiatives enabling a better response to situations and needs that have been more recently perceived by the concerned businesses and sectors.

TARGET GROUPS: WOMEN; EMPLOYERS.

Ministère
de l'Emploi et
de la Solidarité
sociale

Agencies
specialized
in women's
work force
development

Enterprises in
non-traditional
sectors

ACTIONS	In charge Collaborators	Partners
<p>25 Carry out a comprehensive assessment of the tools employed in the area of immigration in order to facilitate the integration of immigrant women and their entry into the Québec labour market.</p> <p>The government recognizes the need to better adapt its actions, and, in particular, commits to reviewing, and eventually, updating, some of its tools. It intends to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • update and institute regulatory provisions concerning the selection of foreign nationals to ensure the absence of any element that could be disadvantageous to women and better take into account the characteristics of spouses, most of them women, in the assessment of candidates; • at the conclusion of the three years covered by the 2004-2007 action plan entitled <i>Shared Values, Common Interests</i>, evaluate all the measures specifically targeting immigrant women and women from minority ethnocultural groups; • assess personalized support and use of the guide entitled <i>Learning About Québec</i> to ensure they are meeting the intended goals, notably, to better inform difficult-to-reach groups. <p>TARGET GROUP: IMMIGRANT WOMEN.</p>	<p>Ministère de l'Immigration et des Communautés culturelles</p> <p>Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale</p>	
<p>26 Evaluate the possibility of offering services to women living in low-cost housing in order to facilitate their social and economic integration.</p> <p>Women living in low-cost housing projects (HLMs) are often very isolated. Indeed, the majority of tenants are women living in situations of poverty and exclusion. The <i>Société d'habitation du Québec</i> proposes to join forces with the <i>Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale</i> in reflecting on the question of women experiencing job entry problems.</p> <p>The new Social Assistance and Support Program may help to reach women living in HLMs and thereby facilitate their social and occupational integration.</p> <p>TARGET GROUP: WOMEN LIVING IN HLMS.</p>	<p>Société d'habitation du Québec</p> <p>Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale</p> <p>Ministère de l'Immigration et des Communautés culturelles</p>	<p>Regroupement des offices d'habitation du Québec</p> <p>Fédération des locataires d'habitations à loyer modique du Québec</p>

OBJECTIVE 2.3: Continue Implementing and Enforcing the Pay Equity Act

ACTIONS	In charge Collaborators	Partners
<p>27 Heighten support for enterprises and verification in order to increase the rate of compliance with the <i>Pay Equity Act</i>.</p> <p>The law vests the <i>Commission de l'équité salariale</i> with the power to ensure the achievement and maintenance of pay equity by conducting investigations to check on compliance with the Act. To this end, the Commission wishes to adopt concrete means to ensure the compliance of businesses with the <i>Pay Equity Act</i>.</p> <p>TARGET GROUP: WOMEN.</p>	<p>Commission de l'équité salariale</p>	<p>Enterprises</p>
<p>28 Promote the <i>Pay Equity Act</i> to vulnerable women workers and extend the range of educational tools for businesses in order to eliminate gender-based wage discrimination.</p> <p>The <i>Commission de l'Équité salariale</i> has already created numerous services to inform and equip enterprises in order to facilitate their pay equity processes. It has also provided information to women about the Act's provisions. The Commission commits to continuing to design promotional and educational tools for enterprises and to inform women workers, especially the most vulnerable ones, on their rights and remedies.</p> <p>TARGET GROUPS: ENTERPRISES; WOMEN WORKERS.</p>	<p>Commission de l'équité salariale</p>	<p>Enterprises Women's groups</p>
<p>29 Analyze the issue of pay equity among women and men artists, in order to propose measures aimed at achieving more equal remuneration of women and men in the arts.</p> <p>Gaps have been noted between the average incomes of women and men in the arts. This disparity reflects the fact that women receive lower pay than men in most sectors. The issue of access to employment for women artists therefore continues to be a priority for women's future prospects and the government commits to analyze this issue.</p> <p>TARGET GROUP: WOMEN ARTISTS.</p>	<p>Ministère de la Culture et des Communications</p>	<p>Union des artistes Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec Société de développement des entreprises culturelles du Québec</p>

