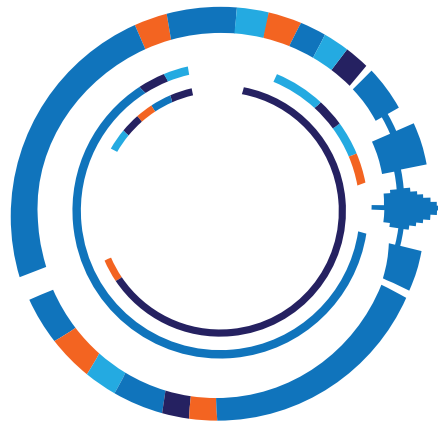




Vision for the future for Indigenous peoples



PREAMBLE

After being left on the sidelines of the development that was happening around them for far too long, the Indigenous peoples are now keen to create the optimal conditions that will allow them to generate their own economy while contributing to Quebec's economy. It is undeniable that issues related to Indigenous peoples have never been in the forefront of public awareness as much as they have in recent years. It is important for us to seize this momentum so that the reconciliation movement that has been started goes beyond mere words and instead results in clear commitments made by companies of the Quebec business community and the Government of Quebec. It is these commitments which, by bringing about real changes for Indigenous peoples, will pave the way for reconciliation and make the Grand Economic Circle of Indigenous People and Quebec a historic event in which all participants will be proud to have been involved since it will have contributed to ensuring that Indigenous people take their rightful place in Quebec's economy.

OUR CURRENT SITUATION

The socioeconomic context in which we are currently operating requires a major boost in order to get back on its feet. There are significant needs in many areas, whether in terms of housing, jobs or training. We encourage you to take note of this state of affairs so that you can realize the magnitude of the situation with which we must deal and the challenges we face.

HOUSING

Our current housing stock has **15,541** housing units, an insufficient number to meet all the needs. Many houses are overcrowded. Many of them are in need of major repairs. Significant social and health issues arise from this. Many of our people, unable to find a place to live, are forced to leave our communities to find a place to live in urban centres.

Community housing needs:

- **10,435** new units over 5 years (*overcrowding, growth, migration, etc.*)
- **7,975** units to be renovated or repaired
- **3,751** units to be decontaminated (*mould*)
- **9,461** plots of land to be serviced (*infrastructure*)



Currently, the housing catch-up is not being done and the gap is widening between the Indigenous communities and the rest of Quebec. On average, 200 to 250 units are being built per year while the need is 10,435 over 5 years.



EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING



Currently, the unemployment rate in our communities is **three times higher** than Quebec's unemployment rate. More than half of our members of working age do not have a high school diploma, which has a direct impact on their ability to get a job.

In terms of employment and training:

- **51.5%** of the adults are gainfully employed. Of these, **26.3%** do not have a high school diploma and **56.8%** have a high school diploma.
- **40.2%** of our members aged 18-24 years are employed and **40%** of them are continuing their education.
- The employment rate in the communities is **41.8%** compared to **59.9%** in Quebec.
- The unemployment rate is **22.9%** in the communities compared to **7.2%** in Quebec.
- **60% of our members** do not have a high school diploma



The proportion of those employed is twice as high among those who have completed high school than among those who have not.



INDIGENOUS TOURISM

In January 2021, 247 Indigenous tourism businesses were identified across Quebec, in 17 of the 21 tourism regions and in 40 of the 55 Indigenous communities.

These businesses are divided into four main sectors :

- **38%** are businesses in the arts and culture sector.
- **17%** offer services and activities in the field of hunting and fishing and **18%** offer services related to nature and adventure.
- **27%** are businesses in the accommodation and food service industry.

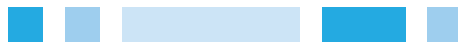
The reality for tourism businesses is that :

- Access to traditional financing is difficult.
- Accessibility to the regions must be improved.
- Jobs in the field must be better known and promoted.



Before the pandemic, 1.2 million visitors annually attended Indigenous tourism experiences that created more than 4,000 jobs and generated \$169 million in economic spinoffs





Our members own many businesses, but these are primarily active in our communities and their services are used primarily by our members. Many factors hamper the development of our businesses and, although our population size is large in certain regions, we are rarely included in the reflections surrounding their development.

In terms of entrepreneurship :

- Our businesses are numerous, but not well-known.
- Access to financing is **difficult**. Interest rates are higher, and some assets are more difficult to finance in communities.
- Many questions related to the occupation and exploitation of the territory's resources remain **unresolved**.
- The quality of our Internet connection is detrimental to the **development** of our businesses and their inclusion in the Quebec economy



Traditional economies (hunting, fishing etc.) have great direct value, they preserve spiritual and cultural connections with the land and involve the consumption of healthy local food and physical activity.



OUR VISION FOR THE FUTURE

We have a vision for the future in terms of economic development. A vision in which our strengths and voices, combined with those of the business community and civil society in Quebec, would allow all of our ambitions to materialize. A vision, which when realized, will change not only our economic situation, but also that of Quebec. We have many businesses and a young population, which want nothing more than to be involved. Better collaboration between Indigenous people and Quebec will be beneficial to all and it is during the Grand Economic Circle of Indigenous People and Quebec that this change will begin.

