

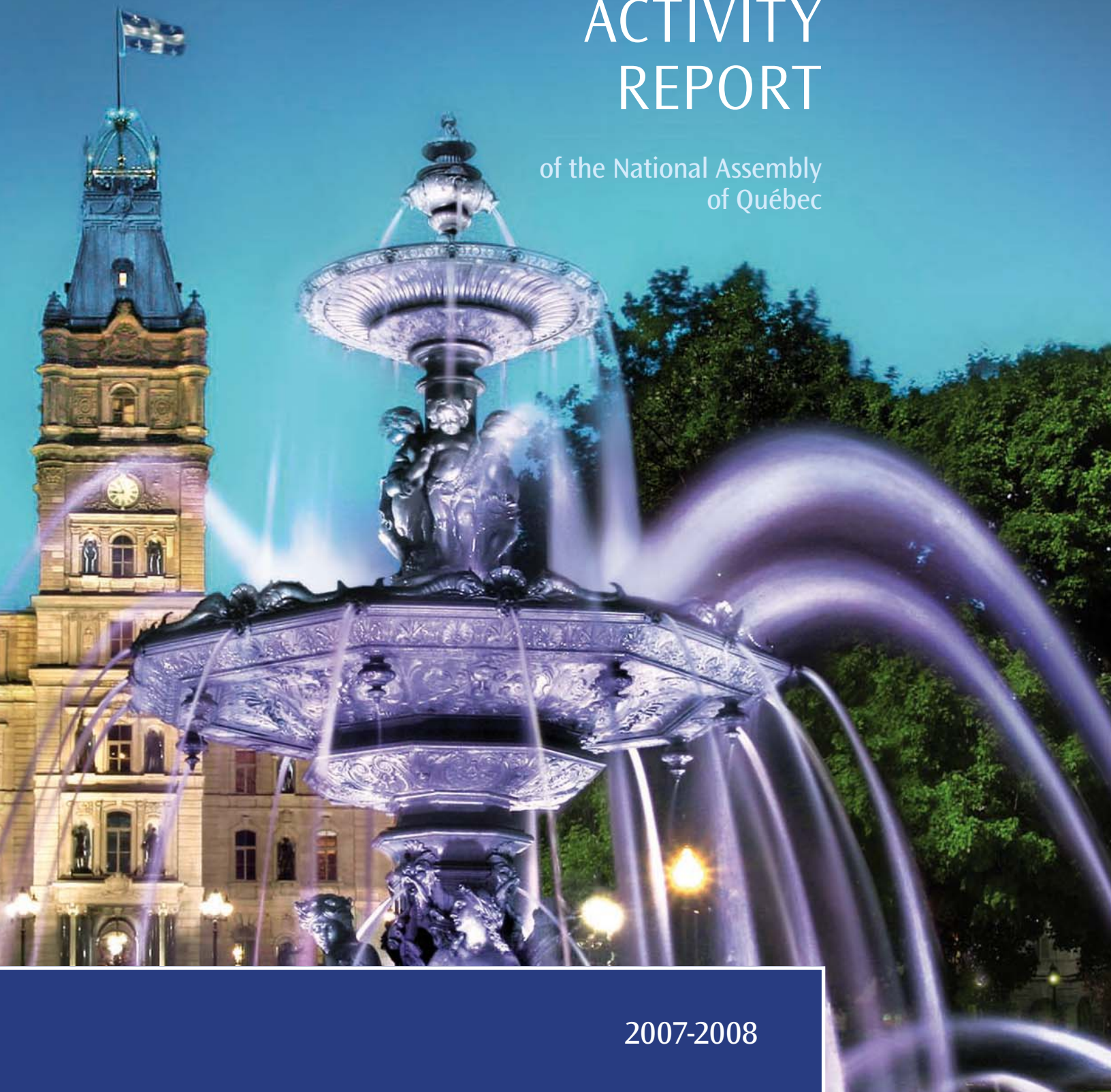


ASSEMBLÉE NATIONALE
QUÉBEC

A place for every citizen

ACTIVITY REPORT

of the National Assembly
of Québec



2007-2008

www.assnat.qc.ca

ACTIVITY REPORT

of the National Assembly of Québec



ASSEMBLÉE NATIONALE
QUÉBEC

Place aux citoyens

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Highlights

2007-2008

Three recognized parties at the National Assembly

The distribution of seats of the 38th Legislature is especially significant: this is the first minority government since 1878. Fifty-six new Members made their entry into the Parliament for a first term of office and three parliamentary groups are represented. This situation required that adjustments be made to the Standing Orders of the National Assembly. Hence, modifications were particularly brought to the rules pertaining to Oral Question Period, to the membership of the standing committees, to the allocation of speaking times and to interpellations in order to take into consideration this new reality. The elected President of this Assembly is Mr. Michel Bissonnet, and this, for a second term, while the Vice-Presidents are, in order, Ms. Fatima Houda-Pepin as well as Messrs. Jacques Chagnon and Marc Picard.



Launching of the activities programme for the 400th anniversary of Québec City at the National Assembly

On 13 November 2007 the President of the National Assembly, Mr. Michel Bissonnet, unveiled the Assembly's programme of activities to commemorate the 400th anniversary of Québec City. The schedule of events comprises 15 different activities (conferences, exhibitions, publications, etc.) on the theme "400 years of traditions and institutions". The opening of the Visitors' Centre, to better welcome citizens and visitors passing through, is part of this programme. Furthermore, still in connection with the celebrations for the 400th anniversary of Québec City, the Research Chair in Democracy and Parliamentary Institutions was created by Laval University and the National Assembly to further improve knowledge of our parliamentary institutions.





New Table for the clerks

A silent witness to the parliamentary debates for over a century, the clerks' Table is at the heart of the proceedings of the National Assembly. To ensure the proper conduct of proceedings, the President of the National Assembly is assisted by the Secretary General and his associates. Since the former clerks' Table no longer met the requirements of their work and that this heritage object could not be altered, the know-how and creativity of several National Assembly employees were drawn upon to design a table that fit into the heritage context of the premises. Since the beginning of the 38th Legislature, the National Assembly of Québec has use of an ergonomical clerks' Table that is equipped with the latest technology.



The National Assembly hosts the Annual Meeting of the CSG/ERC

From 12 to 15 August 2007, the President of the Québec National Assembly, Mr. Michel Bissonnet, welcomed the 47th Annual Meeting and Regional Policy Forum of the *Eastern Regional Conference of the Council of State Governments* (CSG/ERC). This annual meeting of parliamentarians, the most important in the Northeastern part of North America, brought together some 800 delegates, government representatives as well as experts and university scholars hailing from the ERC member States and Canadian provinces.



Inauguration of the Tourny Fountain

The Tourny Fountain, a present from the Simons family to the people of Québec City to commemorate the 400 years of the city's existence, was inaugurated on 3 July 2007, the anniversary day of Québec City, in front of the Parliament Building grounds. Officials and the general public took part in the opening of the 43 water jets of this fountain, a historical gift that will henceforth adorn the scenery of Parliament Hill. The National Assembly oversees the maintenance of this fountain that attracts throngs of visitors.

A word from the President



I am proud to present to you the *Activity Report of the National Assembly of Québec for 2007-2008* which provides an assessment of a year of intensive work on several fronts. Indeed, the First Session of the Thirty-eighth Legislature began on 8 May 2007. On this occasion, 56 newly-elected Members began their term of office at the Parliament: I take this opportunity to congratulate them. An uncommon event also occurred: three political parties being henceforth recognized as parliamentary groups at the National Assembly. This situation required that we amend the Standing Orders of the National Assembly. Furthermore, the Members honoured me by reelecting me to the Chair of the National Assembly: I thank them for having reiterated their confidence in me and for having allowed me to continue to fulfill this noble duty.

As we are committed to increasingly making the National Assembly the house of the people, we have dedicated our efforts toward making our role better known to the citizens and toward inciting them to come and visit us. In order to do this, we have used several methods: further development of the Assembly Channel, various exhibitions and the inauguration of our new Visitors' Centre.

In November 2007, we officially announced our programme of activities to celebrate the 400th anniversary of Québec City. How could it be otherwise, when the history of our institution and that of the city are so closely linked? We are thus implementing some fifteen activities on the theme "400 years of tradition and political institutions". These activities are orchestrated around two main components: on the one hand, culture and entertainment, and, on the other hand, history and research. One element of the programme is the creation of the Research Chair on Democracy and Parliamentary Institutions, which came to be in 2007 following a partnership between Laval University and the National Assembly, an achievement of which I am especially proud.

I hope that this report will enable you to appreciate our achievements and recognize the efforts we have made to secure a place in the collective memory on the occasion of this historic year.

The President of the National Assembly of Québec,

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Michel Bissonnet".

Michel Bissonnet

A word from the Secretary General

I join my voice to that of the President in presenting this ninth report on the activities of the National Assembly. The year 2007-2008, which was characterized by the beginning of the 38th Legislature, brought with it a multitude of activities focussing on the welcoming of newly-elected and reelected Members. This effervescence was most demanding for the staff members of the Assembly, whom I wish to congratulate, not only for their concerted effort, but also for their commitment.



If the majority of the personnel contributed in some form or another to the proper conduct of the proceedings of the 38th Legislature, other persons wholeheartedly involved themselves in long-range projects: I am referring here more particularly to the implementation of the *Stratégie d'affaires en gestion intégrée des ressources* (SAGIR, business solution for the integrated management of resources), which required a tremendous amount of energy on their part. I also am thinking of the new clerks' Table, of which we are very proud, not only because it stems from the collaboration of several administrative branches, who combined their efforts, ideas, creativity and know-how, but also because it is an innovative achievement.

Lastly, the year also distinguished itself owing to the preparations surrounding the activities that we have programmed to mark the 400th anniversary of Québec City. Some of our projects for this occasion have taken form in recent months, among others, the launching of the work *L'hôtel du Parlement, mémoire du Québec* and the inauguration of our new Visitors' Centre. Although of a vastly different nature, these accomplishments have this in common: they are remarkable and they contribute to making the Parliament Building better known to the population.

Beyond the achievements of 2008, I know that the daily efforts of the personnel of the National Assembly have contributed to supporting the Members in the exercise of their duties. This report bears witness to this.

The Secretary General of the National Assembly of Québec,


François Côté

ACTIVITY REPORT

of the National Assembly of Québec

THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY



ITS MISSION

The National Assembly of Québec constitutes the foundation of the legislative power. It is composed of the Members elected by the population of Québec in each of the 125 electoral divisions. The responsibility of debating and passing bills and the budget lies with the Members. They also have the role of supervising the actions of the Government, particularly during Oral Questions and Answers and during the consideration of the Government's estimates of expenditure, and of discussing matters of public interest. The duration of the collective term of office of these Members, which is called a "legislature", is provided for in the Constitution and may not exceed five years.

The National Assembly and the Lieutenant-Governor form the Parliament of Québec. This Parliament assumes all the powers conferred on the Legislature of Québec. (An Act respecting the National Assembly)

GENERAL ELECTIONS IN QUÉBEC

Three parliamentary groups at the National Assembly

On 26 March 2007, Québec elected a minority government for the first time since 1878. There are now three recognized parliamentary groups at the National Assembly, which is a first since the passage of the Standing Orders of the National Assembly, in 1984.

Distribution of seats at the National Assembly as at 31 March 2008

As at 31 March 2008, the distribution of the 125 seats according to the political parties represented at the National Assembly was as follows:

	Number of seats
Québec Liberal Party (QLP)	48
Action démocratique du Québec (ADQ)	41
Parti québécois (PQ)	34
Vacant seats (Bourget, Pointe-aux-Trembles)	2

Parliamentary group:

To be considered a parliamentary group, a political party must have elected not fewer than 12 Members or received not less than 20 % of the popular vote in the most recent general election.

THE THREE POWERS OF THE QUÉBEC STATE

LEGISLATIVE POWER

Examines, discusses, amends and passes laws.

Supervises the action of the executive power. Discusses matters of public interest.



Parliament

EXECUTIVE POWER

Determines policies to guide the actions of the State.

Administers and controls the State in accordance with the laws passed by the legislative power.



Government

JUDICIAL POWER

Interprets the laws passed by the legislative power.

Decides whether a citizen or a group has acted in accordance with the law.



Courts

As a result of the general elections held on 26 March 2007, the National Assembly is composed of 56 newly-elected Members and 69 reelected Members. Thirty-nine Members of the 37th Legislature were defeated, while 15 did not run for office again. At dissolution, two seats were vacant.

Swearing-in of Members

To be permitted to sit in the National Assembly, Members must take two oaths of allegiance. The first stems from the Constitution Act, 1867, and reads as follows: “I, [name of the Member], do swear [solemnly declare] That I will be faithful and bear true Allegiance to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.”

The second oath, which is taken in pursuance of the provisions of the Act respecting the National Assembly, is worded as follows: “I, [name of the Member], declare under oath that I will be loyal to the people of Québec and that I will perform the duties of Member honestly and justly in conformity with the constitution of Québec.”

The taking of the oath is one of the most important events in parliamentary life. It is the gateway to a Member’s most esteemed privilege, that of freedom of speech and its corollary, parliamentary immunity. This is a solemn act, a commitment on the honour of the individual who takes the oath to be loyal to authority, to respect the will of the people and to act in all honesty and justice for the benefit of his fellow citizens.

After having taken these oaths before the Secretary General of the National Assembly, the Member signs the Oath Book of the National Assembly. He then receives the Member’s Medal, the reverse side of which bears the oath of loyalty to the people of Québec, as well as the parliamentarian’s pin, which identifies him as a Member. The Members of the 38th Legislature took the oath over a course of three sittings that took place between 5 and 25 April 2007.

Welcoming of Members

General elections mark the beginning of parliamentary life for the newly elected candidates: the day following the elections, the National Assembly carries out an important operation for the purpose of enabling the new Members to experience a harmonious adaptation to their new duties.

Consequently, the day after the elections of 26 March 2007, the Assembly communicated with the new Members to provide them with all of the information they required for the decisions they were to take during the first weeks of their term of office.

Moreover, as early as 11 April 2007, the parliamentarians, their spouses and their staff were convened to take part in hospitality activities and training sessions on the organization of the Assembly, the organization of parliamentary proceedings, their work conditions and the services provided to them by the administration of the National Assembly.

Election of the President and of the Vice-Presidents

After the general elections, the Members must elect a president whose role is to chair the meetings of the Assembly, direct its services and represent it in its relations with other parliaments.

On 8 May 2007, Mr. Michel Bissonnet was reelected President of the National Assembly by secret ballot, in compliance with the provisional rules adopted for the circumstance by the Members of the National Assembly. It was the third time since 1999 that the election of the President was conducted in this manner. Three vice-presidents were in turn elected: Ms. Fatima Houda-Pepin, the Member for La Pinière, as well as Messrs. Jacques Chagnon, the Member for Westmount—Saint-Louis, and Marc Picard, the Member for Chutes-de-la-Chaudière.

Temporary regulations and rulings from the Chair regarding the parliamentary proceedings

At the outcome of the general elections of 26 March 2007 and within the context of a minority government, the National Assembly temporarily amended some of its rules of parliamentary procedure. These amendments, which stem from the decisions unanimously agreed to by the three parliamentary groups, are in effect for the duration of the 38th Legislature. Among them, only one directly concerns the proceedings of the National Assembly, namely the rule regarding calling attention to the want of a quorum. The other modifications concern parliamentary committee proceedings.

Furthermore, owing to the new composition of the Assembly, the President rendered several rulings to ensure the proper conduct of proceedings. Hence, the conduct of Oral Questions and Answers, the distribution of the “Wednesday motions” (business standing in the name of Members in opposition) and interpellations as well as the allocation of speaking time in various debates were the subject of rulings from the Chair.

Contribution of the administrative personnel

Each general election requires an important contribution on behalf of the administrative personnel as regards support services to defeated, newly elected or reelected Members. This type of assistance focuses primarily on the management of arrivals and departures among the political personnel, the management of riding offices, office planning and the provision of computer equipment and telephony services, cable television and Internet in the electoral divisions and at the Parliament Building, the updating of the Internet site and promotional publications, training sessions given to new Members and to the consulting services working with Members and political staff in relation to the elections.

These activities were prepared before the elections were called and the services were rendered up to several months after election day.



DID YOU KNOW?

The **quorum** is the least number of parliamentarians whose presence is required in order that the Assembly or its committee of the whole may sit. It is set at one-sixth of its members, including the President, which represents 21 Members out of 125. When a standing committee is sitting, this number is reduced to one-tenth of the Members, including the President, namely 13 Members out of 125. For a Member to be permitted to call attention to the want of a quorum, at least six Members of this parliamentary group must be present. When a committee is sitting, this number is reduced to three.

By-elections

A by-election is held in an electoral division for the purpose of filling a vacancy arising from the resignation or death of a Member or even from a legal ruling. When a seat becomes vacant, a government order instituting the holding of an election must be forwarded to the Chief Electoral Officer no later than six months as from the first day of the vacancy.

In compliance with a government order dated 22 August 2007, a by-election was held on 24 September 2007, in the electoral division of Charlevoix, at the outcome of which Ms. Pauline Marois (PQ) was declared elected by the Chief Electoral Officer.

“Who are our Members of the 38th Legislature?”

