



NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF QUÉBEC

FIRST SESSION

FORTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE

Bill 493

Interculturalism Act

Introduction

**Introduced by
Madam Catherine Fournier
Member for Marie-Victorin**

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EXPLANATORY NOTES

The purpose of this bill is to assert interculturalism as a model for integration and diversity management in Québec.

The bill establishes a policy that enacts the principles of interculturalism. In particular, the policy recognizes the fact that French is the common language in Québec and that learning it fosters the integration of individuals from diverse ethnocultural backgrounds. The policy also promotes intercultural interactions and the participation of individuals from such backgrounds in the evolution of Québec society in order to contribute to the cultural enrichment of society and the development of a common culture in harmony with the democratic and Québec values expressed in the Charter of human rights and freedoms.

The minister in charge of the administration of the bill may take such measures as the Minister considers appropriate to implement the Québec policy on interculturalism.

The Minister may establish an advisory committee to assist in implementing this bill.

The bill also amends the Charter of human rights and freedoms to add interculturalism as an interpretive principle of the various provisions of the Charter.

LEGISLATION AMENDED BY THIS BILL:

- Charter of human rights and freedoms (chapter C-12).

Bill 493

INTERCULTURALISM ACT

AS Québec is a democratic, pluralistic and inclusive society that fosters harmonious intercultural relations;

AS Québec society is the reflection of Québec's history;

AS the Charter of the French Language recognizes Québec as a people that is in the majority French-speaking and that it is important to ensure the vitality and preservation of the French language;

AS the rights under the Charter of human rights and freedoms must be respected while taking into account Québec's reality regarding the integration of individuals from diverse ethnocultural backgrounds;

THE PARLIAMENT OF QUÉBEC ENACTS AS FOLLOWS:

CHAPTER I

OBJECT

1. The purpose of this Act is to establish interculturalism as a model for integration and management of ethnocultural diversity in Québec.

CHAPTER II

QUÉBEC POLICY ON INTERCULTURALISM

2. It is hereby declared to be the policy of the Gouvernement du Québec to

(1) recognize that integration results from mutual collaboration where Québec society is responsible for fostering the adaptation of individuals from diverse ethnocultural backgrounds, and where every individual from such diverse backgrounds must accept the existing legal order, institutions and culture;

(2) recognize the fact that the integration of individuals from diverse ethnocultural backgrounds requires their participation in Québec society;

(3) recognize and promote the fact that French is the common language of Québec and that learning the French language fosters the integration of individuals from diverse ethnocultural backgrounds;

(4) foster and promote intercultural rapprochement and interactions to facilitate integration and contribute to the cultural enrichment of Québec society;

(5) promote the understanding and creativity that arise from interactions between individuals;

(6) promote the full and fair participation of individuals from diverse ethnocultural backgrounds in the evolution and shaping of all aspects of Québec society in order to foster the development of a common culture in harmony with the democratic and Québec values expressed in the Charter of human rights and freedoms (chapter C-12), and assist them in eliminating any barriers to such participation;

(7) encourage and assist with the establishment of reasonable, necessary measures to facilitate the social and cultural integration of individuals from diverse ethnocultural backgrounds;

(8) foster, in individuals from diverse ethnocultural backgrounds, the development of a sense of belonging to the place where they live; and

(9) ensure that all individuals receive equal treatment and equal protection under the law.

3. The policy also establishes that all bodies must

(1) ensure that all individuals have an equal opportunity to obtain employment and advancement;

(2) promote policies, programs and actions that foster the contribution of individuals from diverse ethnocultural backgrounds to the evolution of Québec society and the development of a common culture;

(3) promote policies, programs and actions that, by fostering the learning of the French language and the democratic and Québec values expressed in the Charter of human rights and freedoms, allow individuals from diverse ethnocultural backgrounds to integrate into Québec society;

(4) collect statistical data in order to develop policies, programs and actions that are consistent with Québec policy on interculturalism; and

(5) carry on their activities in a manner that takes into account Québec interculturalism.

For the purposes of this Act, “body” means a public body within the meaning of the Act respecting Access to documents held by public bodies and the Protection of personal information (chapter A-2.1).

CHAPTER III

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE QUÉBEC POLICY ON INTERCULTURALISM

4. The Minister promotes and encourages the implementation of the Québec policy on interculturalism, and may provide advice and assistance regarding the development and implementation of programs and actions for this purpose.

5. The Minister takes such measures as the Minister considers appropriate to implement the Québec policy on interculturalism and, for that purpose, may, in particular,

(1) encourage and assist individuals and bodies to project, enhance and promote interculturalism in their activities in Québec and abroad;

(2) carry out or support research relating to interculturalism and foster advances in knowledge in the field;

(3) encourage and promote intercultural rapprochement and interactions;

(4) encourage and assist businesses, employers' associations, labour unions, voluntary organizations and other private organizations to ensure full participation of individuals from diverse ethnocultural backgrounds in Québec society, in particular the social and economic aspects, and to promote respect and better knowledge of the intercultural reality of Québec;

(5) encourage the preservation, enhancement, sharing and dynamic expression of the intercultural heritage of Québec;

(6) facilitate learning of the French language and the democratic and Québec values expressed in the Charter of human rights and freedoms for all individuals; and

(7) assist individuals from diverse ethnocultural backgrounds in overcoming any discriminatory barriers.

6. The Minister may, with the approval of the Government, enter into agreements or arrangements with a government other than the Gouvernement du Québec, or with an international organization, or with a department or body of that government or organization, in order to foster the intercultural character of Québec.

7. The other ministers, in the execution of their respective mandates, take such measures as they consider appropriate to implement the Québec policy on interculturalism.

CHAPTER IV

QUÉBEC INTERCULTURALISM ADVISORY COMMITTEE

8. The Minister may establish an advisory committee to assist the Minister in implementing this Act or on any other matter relating to interculturalism and, in consultation with such organizations representing intercultural interests as the Minister deems appropriate, may appoint the members and designate the Chair of the committee.

9. The Minister determines the remuneration, employee benefits and other conditions of employment of the members of the committee.

10. Not later than 31 July each year, the committee established under section 8 sends a report to the Minister on its activities for the preceding fiscal year.

11. The Minister tables the report in the National Assembly within 30 days of receiving it or, if the Assembly is not sitting, within 30 days of resumption. The competent committee of the National Assembly examines the report.

CHAPTER V

AMENDING PROVISION

CHARTER OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS

12. The Charter of human rights and freedoms (chapter C-12) is amended by inserting the following section after section 50.1:

“**50.2.** The Charter shall be interpreted so as to promote the preservation and enhancement of interculturalism.”

CHAPTER VI

TRANSITIONAL AND FINAL PROVISIONS

13. The Minister designated by the Government is responsible for the administration of this Act.

14. This Act comes into force on *(insert the date of assent to this Act)*.

