

FROM BUDGETARY TO TAX EXPENDITURES: TACKLING SOCIAL PROTECTION IN QUEBEC, CANADA

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INTRODUCTION

In his 2018 article "Reimagining Social Protection" Michal Rutkowski, the World Bank's Global Director for Social Protection and Jobs, highlighted the need for new social protection systems that retain their original purpose of fighting poverty, helping households manage uncertainty, and ultimately sparking a more efficient and equitable economy, while recognizing that "the changing nature of work is upending traditional employment and its benefits" (Rutkowski, 2018: 11). The economic fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic has underlined the urgency of the review of social protection regimes he called for.

A comprehensive analysis of the status quo is critical for that. Against this background, this research paper aims to contribute to tracing the current contours of social protection expenditures in Quebec by answering the following question: what are the social protection expenditures incurred by the Quebec government and what objectives do they target?

To that end, it is important to pinpoint all the measures used by the Quebec government, such as cash allowances, in-kind provision of services, as well as tax expenditures. Too often underestimated, the latter refer to measures implemented through taxation that result in both revenues forgone for the government and a monetary benefit for the recipient household.

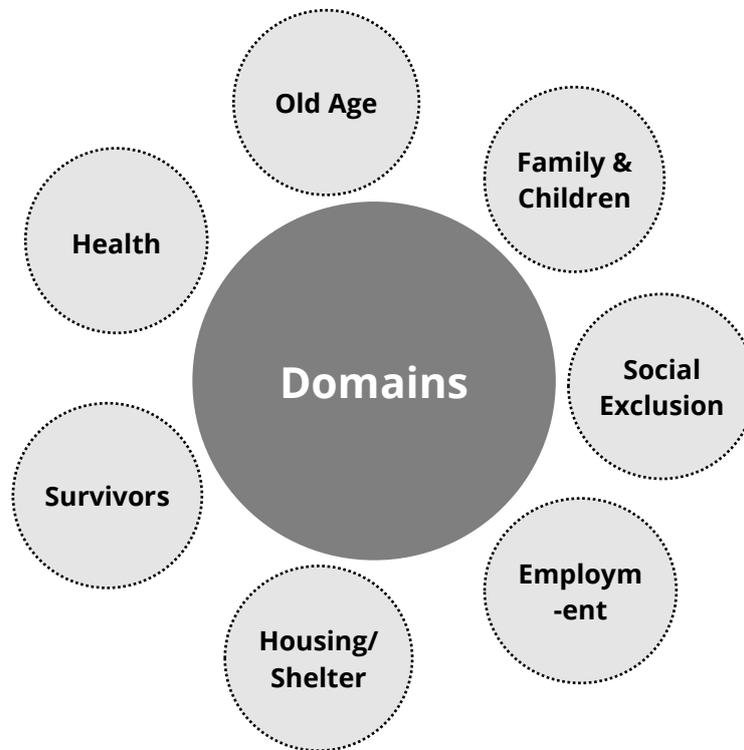
1. STUDY FRAMEWORK

Most often identifiable as broad areas of intervention (see Figure 1), social policies include state interventions aimed to 1) provide collective protection against major social risks (old age, sickness, unemployment, etc.) and 2) contribute to individual and collective well-being by strengthening possibilities and benefits through equal opportunities¹. They are generally associated with the domains of labour and employment, income, education, health, housing and culture, and unfold along different social protection regimes forged by compromises reached by social and institutional actors in a given society at a given time. These compromises, for which the state is both the guardian and the regulator, are translated into legislative social measures, social programs and financing based on a dual principle of assistance and solidarity².

¹ Guienne, 2001 ; Lightman, 2003; Euzéby, 2004 ; Raynier, 2005 ; Join-Lambert, 1997 ; De Maillard and Kübler, 2015).

² Dauphin, S. (2010). Le champ des politiques sociales. *Informations sociales*, 157, pp. 6-7.

Figure 1. Domains of Social Protection



An examination of the evolution of social protection regimes over the last three decades highlights a plurality of systems, instruments and modes of financing social protection. The analysis also discloses that, in addition to cash allowances and in-kind provision of public services, tax expenditures are increasingly being added as a third mode of government intervention in social protection³.

The challenge then becomes that of identifying, gathering and analyzing financial information pertaining to this field of government intervention. As mentioned by Damon and Ferras, "Analyzing social protection (...) requires the mobilization of accounting and financial data, bearing in mind that they are conventional in nature" (Damon et Ferras, 2015: 48). Indeed, the literature does not provide a unique definition of the concept of social protection that translates into easily identifiable indicators, which makes it all the more difficult to spot the expenditures generated in this respect in official documents.

Table 1 gives an overview on the field of social protection including the general vision and objectives with which it is associated, as well as the domains of intervention. These areas will vary as a function of time and socio-political contexts of each jurisdiction.

³ Godbout, 2006; Provencher and Godbout, 2021; Provencher, Godbout and St-Cerny, 2021.

Table 1. The field of social protection

General Vision	Objectives	Domains
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Protecting against major social risks▪ Promoting well-being and social inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Bolstering income▪ Fostering employment▪ Fortifying pensions▪ Strengthening education▪ Supporting families▪ Promoting social equity▪ Pursuing specific social policy objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Health▪ Survivors▪ Old age▪ Family & children▪ Employment▪ Housing (Shelter)▪ Social exclusion

The analysis of expenditures based on the pursued objectives allows for a more detailed description of social protection expenditures and sheds light on the fact that there is often a variety of schemes related to the same social protection objective. This is the case in Quebec, for example, with the Solidarity Tax Credit (STC), which has the effect of increasing household incomes, and certain allowances offered under the public system, all of which are associated with the same objective of supporting personal income. In other cases, a scheme may be used as a means to attain a specific objective while also targeting another. This is the case with the post-secondary student tax relief measure, which is intended to support education and improve living conditions of certain groups. Thus, even if the measure does not refer directly to an income support objective, it contributes to the financial security of the populations that benefit from it (students, tenants, etc.).

For the purposes of this study, given that there is no "social protection expenditures" category in the official reports of the Quebec government, three data sources were used to analyze financial information related to social protection in Quebec:

1. the Canadian Classification of Functions of Government (CCOFOG);
2. public accounts;
3. tax expenditure reports published by the Ministère des Finances du Québec (Ministry of Finance of Quebec).

The budgetary and tax expenditures inherent in the personal income tax system for the year 2019 have been classified according to the objective they pursue, halfway between the general vision and social protection domains in Table 1. For the last goal of pursuing specific social policy objectives, it is worth noting that it groups public expenditures associated with initiatives designed to:

1. respond to a specific problem (e.g., budgetary expenditures offered to youth in difficulty or the tax credit for the treatment of infertility);
2. improve living conditions (e.g., budgetary expenditures and services for the integration of immigrants or the independent living tax credit for seniors);

- strengthen social participation (e.g., budgetary expenditures to support community organizations or the Children's Activity Tax Credit).

