

2017-2018 QUÉBEC BUDGET SUMMARY

March 28, 2017

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INTRODUCTION

The Minister of Finance Carlos J. Leitão tabled on March 28, the Québec Economic Plan for 2017, a third consecutive balanced budget, confirming Québec's good economic and financial health.

Here are the highlights of the 2017 budget.

MEASURES PERTAINING TO INDIVIDUALS

Elimination as of 2016 of the health contribution for low- and middle-income taxpayers

The health contribution will be eliminated retroactively, as of 2016, for all adults whose income for that year does not exceed \$134,095.

Adults whose income for 2016 was greater than \$134,095, other than exempt individuals, must pay for that year a health contribution equal to the lesser of \$1,000 or 4% of the amount by which their income for the year exceeds \$134,095.

Revenu Québec will be responsible for cancelling or recalculating the amount for 2016.

A new notice of assessment for 2016 will be sent, not later than June 30, 2017, to all taxpayers in respect of whom Revenu Québec has already determined, on the date of the budget speech, the amount of the health contribution payable for the year.

General tax reduction and simplification of the calculation of personal tax credits

The government grants a tax reduction in the form of an increase of the basic tax credit granted to all individuals, other than trusts.

The general tax reduction will raise the zero-tax threshold from \$14,544 to \$14,890 as of the 2017 taxation year.

Currently, the Québec tax system uses the rate applicable to the second taxable income bracket of its tax table (20%) to calculate personal tax credits.

Amendments will therefore be made to the tax legislation so that personal tax credits are calculated according to the rate applicable to the first taxable income bracket of the personal income tax table – 16% – with no reduction in the value of the personal tax credits.

[Table 1](#) in appendix shows the amounts that will be granted for the 2017 taxation year for the purpose of calculating the various personal tax credits.

For greater clarity, eligible medical expenses, eligible expenses to obtain medical care not provided in the region where an individual lives, and interest paid on a student loan will continue to be converted into a tax credit at the rate of 20%. The same is true of the first \$200 in gifts included in the calculation of the tax credit for gifts.

As of the 2018 taxation year, each of the amounts granted for the purpose of calculating personal tax credits will be automatically indexed each year.

Terms of calculation of certain personal tax credits

Changes will be made to the terms of calculation of certain personal tax credits so that there is no tax impact further to the reduction of the applicable conversion rate from 20% to 16%. Therefore, modifications will be made in the three following situations:

- > Tax credit for persons living alone, with respect to age and for retirement income;
- > Tax credits for dependants;
- > Adjustment of the basic tax credit following receipt of an income replacement indemnity (CNESST, SAAQ, other indemnities).

Clarifications concerning source deductions of income tax

For the 2017 taxation year, income tax must be deducted at source as if the amounts used to calculate personal tax credits had not been increased and the rate applicable to the first taxable income bracket of the personal income tax table had not been retained as the rate for converting these amounts into tax credits.

Extension to March 31, 2018 of the eligibility period under the RénoVert tax credit

The period during which a renovation agreement may be entered into with a qualified contractor for the purposes of the RénoVert tax credit will be extended by one year, to March 31, 2018 and all expenses will have to be paid before January 1, 2019.

Renovation agreements entered into after March 31, 2017 and before April 1, 2018 may relate to all eco-friendly renovation work currently recognized for the purposes of the

RénoVert tax credit, with the exception of the construction, renovation, modification or rebuilding of a system for the discharge, collection and disposal of waste water, toilet effluents or grey water, since a new refundable tax credit will apply to such work as of April 1, 2017.

New temporary refundable tax credit for the upgrading of residential waste water treatment systems

This new refundable tax credit will be introduced temporarily.

Briefly, the financial assistance under this tax credit, which may reach \$5,500 per eligible dwelling, will correspond to 20% of the portion, in excess of \$2,500, of qualified expenditures paid by an individual to have recognized work carried out to upgrade the waste water treatment system of the individual's principal residence or the individual's cottage.

This tax credit will apply to individuals who have a qualified contractor carry out such work under a service agreement entered into after March 31, 2017 and before April 1, 2022.