OBJECTIVE 2.4: Support Women’s Entrepreneurship

ACTIONS	In charge Collaborators	Partners
<p>30 Continue supporting regional women’s entrepreneurship agencies.</p> <p>In 2002 regional women’s entrepreneurship agencies were created to facilitate the granting of loans to women entrepreneurs and support them in their business projects. They are already operating in six resource regions: Bas-Saint-laurent, Saguenay–Lac-Saint-Jean, Mauricie, Abitibi-Témiscamingue, Côte-nord and Gaspésie–Îles-de-la-Madeleine. The government commits to continue supporting these agencies. It also intends to gradually expand its financial support to other regions, particularly, the Nord-du-Québec, where it is important to encourage and support the projects of Native women entrepreneurs who want to contribute to the economic development of their communities.</p> <p>TARGET GROUP: WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS.</p>	<p>Ministère du Développement économique, de l’Innovation et de l’Exportation</p>	

OBJECTIVE 2.5: Improve Women's Economic Security Throughout their Lifest

ACTIONS	In charge Collaborators	Partners
<p>31 Form a multisectoral committee to study the situation of caregivers and create new support measures, notably in the area of taxation, employment and home support.</p> <p>The government has set itself the goal of studying the conditions associated with caring for loved ones and the consequences on caregivers, with a view to improving the support and resources for these individuals, most of them women.</p> <p>TARGET GROUP: CAREGIVERS.</p>	<p>Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux</p> <p>Ministère des Finances</p> <p>Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale</p> <p>Ministère du Travail</p> <p>Régie des rentes du Québec</p> <p>Ministère de la Famille, des Aînés et de la Condition féminine</p>	<p>Health and social service network</p> <p>Employer and trade union associations</p>
<p>32 Strengthen protection for live-in caregivers.</p> <p>Some immigrant women are admitted to Québec on a temporary basis under a federal program addressed to live-in caregivers. To obtain permanent residency status, these women must live with their employer for at least 24 out of the first 36 months of their stay. Since they are obliged to live with their employer, it can be arduous for them to ensure compliance with the social protections to which they are entitled. Their situation must be monitored to protect them from exploitation. In addition, once they have become permanent residents, it is important that their occupational endeavours and the obstacles confronting them be made known. The government commits to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • renew, for the 2007-2008 and 2008-2009 financial periods, the partnership agreement signed with the <i>Association des aides familiales du Québec</i>; • extend the validity period of the certificate of acceptance to Québec from 14 to 36 months for live-in caregivers; • conduct a survey of family caregivers who have obtained permanent residency in order to analyze their social and occupational integration and integration process. <p>TARGET GROUP: IMMIGRANT WOMEN ADMITTED ON A TEMPORARY BASIS.</p>	<p>Ministère de l'Immigration et des Communautés culturelles</p> <p>Conseil du statut de la femme</p>	<p>Association des aides familiales du Québec</p>

GUIDELINE 3: Achieving a Better Balance between Responsibilities at Home and at Work

The fast pace of women's integration in the job market; the slow increase of men's participation in the domestic sphere; the delayed adaptation of structures and ways of operating to new family situations; the demands of the job market, social participation, motherhood and fatherhood; and the demographic changes in Québec society are all factors contributing to the complexity of balancing work and family responsibilities. In addition to depending on the adoption of measures directed at both women and men, balancing work and family requires a change in culture on the part of organizations. Organizations must help women and men to exercise their various social roles, in particular that of caring for their children and loved ones. Support for better coordination between the domestic and occupational spheres is a powerful lever in lessening gender inequality, while fostering a higher birth rate and preparing society for the aging of the population. Consequently, the government intends to support the equitable distribution of family responsibilities and will encourage workplaces and partners concerned to provide favourable conditions to this end.

OBJECTIVE 3.1: Foster Fair Distribution of Family Responsibilities

ACTIONS	In charge Collaborators	Partners
<p>33 Allow parents to strike a better balance between their studies and their family responsibilities.</p> <p>A large proportion of students have responsibilities as parents, leading the educational system to facilitate the balance between studying and private life. The government intends to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better publicize existing services in schools, CEGEPs and universities; • Conduct a study with young parents, particularly young mothers, on existing services and their needs in this respect; • Better publicize the measures contained in the loans and bursaries program designed to facilitate the balance between studies and family. <p>TARGET GROUP: STUDENTS WITH PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITIES</p>	<p>Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport</p>	<p>School boards CEGEPs Universities</p>
<p>34 Propose innovative solutions to make life easier in the farming milieu.</p> <p>For years, women farmers have asked for special support measures to be put in place, mostly to assist them when having a family, that is, the equivalent of support provided to women employees in other sectors of economic activity. An experimental project will be conducted on innovative solutions to needs in balancing work and family in the agricultural and bio-food sectors.</p> <p>TARGET GROUP: WOMEN FARMERS WITH PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITIES</p>	<p>Ministère de la Famille, des Aînés et de la Condition féminine Ministère de l'Agriculture, des Pêcheries et de l'Alimentation</p>	<p>Union des producteurs agricoles Fédération des agricultrices du Québec</p>