2. SOCIAL PROTECTION EXPENDITURES IN QUEBEC: THE BIG PICTURE

Section 2 depicts an initial overview of budgetary and tax expenditures on social protection. The Canadian Classification of Functions of Government (CCOFOG), part of Statistics Canada's Canadian Government Finance Statistics (CGFS), represents a first source of information on social protection expenditures in Quebec. This database compiles the expenditures of governments at the federal, provincial and territorial level for different functions, including a function called "Social Protection". More specifically, the CCOFOG nomenclature identifies expenditures for the administration, development and management of programs, services and facilities related to sickness and disability, old age, survivors, family and children, unemployment, as well as housing and social exclusion not elsewhere classified. A more general category covers research and development related to social protection as well as social protection expenditures not elsewhere classified⁴. The nomenclature also makes it possible to identify expenditures related to 1) services and transfers that benefit individuals and households and 2) expenditures related to services provided on a collective basis.

The CCOFOG data illustrates the most accurate picture of social protection expenditures in Quebec. It identifies \$20.5 billion in social protection expenditures by the Quebec Government in 2019 and provides information on their distribution according to different social protection domains.

The largest share of the \$20.5 billion in social protection expenditures was allocated to "Family and Children", representing 41.8% of the total. This is followed by spending on the fight against "Social Exclusion" (30.1%) and on supporting those suffering from "Sickness and Disability"⁵ (19.9%). These three areas combined account for over 90% of social protection expenditures.

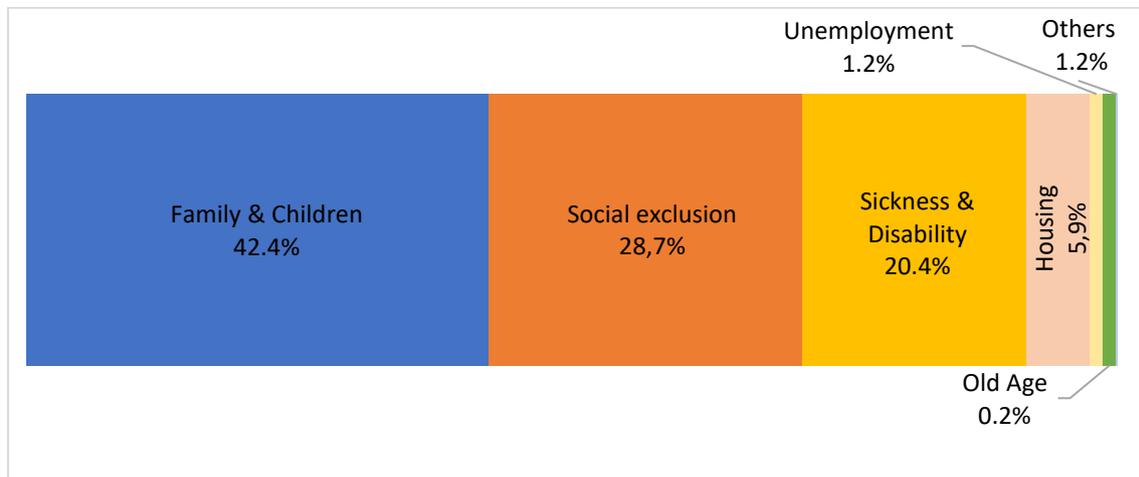
The CCOFOG's data provide less information, however, on the composition of these broad categories of expenditures. This leads to the following two questions: what are the specific

⁴ The Canadian classification lists the expenditures relating to the administration and management of health services within the health function and therefore excludes them from the social protection function.

⁵ The sickness and disability domains are treated separately in the Canadian classification. These two categories of expenditures have been merged for the purposes of this study.

schemes of allocations and/or services that these expenditures cover? What are the specific objectives tackled by the Quebec government through these different expenditures?

Figure 2. Distribution of Quebec’s expenditures by social protection domain, 2019



Source: Table 10-10-0005 part of CCOFOG by Consolidated Government Component published in 2020.
 Note: The sum may be different from 100 due to rounding.

Unlike Statistics Canada’s classification, the data from the Quebec government’s public accounts do not distinguish expenditures according to a specific category related to social protection. Instead, the financial information is presented with reference to the six missions of the government: 1) health and social services; 2) education and culture; 3) economy and environment; 4) assistance for individuals and families; 5) administration and justice; and 6) debt service. All budgetary expenditures are thus identified within twenty-three ministerial portfolios according to programs, sub-programs and program elements. In practice, the authorized appropriations for each program or sub-program are included in the total appropriations of the ministerial portfolio to which they belong. Expenditures to protect against social risk and/or to improve living conditions of individuals are distributed across eight ministerial portfolios (see [Appendix 1](#) - Inventory of social protection programs and sub-programs by ministerial portfolio). These programs or program elements account for more than \$22 billion in social protection expenditures.

The data in Table 2 highlights the proportion of social protection appropriations within each of the eight concerned ministerial portfolios. For example, social protection expenditures allocated to the *Education and Higher Education* portfolio refers to the two *Programs of Student Financial Assistance* and *Recreation and Sports Development*, totaling more than \$937 million in authorized appropriations (see [Appendix 1](#)).

Table 2. Social protection budgetary expenditures in Quebec by ministerial portfolios, 2019

Ministerial portfolio	Total expenditures	Social protection expenditures	
	in \$M	in \$M	in % of the total
Municipal affairs and housing	2 570	671	26,1%
Executive Council	540	56	10,3%
Education and higher education	21 507	937	4,4%
Family	2 897	2 821	97,4%
Immigration, diversity & inclusion	406	344	84,8%
Justice	1 096	368	33,6%
Health and social services	41 568	13 284	32,0%
Labour, employment and social solidarity	4 569	3 907	85,5%
Total	75 153	22 388	29,8%

Source: Ministère des Finances du Québec (2020), *Public Accounts 2019-2020 - Financial information on the consolidated revenue funds: general fund and special funds - Vol. 2.*

Social protection expenditures make up almost the totality of the expenditures in the Family portfolio at 97.4%, followed by Labour, Employment and Social Solidarity at 85.5%, and a major proportion of the expenditures in the Immigration, Diversity and Inclusion portfolio at 84.8%. The Ministries of Justice and Health and Social Services also show a significant proportion of social protection expenditures within their portfolios (33.6% and 32.0% respectively). This is followed by allocations related to the Municipal Affairs and Housing portfolio, which account for 26.1% of the total budget. Finally, other social protection expenditures, including those mentioned above, are found in the portfolios of the Ministry of Education and Higher Education and the Executive Council.

