



Fédération des chambres
de commerce du Québec

Requests and Recommendations for the Government of Canada for the 2022–2023 Budget

Summary

December 2021

This brief contains a summary of the FCCQ's expectations and its recommendations to the Minister of Finance for consideration in preparing the 2022–2023 budget. In addition to tax measures, which are the responsibility of the Department of Finance, our recommendations target many areas and portfolios, all directly associated with economic development.

Our recommendations focus on **three priorities**:

1- Solutions to the labour shortage

The labour shortage is the main impediment to business competitiveness in Quebec and Canada, affecting all companies and economic sectors. Since the beginning of the pandemic, the issue of labour scarcity has grown more acute, representing the main obstacle to the recovery and growth of Quebec and Canadian businesses.

The 2021–2022 budget and the 2021 Economic and Fiscal Update were dedicated to measures for combatting the pandemic, and so the FCCQ believes that the 2022–2023 budget is a golden opportunity for the Government of Canada to implement measures to address labour shortages. With this brief, the FCCQ hopes to contribute to this process with a set of recommendations, including the following:

- Review the functioning of the Employment Insurance program
- Adopt measures for retaining experienced workers
- Modernize the approach to continuing education by adopting the Voluntary Continuing Education Savings Plan (VCESP)
- Take the steps required to make the Ottawa–Quebec agreement on TFWP relief measures permanent

2- Government finances

The FCCQ would like to express its support for how the government has managed Canada's finances during the pandemic, in particular its willingness to create programs to support Quebec's economy and prevent an even more serious economic crisis. Two years into the pandemic, the issue of government finances is more important than ever, particularly since the pandemic has resulted in large deficits and a sharp increase in Canada's gross debt-to-GDP ratio.

In the current environment, the FCCQ believes the government's priority should be to create conditions conducive to the recovery of business, including by refraining from raising corporate taxes and continuing to financially support companies in sectors that will take longer to recover from the pandemic. The FCCQ would also like to see the government take action to significantly reduce the gross debt-to-GDP ratio in order to ensure the long-term sustainability of public finances and Canada's business environment.

3- Regional development

It is obvious to the FCCQ that an economic recovery cannot be viable and sustainable if it does not benefit all regions of Quebec and Canada. With this in mind, FCCQ would like to see the government support businesses in outlying regions that, in addition to trying to recover from the pandemic, face a host of challenges unique to their areas. More specifically, the FCCQ's recommendations address the issues facing businesses in Quebec's outlying regions, which include the following:

- The need for sustainable transportation, public transit and transport electrification
- Completion of the VIA Rail HFR project
- The need for short-line railways
- The need for investment in regional airports

Full Brief

As mentioned above, this is only a summary of the FCCQ's expectations. To consult the full brief on the FCCQ's pre-budget recommendations, click [here](#) [in French only].