Eligible dwelling

For the purposes of the tax credit, a particular eligible dwelling of an individual will generally mean a dwelling located in Québec, whose construction was completed before January 1, 2017 and of which the individual is the owner at the time the expenditures attributable to the carrying out of the recognized work are incurred, where, at that time, the dwelling is, or is part of, an isolated dwelling within the meaning of the Regulation respecting waste water disposal systems for isolated dwellings and is:

- > the individual's principal place of residence; or
- > a cottage suitable for year-round occupancy that is normally occupied by the individual.

Recognized work

Construction, renovation, modification, rebuilding, relocation or enlargement of a system for the discharge, collection and disposal of waste water, toilet effluents or grey water of an eligible dwelling, will be considered recognized work. Recognized work will also include necessary site restoration work.

However, work may be recognized only if the carrying out of the work is awarded to a qualified contractor under the terms of an agreement entered into after March 31, 2017 and before April 1, 2022.

At the time the agreement is entered into, the contractor must be a person or a partnership with an establishment in Québec.

In addition, the contractor must, at the time the work is carried out, hold an appropriate licence issued by the Régie du bâtiment du Québec and the licence security.

Qualified expenditures

Qualified expenditures must be paid in the year and will correspond to:

- > the cost of permits necessary to carry out the work, including the cost of studies carried out to obtain the permits;
- > the cost of services provided by the contractor to carry out the work, including, as applicable, the related goods and services tax and Québec sales tax;
- > the cost of movable property that is used in the carrying out of the work, including, as applicable, the related goods and services tax and Québec sales tax, provided the movable property was acquired after March 31, 2017 from the contractor or a merchant holding a registration number assigned under the Act respecting the Québec sales tax and complies with, where required, the standards established by the Regulation respecting waste water disposal systems for isolated dwellings.

Excluded expenditure

An excluded expenditure for a year will mean any portion of an individual's expenditures attributable to the carrying out of recognized work provided for in a service agreement in relation to an eligible dwelling of the individual that is:

- > used to finance the cost of recognized work;
- > attributable to goods or services supplied by a person not at arm's length with the individual or one of the other owners of the dwelling, unless the person holds a registration number assigned under the Act respecting the Québec sales tax;

- > deductible in the calculation of an individual's business or property income for the year or any other year;
- > included in the capital cost of depreciable property.

Refund or other form of assistance

An individual's qualified expenditures must be reduced by, as the case may be, the amount of any government assistance in excess of the first \$2,500 granted in that respect, any non-government assistance, any refund or other form of assistance.

However, government assistance in the form of tax relief granted under the Québec tax system or federal tax system will not have to be subtracted from an individual's qualified expenditures.

Greater recognition of the special needs of inhabitants of the Communauté maritime des Îles-de-la-Madeleine

Currently, Québec tax regulations provide that northern zones and intermediate zones are those prescribed by the federal tax regulations for the purposes of the northern residents deduction granted under the federal tax system.

The Québec tax regulations will be amended so that the Magdalen Islands are considered northern zones as of the 2017 taxation year (intermediate zone before 2017).

MEASURES PERTAINING TO BUSINESSES

Adjustment to the refocusing of the SBD – Replacement of the hours worked criterion

The qualification criterion concerning the minimum number of hours worked will be replaced by a qualification criterion concerning the minimum number of hours paid.

The thresholds of 5,000 hours and 5,500 hours will be kept for the purposes of the new qualification criterion.

The special rules applicable to the qualification criterion based on hours worked will be adapted to take into account the fact that the qualification

criterion will now be based on hours paid for a corporation's employees.

More specifically, the following rules will apply:

- > a maximum of 40 hours per week per employee will be considered;
- > the expenditure relating to hours paid for an employee must have been incurred for the taxation year covered by the application for the SBD;
- > the 5,500 hours applying to the current year will be based on a full taxation year and this threshold will be reduced proportionally in the case of a short fiscal period; this proportional reduction will not be applied for the previous year consolidated basis test;
- > with respect to the previous year consolidated basis test, the corporation must consider the taxation years ended during the calendar year preceding the year during which the corporation's taxation year ends;
- > each corporation in a group of associated corporations must count its employees' hours paid; for greater clarity, the hours paid for a subcontractor that is acting on behalf of a corporation will not be counted by the corporation, but may be counted by the subcontractor.