The information on authorized appropriations in the public accounts is composed solely of budgetary expenditures, excluding tax expenditures targeting social protection⁶. However, tax expenditures are increasingly added to budgetary expenditures for cash transfers and in-kind support to form a third important mode of public intervention in the field of social

⁶ Under current accounting standards, certain tax measures or expenditures are reported as supplementary information in the Public Accounts because they are considered equivalent to transfer expenditures. These are the refundable tax credits for the family allowance, refundable tax credits for childcare expenses, home support for seniors, work premium, Quebec education savings incentive, support for seniors, medical expenses, caregivers and tax shield. However, these tax expenditures are not accounted for in the budget expenditures associated with the various departmental portfolios and are therefore excluded from the analysis.

protection⁷. Indeed, work on social protection shows a growing number of tax expenditures⁸ in personal income tax systems to pursue social protection objectives, such as access to housing, bolstering retirement savings, allocation of additional resources to low-income families, etc.⁹

The concept of tax expenditures refers to "policy choices by which the government agrees to deprive itself of a portion of its tax revenues to achieve its objectives"¹⁰. Therefore, putting together an inventory of social protection expenditures in Quebec necessarily involves taking into account tax expenditures, which is the third source of data in this study.

For 2019, the Tax Expenditures report for Quebec lists 154 tax expenditures in the personal income tax system that amount to \$23.8 billion in government revenue forgone¹¹. These expenditures are presented by taxpayer group (families, seniors and caregivers, donors, etc.) or by sector of activity (culture, businesses and investments, financial sector, etc.) without distinguishing those that contribute directly to the financing of social protection. These 154 expenditures were examined based on their inclusion in one of the social protection domains. This classification made it possible to draw up a list of 65 expenditures considered to be socio-fiscal expenditures insofar as they contribute in one way or another to protection against major social risks, to the improvement of living conditions or to the fight against exclusion and social inequalities. These expenditures were then categorized according to the pursued objectives (see [Appendix 2 - Inventory of socio-fiscal measures - Quebec personal income tax system](#)). In 2019, these socio-fiscal expenditures totalled \$20.2 billion, corresponding to more than 84% of tax expenditures in Quebec¹².

When budgetary and tax expenditures are combined, social protection expenditures totalled more than \$42 billion, divided almost equally between budgetary (\$22.4 billion¹³) and tax expenditures (\$20.2 billion) in 2019. While this compilation sheds light on the scale of public expenditures on social protection in Quebec, it provides less insight on the nature of the

⁷ Godbout, 2006; Provencher and Godbout, 2021.

⁸ Tax exemptions, deductions, reductions, credits and deferrals are the five key types of tax expenditures in personal income tax systems.

⁹ Provencher et al. 2021; Barrios, Moscarola, Figari, Gandullia and Riscado, 2020; Morel, Touzet and Zemmour, 2019.

¹⁰ Ministère des Finances du Québec (2020), [Tax Expenditures – 2019 Edition](#).

¹¹ Id.

¹² Y. Provencher, L. Godbout and S. St-Cerny (2021). "Social Tax Expenditures in Quebec (Canada): the State of Play", *International Journal of Social Welfare*, 2021(00), 1–11.

¹³ The difference with the previously mentioned total of \$20.5 billion in budgetary expenditures (see Figure 2) is explained by the fact that the CCOFOG lists the authorized appropriations for the dental, pharmaceutical and drug subprograms of the Régie de l'assurance-maladie du Québec (RAMQ) program under the health function and not under the social protection function. At the same time, it is not possible to know the function of the CCOFOG (health or social protection) where different sub-program expenditures of the population services program appear within the Health and Social Services portfolio.

mechanisms put in place according to the primary goals, which is the subject of the following section.

3. SOCIAL PROTECTION EXPENDITURES BY POLICY OBJECTIVES

The goal of this section is to establish a more granular picture of the amounts committed to the various government initiatives in terms of social protection. The grid for analyzing expenditures relative to social protection objectives, as presented in the first section of this paper, allows us to gain a better understanding of social protection in Quebec by identifying the measures related to each objective and the distribution of the funding devoted to them.

Bolstering income

As displayed in Table 3, spending to bolster personal income amounted to \$5.8 billion in 2019. Slightly less than \$3.2 billion (54.7%) comes from budget spending, while \$2.6 billion in tax expenditures constitute 45.3%. Budgetary expenditures were used to fund four income support programs for individuals and households.

Table 3. Social protection expenditures to support income, 2019 (in \$M)

Total expenditures: 5 832,9			
<i>Budgetary expenditures:</i>		<i>Tax expenditures:</i>	
	54,7%		45,3%
1. Support for individuals and families	2 987,5	1. Solidarity tax credit	1 709,7
2. Assistance for victims of criminal acts	159,0	2. Age amount credit ¹⁴	236,6
3. Community Action	41,1	3. Retirement income credit	210,4
4. Compensation and Recognition of Acts of Good Citizenship	1,4	4. Non-taxation of workers' compensation benefits	182,3
		5. Senior assistance tax credit	102,0
		6. Others	202,9
Total	3 189,0	Total	2 643,9

Sources: Ministère des Finances du Québec (2020), *Public Accounts 2019-2020 - Consolidated Revenue Fund Financial Information: General and Special Funds: Fiscal Year Ended March 31, 2020 - Vol. 2* & Ministère des Finances du Québec (2020), *Tax Expenditures - 2019 Edition*.

¹⁴ The non-refundable age amount credit is designed for individuals aged 65 and over and the calculation is based on family income.

More than 93% of budget spending to support personal income, nearly \$3 billion, was devoted to funding the *Support for Individuals and Families'* program (financial assistance of last resort), to which are added amounts used to fund programs associated with community environments as well as assistance programs for victims of criminal acts or for those who have demonstrated acts of good citizenship. On the tax expenditures side, the *Solidarity Tax Credit* (STC) is the largest tax expenditure estimated at \$1.7 billion or 64.6% of all tax expenditures providing income support. The basic needs tax credit schemes, as the *Age Amount* and the *Amount for Retirement Income*, account for 9% and 8% of income support tax expenditures respectively. The *Senior Assistance Tax Credit* accounts for 3.9%. The tax revenue losses associated with the *Non-taxation of Various Benefits/Allowances* and *Income Support Allowances for Seniors* represent 14.3% of income support tax expenditures.

Fostering employment

To achieve the objective of fostering employment, the Government of Quebec relies much more on tax expenditures than on budgetary expenditures. Only one program, representing 36% of total spending to foster employment, was identified as being channeled through budgetary expenditures: the *Employment Assistance Measures* program of the Labour, Employment and Social Solidarity portfolio, with over \$878 million in 2019. Nine tax expenditures, on the other hand, are dedicated to fostering employment. The *Tax Deduction for Workers* is the largest tax expenditure with almost half (48.3% or \$762M) of tax expenditures related to employment support, followed by the *Tax Credit for Career Extension* (21.1% or \$333M). One important measure explicitly targets low-income workers: the *Work Premium Tax Credit*. The three components of the Work Premium Tax Credit account for 20.7% of the tax expenditures attributed to support employment. Next is the *Tax Credit for Recent Graduates Working in Remote Resource Region*, which amounts to 3.5% of tax expenditures for employment assistance. The remaining tax expenditures cost \$50 million or less each.