OBJECTIVE 3.2: Encourage Workplaces to Institute Measures to Improve the Balance between Work and Family in Both Predominantly Male and Predominantly Female Sectors

ACTIONS	In charge Collaborators	Partners
<p>35 Create a website on balancing work and family within the government portal.</p> <p>A new website on balancing work and family will be built to raise awareness in general and in work settings concerning the needs of personnel and to disseminate information on existing and proposed measures and tools. The site will eventually become transactional and, in particular, allow for the processing of requests dealing with government measures on the subject. The government's on-line development plan will be respected during work on the government portal.</p> <p>TARGET GROUPS: EMPLOYERS; TRADE UNIONS; WORKERS, THE GENERAL PUBLIC</p>	<p>Ministère de la Famille, des Aînés et de la Condition féminine</p> <p>Ministère des Services gouvernementaux</p>	
<p>36 Provide financial and technical support for businesses as well as employer and trade union associations that see to promoting and implementing measures on balancing work and family.</p> <p>Businesses, especially the smallest ones, aren't always equipped to deal with the demands made on workers by their occupational and family responsibilities. Based on an ongoing experiment with some 20 small and medium-size businesses, the government will recommend a global formula to assist workplaces in instituting measures to facilitate the work-family balance. This kind of technical and financial support may be offered to employer and union associations or to other organizations for them to measure workers' needs before putting out guides and other tools for their members.</p> <p>TARGET GROUP: WORKERS WITH FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES</p>	<p>Ministère de la Famille, des Aînés et de la Condition féminine</p>	<p>Employer and trade union associations</p>

ACTIONS	In charge Collaborators	Partners
<p>37 Create the Family Recognition Award.</p> <p>The government intends to publicly acknowledge businesses making efforts to offer their personnel measures to facilitate the work-family balance. To this end, it plans to create an award to encourage these businesses and make known recipients' good practices.</p> <p>TARGET GROUP: BUSINESSES THAT HAVE IMPLEMENTED MEASURES TO FACILITATE THE BALANCE BETWEEN WORK AND FAMILY</p>	<p>Ministère de la Famille, des Aînés et de la Condition féminine</p>	<p>Employer and trade union associations</p> <p>Local and regional partners</p> <p>Media</p>
<p>38 Introduce the Equality label for businesses.</p> <p>A Québec label will serve to acknowledge the quality of work-family balance measures implemented in businesses. Specifically, it will draw attention to businesses that have taken interesting initiatives to foster gender equality.</p> <p>TARGET GROUP: BUSINESSES</p>	<p>Ministère de la Famille, des Aînés et de la Condition féminine</p> <p>Bureau de normalisation du Québec</p>	<p>Employer and trade union associations</p>
<p>39 Study the possibility of providing goods and services in workplaces.</p> <p>The aim of offering goods and services on workplace premises is to relieve employees of some regular tasks such as housekeeping, car maintenance and meal preparation, thereby allowing families to have a better quality of life. The intention is also to offer businesses a strategic tool to increase their appeal, improve their ability to develop staff loyalty and increase productivity.</p> <p>TARGET GROUPS: BUSINESSES; WORKERS</p>	<p>Ministère de la Famille, des Aînés et de la Condition féminine</p>	

OBJECTIVE 3.3: Heighten Collaboration and Partnership among Stakeholders

ACTIONS	In charge Collaborators	Partners
<p>40 Support the development and implementation of municipal family policies</p> <p>For the past five years, the government has supported the development of over 180 projects related to municipal family policies.</p> <p>It intends to continue to encourage municipalities and regional county municipalities (MRC) to adapt their services and activities to the situation of women and families.</p> <p>TARGET GROUP: THE GENERAL PUBLIC</p>	<p>Ministère de la Famille, des Aînés et de la Condition féminine</p>	<p>Municipalities and regional county municipalities Carrefour action municipale et famille</p>
<p>41 Take stock of partnerships aimed at integrating public services offered to young people and their families.</p> <p>In answer to the recommendations in the report on community schools, issued following the regional town hall meetings known as “The Public Talks” (<i>Forum des générations</i>), the government will conduct an inventory of educational institutions aiming to integrate their services into a single whole. The purpose of the inventory will be to describe the scope of these services, to specify the advantages and difficulties inherent in such integration and to make known the positive experiences to the educational system and the community.</p> <p>TARGET GROUPS: YOUNG PEOPLE AND THEIR PARENTS; THE GENERAL PUBLIC</p>	<p>Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport</p>	<p>School boards Educational institutions Municipalities Health and social service agencies and health and social service centres Community organizations</p>

ACTIONS

**In charge
Collaborators**

Partners

42

Support the implementation of supervisory services for high school students with disabilities aged 12 to 21 who don't have the autonomy needed to be alone outside class hours.