As at 31 March 2008, women, of whom there are 32, occupied 25.6 % of the seats in the National Assembly. Nine among them sit on the Executive Council, thus forming 47.3 % of the executive.

Members hail from various professional and academic backgrounds.

There are 14 former mayors among the current Members.

The principal professional occupations of Members before their election were:

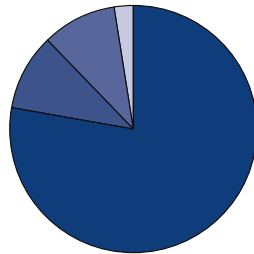
Administrators	21 %
Professors	15 %
Lawyers	12 %
Merchants and industrial entrepreneurs	10 %
Public servants	8 %

Among the most prevalent university disciplines are:

Law	23 %
Administration	15 %
Political science	10 %
Teaching, education, education science	8 %

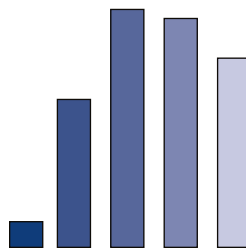
Academic background:

University	78 %
College	9.8 %
High school and vocational training	9.8 %
Data not available or other	2.4 %



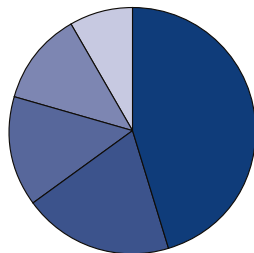
Distribution of Members per age group:

20-29 years	4
30-39 years	22
40-49 years	35
50-59 years	34
60 years and over	28



Parliamentary experience of Members:

First term of office	56
Second term of office	24
Third term of office	18
Fourth term of office	15
Fifth to eighth term of office	10



The Members of the National Assembly have on average 6 years and 2 months of parliamentary experience.

The roles of a Member: legislator, controller and intermediary

The primary activity of the Member is his participation in the legislative process. As a legislator, he examines, analyzes and votes on bills at the National Assembly. This role is carried out in several stages, both in the Assembly and in the standing committees.

Furthermore, the Member disposes of several methods to control the actions of the Government. It should be mentioned, among other methods, the interrogation of Ministers on topics of current interest during Oral Question Period, as well as the examination of the activities and management of ministries in committee. He plays an active part during public consultations in parliamentary committee with regard to the main societal issues.

He also exercises the role of intermediary between his constituents and the public administration. The Member represents the constituents of his electoral division. He defends the interests of his fellow citizens and explains their needs to the Government machinery.

Resignations

Three Members resigned in 2007. They are:



Mr. Rosaire Bertrand (PQ)

*Riding
of Charlevoix*

First elected:
on 12 September 1994

Date of resignation:
on 14 August 2007



Ms. Diane Lemieux (PQ)

*Riding
of Bourget*

First elected:
on 30 November 1998

Date of resignation:
on 17 October 2007



Mr. André Boisclair (PQ)

*Riding of
Pointe-aux-Trembles*

First elected:
on 25 September 1989

Date of resignation:
on 15 November 2007

THE MEMBERS OF THE 38TH LEGISLATURE



JEAN CHAREST
Premier
Sherbrooke



JEAN-MARC FOURNIER
Government
House Leader
Châteauguay



HENRI-FRANÇOIS GAUTRIN
Deputy Government
House Leader
Verdun



BENOÎT PELLETIER
Deputy Government
House Leader
Chapleau



NORMAN MacMILLAN
Chief Government
Whip
Papineau



LUCIE CHARLEBOIS
Deputy Government
Whip
Soulanges



YVON VALLIÈRES
Caucus Chair
Richmond



PIERRE ARCAND
Mont-Royal



VINCENT AUCLAIR
Vimont



RAYMOND BACHAND
Outremont



LINE BEAUCHAMP
Bourassa-Sauvé



CLAUDE BÉCHARD
Kamouraska-Témiscouata



LAWRENCE S. BERGMAN
D'Arcy-McGee



MARGUERITE BLAIS
Saint-Henri—Sainte-Anne



JULIE BOULET
Lavolette



ROCH CHOLETTE
Hull



MAURICE CLERMONT
Mille-Îles



RUSSELL COPEMAN
Notre-Dame-de-Grâce



PHILIPPE COUILLARD
Jean-Talon



MICHELLE COURCHESNE
Fabre



EMMANUEL DUBOURG
Viau



JACQUES P. DUPUIS
Saint-Laurent



MONIQUE GAGNON-TREMBLAY
Saint-François



JOHANNE GONTHIER
Mégantic-Compton



SAM HAMAD
Louis-Hébert



YOLANDE JAMES
Nelligan



MONIQUE JÉRÔME-FORGET
Marguerite-Bourgeoys



GEOFFREY KELLEY
Jacques-Cartier



CHARLOTTE L'ÉCUYER
Pontiac



LAURENT LESSARD
Frontenac



YVON MARCOUX
Vaudeuil



PIERRE MARSAN
Robert-Baldwin



NICOLE MÉNARD
Laporte



NATHALIE NORMANDEAU
Bonaventure



GUY OUELLETTE
Chomedey



FRANÇOIS OUIMET
Marquette



ALAIN PAQUET
Laval-des-Rapides



PIERRE PARADIS
Brome-Missisquoi



PIERRE REID
Orford



GERRY SKLAVOUNOS
Laurier-Dorion



CHRISTINE ST-PIERRE
Acadie



LISE THÉRIAULT
Anjou



TONY TOMASSI
LaFontaine



STÉPHANIE VALLÉE
Gatineau



DAVID WHISSELL
Argenteuil



MICHEL BISSONNET
President
Jeanne-Mance—Viger



FATIMA HOUDA-PEPIN
First Vice-President
La Pinière



JACQUES CHAGNON
Second Vice-President
Westmount—Saint-Louis



MARC PICARD
Third Vice-President
Chutes-de-la-Chaudière

2007

AS AT 31 MARCH 2008



MARIO DUMONT
Leader of the Official Opposition
Rivière-du-Loup



SÉBASTIEN PROULX
Official Opposition
House Leader
Trois-Rivières



SYLVIE ROY
Deputy Official Opposition
House Leader
Lotbinière



FRANÇOIS BONNARDEL
Chief Official
Opposition Whip
Shefford



LUCILLE MÉTHÉ
Deputy Official
Opposition Whip
Saint-Jean



PIERRE GINGRAS
Caucus Chair
Blainville



PIERRE MICHEL AUGER
Champlain



PASCAL BEAUPRÉ
Joliette



FRANÇOIS BENJAMIN
Berthier



HUBERT BENOIT
Montmorency



ÉRIC CAIRE
La Peltre



MARTIN CAMIRAND
Prévost



ÉRIC CHARBONNEAU
Johnson



JEAN DAMPOUSSE
Maskinongé



ALBERT DE MARTIN
Huntingdon



ROBERT DESCHAMPS
Saint-Maurice



FRANÇOIS DESROCHERS
Mirabel



SIMON-PIERRE DIAMOND
Marguerite-D'Youville



JEAN DOMINGUE
Bellechasse



ÉRIC DORION
Nicolet-Yamaska



RAYMOND FRANCOEUR
Portneuf



JEAN-FRANÇOIS GOSSELIN
Jean-Lesage



GINETTE GRANDMONT
Masson



JANVIER GRONDIN
Beauce-Nord



LINDA LAPOINTE
Groulx



ÉRIC LAPORTE
L'Assomption



LUCIE LEBLANC
Deux-Montagnes



CLAUDE L'ÉCUYER
Saint-Hyacinthe



SYLVAIN LÉGARÉ
Vanier



CHRISTIAN LÉVESQUE
Lévis



RICHARD MERLINI
Chambly



CLAUDE MORIN
Beauce-Sud



CATHERINE MORISSETTE
Charlesbourg



ANDRÉ RIEDL
Iberville



JEAN-FRANÇOIS ROUX
Arthabaska



CLAUDE ROY
Montmagny-L'Islet



MONIQUE ROY VERVILLE
La Prairie



SÉBASTIEN SCHNEEBERGER
Drummond



GILLES TAILLON
Chauveau



JEAN-FRANÇOIS THERRIEN
Terrebonne



PAULINE MAROIS
Leader of the Second Opposition Group
Charlevoix



FRANÇOIS GENDRON
House Leader of the
Second Opposition Group
Abitibi-Ouest



STÉPHANE BÉDARD
Whip of the
Second Opposition Group
Chicoutimi



MAXIME ARSENEAU
Îles-de-la-Madeleine



STÉPHANE BERGERON
Verchères



PASCAL BÉRUBÉ
Matane



VACANT
Pointe-aux-Trembles



CAMIL BOUCHARD
Vachon



ALEXANDRE CLOUTIER
Lac-Saint-Jean



JACQUES CÔTÉ
Dubuc



CLAUDE COUSINEAU
Bertrand



PIERRE CURZI
Borduas



SERGE DESLIÈRES
Beauharnois



RITA DIONNE-MARSO LAIS
Rosemont



DANIELLE DOYER
Matapédia



BERNARD DRAINVILLE
Marie-Victorin



MARJOLAIN DUFOUR
René-Lévesque



LUC FERLAND
Ungava



SYLVAIN GAUDREAU LT
Jonquière



NICOLAS GIRARD
Gouin



LOUISE HAREL
Hochelaga-Maisonneuve



LISETTE LAPOINTE
Crémazie



FRANÇOIS LEGAULT
Rousseau



GUY LELIÈVRE
Gaspé



MARTIN LEMAY
Sainte-Marie—Saint-Jacques



VACANT
Bourget



MARIE MALAVOY
Tailleur



AGNÈS MALTAIS
Taschereau



JOHANNE MORASSE
Rouyn-Noranda—Témiscamingue



SYLVAIN PAGÉ
Lafontaine



IRVIN PELLETIER
Rimouski



LORRAINE RICHARD
Duplessis



SYLVAIN SIMARD
Richelieu



DENIS TROTTER
Roberval



DANIEL TURP
Mercier



ALEXIS WAWANOLATH
Abitibi-Est

THE SEATING PLAN OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY AS AT 31 MARCH 2008

Parliamentary duties

President

He is elected among the Members and his duties are threefold: to chair the sittings of the Assembly while ensuring that the Standing Orders are observed and that the rights and privileges of the National Assembly and of its Members are protected; to oversee the services of the Assembly; to represent the Assembly in Québec and abroad, particularly in its relations with other Parliaments.

Vice-presidents

There are three vice-presidents, the first two of which are elected among the Members of the parliamentary group forming the Government and the third, among the Members of the parliamentary group forming the Official Opposition. They assist the President in his duties and enjoy the same prerogatives and the same authority as the latter when they replace him in his parliamentary duties.

Leader

A Member who is responsible for the parliamentary activity of his party.

House Leader and Deputy House Leader

A Member who is responsible for establishing the parliamentary strategies of his group, assisted and replaced in his duties by his deputy.

Whip and Deputy Whip

A Member who is responsible for discipline within his group and who coordinates the activities of the Members in the Assembly, in committee and within delegations, assisted and replaced in his duties by his deputy.

Caucus Chairman

A Member who is responsible for chairing the proceedings of the caucus of his parliamentary group.

Parliamentary groups

● Parliamentary group forming the Government

The group of Members whose party won the majority of seats in the general elections. Their leader becomes the Premier, and he chooses, generally among the Members of this group, those who shall become Ministers.

● Parliamentary group forming the Official Opposition

The group of Members whose party won the second largest number of seats in the general elections. The leader of this parliamentary group becomes the Leader of the Official Opposition.

● Second Opposition Group

The group of Members whose party won the third largest number of seats in the general elections. The leader of this parliamentary group becomes the Leader of the Second Opposition Group.

Independent Member:

A Member of Parliament who is not a member of a recognized political party under the Standing Orders of the National Assembly or who, during a term of office, leaves a group without joining another. An independent Member may join a parliamentary group at any time during a legislature.

Parliamentary group:

group composed of not fewer than 12 Members elected returned to the Assembly by the same political party or which received not less than 20% of the popular vote in the most recent general election.

THE SEATING PLAN OF THE ASSEMBLY



- ◆ Leader of the Official Opposition
- Vice-President
- Official Opposition House Leader
- ▲ Chief Official Opposition Whip

- ◆ Leader of the Second Opposition Group
- House Leader of the Second Opposition Group
- ▲ Whip of the Second Opposition Group

*Public Servants

- ◆ Premier
- Vice-President
- Government House Leader
- ▲ Chief Government Whip
- Minister

*Sergeant-at-Arms

PARLIAMENTARY WORK



During their term of office, the Members are called upon to discuss a multitude of issues concerning the public affairs of Québec. Several methods are at their disposal in order to examine a question concerning a given societal issue and to fully take part in the parliamentary proceedings. The debates at the National Assembly and in the committees proceed according to a set of rules based on the British parliamentary system guaranteeing freedom of speech to Members and their legal authority over the business of the State.

SCHEDULE OF SITTINGS

The Standing Orders of the National Assembly establish a work calendar that is divided into two annual periods during which the Assembly meets: one in the spring and one in the fall. The spring sessional period takes place from the second Tuesday in March until 23 June at the latest, and the fall sessional period takes place from the third Tuesday in October until 21 December at the latest.

In both spring and fall, the Assembly holds regular sittings in accordance with two distinct schedules: that of the ordinary sessional period and that of the Assembly's extended hours of meeting. The following table illustrates the schedule of the Assembly according to the time of year.

Schedule of the National Assembly sittings

Schedule	Ordinary hours of meeting 2 nd Tuesday in March to 24 May / 3 rd Tuesday in Oct. to 24 Nov.	Extended hours of meeting 25 May to 23 June / 25 Nov. to 21 Dec.
Monday	*	*
Tuesday	10 a.m. to 12 p.m.	10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Wednesday	2 p.m. to 6 p.m.	3 p.m. to 6 p.m.
Thursday		8 p.m. to midnight
Friday		

* The Assembly sits on Monday on motion by the Government House Leader.

Outside the periods provided for in the Standing Orders, the Assembly, at the request of the Premier, may hold extraordinary sittings. This request is addressed to the President or, in his stead, to the Secretary General.

As regards the standing committees, they may sit at any time of the year, from Monday to Friday, according to the hours provided for in the Standing Orders. However, they may not sit while Routine Proceedings are underway in the Assembly. See table on page 25.



DID YOU KNOW?

In 2007-2008, over 9000 persons attended the parliamentary debates in the National Assembly Chamber. As regards the standing committees, 4300 persons attended their proceedings.



DID YOU KNOW?

In 1908, the Parliament Building was festively lit on the occasion of the 300th anniversary of Québec City. However, four of the lights that had been installed for the event were left atop the central tower, whence began the **tradition** of turning on these lights when the Members are sitting in the National Assembly Chamber.



THE ASSESSMENT OF WORK AT THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

Sittings of the National Assembly and of the standing committees

During 2007-2008, 63 sittings were held in the Assembly and 294 in committee. The following table provides a breakdown thereof:

	ASSEMBLY		COMMITTEES	
	Sittings	Hours	Sittings	Hours
April	0	0	0	0
May	13	70 h 29	21	25 h 30
June	12	30 h 48	60	232 h 25
July	0	0	0	0
August	0	0	0	0
September	0	0	14	55 h 38
October	8	29 h 36	30	76 h 47
November	14	57 h 57	59	124 h 03
December	10	30 h 50	47	105 h 01
January	0	0	14	38 h 14
February	0	0	26	121 h 37
March	6	34 h 12	23	69 h 18
TOTAL	63	253 h 52	294	848 h 33

Conduct of a sitting at the National Assembly

An Assembly sitting comprises two distinct periods: the Routine Proceedings and the Orders of the Day.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS	ORDERS OF THE DAY
<p>The Routine Proceedings are composed of nine items of business set aside for information given by the Government to the National Assembly. One of the more interesting items is certainly Oral Questions and Answers, which takes place on every sitting day. The order in which the items of business under Routine Proceedings are taken is as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Statements by Ministers; 2. Introduction of Bills; 3. Tablings; 4. Complaints of Breach of Privilege or Contempt and Personal Explanations; 5. Oral Questions and Answers; 6. Deferred Divisions; 7. Motions Without Notice; 8. Notices of Proceedings in Committees; 9. Information on the Proceedings of the Assembly. 	<p>The Orders of the Day are devoted mainly to debates on bills at either of the stages of their consideration. It is also at this time that the National Assembly takes into consideration all other substantive motions for debate. The Orders of the Day are composed of five items of business that must be taken according to a predetermined order of priority:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Business Having Precedence; 2. Urgent Debates; 3. Debates on Reports from Committees; 4. Other Business Standing on the Order Paper; 5. Business Standing in the Name of Members in Opposition.

A FEW NUMBERS IN 2007-2008

- 3 statements by ministers;
- 95 bills were introduced up until 31 March 2008;
- 863 papers were tabled in the National Assembly, including decisions from the Office of the Assembly, annual reports of ministries and public agencies, committee reports and petitions.

Routine Proceedings

Statements by Ministers – A Minister may make a statement to the Assembly on any subject he deems to be relevant, such as the announcement of a government policy or the Government's reaction to a given event.