Table 4. Social protection expenditures to foster employment, 2019 (in \$M)

Total expenditures: 2 455,6			
<i>Budgetary expenditures:</i>	35,8%	<i>Tax expenditures :</i>	64,2%
1. Employment assistance measures	878,4	1. Tax deduction for workers	762,3
		2. Tax credit for career extension	333,1
		3. Work premium tax credits	308,7
		- Adapted Work Premium-persons with limited employment capacity	10,9
		- Assistance for former recipients of social assistance-Supplement to the work premium/Alternative youth programs/job objective program career	6,9
		4. Tax credit for recent graduates working in remote resource region	55,4
		5. Refundable Tax Credit for Tax shield	49,5
		6. Deduction for security/stock options (Shares or units trust)	44,9
		7. Tax credit for taxi drivers and taxi owners - individuals	4,2
		8. Tax credit for an on-the-job training period - citizens	0,8
		9. Deduction for tradesperson's tool expenses	0,5
Total	878,4	Total	1 577,2

Sources: Ministère des Finances du Québec (2020), Public Accounts 2019-2020 - Consolidated Revenue Fund Financial Information: General and Special Funds: Fiscal Year Ended March 31, 2020 - Vol. 2 & Ministère des Finances du Québec (2020), Tax Expenditures - 2019 Edition.

Fortifying pensions

Incentives for building up pensions are an integral part of funded retirement plans, either through private insurance plans or in mandatory public insurance schemes. Such schemes are generally intended to provide basic financial protection during retirement as well as in

the event of death or disability¹⁵. While there is no budgetary expenditure related to this objective, there are various tax incentives to stimulate individual savings for retirement. As illustrated in Table 4, the most important of these are the tax treatment of the *Registered Pension Plan (RPP)* and the *Registered Retirement Savings Plan (RRSP)*. The *Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP)* is much smaller. These three measures alone account for 94.2% of tax expenditures associated with pensions. They are followed by the *Non-taxation of Tax-Free Savings Account (TFSA) Investment Income* (2.7% of spending), the *Tax Credit for a Labour-Sponsored Fund* (1.8% of spending) and the *Tax Deduction for Pension Income Splitting Between Spouses* (1.3% of spending).

Table 5. Social protection expenditures to fortify pensions 2019 (in \$M)

Total expenditures: 9 496,5			
<i>Budgetary expenditures:</i>	0,0%	<i>Tax expenditures:</i>	100%
-	-	1. Tax treatment - Registered pension plan (RPP) – deduction of contributions / non-taxation of investment income / taxation of withdrawals	5 001,6
		2. Tax treatment - Registered retirement savings plan (RRSP) – deduction of contributions / non-taxation of investment income / taxation of withdrawals	3 921,5
		3. Non-taxation of TFSA investment income	260,4
		4. Tax credit for a labour-sponsored fund	167,6
		5. Deduction - pension income splitting between spouses	126,7
		6. Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP)-tax deferral	18,7
Total	0,0	Total	9 496,5

Sources: Ministère des Finances du Québec (2020), *Public Accounts 2019-2020 - Consolidated Revenue Fund Financial Information: General and Special Funds: Fiscal Year Ended March 31, 2020 - Vol. 2* & Ministère des Finances du Québec (2020), *Tax Expenditures - 2019 Edition*.

¹⁵ The analysis presented here excludes data related to the Régime des rentes du Québec (RRQ), a mandatory public insurance plan for workers aged 18 and over with annual earnings exceeding \$3,500. Although premiums are collected by Revenu Québec, an agency of the Ministère des Finances, the funding of pensions and benefits is entirely the responsibility of workers and employers.

Strengthening education

Nearly three-quarters of government intervention to strengthen education is channeled through budgetary expenditures, in particular through two main schemes totalling \$930 million: the funding of various *Scholarships Provided with Loans* (73.8% of budgetary expenditures or \$677.3 million) and the sub-program of *Interests and Banks Repayments of Student Loans*. In addition, nine tax measures to support education total \$319.6 million in 2019, 75% of which are associated with the three spending mechanisms of the *Education Savings Incentive Refundable Tax Credit* (29.4), the *Tax Credit for Tuition or Examination Fees* (21.2% and a third mechanism of *Tax Exemption for Scholarships and Awards* (24.0%). The *Tax Credit for the Transfer of the Recognized Parental Contribution* and the *Tax Credit for the Transfer of the Tuition Amount* represent 13.6% and 7.0% of tax expenditures in support of education, respectively. Finally, four smaller tax expenditures account for less than 5%: *Tax Credits for Interest Paid on a Student Loan* or for *Minor Children in Vocational Training*, and *Tax Deductions for Tool Expenses* and for *Adult Basic Education*.

Table 6. Social protection expenditure to strengthen education, 2019 (in \$M)

Total expenditures: 1 249,6			
<i>Budgetary expenditures:</i>		<i>Tax expenditures:</i>	
	74,4%		25,6%
1. Scholarships provided with loans	625,3	1. Refundable tax credit for education savings incentive	93,9
2. Interests and bank repayments	252,7	2. Tax exemption for scholarships and awards	76,8
3. Other	52,0	3. Tax credit for tuition or examination fees	67,9
		4. Tax credit for the transfer of the recognized parental contribution	43,4
		5. Tax credit for transfer to parents or grandparents of the tax credit for tuition and exam fees	22,5
		6. Tax credit for interest paid on a student loan	10,1
		7. Tax credit for minor child in vocational training or post-secondary education	3,6
		8. Deduction for tools for an eligible apprentice mechanic	0,9
		9. Deduction for tuition fee assistance for adult basic education	0,5
Total	930,0	Total	319,6

Sources : Ministère des Finances du Québec (2020) *Public Accounts 2019-2020 - Consolidated Revenue Fund Financial Information: General and Special Funds: Fiscal Year Ended March 31, 2020 - Vol. 2* & Ministère des Finances du Québec (2020), *Tax expenditures - 2019 Edition*.

Supporting families

Social protection expenditures to support families represent more than \$6 billion, 44.8% of which come in the form of budgetary expenditures. Specifically, three programs, among the nine budgetary expenditures associated with this objective, are intended to support and finance childcare services, accounting for more than 95%.

Table 7. Social protection expenditures to support families, 2019 (in \$M)

Total expenditures: 6 132,2			
<i>Budgetary expenditures:</i>		<i>Tax expenditures:</i>	
	44,8%		55,2%
1. Financial support for childcare centres	1 308,3	1. Refundable tax credit for family allowance (General)	2 403,7
2. Financial support for coordinating offices for home daycare and home daycare providers	597,4	- Supplement for the purchase of school supplies	113,5
3. Financial support for daycare centres	550,2	- Supplement for disabled child	104,0
4. Pension plan for employees working in childcare services	90,9	- Supplement for disabled child requiring exceptional family care	33,9
5. Financial support for family services	55,7	2. Refundable tax credit for childcare expenses	728,6
6. Infrastructure Funding Program for Childcare Centres	41,8		
7. Collective insurance plan	38,6		
8. Administration of the family allowance	36,3		
9. Financial support for community organizations (or bodies)	29,3		
Total	2 748,5	Total	3 383,7

Sources: Ministère des Finances du Québec (2020), *Public Accounts 2019-2020 - Consolidated Revenue Fund Financial Information: General and Special Funds: Fiscal Year Ended March 31, 2020 - Vol. 2* & Ministère des Finances du Québec (2020), *Tax Expenditures - 2019 Edition*.