We encourage you to learn about our vision and get involved, as businesses or individuals, because it is clear to us that change requires your commitment.

HOUSING

Our vision of housing from an economic perspective is that the catch-up work is taking off.

Its benefits are tangible and lasting, and, above all, they reflect on all spheres of our communities. Our members have access to sound, safe and healthy housing in sufficient quantities. They are important players in this development with the support of committed partners.

- Construction in our communities is substantially increased, with the participation of the Government of Quebec and civil society, in addition to our actions and those of the federal government.
- Indigenous providers in construction and related fields operate in a sustainable environment with perspectives that go beyond the short term; opportunities are open to them both inside and outside our communities.
- Our members have access to a continuum of housing options that are tailored to our needs and these options offer economic opportunities.
- Our members have easy access to financing which allows them to consider barrier-free access to individual property.

- The individual and collective capacities of our members are strengthened at all levels.
- Files related to adding land to reserves are processed promptly to avoid limiting the physical capacity of Indigenous peoples to implement housing projects within their communities.

EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ■ ■ ■ ■ ■

In terms of employment and training, we want our population, whose average age is lower than that of Quebec, to be able to contribute to meeting existing human resource needs. To achieve this vision, the business community relies on the knowledge of our organizations to ensure a good integration of our members in employment.

- Our members are an integral part of the solution to alleviate the labour shortage that Quebec is currently facing.
- Our Indigenous individuals and businesses participate in the realization of major economic development projects in Quebec.
- Our members have good quality jobs and the unemployment rate in our communities has dropped dramatically.
- Training courses adapted to the needs of our populations are offered and allow them to continue their studies at a distance or on site in culturally appropriate places.
- Quebec businesses are made aware of the realities of Indigenous peoples and our members are effectively integrated into work teams.

INDIGENOUS TOURISM ■ ■ ■ ■ ■

In the coming years, our vision for Indigenous tourism is for it to continue to grow and become the most significant economic sector for the Indigenous communities in Quebec. More than ever a must, this sector is a strong vector of rapprochement and one of the greatest destination strengths in terms of tourism.

Here are some elements that are part of this vision :

- The Government of Quebec recognizes the value of the sector, and its support facilitates investment in Indigenous tourism through programs dedicated to this sector.
- Well-established national campaigns to raise awareness of Indigenous cultures are carried out among Quebecers by focusing on tourism.
- New “loan guarantee” financing mechanisms make it possible to compensate for the non-seizability of promoters “on-reserve”.
- The Indigenous tourism sector is well connected to the two main gateways to international tourism: Quebec City and especially Montreal.
- Campaigns to promote jobs in tourism among Indigenous people are bearing fruit.
- Access to regions and communities has greatly improved.
- The recognized sectoral tourism association, Indigenous Tourism Quebec, has solidified its budget allowing it to better support promoters and communities in their tourism-related challenges and opportunities.
- Government programs recognize non-economic impacts in the analysis of Indigenous promoters (impacts on language, pride, identity, rapprochement, etc.).

ENTREPRENEURSHIP



In terms of entrepreneurship, we want our businesses and the economic contributions in general of Indigenous people to Quebec's economy to be known and recognized. In our vision, our businesses can benefit from the same advantages as Quebec's businesses (technologies, financing program, etc.), allowing them to grow and develop.

- Access to financing is facilitated.
- Indigenous businesses are known to their Quebec counterparts and are an integral part of the regional business environment.
- Large businesses and governments have procurement policies that take into account the specificities of our businesses and promote the development of their capacities and their inclusion in the Quebec economy.
- Issues related to the occupation and exploitation of the territory's resources are settled and clear to all. The environment is conducive to investments and to the fair participation of Indigenous people in territorial development and the resulting major projects.
- We are part of regional development committees and are stakeholders in strategic thinking processes.
- Our cultural heritage is respected, protected and valued because of its integration into the Quebec economy.
- We benefit from high-speed Internet access enabling the inclusion of our most remote communities in the digital economy. These communities also have the necessary skills to benefit from this economy.
- We can access services and information in both official languages.
- Our organizations are recognized by Quebec economic development players, and we can collaborate to promote the inclusion of our peoples in Quebec's economy.
- We are recognized as distinct nations with their own governance structures rather than as minorities to be considered.
- We have fair access to financial and insurance products.

**Do you want to join us and contribute to the realization of our vision
and ambitions?**

**We invite you to visit our website at grandcercle.ca
and contact us!**

We would like to thank all the organizations that participated
in the drafting of this document:

**First Nations of Quebec and Labrador
Economic Development Commission**

Assembly of First Nations Quebec-Labrador

**First Nations Human Resources
Development Commission of Quebec**

**First Nations of Quebec and Labrador
Health and Social Services Commission**

Indigenous Tourism Quebec