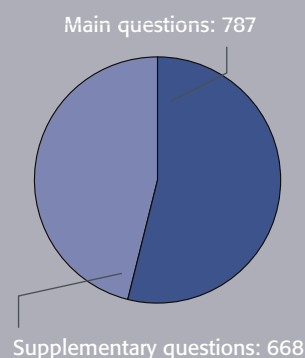
Introduction of Bills – It is during Routine Proceedings that a bill may be introduced. Members do not discuss the content of the bill at this point but simply allow the text thereof to be submitted for consideration during the subsequent stages of the legislative process.

Oral Questions and Answers

This item of business is without a doubt the most familiar to citizens. During this 45-minute period, Members may question Ministers on matters of public interest, stemming from current events or urgent matters, falling within their competence or that of the Government.

45.75 hours were set aside for Oral Questions and Answers.

Number of questions asked:



From 5 to 8 September 2007, the National Assembly hosted the **25th Annual Joint Meeting of the Association of Parliamentary Counsel and that of Legislative Counsel in Canada**. This event enabled law clerks of the Canadian parliamentary assemblies to exchange views on shared interests regarding legislative drafting, parliamentary law and procedure.



DID YOU KNOW?

The National Assembly Chamber, known as the “blue room”, was formerly called the “**green room**” and was repainted blue for the purposes of the broadcasting of debates, in 1978.

IN 2007-2008, 260 MOTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE WERE CARRIED. THEY CONCERNED SUBJECTS SUCH AS:

- the 400th anniversary of the founding of Québec City;
- the World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development;
- the death of Ms. Andrée P. Boucher, former mayor of Québec City;
- the retirement of Mr. Norman Delisle, parliamentary correspondent for 36 years.

Orders of the Day

Business Having Precedence – As the name indicates, these items of business have precedence over all other matters, owing to their importance or urgency. The Opening Speech of the Session, delivered by the Premier, ranks first among the items of business having precedence, as well as the speeches by the Leaders of the parliamentary groups or their representatives, within the framework of the ensuing debate thereon. Among other business having precedence, the Budget Speech and want of confidence motions should also be mentioned.

Urgent Debates – Any Member may request the holding of an urgent debate. The President authorizes the holding of such a debate if he deems that the request concerns a specific and important matter involving the responsibility of the Assembly and which cannot otherwise be discussed.

Debates on Reports from Committees – The committee reports that contain recommendations are placed on the *Order Paper* immediately after they have been tabled in the Assembly and must be taken into consideration within 15 days following this tabling.

Other Business Standing on the Order Paper and Notices – It is during this period that the Assembly engages in the various stages of the consideration of a bill, more particularly the passage in principle, the consideration of the report from the committee that examined the bill, and the passage of the bill.

Only a Minister may introduce a bill having a financial impact. However, barring this exception, any Member has the right to introduce a bill at the National Assembly, and he may thereupon entrust its drafting to the legal and legislative services of the Assembly.

DURING THE PAST YEAR, THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY PASSED 58 BILLS, MORE SPECIFICALLY:

- 44 introduced by Ministers, 84 % of which were adopted unanimously;
- 2 introduced by Members and adopted unanimously;
- 12 private bills, all of which were adopted unanimously.

On average, 52 days elapsed between the introduction of these bills and their passage.

THE STANDING COMMITTEES

An important part of parliamentary work is not carried out in the Assembly itself, but in the committees, where Members exercise their duties as legislators and controllers of the Government's actions and the public administration. The committees are composed of a group of Members and are responsible for the examination of any matter falling within their competence. It is in committee that the population can be heard during public consultations on bills or on important societal issues. It is also in committee that the Members give detailed consideration to bills, closely examine the activities of the ministries and government agencies, study the budgetary estimates of the Government and may also choose, on their own initiative, to examine any other matter within their field of jurisdiction.

There are eleven standing parliamentary committees, nine of which are sector-based. A Member from the group forming the Official Opposition chairs the Committee on Public Administration and the President of the National Assembly chairs the Committee on the National Assembly.

Temporary rules concerning the membership of the standing committees

On 24 May 2007, the National Assembly decided to make certain changes to its Standing Orders for the duration of the 38th Legislature. These modifications essentially aim to attune the composition of the committees to the new reality created by a minority government being in power and the presence of a third parliamentary group. The new rules thus provide that the committees henceforth are composed of five members from the parliamentary group forming the Government, four members hailing from the Official Opposition and three members from the Second Opposition Group. However, concerning the latter, only two of the three members have the right to vote.

Furthermore, the amendments to the Standing Orders specify the allocation of chairmanships and vice-chairmanships of the nine sector-based committees among the different parliamentary groups, as indicated in the table below:

Parliamentary group	Chairmen	Vice-chairmen
Forming the Government	5	4
Official Opposition	2	4
Second Opposition Group	2	2

It should be noted that, in compliance with these provisional rules, the Committee on Institutions elects among its members a second vice-chairman from the Second Opposition Group.

Committee chairman:

A Member of one of the parliamentary groups, elected by the members of the committee for a two-year term, he organizes and chairs the proceedings of his committee. The chairman of the committee takes part in the debates and has the right to vote.

Committee vice-chairman:

A Member of a parliamentary group other than that of the chairman, elected by the members of the committee for a two-year term, he assists the chairman in his duties and replaces him when necessary.

Schedule of the standing committee sittings

Date	Day	Hour
Other than during the extended hours of meeting	Monday	2 p.m. to 6 p.m.
	Tuesday to Thursday	9.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. 2 p.m. to 6 p.m.
	Friday	9.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m.

During the extended hours of meeting

Date	Day	Hour
25 May to 23 June	Monday to Friday	10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
25 Nov. to 21 Dec.		3 p.m. to 6 p.m. 8 p.m. to midnight

New composition of the standing committees

Before presenting an overview of the work carried out in 2007-2008, the following provides a portrait of the terms of reference and the members of each committee as at 31 March 2008:

COMMITTEE ON THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

Standing Orders of the Assembly and Rules for the Conduct of Proceedings;
coordination of the proceedings of the other committees

Ex-officio members:

The President of the National Assembly:
Mr. Michel Bissonnet

The Vice-Presidents of the National Assembly:
Ms. Fatima Houda-Pepin Mr. Jacques Chagnon
Mr. Marc Picard

The House leaders of the parliamentary groups:
Mr. Jean-Marc Fournier Mr. Sébastien Proulx
Mr. François Gendron

The whips of the parliamentary groups:
Mr. Norman MacMillan Mr. François Bonnardel
Mr. Stéphane Bédard

The chairmen of the committees:
Ms. Catherine Morissette Ms. Louise Harel
Ms. Lise Thériault Mr. Gille Taillon
Mr. Geoffrey Kelley Mr. Pierre Paradis
Mr. Claude L'Écuyer Mr. Sylvain Simard
Mr. Alain Paquet Mr. Lawrence S. Bergman

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION



Accountability and examination of financial commitments of the ministries and public agencies

Members:

The chair	Gilles Taillon (Chauveau) ADQ
The vice-chair	Vincent Auclair (Vimont) QLP
QLP	ADQ
Lucie Charlebois (Soulanges)	Pierre-Michel Auger (Champlain)
Roch Cholette (Hull)	Hubert Benoit (Montmorency)
Henri-François Gauthier (Verdun)	Jean-François Therrien (Terrebonne)
Guy Ouellette (Chomedey)	PQ
	Pascal Bérubé (Matane)
	Martin Lemay (Sainte-Marie—Saint-Jacques)
	Agnès Maltais (Taschereau)

COMMITTEE ON INSTITUTIONS



Executive Council, justice, public security, intergovernmental relations, the Constitution

Members:

The chair	Lise Thériault (Anjou) QLP
The vice-chair	Christian Lévesque (Lévis) ADQ
The vice-chair	Rita Dionne-Marsolais (Rosemont) PQ
QLP	ADQ
Pierre Marsan (Robert-Baldwin)	Pascal Beaupré (Joliette)
Guy Ouellette (Chomedey)	André Riedl (Iberville)
Alain Paquet (Laval-des-Rapides)	Sylvie Roy (Lotbinière)
Tony Tomassi (LaFontaine)	PQ
	Alexandre Cloutier (Lac-Saint-Jean)
	Daniel Turp (Mercier)

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC FINANCE



Finance, the budget, the public accounts, the public administration, the public service, supply and services

Members:

The chair	Alain Paquet (Laval-des-Rapides) QLP
The vice-chair	Linda Lapointe (Groulx) ADQ
QLP	ADQ
Pierre Arcand (Mont-Royal)	Lucille Méthé (Saint-Jean)
Roch Cholette (Hull)	Claude Morin (Beauce-Sud)
Emmanuel Dubourg (Viau)	Gilles Taillon (Chauveau)
Nicole Ménard (Laporte)	PQ
	François Legault (Rousseau)
	Guy Lelièvre (Gaspé)
	Irvin Pelletier (Rimouski)

The importance of parliamentary control

Parliamentary control activities represent close to **30 %** of the work carried out in committee, as the following numbers indicate:

Parliamentary control

Government estimates of expenditure	179 h 20	21.1 %
Interpellations	9 h 53	1.2 %
Surveillance of agencies	8 h 44	1.0 %
Examination of financial commitments	18 h 27	2.2 %
Accountability	35 h 25	4.2 %

Subtotal 29.7 %

Other work

Consideration of public bills	286 h 41	33.8 %
Consideration of private bills	14 h 04	1.7 %
Other orders of the National Assembly	145 h 05	17.1 %
Delegated legislation	-	0.0 %
Other mandates under the Standing Orders	34 h 33	4.1 %
Orders of initiative	69 h 57	8.1 %
General organization and election of chairs and vice-chairs	46 h 23	5.5 %

Subtotal 70.3 %

TOTAL 100 %

COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL AFFAIRS



Family, health, social and community services, status of women, income security

Members:

The chair
The vice-chair

Geoffrey Kelley (Jacques-Cartier) QLP
Bernard Drainville (Marie-Victorin) PQ

QLP

Russell Copeman
(Notre-Dame-de-Grâce)
Pierre Reid (Orford)
Gerry Sklavounos (Laurier-Dorion)
Stéphanie Vallée (Gatineau)

ADQ

Éric Caire (La Peltre)
Ginette Grandmont (Masson)
Éric Laporte (L'Assomption)
Claude Roy (Montmagny-L'Islet)

PQ

Stéphane Bergeron (Verchères)
Lisette Lapointe (Crémazie)

COMMITTEE ON LABOUR AND THE ECONOMY



Industry, trade, tourism, labour, science and technology,
energy and resources, manpower

Members:

The chair
The vice-chair

Catherine Morissette (Charlesbourg) ADQ
Gerry Sklavounos (Laurier-Dorion) QLP

QLP

Pierre Arcand (Mont-Royal)
Emmanuel Dubourg (Viau)
Johanne Gonthier
(Mégantic-Compton)
Nicole Ménard (Laporte)

ADQ

Éric Charbonneau (Johnson)
Jean-François Gosselin (Jean-Lesage)
Richard Merlini (Chambly)

PQ

Marjolain Dufour (René-Lévesque)
Sylvain Gaudreault (Jonquière)
Johanne Morasse
(Rouyn-Noranda—Témiscamingue)

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES AND FOOD



Agriculture, fisheries, food

Members:

The chair
The vice-chair

Pierre Paradis (Brome-Missisquoi) QLP
Janvier Grondin (Beauce-Nord) ADQ

QLP

Maurice Clermont (Mille-Îles)
Charlotte L'Écuyer (Pontiac)
Yvon Marcoux (Vaudreuil)
Stéphanie Vallée (Gatineau)

ADQ

Albert De Martin (Huntingdon)
Robert Deschamps (Saint-Maurice)
Sébastien Schneeberger (Drummond)

PQ

Maxime Arseneau (Îles-de-la-Madeleine)
Sylvain Pagé (Labelle)
Denis Trottier (Roberval)

COMMITTEE ON PLANNING AND THE PUBLIC DOMAIN



Local communities, municipal planning, housing, recreation

Members:

The chair
The vice-chair

Claude L'Écuyer (Saint-Hyacinthe) ADQ
Charlotte L'Écuyer (Pontiac) QLP

QLP

Vincent Auclair (Vimont)
Russell Copeman
(Notre-Dame-de-Grâce)
Guy Ouellette (Chomedey)
Tony Tomassi (LaFontaine)

ADQ

Martin Camirand (Prévost)
Raymond Francoeur (Portneuf)
Jean-François Roux (Arthabaska)

PQ

Jacques Côté (Dubuc)
Claude Cousineau (Bertrand)
Danielle Doyer (Matapédia)

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION



Education, vocational training, consumer protection

Members:

The chair
The vice-chair

Louise Harel (Hochelaga-Maisonneuve) PQ
Pierre Arcand (Mont-Royal) QLP

QLP

Vincent Auclair (Vimont)
Maurice Clermont (Mille-Îles)
Guy Ouellette (Chomedey)
Stéphanie Vallée (Gatineau)

ADQ

François Desrochers (Mirabel)
Éric Dorion (Nicolet-Yamaska)
Sylvain Légaré (Vanier)
Monique Roy Verville (La Prairie)

PQ

Nicolas Girard (Gouin)
Marie Malavoy (Taillon)

COMMITTEE ON CULTURE



Culture, communications, cultural communities,
immigration, relations with the citizens

Members:

The chair
The vice-chair

Sylvain Simard (Richelieu) PQ
Emmanuel Dubourg (Viau) QLP

QLP

Lucie Charlebois (Soulanges)
Charlotte L'Écuyer (Pontiac)
Pierre Marsan (Robert-Baldwin)
François Ouimet (Marquette)

ADQ

Pascal Beaupré (Joliette)
François Benjamin (Berthier)
François Bonnardel (Shefford)
Lucie Leblanc (Deux-Montagnes)

PQ

Pierre Curzi (Borduas)
Alexis Wawanoloath (Abitibi-Est)

Temporary chairman:

A Member appointed by the President of the Assembly to preside over the debates of a committee, at the request of a committee chairman or when the Assembly so directs in an order of reference. The Committee on the National Assembly approves a list of Members who may act in such capacity. The list of temporary chairmen was as follows as at 31 March 2008:

QLP

Lucie Charlebois (Soulanges)
Maurice Clermont (Mille-Îles)
Johanne Gonthier
(Mégantic-Compton)
Yvon Marcoux (Vaudreuil)
Nicole Ménard (Laporte)
Pierre Reid (Orford)

ADQ

François Benjamin (Berthier)
François Desrochers (Mirabel)
Éric Dorion (Nicolet-Yamaska)
Richard Merlini (Chambly)
Jean-François Therrien
(Terrebonne)

PQ

Maxime Arseneau
(Îles-de-la-Madeleine)
Serge Deslières (Beauharnois)
Danielle Doyer (Matapédia)
Guy Lelièvre (Gaspé)

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND THE ENVIRONMENT



Transportation, public works, the environment, wildlife

Members:

The chair
The vice-chair

Lawrence S. Bergman (D'Arcy-McGee) QLP
Jean Domingue (Bellechasse) ADQ

QLP

Johanne Gonthier
(Mégantic-Compton)
François Ouimet (Marquette)
Pierre Reid (Orford)
Gerry Sklavounos (Laurier-Dorion)

ADQ

Jean Damphousse (Maskinongé)
Simon-Pierre Diamond
(Marguerite-D'Youville)
Pierre Gingras (Blainville)

PQ

Camil Bouchard (Vachon)
Serge Deslières (Beauharnois)
Luc Ferland (Ungava)

Key events

On-line consultations

Since the first experimentation with on-line consultations at the National Assembly in 2000, the standing committees have increasingly had recourse to this technological tool that enables the gathering of comments from a greater number of citizens with regard to bills or topics of current interest.

During the past year, the standing committees have used this form of consultation on four occasions. Hence, the Committee on Culture conducted an on-line consultation on the document entitled *Planning for 2008-2010 Québec Immigration Levels*. For its part, the Committee on Public Finance, in March 2008, held an on-line consultation with reference to the *Report on the implementation of the Lobbying Transparency and Ethics Act and the Code of Conduct for Lobbyists*. Lastly, the Committee on Transportation and the Environment used this consultation method for two of its mandates, namely during the special consultations on the draft *Government Sustainable Development Strategy* and during the order of initiative on residual waste management in Québec. The possibilities provided by on-line consultations have also been expanded: both of the latter consultations also enabled participants to fill in an on-line questionnaire and to send in a study paper via the Internet on the issues under examination. This was a first at the National Assembly. The committees thus received 539 on-line answers, as indicated in the table on the following page:

On-line consultations	Questionnaires	Documents
Planning for 2008-2010 Québec immigration levels (18 July 2007– 11 October 2007)	98	-
The draft Government Sustainable Development Strategy (2 October 2007–12 November 2007)	54	73
Residual waste management (12 December 2007-26 February 2008)	225	89
Total *	377	162

* As at 31 March 2008, the results of the on-line consultation of the Committee on Public Finance were not yet known.

The Committee on Public Administration: 10 years of continuity and innovation

In autumn 2007, the Committee on Public Administration celebrated its 10 years of existence. The idea of giving a horizontal mandate to examine the government administration had led to its creation, on an experimental basis, on 10 April 1997. Five months later, after amendments were made to the Standing Orders, its status became permanent.

Henceforth, parliamentarians who are members thereof play an important role in the implementation of results-based management and in the improvement of practice as regards controlling the public administration.