First and foremost, there is the *financial support program for Childcare Centres* (47.6% of budgetary expenditures or \$1.3 billion), the *Infrastructure Funding Program for Childcare Centres* (1.5% or \$41.8 million), the *Pension Plan program for Employees Working in Childcare Services* (3.3% or \$90.9 million) and the *Associated Collective Insurance Plan* (1.4% or \$38.6 million). This is followed by the *Financial Support Programs for Daycare Centres* (20.0% or

\$550.2M) and for *Coordinating Offices for Home Daycare and Home Daycare Providers* (21.7% or \$597.4M). Other budgetary expenditures are linked to the administration of the *Family Allowance Tax Credit*, the *Financial Support Program for Community Organizations*, as well as the *Family Services Financial Support Program*.

Tax expenditures for the support of families amount to \$3.4 billion or 55.2% of the total through two major refundable tax credits (RTCs). As shown in Table 7 below, this is a share of the *Refundable Tax Credit for Family Allowance* including its three supplement components (purchase of school supplies, disabled child and disabled child requiring exceptional care). These tax measures account for nearly 80% of tax expenditures for the support of families (\$2.7 billion). The other tax expenditure is the *Refundable Tax Credit for Childcare Services*, which represents 21.5% of total tax expenditures (or \$728.6 million) in this category.

Promoting social equity

Seven out of every ten dollars of government intervention spent through tax expenditures are aimed to promote social equity. Social equity refers to the notion of social justice and more specifically to the idea of fairer living conditions by granting specific rights to groups and individuals in a situation deemed to be disadvantageous. Public expenditures related to social equity include tax equity and budgetary expenditures for categories of populations in vulnerable situations. In 2019, \$984 million were allotted to promote social equity in Quebec, divided among six budgetary expenditures totaling \$294 million and five tax expenditures estimated at \$690 million. Budgetary expenditures associated with the *Commission des Services Juridiques* (CSJ), the *Management and Administration of the Public Curator*, and the *Protective Measures Program* (PM) account for more than 85% of budget expenditures, followed by the expenditures of the *Office de la Protection du Consommateur* (4.2%), the *Commission des Droits de la Personne et de la Jeunesse* (5.9%), and expenditures associated with the *Administration and Support for the Integration of Persons with Disabilities* (4.7%), making up nearly 15% of budget expenditures related to this objective.

Tax expenditures under this objective focus on issues of tax burden reapportioning across different categories of taxpayers¹⁶. As illustrated in Table 8, three tax credits and two tax deductions are devoted to tax equity. The most important expenditure concerns the *Transfer of Unused Tax Credits by a Spouse*, a measure that allows taxpayers to benefit from tax credits that their spouse cannot claim because of insufficient income. This measure represents more than three-quarters of tax equity spending. Two other tax credits related to basic needs coverage, the *Tax Credit for Persons Living Alone* and the *Tax Credit for Dependents*, account for 16.7% of spending, while the two tax deductions for *Residents of Remote Resource*

¹⁶ It is useful to note that the most important tax equity measure is the basic tax credit in the Quebec tax system, whereby no tax is payable until a certain level of income is earned. In 2019, the tax expenditure associated with this measure is estimated at \$12.8 billion. Since the basic tax credit is considered part of the benchmark tax system and not a tax expenditure arising from a departure from the benchmark tax system, we have not included it as a tax expenditure.

Region and for Taxpayers Subject to Tax deduction for Supports Payments Made and Maintenance Allowance comprise a little over 7% of tax equity spending.

Table 8. Social protection expenditures to promote social equity, 2019 (in \$M)

Total expenditures: 983,9					
<i>Budgetary expenditures:</i>		29,8%	<i>Tax expenditures:</i>		70,2%
1.	Commission des services juridiques	177,8	1.	Tax credit for transfer of unused tax credits by a spouse	526,6
2.	Protection measures (Permanent)	51,8	2.	Tax credit for a person living alone	102,8
3.	Management and Administration of the Public Curator (Permanent 1 & 2)	20,5	3.	Tax deduction for residents of designated remote resource region	28,1
4.	Commission des droits de la personne et de la jeunesse. Amortization of assets	17,3	4.	Tax deduction for supports payments made and maintenance allowance	20,3
5.	Administration and Support for the Integration of Handicapped Persons. Amortization of assets	13,7	5.	Tax credit (or amount) for other dependents	12,6
6.	Office de la protection du consommateur. Amortization of assets	12,4			
Total		293,5	Total		690,4

Sources: Ministère des Finances du Québec (2020), Public Accounts 2019-2020 - Consolidated Revenue Fund Financial Information: General and Special Funds: Fiscal Year Ended March 31, 2020 - Vol. 2 & Ministère des Finances du Québec (2020), Tax Expenditures - 2019 Edition.

Pursuing specific social policy objectives

In 2019, more than \$16 billion were dedicated to specific social policy objectives in the social field. Government intervention in this context is characterized by the implementation of a plurality of budgetary expenditures and tax expenditures pursuing different ends and targeting diverse segments of the population. The analysis of the various public reports has made it possible to identify seventeen tax expenditures and twenty-four budgetary expenditures linked to the pursuit of a specific social policy objective and grouped into three categories: 1) Responding to a specific problem (50% of expenditures); 2) Improving living conditions (41% of expenditures); and 3) Strengthening social participation (9% of expenditures) (see [Appendix 3](#) - Inventory of budgetary expenditures with a specific social policy objective).