The tax legislation will also be amended for the purposes of the SBD so that a person who holds, directly or indirectly, most of the shares with full voting rights of the capital stock of a corporation is deemed to have received remuneration from said corporation for the taxation year of the corporation, corresponding to a conversion factor of 1.1 for each hour the person worked as an active participant in the corporation's activities for the year. The corporation must document the hours worked by a person in these circumstances.

Application date

Replacement of this qualification criterion will apply to taxation years beginning after December 31, 2016.

Increase in the additional deduction for transportation costs of certain remote manufacturing SMEs

To provide more assistance to manufacturing SMBs that carry out their activities in the "special remote area", the additional deduction rate for

transportation fees that currently can reach 7% of the gross income will be raised to 10%.

This additional deduction rate will apply to taxation years beginning after March 28, 2017.

Introduction of an additional deduction for transportation costs of all SMEs located in the special remote area

Eligible corporation

The additional deduction will be available to all Canadian-controlled private corporations whose paid-up capital, calculated on a consolidated basis, is less than \$15 million. These corporations, regardless of their sector of activity, may claim this deduction in the calculation of their net income.

Eligible corporations may benefit partially from the deduction for a taxation year, where their paid-up capital, calculated on a consolidated basis for the year, is between \$10 million and \$15 million, the additional deduction being linearly reduced in accordance.

Determination of the level of activities in the special remote area

An eligible corporation may claim the 10% additional deduction for a taxation year, where the corporation shows that over 50% of its “cost of labour” or over 50% of its “cost of capital” for the taxation year is attributable to the carrying on of the business located in the special remote area.

Moreover, there will be no limit on the additional deduction for transportation costs of SMEs located in the special remote area.

The additional deduction for transportation costs of SMEs located in the special remote area and the additional deduction for transportation costs of remote manufacturing SMEs cannot be cumulated by a corporation for a given taxation year.

Application date

This tax measure will apply to an eligible corporation’s taxation year that begins after March 28, 2017.

Improvements to the tax holiday for large investment projects

The budget provides for:

- > a three-year extension of the tax holiday eligibility period for large investment projects, until December 31, 2020;
- > a change to the tax holiday eligibility rules to promote the expansion of large investment projects already under way.

These amendments will apply to large investment projects in relation to which an application for an initial qualification certificate is filed after March 28, 2017.

Introduction of an additional capital cost allowance of 35%

The tax legislation and regulations will be amended to introduce an additional capital cost allowance where a business acquires manufacturing or processing equipment (cat. 53) and computer equipment (cat. 50) before April 1, 2019.

Qualified property

Qualified property must be put to use within a reasonable time of its acquisition and be used by the taxpayer mainly in the course of carrying on a business during a period of 730 consecutive days following the day it is first put to use, except in the case of loss or involuntary destruction of the property – caused, among other things, by accident or theft – or in the case of a major breakdown of the property.

Such property must be used mainly in Québec throughout the 730-day period. In addition, the property must be new at the time of its acquisition and be acquired by the taxpayer after March 28, 2017.

Additional capital cost allowance

A taxpayer will be entitled to the allowance for two taxation years: the taxation year in which the property is first put to use and the taxation year following that year.

The base amount of the allowance will correspond, for a taxation year, to an amount equal to 35% of the amount deducted as depreciation in calculating income attributed to the property for the year in respect of the capital

cost allowance class to which the qualified property belongs.

Special tax

A taxpayer that claims an additional capital cost allowance in respect of qualified property and does not use the property mainly in the course of carrying on a business during a period of 730 consecutive days following the day it is first put to use or does not use it mainly in Québec throughout the 730-day period will be subject to a special tax.

This special tax will correspond to the amount of the additional capital cost allowance obtained by the taxpayer in respect of the property.

Application date

These changes will apply after March 28, 2017 in respect of property acquired after that date and before April 1, 2019.

Higher increases respecting the refundable tax credit for Québec film or television production

The budget calls for an upward revision of the improvements relating to the tax credit for Québec film productions, i.e.:

- > increase in rate from 8% to 16% in the enhancement for productions with no public financial assistance and its adjustment according to the level of public assistance;
- > increase from 8% to 10% in the rate of enhancement for computer-aided special effects and animation;
- > the increase from 8% to 10% and 16% to 20% in the regional improvement rates, depending on the type of production.