The mandates of the standing committees

The sector-based standing committees may carry out three types of mandates: orders of initiative, orders of reference and statutory orders. The list of mandates carried out by the standing committees in 2007-2008 can be found in appendix.

1. Orders of initiative

In the course of 2007-2008, the members of the various committees took the initiative to examine issues affecting numerous areas of activity. The organization of these mandates requires the holding of several meetings during which members prepare consultation or information papers, hear experts, plan public hearings and draft final reports containing recommendations addressed to the Government.

The Committee on Transportation and the Environment carried out an order of initiative on residual waste management in Québec, just as Québec's residual waste management policy is nearing its expiry, in 2008. More particularly, it chose to examine the reduction at source of these materials. It also examined the issue of reuse, recycling and reclamation

Orders of initiative:

On their own initiative, committee members examine draft regulations and regulations, the orientation, activities and management of public agencies and any other matter of public interest.



The members of the Committee on Transportation and the Environment visited businesses dealing with residual waste management.

of certain materials: putrescible materials, non-returnable softdrink containers, dangerous household waste, as well as residual material stemming from the industrial, commercial and institutional sector and from the construction, renovation and demolition sector. Finally, the Committee examined the elimination of residual material, such as solid residue and municipal wastewater sludge.

In relation thereto, it heard 49 groups during its special consultations. Furthermore, via an on-line consultation, a total of 225 citizens were provided the opportunity to give their opinion on the subject by answering a questionnaire and 89 others sent in a discussion paper. The Committee also travelled to the Lanaudière region to visit sanitary landfills.

For its part, the Committee on Public Finance held a four-hour public hearing on 28 November 2007 with Messrs. Henri-Paul Rousseau, Chief Executive Officer and Director of the Caisse de dépôt et placement du Québec, and Pierre Brunet, Chairman of the Caisse's board of directors, regarding the crisis in the asset-backed commercial paper sector. Where global financial markets were disrupted by problems linked to this type of paper, which had repercussions on the holdings and liquid assets of numerous financial institutions, this hearing enabled parliamentarians to exchange views on the impacts of this crisis on the management of the Caisse.

During the previous Legislature, the Committee on Education tabled in the National Assembly a report containing 18 recommendations within the framework of an order of initiative it had chosen to conduct on the school success of Natives. One year later, the Committee members wanted to be informed of the follow-up that had been given to these recommendations and, for this purpose, heard, in March 2008, the representatives of the Institut culturel et éducatif montagnais, the Cree School Board and the First Nations Education Council, as well as the Minister of Education.

Standing committees also undertook the surveillance of agencies to examine the orientation, activities and management of public agencies falling within their competence. For instance, the Committee on Education heard two committees responsible for advising the Minister of Education. They are the Comité consultatif sur l'accessibilité financière aux études, responsible for advising the Minister on financial assistance programmes, tuition fees and policies that might have an impact on financial accessibility to education, and the Comité sur les affaires religieuses, who advises the Minister on all matters concerning the place of religion in schools.



DID YOU KNOW?

At the request of the National Assembly, the committees examine bills, estimates of expenditure and any other matter that may be referred to them. These are known as “**orders of reference**”.

2. Orders of reference

Clause-by-clause consideration of bills

The standing committees examined 50 bills of which a complete list may be consulted in appendix. Regarding the bills as a whole, 1364 sections were examined and 271 amendments were adopted out of the 304 amendments introduced.

General and special consultations

In 2007-2008, 376 groups and individuals came before the committees to give their opinion on the various matters on which consultations were held and 406 briefs were submitted to the committees. These consultations enable the parliamentarians to properly assess the issues arising from a matter under consideration and to make observations, conclusions and recommendations.

For example, a public consultation was held on the draft Government Sustainable Development Strategy after which the Committee on Transportation and the Environment tabled, in the National Assembly, a report containing five recommendations. The latter were taken into consideration in the drafting of the Government Sustainable Development Strategy. The Committee on Institutions, for its part, was given the mandate to hold a general consultation on Bill 9, An Act to protect persons with regard to activities involving firearms and amending the Act respecting safety in sports. This bill aims, among other things, to prohibit the possession of firearms in the buildings and on the grounds of childcare facilities and educational institutions and in conveyances used for public transportation and school transportation.

General consultation:

This type of consultation is open to the population at large. Prior to its holding, a public notice must be published in selected newspapers, in the *Québec Official Gazette* and on the Internet site of the Assembly inviting any individuals and organizations interested in the matter under consideration to submit a brief to the committee. Public hearings are then held by the committee in order to discuss the submissions received.

Special consultations:

These are limited to individuals and organizations chosen by the Committee or by the Assembly owing to their knowledge or expertise regarding the matter under consideration.

Furthermore, the following are some of the subjects that gave rise to public consultations:

- the document entitled *Report from the Minister of Labour on the implementation of the Pay Equity Act*;
- the document entitled *Planning for 2008-2010 Québec Immigration Levels*;
- the documents entitled *Evaluation report of the Act to reform the Code of Civil Procedure* and the *Report on strategic lawsuits against public participation (SLAPP)*;
- Bill 22, An Act to amend various legislative provisions concerning the urban agglomeration of Montréal;
- Bill 32, An Act to promote rigorous management of public infrastructures and large projects;
- Bill 41, An Act to foster transparency in the sale of gasoline diesel fuel;
- Bill 42, An Act to amend the Highway Safety Code and the Regulation respecting demerit points;
- Bill 63, An Act to amend the Charter of human rights and freedoms.

Examination of the estimates of expenditure 2007-2008

For a two-week period, during the month of June, the standing committees considered the estimates of expenditure of the Government, as stipulated in Standing Order 282. Upon the conclusion of their mandate, the committees had devoted close to 180 hours to the examination and adoption of the estimates of expenditure granted to the ministries and agencies, totalling over 61 billion dollars.

3. Statutory orders and orders in compliance with the Standing Orders

Statutory orders stem from an act or a regulation arising therefrom, or they may originate from a Standing Order of the National Assembly. As an example, the Committee on Culture heard the chairman of the Commission d'accès à l'information du Québec (CAI) and examined the annual reports of this agency for the years 2001 to 2007. In its report, which contains eight recommendations adopted unanimously, the Committee on Culture reached the conclusion that the CAI is experiencing a crisis and that measures must be taken as soon as possible to ensure its survival.

As regards the Committee on Labour and the Economy, it proceeded with the examination of the financial statements and the activity reports for 2003-2004 to 2006-2007 of the Fonds national de formation de la main-d'œuvre, in compliance with section 43 of the Act to foster the development of manpower training. On this occasion, Ms. Marjolaine Loiselle, Chair of the Commission des partenaires du marché du travail, presented an assessment of the agency and answered the Committee members' questions.

The Committee on Social Affairs examined the annual management reports and for this purpose heard, in January 2008, the representatives of the Bas-Saint-Laurent, Chaudière-Appalaches, Estrie, Mauricie et Centre-du-Québec and Outaouais Health and Social Services Agencies as well as the Centre de santé et de services sociaux de la Baie-James. Moreover, the Committee heard, in March 2008, the chief executive officer of the Conseil de gestion de l'assurance parentale on her management of the Fonds d'assurance parentale.

INTERPELLATIONS

Pursuant to the Standing Orders of the National Assembly, every Member of the Official Opposition or of the Second Opposition Group may interpellate a minister on a matter of general interest for which he is officially responsible. The interpellation is held at a meeting of the appropriate standing committee, on Friday morning, from 10.00 o'clock a.m. to 12.00 o'clock noon. One interpellation may be held each week during the periods in which the National Assembly ordinarily meets (excepting during intensive session, when none may be held). During 2007-2008, the Government's ministers were interpellated in committee on the following subjects:

- the policy of the Government of Québec as regards assistance to families;
- home support services and support to informal caregivers coming under the Minister of Health and Social Services;
- the prescription drug policy;
- the state of Québec's economy;
- the crisis in the asset-backed commercial paper (ABCP) industry and its impact as regards the Government of Québec, the Crown corporations and the public agencies coming under the Minister of Finance.

The Committee on Public Administration

The Committee on Public Administration is required to hear public administrators on their management. It carries out this mandate by inviting the deputy ministers and the chief executive officers of public bodies to come before it to answer the questions of parliamentarians on their annual management reports or to discuss the observations contained in the Auditor General's reports.

Pursuant to the Standing Orders of the National Assembly, the Committee must also examine all financial commitments equal to or exceeding \$25,000 granted to the ministries and public agencies whose estimates of expenditure are voted by the Assembly. In scrutinizing



Hosting of the Conference of Parliamentary Committee Clerks

From 12 to 15 September 2007, the National Assembly hosted the 3rd Conference of Canadian Parliamentary Committee Clerks. Close to 70 parliamentary committee clerks hailing from eight Canadian provinces and territories were thus given the opportunity to share their viewpoints regarding their profession. The discussions focussed primarily on the impact of minority governments on committee proceedings, the criteria for efficient oversight, technological developments within the committees, and committee proceedings held outside of the Parliament.

these expenditures, the Committee ensures itself of their advisability, of the observance of the government rules and standards that govern the granting of contracts and subsidies, and of the equitable allocation of public funds.

During the 2007-2008 fiscal year, the Committee on Public Administration tabled in the National Assembly four reports detailing its work with regard to results-based management.

- The first report concerns the hearing of the Auditor General of Québec on his 2007-2008 annual management report and on his financial commitments for the corresponding fiscal year.
- The second report follows up on a mandate it had received from the National Assembly regarding the Balanced Budget Act. It contains six recommendations.
- The third report contains eleven recommendations following hearings of deputy ministers and chief executive officers of public bodies on their administrative management. Furthermore, this report contains in appendix the results of the examination of five annual management reports for which no hearings were held.
- Lastly, the fourth report summarizes the hearing of the Deputy Minister of Employment and Social Solidarity and the examination of some 12,000 financial commitments for the ministries and government agencies overall.

CONTRIBUTION OF THE RESEARCH DIVISION TO THE EXERCISE OF PARLIAMENTARY CONTROL

The Research Division of the Library of the National Assembly is a parliamentary service whose primary purpose is to support the Members in the standing committees to carry out orders of initiative and parliamentary control. During 2007-2008, it prepared 172 analysis and information documents and took part in the research and drafting of all papers published by the standing committees.

Several tools have enabled the Research Division to support the standing committees in carrying out their oversight mandates, which stem in particular from the implementation of the Public Administration Act. More specifically, the Division analyzes the annual management reports of the 74 ministries and public agencies falling within the supervisory authority of the Committee on Public Administration.

It acts similarly with regard to all agencies and Crown corporations under the jurisdiction of the sector-based standing committees. Lastly, it proposes an order of precedence as regards the agencies that could be subjected to an order of surveillance or to an accountability exercise.

EFFECTIVE SUPPORT TO THE WORK OF MEMBERS

New clerks' Table

At the resumption of the parliamentary proceedings in autumn 2007, a new clerks' Table was installed in the centre of the National Assembly Chamber. Designed by the Parliament Building architect, Eugène-Étienne Taché, who had placed it at the junction of exchanges between parliamentarians, the former table could no longer accommodate the technological improvements allowing for more efficient work. The new table is equipped with:

- ergonomic workstations;
- methods to facilitate communications between the Secretary General, his assistant clerks and the President owing to a computer-integrated telephone system;
- a speaking time management system and a computerized procedural databank;
- an application enabling recorded divisions to be registered and the results to be generated electronically;
- the technology required to electronically record and transfer the scroll (preliminary Votes and Proceedings), etc.

As the true headquarters of parliamentary life, the new table results from the coordinated action of the Associate General Secretariat for Parliamentary Affairs and Procedure and the Building Management, Computer Services and Debates Broadcasting and Publishing Directorates. For more information, please consult this activity report's central panel.

Implementation of Wi-Fi technology (Wireless Internet)

The Members of the 38th Legislature now have on-line access to information that is useful in their parliamentary proceedings and to documents such as briefs and bills. Furthermore, Members now have laptop computers equipped with wireless technology that is available in close to twenty meeting rooms including the National Assembly Chamber, the Legislative Council Chamber, the parliamentary committee rooms and the Library.

This network serves the Members of the National Assembly, the Ministers, the Assembly personnel, guests, journalists and visitors (in committee or for any other event). Persons taking part in various parliamentary simulations also may benefit from this service.

More information can be found under the heading "Our services" on the Internet site of the National Assembly at the following address: www.assnat.qc.ca.



DID YOU KNOW?

Each document tabled in the National Assembly by a Member during a sitting becomes **public** from the moment it is tabled.



DID YOU KNOW?

The time period elapsed between a Member's address in the National Assembly and its on-line **transcription** on the Internet site is approximately 40 minutes. A final version of the *Journal des débats (Hansard)* with a table of contents is available as early as 5.00 p.m. the following day.

Documents tabled on Internet

To simplify access to information by Members and citizens, a list of all of the documents tabled in the National Assembly has been available on-line on the Internet site of the National Assembly since the beginning of the 38th Legislature.

Moreover, since 16 October 2007, in addition to the paper version, a digitized copy of the annual reports and strategic plans of the ministries and agencies as well as documents by the persons appointed by the National Assembly is also available on-line. This brings about a substantial reduction in the number of paper copies required from the ministries and agencies, and this, from an environment protection perspective.



DID YOU KNOW?

Section 133 of the Constitution Act, 1867, and section 7 of the Charter of the French language provide for the **obligation to print and publish bills and statutes in both French and English**. To produce the English texts of bills and amendments, of essential importance to the legislative process, the Translation Service of the National Assembly translated over a half-million words in the course of 2007-2008.

THE CITIZENS



In addition to providing the citizens with the opportunity to follow the parliamentary proceedings and on occasion to take part in them, the National Assembly disposes of a vast array of communications tools for the purpose of bringing the citizens and their elected representatives closer together. In this regard, it is one of the most pioneering parliamentary assemblies in the world and the services it provides to citizens are ever increasing.

EDUCATIONAL AND RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

Very few parliaments worldwide offer educational activities to their population as rewarding as those of the National Assembly of Québec. To stimulate the interest of people of all ages in the exercise of democracy and to contribute to their becoming active and well-informed citizens, the National Assembly has developed various activities and publications to educate on democracy.

The Tournament and the parliamentary simulations

In the form of role playing, these educational activities allow the participants to understand the operation of the National Assembly, its rules, advantages and limitations. Within a period of a few days, the citizen-Members draft and discuss bills while learning the art of compromise, consensus and the respect of others. *l'art du compromis, du consensus et du respect de l'autre.*

YOUNG DEMOCRATS' TOURNAMENT, FROM 20 TO 22 APRIL 2007

Quiz game on democracy from Ancient Greece to this day

Target group: Secondary 4 and 5 and college

Participants: 303 (253 students and 50 accompanying professors)

Theme: Distinguished Québec figure: Louis-Joseph Papineau



PUPILS' PARLIAMENT, ON 4 MAY 2007

Target group: 6th grade elementary students

Participants: 125 apprentice Members

Examples of bills considered:

- An Act obliging schools to implement a recycling programme for recyclable materials to protect the environment and avoid waste
- An Act obliging elementary schools and secondary schools to integrate computer science into all school subjects on a daily basis





SENIORS' PARLIAMENT, FROM 10 TO 12 SEPTEMBER 2007

Target group:	retirees and pre-retirees
Participants:	90 apprentice Members
Examples of bills considered:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An Act establishing the responsibility of citizens and of the government as regards the environment and sustainable development • An Act to ensure the implementation of the rights and duties of persons

YOUTH PARLIAMENT, FROM 26 TO 30 DECEMBER 2007

Target group:	college and university students
Participants:	100 apprentice Members and journalists
Examples of bills considered:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An Act to amend Québec's national defence policy • An Act respecting prescription drug management

STUDENT PARLIAMENT, FROM 2 TO 6 JANUARY 2008

Target group:	college and university students
Participants:	147 apprentice Members and journalists
Examples of bills considered:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An Act respecting linguistic and professional integration in Québec; • An Act to promote labour law.



STUDENT FORUM, FROM 6 TO 10 JANUARY 2008

Target group:	college students
Participants:	135 apprentice Members, president, vice-presidents, secretary general, deputy clerks, journalists and press officers
Examples of bills considered:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An Act respecting the recognition of foreign diplomas in the health sector • An Act respecting the management of drinking water

YOUNG PEOPLE'S PARLIAMENT, FROM 13 TO 15 FEBRUARY 2008

Target group:	Secondary 3 and 4 students
Participants:	114 apprentice Members, president, vice-presidents, deputy clerks and journalists;
Examples of bills considered:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An Act concerning the prohibition of selling energy drinks to minors; • An Act fostering the promotion of healthy lifestyles among young Quebecers.



Fondation Jean-Charles-Bonenfant

For over 30 years, the Fondation Jean-Charles-Bonenfant of the National Assembly has perpetuated the memory of this law clerk and humanist, university scholar, historian and author, celebrated at his death in 1978 as one of the great intellectuals of Québec. Mr. Bonenfant participated in the outreach of democracy and parliamentary institutions, in particular among the general public and young people.

In carrying out these aims, the Fondation organizes the activity known as Parliaments in High Schools, which reaches hundreds of high school students in their own environment, as well as an annual conference on themes relating to parliamentarism. It also offers parliamentary internships to university students.