Table 9. Social protection expenditures to pursue a specific social policy objective, 2019 (in \$M)

1- Responding to a specific problem (total expenditures: 8 198,4)					
<i>Budgetary expenditures:</i>		87,1%	<i>Tax expenditures:</i>		12,9%
1. Pharmaceutical services and drugs	2 587,3		1. Tax credit for medical expenses	950,4	
2. Youth in difficulty	1 500,3		2. Refundable tax credit for medical expenses	61,4	
3. Mental health	1 379,0		3. Tax credit for a severe and prolonged impairment in mental or physical functions	30,6	
4. Intellectual disability and autism spectrum disorder	1 071,4		4. Refundable tax credit for the treatment of infertility	6,6	
5. Other services-RAMQ	247,1		5. Tax credit for medical care not available in your area	3,5	
6. Dental care	214,0		6. Refundable tax credit for adoption expenses	1,5	
7. Addiction	145,3				
Sub-total 1	7 144,4		Sub-total 1	1054,0	

2- Improving living conditions (Total expenditures: 6 721,9)					
<i>Budgetary expenditures:</i>		89,8%	<i>Tax expenditures:</i>		10,2%
1. Support Autonomy for Seniors/Residence	3 121,8		1. Refundable tax credit for home-support services for seniors	576,2	
2. Support Autonomy for Seniors/Home care support service	1 542,7		2. Refundable tax credit for caregivers of an adult	73,5	
3. Physical disability	647,6		3. Home buyers' tax credit	32,0	
4. Société d'habitation du Québec	645,4		4. Independent living tax credit for seniors (Refundable tax credit)	2,9	
5. Financial Assistance Program for Water Sprinklers in Private Seniors' Residences	26,9				
6. Régie du logement	25,2				
7. Caregivers support	15,3				
8. Support for seniors in vulnerable situations	12,4				

Sub-total 2	6 037,3	Sub-total 2	684,6
3- Strengthening social participation (Total expenditures: 1 487,7)			
<i>Budgetary expenditures:</i>	78,4%	<i>Tax expenditures:</i>	21,6%
1. Community organizations and other bodies (permanent)	735,8	1. Tax credits for donations and gifts	289,8
2. Francization services	130,1	2. RTC for children's (or youth) activities	22,2
3. Diversity and inclusion	94,3	3. RTC for top-level (or elite) athletes	5,9
4. Immigration and prospection	77,3	4. RTC for seniors' activities	1,4
5. Secrétariat à la jeunesse	55,8	5. Tax credit for cultural patronage	0,9
6. Performance, development and transformation support	42,6	6. Tax credit for first major donation to the cultural sector	0,6
7. Active aging	18,2	7. Tax credit for contributions to authorized Quebec political parties	0,5
8. Recreation and sports	7,4		
9. Secrétariat aux aînés	4,9		
Sub-total 3	1 166,4	Sub-total 3	321,3
TOTAL: Pursuing specific social policy objectives	14 348, 1	TOTAL: Pursuing specific social policy objectives	2 059, 9
Total expenditures: 16 408,0			
<i>Budgetary expenditures:</i>	87,4%	<i>Tax expenditures:</i>	12,6%

Sources: Ministère des Finances du Québec (2020) *Public Accounts 2019-2020 - Consolidated Revenue Fund Financial Information: General and Special Funds: Fiscal Year Ended March 31, 2020 - Vol. 2* & Ministère des Finances du Québec (2020), *Tax expenditures - 2019 Edition*.

With regards to responding to a specific problem seven budgetary expenditures account for 87.1% of all expenditures in this category, compared to 12.9% provided through tax expenditures. A closer look shows that the *Pharmaceutical and Drug Services* programs constitute more than 36% of budgetary expenditures and that, at the same time, the *Tax Credit for Medical Expenses* amount to more than 90% of tax expenditures in this category. Finally, the three programs *Intellectual Disability and Autism Spectrum Disorder*, *Youth in Difficulty* and *Mental Health* account for more than 55% of budgetary expenditures.

Budgetary expenditures to improve living conditions account for 89.8% of expenditures in this category, compared to only 10.2% for tax expenditures. Further examination shows that that budget expenditures associated with seniors' support (home-support and

accommodation) represents more than three quarters (77%) of budgetary expenditures while 84% of tax expenditures in this category is geared to improving living conditions through the *Refundable Tax Credit for Home-Support for Seniors*.

Finally, budgetary expenditures amount to 78.4% of social participation expenditures, compared to 21.6% for tax expenditures. Herein, spending on *Community Organizations and Other Bodies* totals \$735.8 million, or 63% of global budget, followed distantly by *Francization Services* (11%) and the *Diversity and Inclusion* program, which accounts for only 8% of budgetary expenditures (see [Appendix 3](#)). On the other hand, the *Tax Credits for Donations and Gifts* accounts for more than 90% of tax expenditures outlined to ensure integration and social participation.

In summary, an overall review of spending on the various government social protection initiatives shows that they are significant and are composed of both budgetary and tax expenditures in almost equal proportions. Together, they amount to more than \$42 billion.

Table 10. Distribution of total public social protection expenditures, 2019 (in \$M)

Social protection objectives	Budgetary expenditures	Tax expenditures	Total
1. Bolstering income	3 189	2 644	5 833
2. Fostering employment	878	1 577	2 455
3. Fortifying pensions	-	9 497	9 497
4. Strengthening education	930	320	1 250
5. Supporting families	2 748	3 384	6 132
6. Promoting social equity	294	690	984
7. Pursuing specific social policy objectives	14 348	2 060	16 408
Total	22 387	20 172	42 559

Sources: *Ministère des Finances du Québec (2020) Public Accounts 2019-2020 - Consolidated Revenue Fund Financial Information: General and Special Funds: Fiscal Year Ended March 31, 2020 - Vol. 2* & *Ministère des Finances du Québec (2020), Tax expenditures - 2019 Edition*.

4. CONCLUSION

The objective of this research paper was to examine the expenditures budget and the tax system to produce an inventory of public spending on social protection in Quebec. The results show that social protection spending is significant. In 2019, more than \$42 billion in public spending were devoted to social protection in Quebec, divided almost equally between budgetary (\$22.4 billion) and tax expenditures (\$20.2 billion).

Some social protection objectives are particularly funded through tax expenditures, while others are predominantly supported through budgetary expenditures. In this respect, the analysis has shown that social protection objectives can be targeted by only one type of expenditure or by both. For example, the incentives to fortify pensions are provided exclusively through tax expenditures, while the pursuit of specific social policy objectives is more often reflected in budgetary expenditures. Bolstering income, supporting families and fostering employment are more often targeted through tax expenditures, in contrast to support for education, where initiatives are predominantly funded by budgetary expenditures. In summary, social protection spending in Quebec is considerable, covering several segments of the population, as well as a broad array of objectives and activities.

The analysis creates an inventory based on the objectives clearly established at the outset, and thus provides a picture of the social protection expenditures offered by the Quebec government. While this is a step forward, given the important role for social protection of the federal and municipal governments, to complete this framework, it would be necessary to include the social protection expenditures, both budgetary and fiscal, of other public entities.