Refer to [table 2](#) in appendix.

Changes to the refundable tax credit for film production services

The category of eligible small-budget productions will be eliminated, and the only category maintained will be the category of eligible productions whose entry threshold determined based on production costs will be lowered (\$250,000)

The amendments to be made to the tax legislation and to the *Act respecting the sectoral parameters of certain fiscal measures* will apply

in respect of an eligible production for which an application for an approval certificate is filed with SODEC after March 28, 2017.

Elimination of an applicability condition for the refundable tax credit for the production of multimedia events or environments staged outside Québec

The budget projects an adjustment to the tax credit, to remove the requirement that a foreign company not have establishments in Québec.

Consequently, a Québec company entering into such a contract with a foreign company at arm's length will obtain the tax credit even though said foreign company has an establishment in Québec, whether or not said establishment is directly involved in activities of the contract.

This change will apply in respect of an eligible production whose first public performance takes place after March 28, 2017 and for which an application for an advance ruling or an application for a certificate is submitted to the Société de développement des entreprises culturelles after that day.

Streamlining of the refundable tax credit for corporations specialized in the production of multimedia titles

The *Act respecting the sectoral parameters of certain fiscal measures* will be amended to provide that, solely for the purposes of the 75% criterion (required for the specialized corporation certificate) and the parameters used to determine the tax credit rates, a part of another multimedia title will be deemed an eligible multimedia title, even though it is a component of another title produced by a corporation with an establishment in Québec if it is shown, to the satisfaction of Investissement Québec, that the other title is an eligible multimedia title.

The changes will apply to an application for a specialized corporation certificate submitted to Investissement Québec after March 28, 2017.

Renewal and improvement of the refundable tax credits aimed at encouraging the creation of new financial services corporations

Extension of the time limit for submitting an application for a corporation qualification certificate

Currently, in order for a corporation to be eligible for the refundable tax credits aimed at encouraging the creation of new financial services corporations, the application for a corporation qualification certificate must be submitted to the Minister of Finance no later than December 31, 2017. This time limit will be extended to December 31, 2022.

Addition to eligible expenses

The tax legislation will be amended to add two new eligible expenses:

- > The fees relating to the constitution of a prospectus required by a recognized regulatory or self-regulatory organization of a financial market;
- > The fees paid to a compliance consultant to ensure compliance with the requirements of a recognized regulatory or self-regulatory organization of a financial market.

More specifically, these expenses must be directly attributable to the eligible activities of the corporation.

These changes will apply in respect of expenses incurred by a qualified corporation for a taxation year included, in whole or in part, in the period of validity of its corporation qualification certificate and after March 28, 2017.

Broadening of the refundable tax credit for the production of ethanol in Québec

The refundable tax credit for the production of ethanol in Québec will be modified so that the “eligibility period” no longer refers to a maximum period of ten years and production of biodiesel fuel by a qualified corporation can now qualify for this tax credit.

Under the tax legislation, the tax credit is granted to a qualified corporation for an eligibility period beginning no earlier than April 1, 2006 and ending no later than March 31, 2018.

This change will apply to a qualified corporation whose taxation year ends after March 28, 2017.

OTHER MEASURES

Extension of the compensation tax for financial institutions and maintenance of rates for an additional five-year period

Extension of the application period

It is currently provided that the compensation tax for financial institutions will be eliminated as of March 31, 2019. This period will be extended until March 31, 2024.

[Table 3](#) in appendix shows the new rates of the compensation tax for financial institutions applicable according to the period concerned.

Implementation of a technological solution relying on the possibilities of sales recording modules

To ensure healthy competition and foster tax fairness in the remunerated passenger transportation sector, the government is announcing that a technological solution relying on the possibilities of sales recording modules will be implemented, starting at the end of 2019, in all vehicles offering this type of service, whether they are conventional taxis or vehicles using a new approach. Issuing a bill to customers will be mandatory.

The technological solution will make it possible, in particular, to:

- > collect and record, for each driver, information on vehicle operation;
- > transmit the information to Revenu Québec in real time, confidentially and securely.

Awareness, inspection and investigation team in the tourist accommodation sector

The Québec government intends to establish an awareness, inspection and investigation team in the tourist accommodation sector.