Parliamentary internships: Desjardins, a new partner

In 2007-2008, five 10-month internships accompanied by a \$17,000 scholarship were offered to students holding a Bachelor's degree from a Québec university. Since 2007, the Fondation can count on the support of a new partner, the Mouvement des caisses Desjardins, which provides a financial contribution to the internship programme.

Each year, the Fondation interns enjoy a hands-on experience of the numerous aspects of Québec parliamentary life. They become more familiar with the operation of the National Assembly and of the institutions that are accountable thereto, namely the Auditor General, the Public Protector, the Chief Electoral Officer and the Lobbyists Commissioner. Subsequently, each one is paired with a Member of the Government and then with a Member of one of the opposition parties. The interns also take part in a mission abroad and are required to draft a dissertation.

These dissertations were officially submitted on 29 June 2007, in the presence of the Vice-President of the National Assembly and Vice-Chairman of the Fondation, Mr. Jacques Chagnon. This ceremony marked the end of the internship initiated in September 2006 by Maude Benoit, Marline Côté, Jean-Philippe Dallaire, Hugo Genest and Simon Larouche.



Brochure on the internships of the Fondation Jean-Charles-Bonenfant.



The Fondation Jean-Charles-Bonenfant interns, from left to right: Hugo Genest, Marline Côté, Maude Benoit, Simon Larouche and Jean-Philippe Dallaire.

The following dissertations were submitted by the interns:

- *The evolution of political party financing in Québec from 1977 to this day*
(Maude Benoit);
- *Women parliamentary correspondents at the Press Gallery Causes and possible consequences of underrepresentation*
(Marline Côté);
- *"Parliamentary paradiplomacy" Identifying the distinctiveness of the National Assembly of Québec*
(Hugo Genest);
- *Parliamentary privilege of freedom of speech at a time of primacy of individual rights: Analysis and recommendations*
(Jean-Philippe Dallaire et Simon Larouche).



Brochure on the Parliaments in High Schools.

PARLIAMENTS IN HIGH SCHOOLS

Parliaments in High Schools allow secondary students to take part in the decisions that affect school life. More than 125 schools joined this project to educate on democracy since its launching in 2005. The five-year objective is set at 250 schools.

Rio Tinto Alcan is the principal partner of Parliaments in High Schools. The Fédération des commissions scolaires and the Secrétariat à la jeunesse also contribute financially to establishing these Parliaments. The Fondation can also rely on the support of the Chief Electoral Officer as well as that of the Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport.

For more information:
www.parlementsausecondaire.com

JEAN-CHARLES-BONENFANT CONFERENCES

Organized in collaboration with the Law Faculty of Laval University, the Jean-Charles-Bonenfant conferences concern the favourite themes of Mr. Bonenfant, namely parliamentarism, the fundamental principles of public law, federalism and the distribution of jurisdictions, the history of institutional law and finally the drafting and interpretation of laws.

In 2007-2008, the sixth series of conferences focussed on the theme *How to draw up an equitable electoral map*. Messrs. Michel Létourneau, William Cusano and Ms. Marie Grégoire, all three former Members, as well as Mr. Louis Massicotte, political scientist and holder of the Research Chair in Democracy and Parliamentary Institutions of Laval University, exchanged views during a round table led by Mr. Michel C. Auger, journalist and bureau chief for Radio-Canada at the National Assembly. The conference attracted a little over 120 persons.



The sixth Jean-Charles-Bonenfant conference, on 14 November 2007, at *Le Parlementaire* restaurant.

Course and training sessions on parliamentary law and procedure

For a fourth consecutive year, the National Assembly and Laval University have formed a partnership to offer a course on parliamentary law and procedure to university students. Tailor-made for law and political science students, this course aims to instruct them on the rules and principles that characterize the organization and operation of the parliamentary proceedings carried out at the National Assembly.

Announcement of the creation of the Research Chair in Democracy and Parliamentary Institutions

The creation of the Research Chair in Democracy and Parliamentary Institutions, stemming from a partnership between the National Assembly of Québec and Laval University, was announced in November 2007. This announcement is a part of the National Assembly's programme of activities to mark the 400th anniversary of Québec City. The holder of the Chair is Professor Louis Massicotte, from the Department of Political Science of the Faculty of Social Sciences at Laval University. Mr. Massicotte is an internationally known specialist on electoral and parliamentary institutions.

In collaboration with its partners, namely the National Assembly of France, the Public Protector, the Chief Electoral Officer, the Auditor General and the Lobbyists Commissioner, the Chair pursues the objective of creating a pole of excellence, at the university level, on democracy and parliamentary institutions. It also wishes to make parliamentary institutions a specific subject of research, teaching, and training in law and in the political and social sciences, and to make students aware of all aspects of the parliamentary system in modern democracies. Furthermore,



At the announcement of the creation of the Research Chair in Democracy and Parliamentary Institutions, on 13 November 2007.

it hopes to foster a greater openness on the part of the parliamentary community with regard to its environment.

In addition to coordinating research projects on democracy and parliamentary institutions, the Chair supports research teams and will allocate study grants to students in accordance with the following four main axes:

- Parliamentary system and political representation;
- Comparative parliamentary procedure and the legislative process;
- Parliament and the exercise of governance;
- Parliamentary system and elections.

It also will put into place accredited internships within the partner institutions.

Knowledge emerging from the Research Chair in Democracy and Parliamentary Institutions is disseminated via conferences, visits from internationally renowned experts, research seminars and symposia.



Young explorers in the control room of the Debates Broadcasting Directorate.



Other young explorers in the kitchens of *Le Parlementaire* restaurant.

JEUNES EXPLORATEURS D'UN JOUR

On 26 April 2007, the third edition of the Jeunes explorateurs d'un jour activity was held at the National Assembly. This activity, which received the collaboration of the Interparliamentary and International Relations, the Debates Broadcasting and Publishing and the Restaurants Directorates, enabled close to twenty Secondary 4 and 5 students to find out more about an occupation that interests them, such as that of international relations advisor, producer or cook. Sponsored by one of the selected directorate's employees, students were given the opportunity to delve into a new work environment and discover the multiple facets of the profession that they are passionate about.

This activity is offered to students at a strategic time in their lives, when they must make choices that are sometimes difficult with regard to their professional future.

For more information: www.jeunes-explorateurs.org

AN ASSEMBLY THAT IS OPEN TO THE CITIZENS

In the company of guides, citizens and visitors passing through are invited to visit the Parliament Building, designed by Eugène-Étienne Taché, and whose construction spanned from 1877 to 1886.

Since 18 March 2008, the tour of the Parliament Building, designated a national historic site, begins with the Visitors' Centre, a project carried out with the intention of providing a better welcome to the approximately 100,000 visitors who come to the institution each year and of significantly improving services offered thereto. During the visit, guides provide historical details and information on the organization and proceedings of the National Assembly of Québec. At the same time, visitors have the opportunity to discover and admire the architectural characteristics of the building and the richness of the works it contains. Tours are offered in French and English and, with an advance reservation, in Spanish, Italian and Québec Sign Language.



Inauguration of the Visitors' Centre, on 18 March 2008, by the President of the National Assembly.

OPEN HOUSE DAY

More than **1550** persons took part in the open house day at the Parliament Building, organized on the occasion of Québec's national holiday, on 24 June 2007.

OUTDOOR KIOSK

During the summer of 2007-2008, over **300** persons went to the Parliament's outdoor kiosk to register for a guided tour of the gardens and premises of the Parliament Building. Furthermore, close to **7750** passersby visited the kiosk to get answers to their questions.



DID YOU KNOW?

The exhibition entitled *Le Québec, ses députés, ses régions* presents to visitors some 1000 photographs of the 17 administrative regions and of the citizens who live there.

Other exhibitions to see

Among the activities offered to citizens, the presentation of exhibitions has for the past few years constituted a choice event. In 2007, the exhibition entitled *Le Québec, ses députés, ses régions* has continued to attract the attention of visitors. A space to pay tribute to Eugène-Étienne Taché, the designer of the Parliament Building, was also set up in the entry hall of the Amerindian Family door and a display case was installed in the new Visitors' Centre.





A school group, during a guided tour of the Parliament Building.



DID YOU KNOW?

During the past year, in addition to the Québec flag, which must fly at all times atop the central tower of the Parliament Building, the **flags** of States and international organizations were hoisted 30 times atop the Parliament Building. In so doing, the National Assembly honours the presence of distinguished visitors. Among these visitors are foreign parliamentarians, heads of State and Government on official visits, members of the diplomatic and consular corps on official visits or visits on assuming the post.

Guided tours

More than 81,600 persons visited the Parliament Building:

Statistics on attendance according to place of origin		
Place of origin	Number of persons	%
Québec	53,414	65.38 %
Other provinces	8012	9.8 %
United States	8360	10.23 %
Other countries	11,903	14.57 %
Total of visitors	81,689	

Statistics on attendance according to language		
Languages	Number of persons	%
English	21,650	26.5 %
Spanish	801	0.98 %
French	59,073	72.31 %
Italian	163	0.19 %
German	-	-
QSL (Québec sign language)	2	0 %

Statistics on attendance of school groups		
Groups	Number of persons	%
Elementary	12,387	50.32 %
Secondary	10,990	44.65 %
College	784	3.19 %
University	453	1.84 %
Total	24,614	

Welcoming of cultural communities

These visits allow the members of Québec's cultural communities to become familiar with the democratic institution that is the National Assembly, to meet the President and parliamentarians and to improve their knowledge of the history of Québec and of parliamentarism. The following lists the dates on which representatives of various communities visited the Parliament:

- Cambodian community: 25 October 2007;
- Colombian community: 1 November 2007;
- Ukrainian community: 8 November 2007;
- Korean community: 15 November 2007;
- Burundian community: 22 November 2007;
- Indonesian community: 20 March 2008.

The restaurants of the Parliament Building

Le Parlementaire restaurant's reputation of charm and elegance is well established. In addition to parliamentarians, the dining room has been welcoming citizens and visitors at the Parliament Building since 1917. Complementarily, the cafeteria, located on the ground floor, also serves thousands of meals each year. In March 2008, the President of the National Assembly announced that the Parliament Building cafeteria, the *Mini-Débat*, would be renamed *Le Café du Parlement*, the former name of the *Parlementaire* when it first came into existence, and that it would be redesigned in 2008 in order to better welcome its clientele.

Brunches of *Le Parlementaire* restaurant

Several visitors were given the opportunity to discover the fine dining of *Le Parlementaire* and the beauty of its architecture during the five brunches that took place on Sundays during the Québec Winter Carnival and during the main summer holiday celebrations, such as Québec's national holiday, the Québec Summer Festival and the New France festivities.

PRIVATE ACTIVITIES IN THE RESTAURANTS

During the past year, close to one hundred business and private agency activities called upon the services of *Le Parlementaire* restaurant. They were thus able to take advantage of the various services, such as dining in the unique Beaux-Arts style decor of *Le Parlementaire* and taking a guided tour of the Parliament Building.



The President of the National Assembly, Mr. Michel Bissonnet, welcomed the Bulgarian community, on 10 April 2008, at the Parliament Building.



DID YOU KNOW?

In March 2007, right in the middle of the election campaign, the National Assembly's *Le Parlementaire* restaurant hosted, for the first time in its history, the **debate of the leaders** of Québec's three principal political parties.



The Carnival Brunches at *Le Parlementaire* restaurant were held on 3 and 10 February 2008, within the context of the 400th anniversary of Québec City. Some 650 guests and employees of the National Assembly were honoured by the presence of Bonhomme! Our winter ambassador took the opportunity to mingle with the crowd and shake hands with his fans, much to their delight.



On 26 February 2008, Mr. Marc Picard, Third Vice-President of the National Assembly, welcomed the Canada-wide Law Enforcement Torch Run, the main fundraising activity of the Special Olympics for persons living with an intellectual disability. In the two hundred year old institution that is the Parliament, Mr. Picard spoke of the determination of the athletes competing in the 6th National Winter Games, while recalling that the National Assembly is open to the citizens and proud to celebrate its history that is closely linked to that of Québec City.



Deployment of Québec City's 400th anniversary flag on the Grande Allée wing. In order to make visible the symbol representing the historical commemoration of Québec City, the central tower of the Grande Allée wing of the Parliament Building proudly displays the flag of the 400th anniversary of Québec City, and this, for the entire duration of the festivities. The population is indeed invited to enter the Parliament Building and become immersed in its 400 years of history and political traditions.

A FORUM FOR EXCHANGES

Launching of the 400th anniversary activities programme

On 13 November 2007, at *Le Parlementaire* restaurant, the President of the National Assembly, Mr. Michel Bissonnet, announced the National Assembly's programming in commemoration of the 400th anniversary of Québec City in the presence of several dignitaries and media representatives. The programme contains 15 activities focussing on the theme "400 years of traditions and political institutions":

2007	
NOV.	• Announcement of the creation of the Research Chair in Democracy and Parliamentary Institutions (20 November)
DEC.	• Launching of the book <i>L'hôtel du Parlement, mémoire du Québec</i> (14 December)
2008	
FEBRUARY	• Brunches of the Carnival (3 and 10 February) • Conferences on the theme "Getting over the expression 'Old Capital'", (7 February) • Publishing of a thematic issue of the <i>Cahiers des Dix</i> (7 February)
MARCH	• Ceremony commemorating the 400 th anniversary of Québec City (11 March) • Inauguration of the Visitors' Centre (18 March)
APRIL	• Exhibition of rare books and political writings "Les trésors de la Bibliothèque" (15 April to March 2009) • Conferences on the theme "Is Québec City a capital?" (15 April) • Launching of the book <i>Québec : quatre siècles d'une capitale</i> (17 April)
MAY	• Round table "A half-century of women in politics" (7 May) • Brunches of the Mother's Day (11 May)
JUNE	• Brunches of the Québec's national holiday (22 June) • Open house day of the Parliament Building (24 June) • "Québec reliée comme jamais. Oeuvres-témoins de 400 ans d'histoire" exhibition (24 June to 28 September 2008)
JULY	• "Espace Champlain" exhibition (2 July to 29 August 2008)
AUGUST	• Brunches of the New France festivities (3 August) • Publishing of a special issue of the magazine <i>Cap-aux-diamants</i> (13 August)
SEPT.	• Intergenerational Parliament (15 to 17 September)
OCT.	• Conferences on the theme "How do we make Québec City's history?"

To find out more about this special programming, please visit www.assnat.qc.ca/Quebec2008.

**PUBLISHING OF A THEMATIC ISSUE OF THE *CAHIERS DES DIX*
"QUÉBEC, VILLE D'HISTOIRE 1608-2008" AND THE CONFERENCE
"GETTING OVER THE EXPRESSION 'OLD CAPITAL'"**

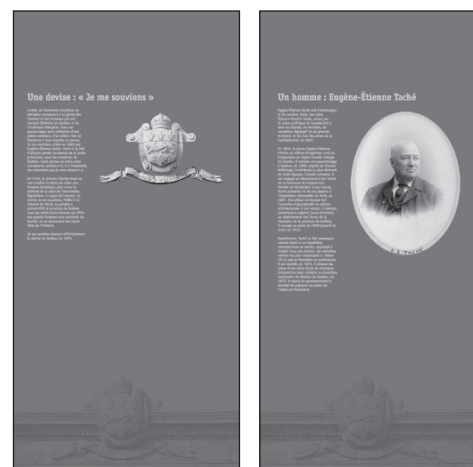
The President of the National Assembly, Mr. Michel Bissonnet, and the Secretary of the Société des Dix, Mr. Fernand Harvey, launched, on 7 February 2008, the issue of the *Cahiers des Dix* on the theme "Québec, ville d'histoire 1608-2008". This launching took place at *Le Parlementaire* restaurant of the National Assembly, in the presence, in particular, of the Mayor of Québec City, Mr. Régis Labeaume. Mr. Gilles Gallichan, historian and librarian at the National Assembly, also a member of the Société des Dix, gave a conference entitled "Getting over the expression 'Old Capital'". Furthermore, the Société awarded the Prix des Dix 2007-2008 to historian Jacques Lacoursière.

Over 200 people attended these activities.



TRIBUTE TO TACHÉ

Since December 2008, a tribute is paid to the designer of the Parliament Building, Eugène-Étienne Taché, via four banners made of fabric installed in the entranceway of the Amerindian Family door. These banners present texts and illustrations enabling a better understanding of the importance and scope of this figure to whom we also owe Québec's official motto, "Je me souviens" (I remember).



5th Political Book Day in Québec

On 23 May 2007, more than 150 participants took part in the 5th Political Book Day in Québec, an activity that aims to promote this literary genre among parliamentarians and the general public.

The success of this Day was characterized by the variety of its programme. The inauguration of the exhibition *Portraits de l'Histoire : les biographies politiques* opened the day's events, punctuated by a wealth of novelties. Three databanks concerning respectively the political parties in Québec, Québec parliamentarism and Québec's political archives were launched. An issue of the *Bulletin d'histoire politique*, focussing exclusively on the magazine's fifteen years of existence, as well as the volume *Histoire de la Tribune de la presse de Québec, 1871-1959*, by historian Jocelyn St-Pierre, were also launched.



The award winners of the fifth edition of Political Book Day in Québec at the Library of the National Assembly.



DID YOU KNOW?