The *Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport* has received many requests from parents for supervisory services before and after classes for high school students with disabilities. These are young people who, because of their disability, do not have enough functional autonomy to be at home alone. In 2004, an interdepartmental group was set up to find ways to meet these needs. Ten pilot projects were financed in 2005-2006 and 2006-2007 by the departments involved. Once these projects have been evaluated, the interdepartmental committee will propose permanent solutions.

TARGET GROUP: YOUNG PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES AND THEIR PARENTS

Ministère de la Famille, des Aînés et de la Condition féminine
Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport
Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux
Office des personnes handicapées

School boards
Educational institutions
Health and social service agencies and health and social service centres
Community organizations

43

Encourage regional projects on balancing work-family-studies, particularly by reaching specific agreements on the subject with the regional conferences of elected officers.

Using a flexible formula and observing government guidelines on regional autonomy, specific agreements will be signed with the regional conferences of elected officers to produce responses tailored to each milieu with respect to balancing work and family.

TARGET GROUP: THE GENERAL PUBLIC

Ministère de la Famille, des Aînés et de la Condition féminine
Ministère des Affaires municipales et des Régions

Regional conferences of elected officers

GUIDELINE 4: Achieving Health Approaches Tailored to Women's Specific Needs

Maintaining and improving one's health and well-being are priority goals for women and men. People's health is influenced by many determinants such as gender, gender relations and socio-economic inequality. Approaches and practices must detect and take into account the similarities and differences between women's and men's health. Research and gender-based analysis are basic means to improve the scope, effectiveness, efficiency and effects of interventions that benefit women and men in the field of health. They are also important in contributing to better social justice. For over 20 years many efforts have been focused on perinatal care, family planning and the phenomenon of violence to improve services for women and, above all, to adapt them more closely to fit women's needs and those of the most vulnerable groups. Efforts to improve women's health and well-being must continue, while ensuring that services for them are tailored to their circumstances. We must also continue to act to improve women's occupational health and safety.

OBJECTIVE 4.1: Tailor Health Care and Social Services to the Specific Needs of Women and Certain Groups

ACTIONS	In charge Collaborators	Partners
<p>44 Draw up the second action plan to promote women's health and well-being.</p> <p>Half-way through the period covered by the action strategy for women's health and well-being, the <i>Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux</i> is assessing the extent to which its objectives have been met. The outcome of the evaluation will provide the department with some basic knowledge to update the strategy and draw up its second action plan to improve women's health and well-being as well as to prevent or mitigate their health and social problems.</p> <p>TARGET GROUPS: WOMEN; THE GENERAL PUBLIC</p>	<p>Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux</p>	<p>Health and social services network</p>
<p>45 Adopt and make known the new perinatal policy.</p> <p>The <i>Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux</i> is in the process of adopting a new perinatal policy. The policy is designed to assist expectant mothers and fathers in their experience, adjustment to their new role and, more particularly, development of their parenting skills. It is also aimed at supporting paternal involvement.</p> <p>The policy includes a number of guidelines focused on promoting women's health and well-being, especially those regarding the development of midwifery, the advisability of obstetric interventions, prevention of teenage pregnancy and assisted human reproduction.</p> <p>TARGET GROUP: EXPECTANT PARENTS</p>	<p>Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux</p>	<p>Health and social services network</p>
<p>46 Adopt a bill aimed primarily at protecting the health of women using assisted human reproduction methods and at framing the research done in this field.</p> <p>The <i>Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux</i> guidelines on framing assisted human reproduction serve to prepare a bill on clinical medicine and research activities. The purpose of the bill is to protect women who resort to assisted reproduction methods and the children born as a result.</p> <p>TARGET GROUPS: WOMEN WHO RESORT TO ASSISTED HUMAN REPRODUCTION METHODS AND CHILDREN WHOSE BIRTH IS ATTRIBUTABLE TO THESE METHODS</p>	<p>Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux</p>	

ACTIONS	In charge Collaborators	Partners
<p>47 Produce a document on a preferred approach to providing health and social services tailored to the needs of women and families affected by an existing or potential problem of excision or infibulation.</p> <p>On completion of consultations about forms of genital mutilation, an interdepartmental working group will produce a document so that health services offered can be adapted to the needs of immigrant women who are victims of these practices.</p> <p>TARGET GROUP: IMMIGRANT WOMEN WHO ARE VICTIMS OF GENITAL MUTILATION</p>	<p>Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux</p> <p>Ministère de l'Immigration et des Communautés culturelles</p>	