Measures to foster diversion of disagreements away from the court system and access to justice

The government is announcing that legislative amendments to the *Tax Administration Act* will be proposed in order to:

- > enable small businesses with ten employees or fewer to contest a decision rendered following an objection before the Small Claims Division of the Court of Québec, on the same basis as an individual;
- > raise eligibility thresholds in tax cases before the Small Claims Division of the Court of Québec (from \$4,000 to \$15,000).

Encouraging the acquisition and use of electric vehicles

Facilitate the purchase and installation of home charging stations for used electric vehicle buyers

The budget provides that from April 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018, the Roulez vert program will allow used electric vehicle buyers to benefit from a rebate on the purchase and installation of a home charging station.

The maximum financial assistance will be \$600, which is the amount currently available to individuals purchasing a new electric vehicle:

- > \$350 toward the purchase of an eligible charging station;
- > \$250 for installation.

Adjust the Drive Electric program rebate based on the manufacturer's suggested retail price

The budget provides that the rebate available under the Drive Electric component of the Roulez vert program will be adjusted, as of April 1, 2017, based on the manufacturer's suggested retail price. For fully electric vehicles, the rebate amount will be as follows:

- > unchanged for vehicles with a manufacturer's suggested retail price below \$75,000;
- > a maximum of \$3,000 for vehicles with a manufacturer's suggested retail price of at least \$75,000, but less than \$125,000;
- > no rebate for vehicles with a manufacturer's suggested retail price of \$125,000 or more.

For rechargeable hybrid vehicles, the rebate is:

- > unchanged for vehicles with a manufacturer's suggested retail price below \$75,000;
- > no rebate for vehicles with a manufacturer's suggested retail price of \$125,000 or more.

Advance the rebate deadline on conventional hybrid vehicles

The budget provides that the financial assistance available for conventional hybrid vehicles will end starting with the acquisition of 2018 models.

Assistance will continue to be available on the acquisition of new conventional hybrid vehicles for the 2017 and previous model years.

Pilot project to promote the acquisition of used electric vehicles

Project participants will consist of the first 1,000 applicants who acquire a used all electric vehicle that meets the following criteria:

- > is between three and four years old;
- > comes from outside Québec (to avoid having a Québec rebate on new vehicles applied more than once to the same vehicle);
- > was bought or leased from an authorized dealer;
- > comes with a warranty of at least three years or 40,000 km, and has been inspected and certified by an automobile manufacturer;
- > with a manufacturer's suggested retail price below \$125,000 if bought new.

The maximum rebate under this pilot project will be \$4,000, which is 50% of the financial assistance granted in the case of a similar electric vehicle if bought new.

Refer to [table 4](#) in appendix.

Revising the additional registration fee for luxury vehicles

Starting January 1, 2018, vehicles that qualify under the Drive Electric component of the Roulez vert program and priced between \$40,000 and \$75,000 will be exempt from the fee.

APPENDIX

Table 1

Change in the amounts granted for the purpose of calculating personal tax credits for the 2017 taxation year
(dollars)

	20% conversion rate before budget		16% conversion rate after budget	
	Amount granted	Tax reduction	Amount granted	Tax reduction
Basic amount	11 635	2 327	14 890 ⁽¹⁾	2 382 ^{(1),(2)}
Amount for persons living alone				
– Basic amount	1 365 ⁽³⁾	273 ⁽⁴⁾	1 707 ⁽³⁾	273 ^{(2),(4)}
– Supplement for single-parent families	1 685 ⁽³⁾	337 ⁽⁴⁾	2 107 ⁽³⁾	337 ^{(2),(4)}
Amount with respect to age	2 505 ⁽³⁾	501 ⁽⁴⁾	3 132 ⁽³⁾	501 ^{(2),(4)}
Amount for retirement income	2 225 ⁽³⁾	445 ⁽⁴⁾	2 782 ⁽³⁾	445 ^{(2),(4)}
Amount for severe and prolonged impairment in mental or physical functions	2 645	529	3 307	529 ⁽²⁾
Amount for minor children engaged in vocational training or post-secondary studies – per term	2 145 ⁽³⁾	429 ⁽⁴⁾	2 682 ⁽³⁾	429 ^{(2),(4)}
Amount for other dependants	3 125 ⁽³⁾	625 ⁽⁴⁾	3 907 ⁽³⁾	625 ^{(2),(4)}
Transfer of the recognized parental contribution				
– Maximum amount	7 665	1 533 ⁽⁴⁾	9 582	1 533 ^{(2),(4)}
– Reduction when a single term of study has been completed	2 145	429	2 682	429 ⁽²⁾

(1) Taking into account the general tax reduction.