The **Library** of the National Assembly plans several hosted activities in relation to its mission. In 2007, 11 books and 2 exhibitions were launched there. Among other activities, 16 official visits were conducted therein and 17 school groups were welcomed within its confines.



DID YOU KNOW?

The **Internet site** of the National Assembly, which contains some 50,000 Web pages, receives 2.2 million visits annually. The section that is most consulted by Internet users is that of the *Journal des débats* (Hansard) of the Assembly.

The high point of the day, a round table on the theme “The specialists and political strategists: the impact on the electorate” gave rise to discussions and debates among the public and guests, André-A. Lafrance, Claire Prévost-Fournier, Yves Théorêt and Martine Tremblay.

At the conclusion of the day’s activities, awards were given to the following authors:

- Martine Tremblay, Prix de la présidence de l’Assemblée nationale for her work *Derrière les portes closes : René Lévesque et l’exercice du pouvoir (1976-1985)*;
- Samy Mesli, Prix de la Fondation Jean-Charles-Bonenfant and the Prix du Ministère des Relations internationales du Québec/Ministère des Affaires étrangères de France for her doctorate dissertation *La coopération franco-québécoise dans le domaine de l’éducation de 1965 à nos jours*;
- Jean Baril, Prix de la Fondation Jean-Charles-Bonenfant for a Master’s thesis, for his essay *Bureau d’audiences publiques sur l’environnement et développement durable : de simple rouage d’une procédure d’autorisation de projet à un véritable organisme de planification environnementale*.

COMMUNICATIONS

Internet site

Year in review

In 2007-2008, the National Assembly continued to develop the content of its Internet site. The section “List of documents tabled in the National Assembly” allows users to access the electronic version of a number of these. This includes the parliamentary committee reports and the annual reports of ministries and public agencies. Furthermore, the bills at the introduction stage are now permanently available on the Internet site. Moreover, citizens were given the opportunity to express their opinion on four subjects under consideration in committee via on-line consultations.

Also worthy of mention are the digitization of new broadcasts from the series *Mémoires de députés* and the new *À la découverte de l’Assemblée* vignettes, the addition of the reconstructed debates from the first session of the 20th legislature (from 7 October 1936 to 12 November 1936) as well as the digitization of a special section presenting the National Assembly’s programme of activities marking the 400th anniversary of Québec City.

Redesigning continues

The National Assembly continued the redesigning of its Internet site this year, with the objective of allowing users to increase their understanding of the Members, their role and the work they carry out, of improving access to the parliamentary proceedings, of promoting the publication thereof and of facilitating searches.

National Assembly channel

Televisual coverage of the parliamentary committee proceedings in Louis-Hippolyte La Fontaine Room

The Debates Broadcasting and Publishing Directorate further developed the programming of the National Assembly channel and of the live Webcasting of parliamentary proceedings by adding the rebroadcasting of the standing committee proceedings taking place in Louis-Hippolyte La Fontaine Room, thus extending accessibility to Québec's parliamentary democracy.

The cameras of the new coverage control room comply with high definition television standards and use the 16:9 image format.

Coverage service		Number of activities	Duration
Televisual coverage		727	1 149 h 46
On-location recording		67	235 h 45
Audio recording		214	496 h 20
Digital recording, <i>Journal des débats</i> (Hansard)		694	1 183 h 28
National Assembly Channel		Number of activities	Duration
Parliamentary activities	Parliamentary proceedings and media events	904	1 529 h 57
In-house production	<i>Vignettes À la découverte de l'Assemblée</i>	not applicable	295 h 20
	<i>Mémoires de députés</i>	not applicable	202 h 13
	Members' holiday greetings (Saint-Jean national holiday and Christmas holidays)	not applicable	127 h 31
Total external broadcasting			2 155 h 01
Continuous electronic hosting			6 628 h 58
Total			8 784 h



DID YOU KNOW?

Since 1995, **La Boutique** of the National Assembly offers a wide variety of souvenirs to the visitors of the Parliament Building. For the purpose of better serving its customers, on 19 July 2007, **La Boutique** made its catalogue available on-line on the Internet site of the Assembly. For more information, please visit www.assnat.qc.ca, under the heading "Our services".

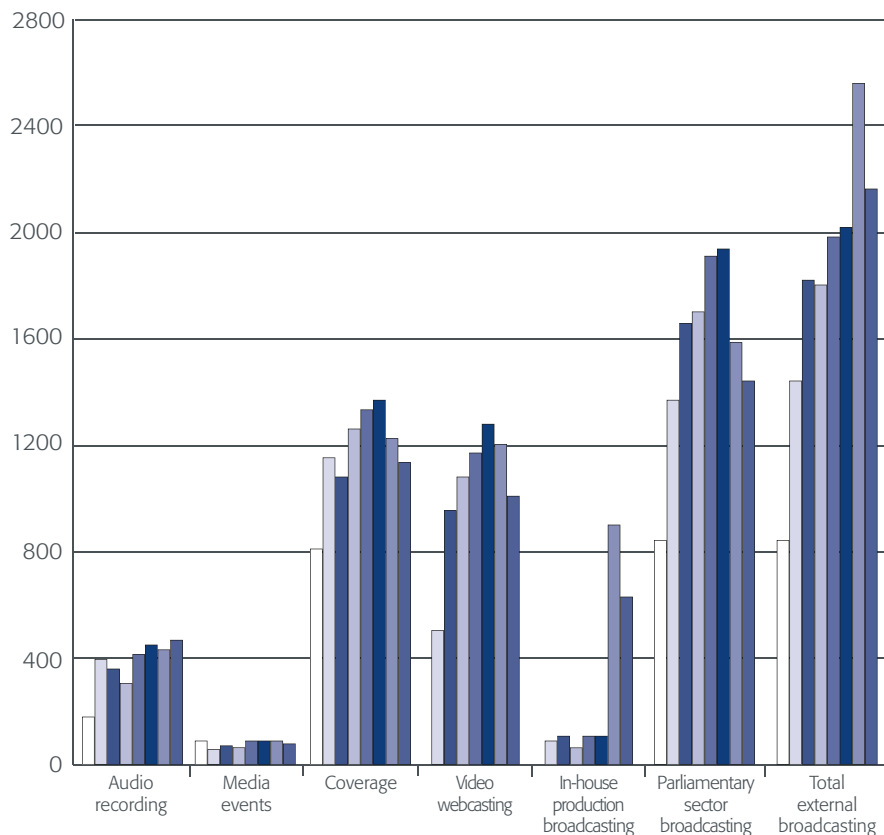
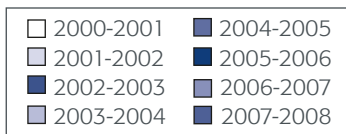


View of Louis-Hippolyte-La Fontaine Room from camera 3.



Coverage control room for Louis-Hippolyte-La Fontaine Room.

Statistics – Fiscal years 2000 to 2008
Broadcasting on the National Assembly Channel (number of hours)



DID YOU KNOW?

Between 1 April 2007 and 31 March 2008, the *Mémoires de députés* series broadcast, on the National Assembly channel, 34 television programs featuring interviews with 17 former parliamentarians. Since the series first began, in 2006, which was made possible owing to the collaboration of the Amicale des anciens parlementaires, 24 parliamentarians have participated in this exercise, thus enabling the production of 47 programs.



New vignettes for *À la découverte de l'Assemblée*

In 2006, the National Assembly, ever eager to improve its Channel and its Internet site, produced 18 five-minute information vignettes explaining certain aspects of the operation of its institution, as well as the roles and responsibilities of the Members. These vignettes focussed specifically on parliamentary work, the services provided to citizens at the Parliament Building (guided tours, restaurants, gift shop) and the educational activities organized by the National Assembly for the various target publics.

Nine new vignettes for *À la découverte de l'Assemblée* were produced in 2007-2008, this time concerning institutional, architectural and heritage aspects of the National Assembly. Moreover, seven vignettes that were produced in 2006-2007 were updated following the general elections in March 2007. Since January 2008, four new vignettes were put into production in order to make known other areas of the National Assembly. All of the vignettes are available on-line at the following address: www.assnat.qc.ca/fra/travaux.

A NEW TABLE FOR THE CLERKS

at the heart of
parliamentary proceedings

THE NEW VISITORS' CENTRE

the gateway to all
of our activities



TWO INNOVATIONS IN PICTURES



A NEW TABLE FOR THE CLERKS at the heart of parliamentary proceedings

A technological challenge

In September 2007, the new clerks' Table was placed in the National Assembly Chamber. Completely redesigned, this Table was created to meet the most highly advanced technological requirements stemming from the computerization of the work performed by parliamentary officials. Each computer station integrates databanks, timers, a telephone and video screens enabling to better support the work of Members and the President.

Taché's Table on display

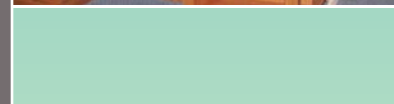
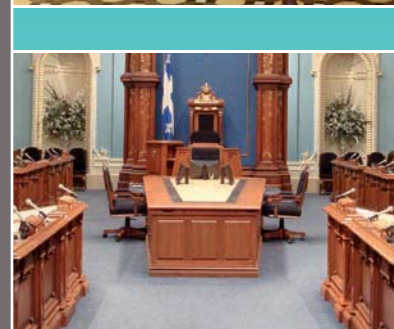
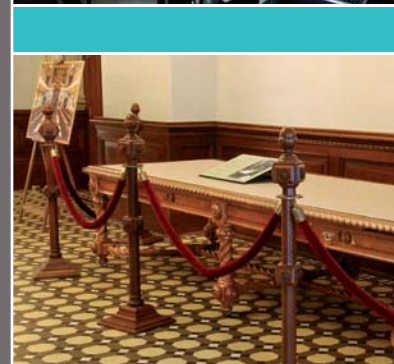
The replacement of the former Table became necessary owing to problems linked to reliability and maintenance brought on by the progressive addition of technological components. Moreover, it was becoming increasingly difficult to keep up with the technological evolution of the work of the clerks without altering the ancestral character of this Neo-Renaissance style piece of furniture created by Eugène-Étienne Taché. A witness of Québec's parliamentary history since 1890, the former Table is on display for the benefit of visitors in the 3rd floor hall of the Parliament Building.

Key exhibit of our parliamentary system

The new trapezoid-shaped Table provides more storage space and more room between workstations. It is made of black walnut, which is the same species of wood as that of the furniture and woodwork of the Assembly Chamber. Located at the heart of parliamentary proceedings, the clerks' Table constitutes a key exhibit of our British-style parliamentary system on which rests the Mace, symbol of the President's authority.

A group achievement

Using the plans submitted by consulting firms specializing in design and ergonomics, the new Table was constructed by the cabinetmakers of the Building Management and Telecommunications Directorate. In total, some fifty individuals collaborated in the project including several employees from the Computer Services and the Debates Broadcasting and Publishing directorates as regards the technological aspects, and from the Associate General Secretariat for Parliamentary Affairs and Procedure for the general coordination. The outcome of this project was underlined by the President of the National Assembly, on 18 October 2007.



THE NEW VISITORS' CENTRE

the gateway to all of our activities

The idea of an all new Visitors' Centre arose from the desire to bring the National Assembly and the citizens even closer together, in order to encourage the population of Québec to actually come on the premises to learn more about the mission of the National Assembly and about the role of Members.

2008, a pivotal year

As 2008 marks the 400th anniversary of Québec City, it became urgent to design a centre that was better adapted to visitors, particularly as we expect that their number will increase during this year of festivities. In 2007-2008, some 100,000 persons visited the Parliament Building.

Information methods adapted to all target publics

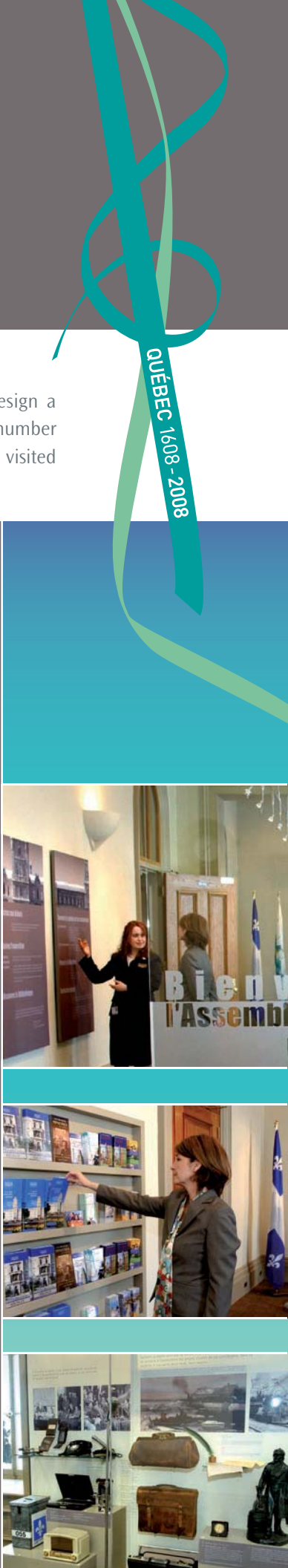
To capture the attention of person of all ages, citizens and visitors passing through, five methods were chosen:

- **Scriptovisual panels** announcing the services of the National Assembly;
- **A display case** featuring objects related to the work of Members;
- **Information terminals** presenting an electronic display of historical and current information on the institution;
- **A viewing room** where visitors may follow the debates live or watch documentaries on the Assembly;
- **A literature display unit** providing all of the information on our activities.

A gateway to free activities and interesting discoveries

The Visitors' Centre is a gateway to the multitude of activities offered to visitors. Indeed, this is where they can be redirected to:

- attend the debates;
- take a free guided tour;
- get information by means of exhibitions, such as “Le Québec, ses députés, ses régions”;
- visit the library;
- taste the cuisine of *Le Parlementaire* and *Le Café du Parlement* restaurants;
- pick up some literature on the Assembly;
- and enjoy all of the activities organized by the Assembly to mark the 400th anniversary of Québec City, such as the open house day, exhibitions, brunches, etc.



QUÉBEC 1608 - 2008



PARLIAMENTARY DIPLOMACY



In democratic systems that are based on the separation of powers, Parliaments conduct their international relations independently and in respect of political pluralism. The President of the National Assembly has the responsibility of representing the institution in international activities, whose non-partisan nature is ensured by delegations composed of Members from the various political groups represented at the Assembly. For over half a century, the National Assembly has developed an extensive network of interparliamentary relations.

MULTILATERAL RELATIONS

The Parliamentary Francophonie (APF)

The National Assembly of Québec is very active within the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie (APF), which constitutes a privileged forum to discuss themes that Québec elected officials hold close to their hearts, including culture, education and parliamentary democracy.

During the 33rd Session of the APF, held in Libreville (Gabon) in July 2007, the President of the National Assembly delivered a speech on Québec's immigration policy on the occasion of the general debate on "migratory movements in the Francophonie". Furthermore, within the APF, the Québec section promotes the support of the Haitian parliamentary institutions. Hence, the National Assembly of Québec welcomed, in November 2007, two senior public servants from Haiti within the framework of the interparliamentary cooperation programme with the APF.

The Québec section being the rapporteur on the theme of cultural diversity within the Committee on Education, Communication and Cultural Affairs, a Québec Member presented the APF's expectations at the First Session of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, which was held in Ottawa from 9 to 13 December 2007.

Within the context of the celebrations surrounding the 400th anniversary of the founding of Québec City, the Québec section actively proceeded with preparations in view of the hosting of major activities attended by Francophone parliamentarians in July 2008: the 24th Americas Regional Assembly of the APF (1 and 2 July 2008), the Conference of Presiding Officers of La Francophonie (4 July 2008) as well as the 34th Session of the APF (5 to 7 July 2008).

The Americas Region of the APF, whose Secretariat headquarters are at the National Assembly, sees to the follow-up of mandates and achievements of the APF among the Francophone parliamentarians of America. In the perspective of support to the Haitian parliamentary institutions, Québec parliamentarians took part in a regional awareness-raising mission conducted in Port-au-Prince, from 5 to 9 November 2007.

The objectives of the inter-parliamentary and international relations of the National Assembly

The international relations of the National Assembly are based on four major objectives:

1. Reinforce the effectiveness of the parliamentary institution and elected officials in their duties as legislators, overseers of government actions, defenders of the public interest and representatives;
2. Improve the position of the National Assembly on the international scene and its institutional reach within interparliamentary networks;
3. Actively participate in building a global community founded on democracy, peace, justice, and prosperity;
4. Broaden the reach of Québec society, particularly by promoting its sectors of excellence.

APF

Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie (Parliamentary Assembly of the Francophonie): founded in 1967, composed of 74 Parliaments of unitary, federal and federated States on the five continents. (National Assembly: full member since 1974)



The member sections of the APF

CPA

Commonwealth Parliamentary Association: founded in 1911, composed of 170 Parliaments of unitary, federal and federated States from 53 countries forming the Commonwealth. (National Assembly: full member since 1933)



The member sections of the CPA

COPA

Parliamentary Confederation of the Americas: created in 1997 on the initiative of the National Assembly of Québec, composed of the parliamentary assemblies of the unitary, federal and federated States, the regional Parliaments and the interparliamentary organizations of the Americas



The member conferences and parliamentary assemblies of the COPA

The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA)

The National Assembly of Québec represented the Canadian Region of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians network at the 53rd Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference, which was held in New Delhi, India, from 21 to 30 September 2007. On this occasion, the Executive Committee of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians network elected the representative of the National Assembly as Vice-chair of the network, thus contributing to the institutional outreach of the National Assembly within the CPA and this network. The members of this network consult together on issues relating to the status of women and encourage the representation and action of women throughout the Commonwealth countries.