OBJECTIVE 4.2: Raise Workplace Awareness of Prevention of Employment Injuries in Women

ACTIONS	In charge Collaborators	Partners
<p>48 Continue implementing measures for the effective prevention of employment injuries in women workers and thereby improve quality of life at work.</p> <p>An increase in employment injuries has been observed in sectors where the density of women in the work force is high. To prevent these injuries, the <i>Commission de la santé et de la sécurité du travail</i> would like to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draw up profiles of women and men working in sectors where the density of women in the work force is high; • Draw up, in four target regions (Capitale-nationale, Montérégie, Saguenay–Lac-Saint-Jean and Estrie), the regional profiles of women working in sectors of economic activity where women are concentrated; • Produce and distribute awareness tools based on specific projects, mainly to eliminate risks to women workers' health and safety in sectors of economic activity where the density of women in the work force is high and in non-traditional sectors. <p>TARGET GROUP: WOMEN WORKERS IN SECTORS WHERE THE FEMALE WORK FORCE IS CONCENTRATED, AND WOMEN IN NON-TRADITIONAL SECTORS.</p>	<p><i>Commission de la santé et de la sécurité du travail</i></p> <p>Departments and agencies concerned</p>	<p>Businesses where the density of women in the work force is high</p> <p>Sectoral occupational health and safety parity associations</p> <p>Trade union and employer associations</p> <p>Institut de recherche Robert-Sauvé en santé et sécurité du travail</p>

GUIDELINE 5: Achieving Respect for Women's Physical Integrity and their Safety in all Spheres of Life

Every year there are many victims of domestic violence and sexual assault, the overwhelming majority of them women and children. Other forms of violence are increasing in Québec as they are everywhere in the world, in particular, the sexual exploitation of women and children and the proliferation of violent pornography. The struggle against violence against women is based on the promotion of fundamental values, including protection of the physical and psychological integrity of all individuals, and the importance of ensuring their safety in all spheres of life. These values should be integrated into intimate and family relationships. An atmosphere of safety and trust must also prevail in schools, workplaces, recreation and sports institutions and all other public institutions and spaces. Experience acquired over 30 years in the areas of domestic, family and sexual violence, has demonstrated that only by mobilizing the entire society can we counter these forms of violence, in the medium and long term. The government therefore intends to maintain its commitment, in collaboration with its partners, to prevent and combat domestic violence and sexual assault. It also intends to take steps to prevent the sexual exploitation and trafficking of women.

OBJECTIVE 5.1: Prevent and Combat Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault

ACTIONS	In charge Collaborators	Partners
<p>49 Continue awareness-raising and education campaigns on the issue of violence against women.</p> <p>All forms of violence to which women are subjected gravely affect their lives and at the same time limit the potential for the social and economic development of Québec society as a whole. Furthermore, some groups of women are more vulnerable, or exposed to violence, for example, young women, Native women, immigrant women and women from minority ethnocultural communities.</p> <p>With a view to reducing social tolerance of the numerous forms of violence, the government clearly reasserts its view that violence against women is unacceptable and a crime. To accomplish this, awareness-raising campaigns about violence that draw on various communications strategies will be carried out under the joint responsibility of the <i>Secrétariat à la condition féminine</i> (of the <i>Ministère de la Famille, des Aînés et de la Condition féminine</i>) and the <i>Ministère de la Justice</i>; they will be conducted in partnership with the different departments concerned by the question and in collaboration with the principal women's groups and specialists in the field.</p> <p>TARGET GROUPS: VICTIMS; ATTACKERS; GENERAL PUBLIC.</p>	<p><i>Ministère de la Famille, des Aînés et de la Condition féminine</i></p> <p><i>Ministère de la Justice</i></p> <p>Ministère des Affaires municipales et des Régions</p> <p>Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport</p> <p>Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale</p> <p>Ministère de l'Immigration et des Communautés culturelles</p> <p>Ministère de la Sécurité publique</p> <p>Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux</p> <p>Secrétariat aux affaires autochtones</p>	<p>Community groups specialized in the issue of violence against women (victims, attackers)</p> <p>Assistance and protection networks established by departments and agencies concerned by violence against women.</p> <p>Community groups working with women who are most vulnerable to violence</p> <p>Research centres in the field of violence against women</p>
<p>50 Conduct research on violence prevention programs in collaboration with agencies from paragonovernmental and community sectors concerned by the issue of domestic violence against women.</p> <p>Several programs aimed at preventing violence against women and promoting non-violence have been initiated in recent years in Québec.</p> <p>To improve the effectiveness of these programs, where applicable, an assessment will be carried out by a research centre specialized in violence against women, in partnership with paragonovernmental and community organizations directly concerned by the phenomenon.</p> <p>TARGET GROUPS: VICTIMS; ATTACKERS.</p>	<p><i>Ministère de la Famille, des Aînés et de la Condition féminine</i></p>	<p>Research centres specialized in the issue of violence against women</p> <p>Public, paragonovernmental and community networks</p>