(2) The result is rounded to the nearest dollar.

(3) In certain cases, the amount granted may be reduced on the basis of income.

(4) The amount indicated is the maximum tax reduction.

Table 2

Base rates and rate increases after changes⁽¹⁾
(per cent)

	Rate of the tax credit								
	Base rate	Increases				Minimum rate	Labour expenditure cap	Effective rate	
		Special effects and computer animation	Regional	According to public financial assistance	As a % of production costs				
					As a % of labour expenditure			Minimum	Maximum
French-language or giant-screen production that is not adapted from a foreign format	40	—	10	16	66	50	20	33	
French-language or giant-screen production that is adapted from a foreign format	36	—	10	16	62	50	18	31	
Other production that is not adapted from a foreign format	32	10	20	16	66	50	16	33	
Other production that is adapted from a foreign format	28	10	20	16	62	50	14	31	

(1) The notes of the preceding table apply to this table, with the necessary adaptations.

Table 3**Rates of the compensation tax for financial institutions**

(per cent)

	From December 3, 2014 to March 31, 2022	From April 1, 2022 to March 31, 2024
Amounts paid as wages		
– Bank, loan corporation, trust corporation or corporation trading in securities	4.48	2.80
– Savings and credit union	3.52	2.20
– Any other person ⁽¹⁾	1.44	0.90
Insurance premiums and amounts established in respect of an insurance fund	0.48	0.30

(1) Excluding an insurance company and a professional order that created an insurance fund under section 86.1 of the *Professional Code*. In addition, a financial institution that has not made the joint election provided for in section 150 of the *Excise Tax Act* is no longer subject thereto as of January 1, 2013.

Table 4

Rebate amounts offered under the Drive Electric component of the Roulez vert program⁽¹⁾

	Prior to the March 2017 Economic Plan	After the March 2017 Economic Plan
All-electric vehicles^{(2),(3)}		
– Under \$75 000	\$8 000	\$8 000
– From \$75 000 to less than \$125 000	\$8 000	\$3 000
– \$125 000 or more	\$8 000	—
Rechargeable hybrid vehicles⁽²⁾		
– Under \$75 000	\$500 to \$8 000 ⁽⁴⁾	\$500 to \$8 000 ⁽⁴⁾
– From \$75 000 to less than \$125 000	\$500 to \$8 000 ⁽⁴⁾	—
– \$125 000 or more	\$500 to \$8 000 ⁽⁴⁾	—
New eligible vehicles		
– Limited speed electric motorcycles	—	\$500
– Fuel cell-powered vehicles	—	\$8 000
Conventional hybrid vehicles		
– Rebate amount	\$500	\$500
– End of eligibility	Upon reaching 15 000 rebate requests	Applicable to models from 2018 onwards
Home charging stations⁽⁵⁾		
– Acquisition	\$350	\$350
– Installation	\$250	\$250
– Allow more than one rebate for a same vehicle (but to different owners)	No	Yes

(1) Maximum rebate for purchased vehicles or vehicles leased for 48 months or more. For 12- to 24-month leases, the rebate equals 25% of the maximum rebate. For 24- to 36-month leases, the rebate is 50% of the maximum rebate, and for 36- to 48-month leases, 75% of the maximum rebate.

(2) Applicable to an electric vehicle purchased or leased for 48 months or more.

(3) The rebate for used all-electric vehicles under this pilot project will be 50% of the financial assistance granted in the case of a similar new electric vehicle.

(4) The rebate varies depending on battery capacity. No rebate when battery capacity is less than 4 kWh. The maximum rebate for rechargeable hybrid vehicles with a battery capacity of at least 4 kWh but under 7 kWh is \$500; it is \$4 000 for those with a battery capacity of at least 7 kWh but under 15 kWh, and \$8 000 for those with a battery capacity of 15 kWh or more.

(5) 240-volt charging stations.

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