The Parliamentary Confederation of the Americas (COPA)

The COPA's electoral observation mission programme, implemented in May 2005, enables parliamentarians to develop know-how as regards the promotion and consolidation of democracy in the Americas.

During the past year, the National Assembly took part in two COPA electoral observation missions. The purpose of these missions, which took place in Guatemala, in September 2007, and in Argentina, in October 2007, were to assess electoral preparedness and observe the conduct of the elections on election day. Led by a Québec Member, both of these missions were organized by the Québec Secretariat of COPA, headquartered at the National Assembly, with the collaboration of the Chief Electoral Officer of Québec. The mission members having observed a climate of insecurity during the election campaign, their principle recommendations in the report on the mission to Guatemala focus on the improvement of the process used to issue the identity cards required to exercise the right to vote and the observance of certain provisions of the Election Act, among others those that oblige political parties to disclose the source of their private funding.

Furthermore, a National Assembly delegation took part in the executive committee meetings of the COPA and of the Network of Women Parliamentarians of the Americas that were held in Los Angeles (California), from 22 to 24 June 2007. At the close of the proceedings of this first COPA meeting to take place in the continental United States, the members of the executive committee particularly adopted a resolution on the theme of migrations between the United States and Latin America. The women parliamentarians of the Americas, for their part, organized a popular seminar whose theme was "human trafficking", in the presence of parliamentarians and specialists hailing from the border region of the Southern United States and Northern Mexico.

Lastly, on 28 and 29 October 2007, delegations of the COPA and the Interparliamentary Forum of the Americas (FIPA), led by the presidents of these two organizations, held their first joint meeting in Québec City, at the invitation of the National Assembly. This meeting allowed for the reinforcement of dialogue between both organizations.

From 25 to 28 March 2008, two public servants travelled to Haiti to assess the current operational situation of the general secretariats of the House of Deputies and of the Senate and to establish what type of action would foster the reinforcement of their central role in parliamentary and administrative affairs.

It should be recalled that currently, the composition of the two continental parliamentary organizations is different: COPA brings together the parliamentary assemblies of the unitary, federal and federated States, the regional Parliaments and the interparliamentary organizations of the Americas, while FIPA is composed of the parliamentary institutions of the member States of the Organization of the American States (OAS).

The American interparliamentary organizations (ERC, CSG, NCSL)

The National Assembly of Québec continued its work within the interparliamentary organizations of the United States which constitute privileged forums to discuss various themes that concern Québec's elected officials and to defend the interests of Québec, particularly in the fields of energy, the environment, agriculture, health, education and relations between Québec and the United States.

From 1 January to 31 December 2007, the National Assembly chaired the *Eastern Regional Conference of the Council of State Governments (CSG/ERC)* and hosted this organization's 47th Annual Meeting and Regional Policy Forum, which was held in Québec City from 12 to 15 August 2007. Organized around the theme "Regional Challenges, Innovative Opportunities: Sharing State-Province Expertise", the event brought together over 800 people including close to 400 legislators from the Northeastern United States and the Eastern Canadian provinces and Ontario.

During this meeting, the National Assembly delegation piloted several resolutions, including one concerning the deferment of the implementation of the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI). Among other things, this resolution asks the American Government and the United States Congress to suspend the implementation of the new rules obliging Canadian and American travellers to present a passport at land border crossings between Canada and the United States, at least until an acceptable solution is implemented, such as an improved driver's licence that could serve as identification at the Canada-United-States border.

A resolution on the fight against global warming was also adopted. The first resolution of its kind to be adopted by an American interparliamentary organization, this text urges greater regional cooperation with a view to reducing greenhouse gases. The ERC particularly exhorts the governments of the States and provinces to encourage investments in public transportation and new green technologies. This resolution was favourably welcomed and contributed to the outreach of the institution and of Québec among the legislators of Eastern Canada and the Northeastern United States.

Furthermore, during the Annual Meeting of the *National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL)*, held in Boston, Massachusetts, from 21 to 27

CSG

Council of State Governments: organization created in 1933, composed of representatives of the executive, legislative and judicial powers from the 50 United States and 6 American territories. (National Assembly: international associated member since 1995)

ERC/CSG

Eastern Regional Conference of the Council of State Governments: organization which constitutes the Eastern Chapter of the CSG and which is composed of parliamentarians and governmental representatives of the Northeastern United States as well as the five Canadian member provinces (National Assembly: international associated member since 1990)

NCSL

National Conference of State Legislatures: American interparliamentary organization founded in 1975, composed of parliamentarians and public servants of the Legislative Assemblies from the 50 United States and 6 American territories. (National Assembly: international associated member since 2000).



The member parliamentary assemblies of the NCSL

July, a Québec Member was reappointed on this organization's executive committee for a third consecutive year. The National Assembly is the only international associated member to sit on the executive committee of the NCSL. Québec's action with regard to the reinforcement of border security was presented during a working meeting. Moreover, at the instigation of a Québec Member who is chair of its eastern region, the CSG organized a conference on the follow-up to be given regarding the WHTI issue, in Detroit, Michigan, on 29 February and 1 March 2008. Finally, the ERC executive committee, during its meeting held in Atlantic City, New Jersey, from 14 to 16 March 2008, adopted a resolution marking the 400th anniversary of Québec City.

BILATERAL RELATIONS

In 2007-2008, within the context of bilateral agreements, the National Assembly Members were welcomed by members of the Parliament of the French Community of Belgium, of the Parliament of Wallonia and of the French Senate. Discussions focussed on important issues such as the consequences of demographic aging, violence and youth, sustainable development and energy policies. Furthermore, shortly after his election at the head of the French National Assembly, President Bernard Accoyer held an audience with his Québec counterpart, President Michel Bissonnet.

The Third Session of the New Brunswick – Québec Parliamentary Association was held in Québec City from 2 to 5 October 2007. During this meeting, parliamentarians of both institutions had the opportunity to discuss current political and parliamentary affairs. They also exchanged information on their know-how as regards renewable energy, particularly wind energy, as well as on the best practices in primary and secondary education.

Lastly, on 26 September 2007, the National Assembly representatives welcomed a delegation of the Interparliamentary Committee on Information and Communications Technologies of the Landtag of Bavaria. The members of this committee were interested in exchanging views with their Québec counterparts on policies to reduce the use of paper in parliamentary institutions and on the replacement of paper by technology.

INTERPARLIAMENTARY COOPERATION

For several years now, the National Assembly has been providing technical support to the parliamentary institutions of certain emerging and consolidating democracies, thus fostering their reinforcement at both the parliamentary and administrative levels. These interparliamentary cooperation activities are conducted by actively supporting these institutions as they take charge of their own development programme.

It is within this framework that the National Assembly carried out this year various activities with the Parliament of the Republic of Haiti, in collaboration with the Parliamentary Centre. A mission to Port-au-Prince, from 27 to 31 May 2007, concluded initially with the general assessment of the institution's needs. An official visit to Québec City by the presidents of the Senate and of the House of Deputies, on 4 and 5 June 2007, also

provided the opportunity for President Bissonnet to establish high-level contacts and to specify the parameters of a future collaboration between the Parliament of Haiti and the National Assembly. Then, on 6 and 7 June 2007, representatives of the National Assembly welcomed senior public servants of the Parliament of Haiti. The various working meetings focussed on the operation of the National Assembly and enabled participants to develop their parliamentary and administrative know-how. Furthermore, from 11 to 15 February 2008, the National Assembly organized a seminar to exchange ideas on the organization and follow-up of parliamentary proceedings at the Parliament of Haiti. Some fifty public servants of both Houses were thus able to benefit from the Québec perspectives.

The National Assembly also extended its support to the National Assembly of Niger during an interparliamentary cooperation activity that was held from 25 October to 16 November 2007. The purpose of this mission was more specifically to provide assistance to the Nigerian institution in preparing its decennial strategic development plan. Finally, on 14 and 15 May 2007, representatives of the National Assembly participated in hosting a workshop on the modernization of work methods in the parliaments of five African States, in collaboration with the persons in charge of the APF's Noria programme.

OFFICIAL VISITS

The international commitments of the National Assembly bring a great number of foreign dignitaries to Québec City. Among these, in 2007-2008, the National Assembly welcomed the following:

Official visits of Assembly presidents:

- 25th Conference of Presiding Officers of Canada;
- The Right Honourable George **Reid**, Presiding Officer of the Scottish Parliament;
- Mr. Joseph **Lambert**, President of the Senate of the Republic of Haiti;
- Mr. Pierre Éric **Jean-Jacques**, President of the House of Deputies of the Republic of Haiti;
- Her Excellency Ms. Katalin **Szili**, Speaker of the National Assembly of the Republic of Hungary;
- Sir Alan **Haselhurst**, Deputy Speaker of the House of Commons of the United Kingdom.

Official visits of parliamentarians:

- 47th Annual Meeting and Regional Policy Forum of the *Eastern Regional Conference of the Council of State Governments (ERC/CSG)*;
- Delegation of Japanese parliamentarians on the occasion of a meeting of the Canada-Japan Friendship Group;
- Interparliamentary Committee on Information and Communications Technologies of the Landtag of Bavaria;
- Third Session of the New Brunswick – Québec Parliamentary Association;
- Delegation of members of the Committee on the Economy, Labour and Social Economics of the Flemish Parliament;
- Joint Meeting of the Parliamentary Confederation of the Americas/ Interparliamentary Forum of the Americas;
- Delegation of the Legislative Assembly of Perm (Russia);
- Delegation of parliamentarians of the State of Maine (United States);
- Mr. Pierre **Lasbordes**, Chair of the France-Québec Friendship Group of the French National Assembly and Member for Essonne;
- Ms. Martine **Bondo**, Senator of Gabon.

Official visits of government representatives to the National Assembly of Québec:

- Mr. Abdou **Diouf**, Secretary General of the International Organization of the Francophonie (OIF);
- Mr. Christian **Philip**, personal representative of the President of the French Republic for the Francophonie.

THE HERITAGE



THE DOCUMENTARY HERITAGE

Launching of *L'hôtel du Parlement, mémoire du Québec*

On 12 December 2007, the President of the National Assembly, Mr. Michel Bissonnet, launched the collector's book *L'hôtel du Parlement, mémoire du Québec* in the presence of Messrs. Gaston Deschênes, historian and author, and Francesco Bellomo, editor and photographer.

Abundantly illustrated, this volume containing over 250 pages is a historical account using the architecture of the Parliament Building which, in the image of Taché's architectural legacy, will continue on through the years. The account is divided into ten themes, ten turning points in our history, from the meeting of two worlds, beginning in 1534, to the Quiet Revolution and the parliamentary reform.

The publication of this work falls within the National Assembly's programme of activities celebrating the 400th anniversary of Québec City. It represents the institution's desire to promote our heritage and to disseminate historical and political knowledge. It is also a tribute to those who, for centuries, have made the Parliament Building an increasingly vibrant place for discussion and discovery

In addition to this publication is a special issue of the *Cahiers des Dix*, referred to on page 48.



Portraits de l'histoire: les biographies politiques exhibit

On the occasion of the 5th Political Book Day in Québec, the Library of the National Assembly inaugurated an exhibit on political biographies. Political biographies are privileged tools to learn more about those who are in positions of power or who have influence thereon. This exhibition, presented from 23 May 2007 to 11 April 2008, enabled to promote a selection of the numerous political biographies of Québec, Canadian and international public figures which are part of the Library's collections.



Richard G. Gervais collection exhibit

In 2006-2007, Mr. Richard G. Gervais donated to the National Assembly a collection of over 1100 objects highlighting the political and religious history of Québec and of Canada since 1875. A selection of this collection was placed on exhibit, on 23 October 2007, at the Library of the National Assembly.



The President of the National Assembly, Mr. Michel Bissonnet, accompanied by the donator, Mr. Richard Gervais, at the collection exhibit.



DID YOU KNOW?

The **Library's computerized catalogue** enables users to locate the documents it holds and, for certain titles, gives direct access to electronic resources. This catalogue now contains 291,727 descriptive entries, providing access to 34,632 electronic documents that may be consulted on the Internet site of the National Assembly.

Library collections and virtual library

As at 31 March 2008, over 2.059 million documents could be consulted at the Library, according to the following distribution:

Printed:	
Monographs, fascicles and brochures	485,078
Magazines	277,060
Newspapers	690,446
Microform records:	
Microfilms	35,905
Microfiches	565,348
Electronic documents (on-line, CD-ROMs)	4046
Audio recordings	185
Videocassettes	875
Posters, maps and photographs	999
Total	2,059,942



DID YOU KNOW?

On 21 January 2008, the **60th anniversary of the flag of Québec** was celebrated at the Parliament Building. At the same date, in 1948, the fleur-de-lisé was hoisted for the very first time atop the central tower of the Parliament Building. Two years later, on 7 March 1950, the Legislative Assembly passed the Official Provincial Flag Act.



A FEW FIGURES

In 2007-2008, the personnel of the Reference Service answered 11,178 information and search requests. Of this number, 4811 were made by parliamentarians, their staff, the personnel of the National Assembly, or organizations under the authority of the National Assembly.

Over 9617 persons came to the Library either as users, as guests at special events or simply as visitors.

Patrons used the Library collections in the following manner: by consulting over 65,000 on site, by borrowing 6717 documents, and by requesting over 129,000 photocopies.

THE ARCHITECTURAL AND URBAN HERITAGE

Former clerks' Table on exhibit

The designer of the Parliament Building, Eugène-Étienne Taché, also designed the former Clerks' Table which was used in the National Assembly Chamber from 1886 to 2007. Of great historical and heritage value, this table is now on display between the National Assembly Chamber and the Legislative Council Chamber, at the galleries level.

Restoration of the masonry on the west façade of the Parliament Building

The dismantling and reassembly of certain sections, the replacement of stones, the repointing, the repairing of fissures, the installation of reinforcement anchors and the cleaning of all surfaces over a portion of the west façade of the Parliament Building completed the work that had begun in 2001. Furthermore, the Centre de conservation du Québec carried out the sixth phase of the Parliament's masonry reconstruction project.

Second phase of the cornice restoration of Jean-Antoine-Panet Building

The reinforcement of the cornice completed the renovations that had been undertaken in the summer of 2006 for the purpose of repairing and strengthening the building's architectural concrete cornice. While ensuring the conservation of the building, this work was instrumental in increasing the safety of the premises for both its occupants and its visitors.



DID YOU KNOW?

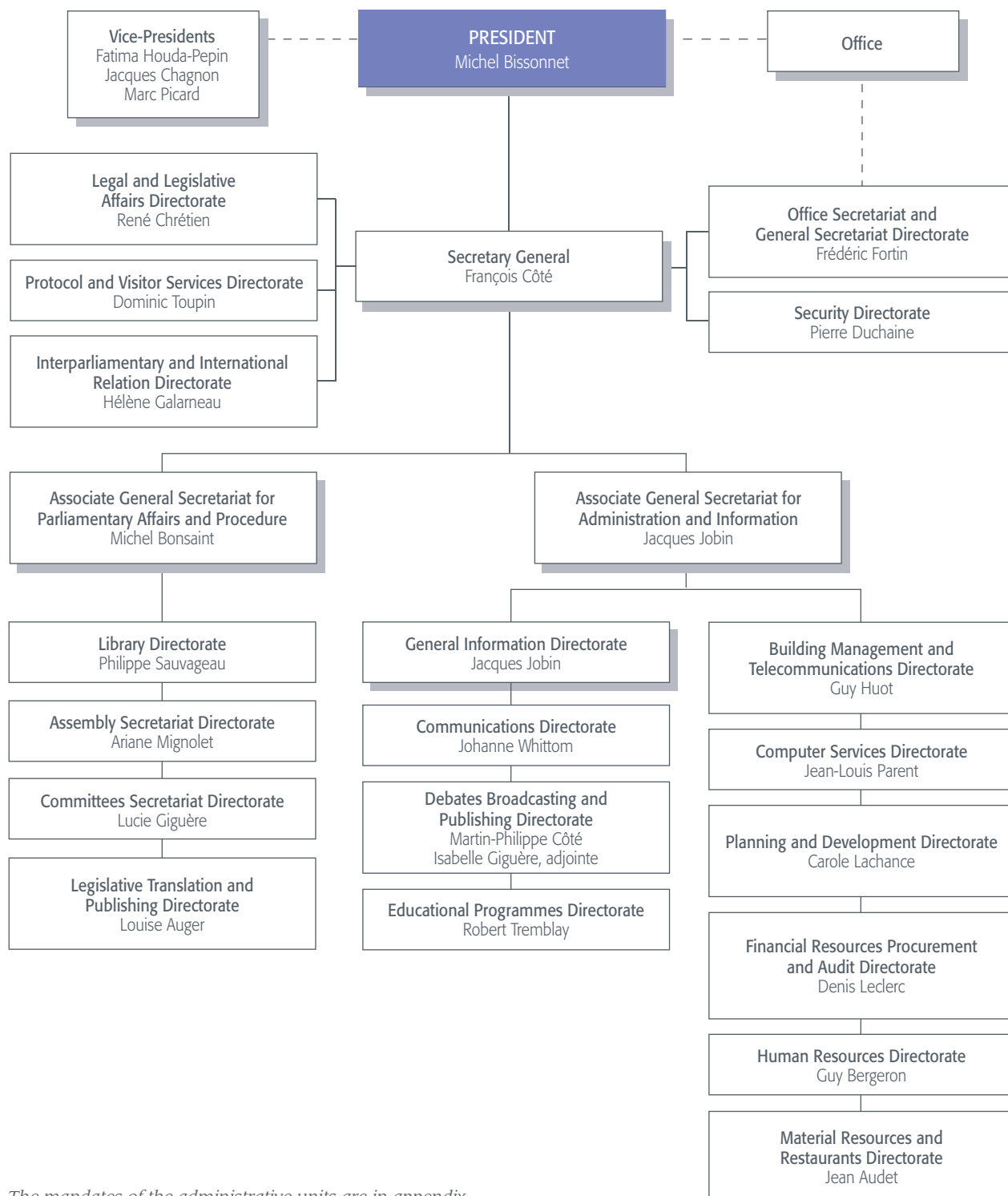
The **building inventory** of the National Assembly consists of four buildings occupied by the Parliament and its services:

- the Parliament Building;
- Jean-Antoine-Panet Building;
- Pamphile-Le May Building;
- and André-Laurendeau Building.