ACTIONS	In charge Collaborators	Partners
<p>51 Continue implementation of the 2004-2009 domestic violence action plan.</p> <p>To combat domestic violence more effectively, the governed unveiled its <i>Action Plan 2004-2009 on Domestic Violence</i> on December 8, 2004. This action plan comprises 72 commitments, many of them aimed at improving victims' security and protection and that of their loved ones; 42 of these commitments were new measures.</p> <p>The new action plan calls for a number of commitments with regard to groups that are more vulnerable to domestic violence, particularly elderly and disabled women, immigrant women, women from ethnocultural minority groups and Native women. The government is intensifying its efforts to increase the safety of domestic violence victims and that of children who are exposed to it; consolidate assistance and protection services; and respond to violent spouses' needs for assistance and supervision.</p> <p>TARGET GROUPS: WOMEN VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE; CHILDREN WHO ARE EXPOSED TO IT; VIOLENT SPOUSES.</p>	<p>Ministère de la Famille, des Aînés et de la Condition féminine</p> <p>Ministère de la Justice</p> <p>Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport</p> <p>Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale</p> <p>Ministère de l'Immigration et des Communautés culturelles</p> <p>Ministère de la Sécurité publique</p> <p>Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux</p> <p>Secrétariat aux affaires autochtones</p>	<p>Community groups specialized in the issue of violence against women (victims, attackers)</p> <p>Assistance and protection networks established by departments and agencies concerned by violence against women.</p> <p>Community groups working with women who are most vulnerable to violence</p> <p>Office des personnes handicapées</p>
<p>52 Ensure that child access supervision services prioritize the needs of children and the non-violent parent in cases of domestic violence.</p> <p>Child access supervision services are used whenever a parent's child access rights have been interrupted or are difficult to ensure due to conflict in the wake of a divorce or separation. In cases of domestic violence, it is recognized that violent behaviour against a spouse is often exacerbated following the couple's breakup.</p> <p>Staff in charge of supervising access rights must ensure the safety of the children and non-violent parent benefiting from these services throughout Québec.</p> <p>TARGET GROUPS: WOMEN VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE; CHILDREN WHO ARE EXPOSED TO IT; VIOLENT SPOUSES.</p>	<p>Ministère de la Famille, des Aînés et de la Condition féminine</p> <p>Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux</p> <p>Ministère de la Justice</p>	<p>Maisons d'hébergement et de transition pour femmes victimes de violence conjugale</p> <p>Community-based child access supervision services</p> <p>Agences de la santé et des services sociaux (regional health and social services agencies)</p>

ACTIONS

**In charge
Collaborators**

Partners

53

Review the use of family mediation in domestic violence cases, considering the safety of victims, and draft recommendations to this end in the ensuing report.

On September 1, 1997, the *Act to institute, under the Code of Civil Procedure, pre-hearing mediation in family law cases and to amend other provisions of the Code* came into effect. Given the impact that the Act's implementation was likely to have on family issues, the Justice Minister formed a committee in May 1998 to monitor the implementation of family mediation.

A number of domestic violence agencies expressed their disagreement with the use of family mediation in domestic violence cases. The government's family mediation follow-up committee will publish a report dealing mainly with this subject in upcoming months.

TARGET GROUPS: WOMEN; MEN.

Ministère
de la Justice

Community groups
specialized in the
issue of violence
against women
(victims, attackers)