Such a broader analysis on what is spent on social protection, by what level of government, for which segments of the population, and to achieve which objective is critical.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Inventory of social protection programs and sub-programs by ministerial portfolios

Ministerial Portfolio	Name of the program	Name of the sub-program (\$M Expenditures)	Objectif *
Municipal affairs and housing	Housing	1- Société d'habitation du Québec (\$645,363)	5
		2- Régie du logement (\$25,193)	5
Executive council	Youth	1- Secrétariat à la jeunesse (\$55,788)	5
Education and higher education	Financial assistance for education	1- Scholarships provided with loans (\$625,278)	4
		2- Interests and banks repayments (Permanent) (\$252,723)	4
		3- Other (\$52,021)	4
	Development of recreation and sports	6- Recreation and sports (\$7,381)	5
Family	Assistance measures for families	1- Financial support for family services (\$55,708)	7
		2- Administration of the family allowance (\$36,327)	7
		3- Financial support for community organizations (or bodies) (\$29,288)	7
	Childcare services	2- Infrastructure funding program for childcare centres (\$41,791)	7
		3- Pension plan for employees working in childcare services (\$90,871)	7
		4- Collective insurance plan (\$38,572)	7
		5- Financial support for childcare centres (\$1 308,335)	7
		6- Financial support for day care centres (\$550,212)	7
		7- Financial support for coordinating offices for home day care and home day care providers (\$597,353)	7

	Public curator	1- Management and administration of the public curator (permanent 1 et 2) (\$20,476)	6	
		2- Protection measures (Permanent) (\$51,846)	6	
Immigration, diversity and inclusion	Immigration, francization, diversity and inclusion	1- Francization services (\$130,058)	5	
		2- Diversity and inclusion (\$94,306)	5	
		3- Immigration and prospection (\$77,310)	5	
		4- Performance, development and transformation support (\$42,621)	5	
Justice	Compensation and recognition	1- Assistance for victims of criminal acts (\$159,038)	1	
		2- Compensation and recognition of acts of good citizenship (Permanent) (\$1,412)	1	
	Other bodies reporting to the minister	1- Commission des services juridiques (\$177,792)	6	
		2- Commission des droits de la personne et de la jeunesse. Amortization of assets (\$17,318)	6	
		3- Office de la protection du consommateur. Amortization of assets (\$12,367)	6	
Health and social services	Services to the public	3- Support autonomy for seniors – Home care support services (Permanent) (\$1 542,695)	5	
		4- Support autonomy for seniors/residence (3 \$121,760)	5	
		5- Intellectual disability and autism spectrum disorder (\$1 071,350)	5	
		6- Youth in difficulty (\$1 500,278)	5	
		7- Addiction (\$145,329)	5	
		8- Mental health (\$1 379,038)	5	

		13- Community organizations (or bodies) and other bodies (Permanent) (\$735,805)	5
		17- Financial assistance program for water sprinklers in private seniors' residences (\$26,925)	5
		18- Physical disability (\$647,618)	5
	Office des personnes handicapées du Québec	1- Administration and support for the integration of handicapped Persons. Amortization of assets (\$13,734)	6
	Régie de l'assurance maladie du Québec (RAMQ)	3- Dental care (Permanent 1 & 3) (\$214,005)	5
		4- Pharmaceutical services and drugs (Permanent 1 & 2) (\$2 587,303)	5
		5- Other services-RAMQ (Permanent 1) (\$247,118)	5
	Status of seniors and caregivers	1- Secrétariat aux aînés (Permanent 1 & 2) (\$4,864)	5
		2- Active aging (\$18,248)	5
		3- Support for seniors in vulnerable situations (\$12,395)	5
		4- Caregivers support (\$15,336)	5
Labour, employment and social solidarity	Financial assistance measures	1- Support for individuals and families (Permanent) (\$2 987,502)	1
		2- Community action (\$41,087)	1
	Employment assistance measures	1- Employment assistance measures (\$878,430)	3

* 1- Bolstering income; 3- Fostering employment; 4- Strengthening education; 5- Pursuing specific social policy objectives; 6- Promoting social equity; 7- Supporting families.

Source: Ministère des Finances du Québec (2020), *Public Accounts 2019-2020 - Consolidated Revenue Fund Financial Information: General and Special Funds: Fiscal Year Ended March 31, 2020 – Vol. 2.*

Appendix 2. Inventory of socio-fiscal measures - Quebec personal income tax system

Objective	Name of the measure
Bolstering income	Solidarity tax credit
	Age amount
	Non-taxation – Guaranteed income supplement and spouse's allowance
	Non-taxation – Workers compensation benefits
	Non-taxation – Benefits from a road accident compensation programme
	Non-taxation – Benefits from a criminal injuries compensation programme
	Non-taxation – Pensions, war allowances or compensation (veterans and civilians)
	Non-taxation – Income support benefits and allowances—military, veterans and family members and lump sums to first responder family members
	Refundable Tax Credit – Grant for seniors to offset a municipal tax increase
	Refundable Tax Credit – Senior assistance tax credit
	Non-Refundable Tax Credit – Amount for retirement income
	Refundable Tax Credit – Property tax refund for forest producers
Fortifying pensions	Registered Pension Plan (RPP) (net deferral, deduction, withdrawal and non-taxation of returns)
	Registered Retirement Savings Plan (RRSP) (net deferral, deduction, withdrawal and non-taxation of returns)
	Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP) (tax deferral)
	Non-taxation – Investment income inside a Tax-Free Savings Account (TFSA)
	Non-Refundable Tax Credit for contributions to a labour-sponsored fund
	Pension income splitting between spouses (deduction)
	Refundable Tax Credit – Work premium tax credits

Fostering employment	Refundable Tax Credit – Work premium tax credits – adapted to people with severe employment constraints
	Refundable Tax Credit – Work premium tax credits – supplement for long-term recipients leaving financial assistance for last resort employment, alternative youth program or job objective program career
	Non-Refundable Tax Credit – Tax credit for career extension
	Tax deduction for workers
	Refundable Tax Credit – Tax shield
	Deduction – Tradesperson’s tool expenses
	Deduction for stock options (shares or trust units)
	Refundable Tax Credit – Tax credit for taxi drivers and taxi owners
	Refundable Tax Credit – Tax credit for on-the-job training period
	Non-Refundable Tax Credit – Tax credit for recent graduates working in remote resource region
Supporting families	Refundable Tax Credit – Family allowance
	Refundable Tax Credit – Family allowance – supplement for disabled child
	Refundable Tax Credit Family allowance – supplement for disabled child requiring exceptional family care
	Refundable Tax Credit Family allowance – supplement for the purchase of school supplies
	Refundable Tax Credit for childcare expenses
Stenghtening education	Registered Education Savings Plan (tax deferral) and RTC Quebec savings incentive
	Non-Refundable Tax Credit – Tax credit for tuition or examination fees
	Non-Refundable Tax Credit – Transfer to parents or grandparents of the tax credit for tuition and examination fees
	Non-Refundable Tax Credit – Interest paid on a student loan
	Non-Refundable Tax Credit – Basic needs – transfer of recognized parental contribution
	Non-Refundable Tax Credit – Basic needs – minor children in vocational training or post-secondary education

	Tax Exemptions – Scholarships and awards		
	Deduction – Apprentice vehicle mechanic tool expenses		
	Deduction – Tuition fee assistance for adult basic education		
Pursuing specific social policy objectives	<i>Respond to a specific problem</i>	<i>Improve living conditions</i>	<i>Strengthen social participation</i>
	Refundable Tax Credit – Tax credit for the treatment of infertility	Refundable Tax Credit – Tax credit for home-support services for seniors	Refundable Tax Credit – Tax credit for seniors’ activities
	Refundable Tax Credit – Tax credit for adoption expenses	Non-Refundable Tax Credit – Home buyers’ tax credit	Refundable Tax Credit – Tax credit for children’s activities
	Non-Refundable Tax Credit – Medical expenses	Independent living tax credit for seniors	Refundable Tax Credit – Tax Credit for top-level athletes
	Non-Refundable Tax Credit – Expenses for medical services not available in your area	Refundable Tax Credit – Caregivers of an adult	Non-Refundable Tax Credit – Tax credits for donations and gifts
	Non-Refundable Tax Credit – Amount for a severe and prolonged impairment in mental or physical functions		Non-Refundable Tax Credit – First major donation to the cultural sector

	Refundable Tax Credit - Medical expenses		Non-Refundable Tax Credit – Cultural patronage
			Non-Refundable Tax Credit – Tax credit for contributions to authorized Quebec political parties
			Refundable Tax Credit – Tax credit for seniors’ activities
Promoting social equity	Supports payments made and maintenance allowance (deduction)		
	Deduction for residents of designated remote areas		
	Non-Refundable Tax Credit – Basic needs – person living alone		
	Non-Refundable Tax Credit – Basic needs – other dependents		
	Transfer of unused tax credits by a spouse		

Source : Ministère des Finances du Québec (2020), *Tax Expenditures – 2019 Edition*.

Appendix 3. Inventory of budgetary expenditures with specific social policy objectives

Ministerial portfolio	Name and # of the program	Program and sub-program description
Municipal affairs and housing	Housing	The purpose of this program is to meet the housing needs of Quebec citizens through an integrated, sustainable approach. It supports the development of low-income and affordable housing, the renovation of Quebec's housing stock (ensuring quality renovations), and public and private initiatives to establish and consolidate quality living environments across Quebec. It also supports the activities of the Régie du logement. The core mission of the Régie, which is a specialized tribunal exercising its jurisdiction in matters relating to residential rental housing, is to decide on disputes brought before it, promote reconciliation

		between landlords and tenants and educate citizens on the rights and obligations arising from a residential lease. In certain situations, the Régie oversees the preservation of the housing stock.
Executive council	Youth	The objective of this program is to ensure the coherence of policies and initiatives concerning youth and coordinate interdepartmental dossiers, particularly by the Youth Action Strategy of the Gouvernement du Québec.
Education and higher education	Financial assistance for education	This program promotes access to professional training at the secondary level and post-secondary full-time or part-time studies. It provides financial support to persons whose financial resources are judged insufficient.
	Development of recreation and sports	The objective of this program is to promote and encourage recreation and sports by supporting community bodies and specific clientele. It also seeks to support volunteer activities, with a special focus on safety in recreational and sports activities.
Family	Financial support for family services	The purpose of this program is to provide financial assistance, in connection with their overall missions, to community organizations working with families and for community drop-in childcare activities. The program supports municipalities and regional county municipalities that wish to implement municipal family policies. It is also in charge of coordinating the implementation and follow up of commitments made to fight bullying and those made to strengthen early childhood services. Lastly, the program finances the administration of the Family Allowance program, the program titled Programme de soutien financier aux services de surveillance d'élèves handicapés âgés de 12

		à 21 and the development of the network of community social pediatrics centres.
	Childcare services	This program promotes access to quality educational childcare services. It provides funding for the operating expenditures of childcare centres, subsidized day care centres and coordinating offices for home day care, as well as subsidies for home day care providers. It also provides funding for childcare centre infrastructure, and pension plans and group insurance for staff working at childcare centres, home day care coordinating offices and subsidized day care centres. This program encompasses the budget transfer to the Government of the Cree Nation, under the agreement to delegate certain powers for educational childcare services and other related matters.
	Public curator	The objective of this program is to assure the protection of citizens declared to be incapacitated and to represent them concerning their rights and property.
Immigration, diversity and inclusion	Immigration, francization, diversity and inclusion	The objective of this program is to recruit and select immigrants in line with Quebec's needs, while fostering an inclusive Francophone society that seeks the full participation of immigrants and ethnocultural minorities.
Justice	Compensation and Recognition	The objective of this program is to ensure financial compensation to individuals injured as a result of an act of good citizenship as well as to crime victims. It is also concerned with the recognition of individuals who have performed acts of good citizenship.
	Other bodies reporting to the minister	This program includes 3 bodies: the Commission des services juridiques, which ensures legal aid services for financially disadvantaged individuals and for children and families confronting certain justice-

		related social problems, the Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse, which enforces the Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms (CQLR, chapter C-12), and the Office de la protection du consommateur which protects citizens' rights under the Consumer Protection Act (CQLR, chapter P-40.1).
Health and social services	Services to the public	This program seeks to deliver public services that meet the objectives defined in the policy on health and well-being regarding the public's general or specific needs.
	Office des personnes handicapées du Québec	This program aims to ensure the implementation of the Act to secure handicapped persons in the exercise of their rights with a view to achieving social, schools and workplace integration (CQLR, chapter E-20.1).
	Régie de l'assurance maladie du Québec	The objective of this program is to defray the costs of insured services and administrative costs, particularly under the health insurance and prescription drug insurance plans.
	Status of seniors and caregivers	This program has a two-fold objective: to promote active aging in Quebec and to implement measures to prevent elder abuse and to specifically support more vulnerable seniors. In addition, the program supports caregivers. Finally, this program makes it possible to plan, advise, coordinate and support policies and measures designed to fight prejudice and promote the participation, health and safety of seniors, all within a context of intergenerational equity and respect for diversity.
Labour, employment	Financial assistance measures	This program is designed to make financial support services available to whoever applies for them and demonstrates their

<p>and social solidarity</p>		<p>need. More specifically, it allows individuals to receive financial assistance of last resort based on the difference between the resources and their acknowledged essential needs. The social assistance and support programs provide recipients with personalized support and guidance with a view to adequately prepare them to participate in a specific measure or an employment assistance program. This program also provides the Cree Hunters and Trappers Income Security Board with the funds required to support the traditional activities of the members of that community. In addition, the program funds community bodies in connection with their overall missions. Lastly, it provides appropriations to the Fonds Québécois d'initiatives sociales and converts last-resort financial assistance benefits into employment assistance measures.</p>
	<p>Employment assistance measures</p>	<p>This program is designed to fund employment assistance measures. The Department is responsible for the offer of public employment services including labour market information, placement and active employment measures relating to the active labour market policy at the provincial, regional, local and sectorial levels. The Department is also responsible for the Act to promote workforce skills development and recognition (CQLR, chapter D-8.3) and the Act respecting workforce vocational training and qualification (CQLR, chapter F-5).</p>

Source: Ministère des Finances du Québec (2020), *Public Accounts 2019-2020 - Consolidated Revenue Fund Financial Information: General and Special Funds: Fiscal Year Ended March 31, 2020 - Vol. 2.*