ACTIONS	In charge Collaborators	Partners
<p>54 Formulate and publish the government's five-year sexual assault action plan (2007-2012) and ensure its implementation.</p> <p>On March 1, 2001, the government's sexual assault guidelines, <i>Orientations gouvernementales en matière d'agression sexuelle</i> and associated action plan containing 59 commitments was unveiled. Implementation of this plan concluded in March 2006.</p> <p>In December 2005, the , co-chaired by the <i>Ministère de la Famille, des Aînés et de la Condition féminine</i> and <i>Ministère de la Justice</i>, conferred the following mandate on the interdepartmental committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • produce a summary report on the implementation of government commitments contained in the 2001-2006 sexual assault action plan; • formulate a new five-year governmental action plan on sexual assault to follow that of 2001; • extend implementation of the current sexual assault action plan until publication of the next plan, which will cover the period of 2007-2012. <p>These decision clearly reveal the government's interest in increasing the effectiveness of efforts to combat sexual assault and assist victims. In addition, the next action plan will target the groups most vulnerable to this form of attack, particularly Native women, disabled women and women from ethnocultural minorities.</p> <p>TARGET GROUPS: CHILD SEXUAL ASSAULT VICTIMS; WOMEN SEXUAL ASSAULT VICTIMS; SEXUAL OFFENDERS, MINOR AND ADULT.</p>	<p><i>Ministère de la Famille, des Aînés et de la Condition féminine</i></p> <p><i>Ministère de la Justice</i></p> <p><i>Ministère des Affaires municipales et des Régions</i></p> <p><i>Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport</i></p> <p><i>Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale</i></p> <p><i>Ministère de l'Immigration et des Communautés culturelles</i></p> <p><i>Ministère de la Sécurité publique</i></p> <p><i>Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux</i></p> <p><i>Secrétariat aux affaires autochtones</i></p>	<p>Community groups specialized in the issue of violence against women (victims, attackers)</p> <p>Assistance and protection networks established by departments and agencies concerned by violence against women.</p> <p>Community groups working with women who are most vulnerable to violence</p> <p>Office des personnes handicapées</p>
<p>55 Reserve 50 housing units to homeless women as part of the AccèsLogis program.</p> <p>Homeless women are often victims of violence and are confronted with difficult situations. With the benefit of a roof and a protected environment, they can get themselves back on their feet, become involved in their community and projects with the capacity to transform their lives.</p> <p>TARGET GROUP: HOMELESS WOMEN.</p>	<p><i>Société d'habitation du Québec</i></p>	

OBJECTIVE 5.2: Prevent and Combat the Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking of Women

ACTIONS	In charge Collaborators	Partners
<p>56 Offer assistance and protection to migrant women who are trafficking victims.</p> <p>Canadian police estimate there are 3000 women and children human trafficking victims in Canada, the majority of them trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation. In December 2005, the federal government adopted Bill C-49. The purpose of this law was to add new offences to the Criminal Code in order to more effectively prosecute those engaged in human trafficking. In May 2006, a federal government guideline made it possible to issue a visitor's permit for trafficking victims that can be renewed for 120 days.</p> <p>The government will ensure that individuals targeted by some of these programs are protected from the risk of trafficking, particularly for the purpose of sexual exploitation. Particular attention will be paid to beneficiaries of the <i>Live-in Care Program and Temporary Workers' Program</i>, because their situation may render them even more vulnerable. A list of resources for migrant women trafficking victims will make it possible to meet these women's housing, financial assistance, psychosocial, legal or other assistance needs.</p> <p>TARGET GROUP: WOMEN TRAFFICKING VICTIMS.</p>	<p>Ministère de la Justice</p> <p>Ministère de la Famille, des Aînés et de la Condition féminine</p> <p>Ministère de l'Immigration et des Communautés culturelles</p> <p>Ministère de la Sécurité publique</p> <p>Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux</p>	<p>Assistance and protection networks established by departments concerned by sex trafficking</p> <p>Maisons d'hébergement et de transition pour femmes victimes de violence conjugale</p> <p>Regional support and integration program for asylum applicants</p> <p>Legal Aid</p> <p>Crime Victims' Assistance Centres</p> <p>Researchers specialized in the issue of sex trafficking</p>

GUIDELINE 6: Achieving Greater Participation by Women in Decision-Making Bodies

Establishing an equal balance of power between women and men is a matter of basic democratic health. However, there is a persistent deficit in the number of women in various institutions or decision-making positions, whether in the political, economic, or social arenas, or in the public service. Furthermore, the government is transferring more and more powers and responsibilities to regional and local stakeholders, who must also participate in achieving de facto equality within their jurisdictions.

Tools have been created and action has been taken to increase women's representation in various circles of power. For example, since 1999, the Equal Access to Decision-Making program has been supporting projects to encourage women's participation in local and regional decision-making bodies throughout all regions of Québec. In the same vein, the government has given the regional conferences of elected officers a number of responsibilities linked to ensuring equality and parity. The government wishes to continue supporting all initiatives for equal representation in circles of power. It also wishes to assist and support regional and local decision-making bodies in fulfilling their governance responsibilities with regard to gender equality.

OBJECTIVE 6.1: Aim for Equal Representation in Circles of Power

ACTIONS	In charge Collaborators	Partners
<p>57 Maintain the Equal Access to Decision-Making program until 2008.</p> <p>Launched in 1999, the Equal Access to Decision Making program is a financial assistance program that makes it possible to support projects conducted by non-profit organizations with the aim of increasing the number of women in decision-making positions in local and regional bodies. The program has had tremendous success, judging by the number of projects set up. The program was renewed in 2005 for a three-year period. Work is underway for program assessment and it will be possible to make adjustments to the program based on assessment results.</p> <p>TARGET GROUP: ALL WOMEN.</p>	<p>Ministère de la Famille, des Aînés et de la Condition féminine</p>	<p>Women's groups Non-profit organizations</p>
<p>58 Create or encourage projects, particularly with universities, aimed at increasing women's presence in circles of power.</p> <p>There is a persistent deficit in the number of women in various institutions. The government will therefore encourage projects likely to increase the number of women in decision-making positions.</p> <p>TARGET GROUP: ALL WOMEN.</p>	<p>Ministère de la Famille, des Aînés et de la Condition féminine</p>	<p>Women's groups Non-profit organizations</p>

ACTIONS	In charge Collaborators	Partners
<p>59 Continue to implement the program and work with the <i>Table des partenaires femmes et politique municipale (Women in Municipal Politics Partner Roundtable)</i> to see how it can be enhanced to increase the number of women in local elected bodies.</p> <p>The government wishes to continue its initiative to increase women's representation in local elected bodies.</p> <p>TARGET GROUP: ALL WOMEN.</p>	<p>Ministère des Affaires municipales et des Régions</p> <p>Ministère de la Famille, des Aînés et de la Condition féminine</p>	<p>Table des partenaires femmes et politique municipale</p>
<p>60 Support the achievement of gender parity on the boards of directors of government agencies.</p> <p>The political declaration entitled <i>Modernizing Public Company Governance</i>, which arose out of the government's commitment in the 2004-2007 Modernization Plan, contains public rules aimed at ensuring that the various segments of Québec society are represented on the boards of directors of public companies. Such companies must make sure that their boards of directors have the same number of men and women members within the next five years.</p> <p>TARGET GROUP: ALL WOMEN.</p>	<p>Ministère des Finances</p> <p>Ministère de la Famille, des Aînés et de la Condition féminine</p>	<p>Public companies and government agencies</p>

OBJECTIVE 6.2: Promote Gender Equality within Local and Regional Governance Structures

ACTIONS	In charge Collaborators	Partners
<p>61 Raise awareness among elected officers and managers at the local and regional levels regarding the notion that the regional conferences of elected officers (CRE) should adopt a declaration of principles on gender equality and parity, or any other initiative aimed at achieving gender equality.</p> <p>The act establishing the <i>Ministère des Affaires municipales et des Régions</i> stipulates that every CRE must develop a five-year regional development plan taking into account the priority of including participation by young people and women in democratic life, according to the principles of equality and parity. The department also intends to raise the awareness of local elected representatives and managers with regard to the advantages of gender-based analysis, and to support them in implementing this tool.</p> <p>TARGET GROUP: ALL WOMEN.</p>	<p>Ministère des Affaires municipales et des Régions</p> <p>Ministère de la Famille, des Aînés et de la Condition féminine</p> <p>Conseil du statut de la femme</p>	<p>Regional conferences of elected officers</p>
<p>62 Foster regional projects that make it possible to achieve gender equality in Québec's regions and to involve women and men in the development of their region, particularly by entering into specific agreements with the regional conferences of elected officers.</p> <p>Pursuant to the government guidelines with respect to regional and municipal autonomy, support will be provided for entering into agreements regarding gender equality. These agreements shall be entered into with interested regional conferences of elected officers, using a flexible approach that will make it possible to respect each region's specific characteristics.</p> <p>TARGET GROUP: ALL WOMEN.</p>	<p>Ministère de la Famille, des Aînés et de la Condition féminine</p> <p>Ministère des Affaires municipales et des Régions</p>	<p>Regional conferences of elected officers</p>
<p>63 Produce updated profiles of the gender equality situation in every administrative region of Québec.</p> <p>From 1998 to 2003, the <i>Conseil du statut de la femme</i> produced regional briefs on the living conditions of women in fourteen regions of Québec. These briefs gave a gender-based overview of women's living conditions in relation to various socioeconomic indicators. This is essential information for any organization that wishes to take into account the specific characteristics of women and men when it comes to regional development. These profiles were updated in 2004 using data from the 2001 census, among other data. Profiles of other regions were also drawn up for the first time. The <i>Conseil</i> commits to producing updated profiles once again based on statistics from the 2006 census.</p> <p>TARGET GROUP: ALL WOMEN.</p>	<p>Conseil du statut de la femme</p> <p>Institut de la statistique du Québec</p>	