THE ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION



The administrative structure as at 31 March 2008



The mandates of the administrative units are in appendix.

THE OFFICE OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

The administration of the National Assembly is carried out within the framework of the statutes, regulations and rules that apply thereto. However, in order to preserve the administrative autonomy of the institution, the *Act respecting the National Assembly* established the Office of the National Assembly, which acts as its administrative board. The Office adopts any measure it deems necessary for the proper administration of the Assembly. It must, among other duties, approve the budgetary estimates of the National Assembly and make decisions in sectors that closely involve Members, such as their various allowances and working conditions.

MEMBERS OF THE OFFICE OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY



Members:

Chairman of the Office:

QLP

Lucie Charlebois (Soulanges)
Johanne Gonthier
(Mégantic-Compton)
Nicole Ménard (Laporte)
Pierre Reid (Orford)
Tony Tomassi (LaFontaine)

Michel Bissonnet (Jeanne-Mance—Viger)

ADQ

Éric Caire (La Peltre)
Sylvain Légaré (Vanier)
Claude Roy (Montmagny-L'Islet)

PQ

Marjolain Dufour (René-Lévesque)

Substitute members:

QLP

Vincent Auclair (Vimont)
Russell Copeman
(Notre-Dame-de-Grâce)
Norman MacMillan (Papineau)

ADQ

Pierre Michel Auger (Champlain)
François Bonnardel (Shefford)
Lucille Méthé (Saint-Jean)

PQ

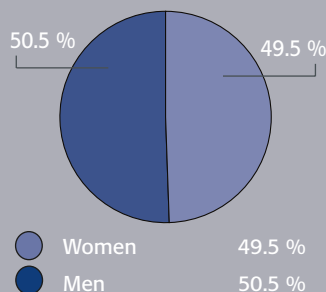
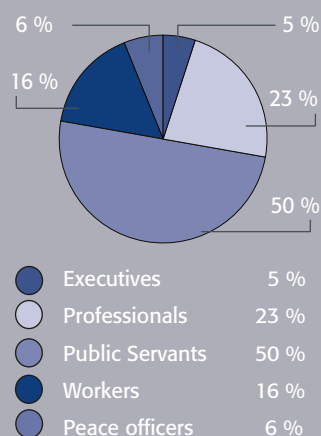
Stéphane Bédard (Chicoutimi)

THE PERSONNEL

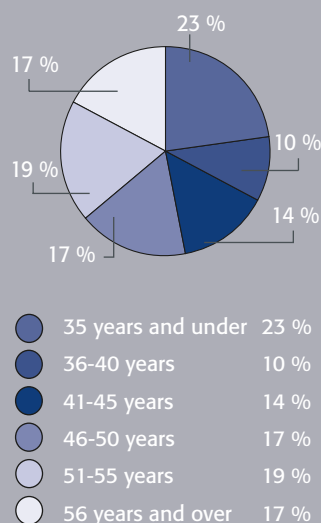
The workforce

For the proper conduct of its operations, the National Assembly disposes of 553 regular positions and 71 casual positions, for a total of 624 positions. The political sector, composed of executive assistants, political attachés, advisors and support staff, consists of 582 persons, both on Parliament Hill and in the Members' riding offices.

Distribution of the administrative sector workforce per employment category



Employees per age group, administrative sector



More than 40 years of services

The National Assembly was able to rely upon the loyal services of Messrs. Jean-Marie Brochu and Eugène Monfette for over forty years. This is no small feat. One need only imagine spending more than 40 years of one's professional career in the service of the same employer, years of fidelity and commitment to the institution.

A quarter of a century of commitment

Mmes Francine Perkins and Nicole Chatigny as well as Messrs. Claude Dugas, Mario Harvey and Benoît Filioux attained 25 years of professional services at the National Assembly or in the public service. The National Assembly expressed its appreciation to its loyal collaborators during a ceremony organized in their honour in the President's parlour.

Professional development: course in parliamentary procedure

The parliamentary activities are at the very heart of the National Assembly's mission. It is important that the employees know the general principles and rules governing parliamentary proceedings. It is for this reason that, since 2003, the parliamentary sector has been giving a course in parliamentary procedure to all new employees of the National Assembly.

In 2007-2008, the training of the public service personnel continued in order to familiarize them with the organization and proceedings of the National Assembly and the parliamentary committees. A one-day course was held on 21 September 2007 for a portion of the Library Directorate staff, for the newly-hired employees of other directorates, as well as for a group of the public service staff of the Debates Broadcasting and Publishing Directorate. Some twenty employees benefited from this course.

It should be mentioned that the *Strategic Plan of the Administration of the National Assembly for 2004-2009* specifies that all of the Assembly personnel must have taken part in parliamentary procedure courses. To date, over 300 persons from the parliamentary and administrative sectors have taken this course.

Entraide 2007 Campaign

For a second year, the National Assembly's Entraide 2007 Campaign brought together the Canadian Red Cross /Québec Division, the organizations affiliated to Partenaire Santé-Québec and Centraide to hold a single fund-raising campaign. Several fund-raising activities were organized in November, including the traditional *happy hour*, a donations campaign, as well as a desserts auction and an items auction.

The impressive generosity of parliamentarians and members of the personnel of the National Assembly was reflected this year by an increase of almost 4 % in donations withheld at source. The National Assembly collected a total sum of \$46,500 which was distributed among the various recipient organizations of the *Entraide 2007* campaign.



Leucan Shaved Head Challenge Campaign

On 8 June 2007, the Parliament Building welcomed some twenty volunteers hailing from the administrative and political sectors having accepted to meet the *Shaved Head Challenge*, an initiative of the Leucan organization to help children with cancer. The challenge, which consisted in having one's head shaved in exchange for a donation, was brilliantly met. The hairdressers for the day, who included Mr. Michel Bissonnet, President of the National Assembly, were thus able to raise \$7400, which amount was sent to this charitable organization.



The President of the National Assembly at work during the *Shaved Head Challenge*, on 8 June 2007.

PRIX ZÉNITH AWARDED FOR THE
LE QUÉBEC, SES DÉPUTÉS, SES RÉGIONS EXHIBITION

On 12 June 2007, the National Assembly was awarded the Prix Zénith, which it received within the framework of an annual contest organized by the Forum des responsables de communication du gouvernement du Québec.

Following the elections held on 26 March 2007, the *Le Québec, ses députés, ses régions* exhibition was redesigned in order to reflect the new composition of the National Assembly.



THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY IS MODERNIZED

The customer support service of the computer branch, again in 2007-2008, answered numerous assistance requests from the political and administrative sectors of the National Assembly.

Client support at a glance:	
Indexed telephone assistance calls	13,028
Other service calls received	± 4000
Emergency service	38
Training days	647
Training to parliamentarians and their staff	66 %

The National Assembly's **computer population** comprises a total of 1555 microcomputers, including 247 laptop computers and 55 printers installed on Parliament Hill and in the ridings. These numbers include the political and administrative sectors.



Successful implementation of the first phase of SAGIR (SGR1)

Beginning in June 2006, the technological work and the revision of work procedures began with a view to the implementation, on 1 April 2007, of SAGIR (Stratégie d'affaires en gestion intégrée des ressources). Under the coordination of the Financial Resources, Procurement and Audit Directorate, the proceedings continued until general elections were called, in February 2007, to allow the management support teams to meet the requirements of these elections. Consequently, the implementation of SAGIR at the National Assembly was postponed until 1 November 2007.

It should be mentioned that the National Assembly undertook to modernize its computer infrastructures as regards financial, material and human resources management. The government-wide large-scale operation is a replacement solution to the current outdated systems by the SAGIR business solution, divided into seven distinct stages to be implemented over several years.

THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY EXPENDITURE (2007-2008)

	Expenditure (\$000)	Authorized staff positions	
		Permanent employees*	Casual employees*
GENERAL SECRETARIAT, LEGAL AFFAIRS, INSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS AND SECURITY			
Office of the Secretary General	1,063.9	14	0
Legal and Legislative Affairs Directorate	482.3	5	0
Protocol and Visitor Services Directorate	2,253.0	34	5
Interparliamentary and International Relations Directorate	2,012.0	23	0
Security Directorate	4,117.1	75	13
	9,928.3	151	18
PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND LIBRARY			
Associate General Secretariat for Parliamentary Affairs and Procedure	515.4	9	0
Library Directorate	5,086.1	83	2
Assembly Secretariat Directorate	618.9	10	3
Committees Secretariat Directorate	1,076.2	20	1
Legislative Translation and Publishing Directorate	495.0	17	0
	7,791.6	139	6
INFORMATIONAL AFFAIRS			
Associate General Secretariat for Administration and Information	382.0	4	0
Communications Directorate	1,425.2	23	1
Debates Broadcasting and Publishing Directorate	4,105.9	60	29
Educational Programmes Directorate	618.9	9	0
	6,532.0	96	30
ADMINISTRATIVE AFFAIRS			
Building Management and Telecommunications Directorate	12,974.5	33	1
Computer Services Directorate	4,630.3	45	0
Planning and Development Directorate	462.1	5	0
Financial Ressources, Procurement and Audit Directorate	1,449.6	25	0
Human Resources Directorate	9,048.2	19	0
Material Resources and Restaurants Directorate	3,929.0	40	16
	32,493.7	167	17
STATUTORY SUPPORT SERVICES TO PARLIAMENTARIANS	60,352.1		
FIXED ASSETS DEPRECIATION	4,977.2		
TOTAL	122,074.9	553	71

* Authorized FTEs (full-time equivalents)

APPENDICES

BILLS PASSED

Government bills (passed)

1	CSA	An Act to establish the Fund for the promotion of a healthy lifestyle
2	CPF	An Act giving effect to the Budget Speech delivered on 23 March 2006 and to certain other budget statements
3	CI	An Act to implement the Convention on International Interests in Mobile Equipment and the Protocol to the Convention on International Interests in Mobile Equipment on Matters Specific to Aircraft Equipment
4	CW	An Act to repeal the Act respecting the provision of health services by medical specialists
5	CLE	An Act to amend the Act to foster the development of manpower training and other legislative provisions
6	CPP	An Act to amend various legislative provisions respecting municipal affairs
8	CC	An Act to amend the Act respecting the Société de développement des entreprises culturelles
9	CI	An Act respecting the safety of persons on certain premises and amending the Act respecting safety in sports
10	CW	An Act to amend the National Holiday Act and other legislative provisions
11	CI	An Act respecting the forfeiture, administration and appropriation of proceeds and instruments of unlawful activities
12	CI	An Act to amend the Professional Code and the Pharmacy Act
13	CW	An Act to amend the Legal Aid Act
14		Appropriation Act No. 1, 2007-2008
15		Appropriation Act No. 2, 2007-2008
16	CLE	An Act to amend the Act respecting the Société du Centre des congrès de Québec and the Act respecting the Société du Palais des congrès de Montréal
17	CPF	An Act to amend the Public Curator Act and the Act respecting the Ministère du Revenu
18	CPP	The Residential Swimming Pool Safety Act
19	CPF	An Act to amend the Securities Act and other legislative provisions
20	CPF	An Act to amend the Act respecting insurance, the Act respecting trust companies and savings companies and other legislative provisions
21	CW	An Act to amend the Act to ensure the enlargement of Parc national du Mont-Orford, the preservation of the biodiversity of adjacent lands and the maintenance of recreational tourism activities
24	CSA	An Act to amend the Act respecting prescription drug insurance
25	CSA	An Act to amend the Act respecting health services and social services for Cree Native persons
26	CSA	An Act to amend the Act respecting the Régie de l'assurance maladie du Québec and to amend other legislative provisions

27	CPF	An Act to amend the Act respecting financial services cooperatives
28	CTE	An Act to amend the Act respecting the conservation and development of wildlife
29	CPP	An Act to amend the Act respecting the Société d'habitation du Québec
30	CC	An Act to amend the Act respecting the Société de la Place des Arts de Montréal, the Act respecting the Société de télédiffusion du Québec and the Act respecting the Société du Grand Théâtre de Québec
32	CPF	Act to promote the maintenance and renewal of public infrastructures (modified title)
33	CTE	An Act to amend the Act respecting the Société des Traversiers du Québec and other legislative provisions
34	CPF	An Act to repeal the Act to establish a special olympic fund and to amend other legislative provisions
38	CPF	An Act to amend the Act respecting the Société immobilière du Québec
39	CLE	An Act to amend the Forest Act and other legislative provisions
42	CTE	An Act to amend the Highway Safety Code and the Regulation respecting demerit points
43	CI	An Act to amend various electoral legislation with regard to the identification of electors
44	CPF	An Act to amend the Financial Administration Act and the Act respecting the Ministère des Finances
45	CI	An Act to amend the Act respecting the Barreau du Québec and the Professional Code (modified title)
46	CI	An Act to amend the Professional Code and the Chartered Accountants Act in respect of public accountancy
49	CPF	An Act to amend the Act respecting Services Québec and other legislative provisions
51	CSA	An Act to amend the Act respecting the Régie de l'assurance maladie du Québec, the Health Insurance Act and the Act respecting health services and social services
52	CPF	An Act to amend various legislative provisions concerning pension plans in the public sector
56	CPP	An Act to amend various legislative provisions respecting municipal affairs
57	CW	An Act to amend the Act respecting the Agence de l'efficacité énergétique and the Act respecting the Régie de l'énergie
58	CLE	An Act to amend the Act respecting labour standards with regard to absences and leave
76		Appropriation Act No. 1, 2008-2009

Public bills at the stage of clause-by-clause consideration in committee

7	CI	An Act respecting the Compilation of Québec Laws and Regulations
22	CPP	An Act to amend various legislative provisions concerning the urban agglomeration of Montréal
36	CTE	An Act to amend the Act respecting transport infrastructure partnerships and other legislative provisions
37	CPF	An Act giving effect to the Budget Speech delivered on 24 May 2007, to the 1 June 2007 Ministerial Statement Concerning the

		Government's 2007-2008 Budgetary Policy and to certain other budget statements
50	CI	An Act to amend the Professional Code and other legislative provisions in the field of mental health and human relations
59	CTE	An Act respecting the boundaries of water property in the domain of the State and the protection of wetlands along part of the Rivière Richelieu
60	CI	An Act to amend the Police Act
61	CTE	An Act to amend the Act respecting the Société des établissements de plein air du Québec and the Act respecting the Société québécoise de récupération et de recyclage
67	CSA	An Act to amend various legislative provisions concerning health

Public bills at the stage of passage in principle

23		An Act respecting clinical and research activities relating to assisted procreation
40		An Act to amend the Courts of Justice Act and the Act to amend the Act respecting municipal courts, the Courts of Justice Act and other legislative provisions
47		Securities and Other Financial Assets Transfer Act
48		An Act to amend the Act respecting municipal courts and other legislative provisions
53		An Act respecting the Agence de gestion des structures routières du Québec
54	CI	An Act to amend the Police Act and other legislative provisions
55	CTE	An Act to again amend the Highway Safety Code and other legislative provisions
63	CSA	An Act to amend the Charter of human rights and freedoms
64		An Act to amend the Act respecting the Autorité des marchés financiers and other legislative provisions
65		An Act respecting the application of the Act to establish a legal framework for information technology
66		An Act respecting the Laboratoire de sciences judiciaires et de médecine légale
69		An Act to amend the Election Act and other legislative provisions
70		An Act to amend the Act respecting health services and social services, the Health Insurance Act and the Act respecting the Régie de l'assurance maladie du Québec
71		An Act to amend the Auditor General Act and other legislative provisions
72		Crop Health Protection Act
73		Real Estate Brokerage Act

Private Members' public bills (passed)

197	CW	An Act to proclaim the International Day of Peace
198	CW	An Act to amend the Act respecting the Fondation Jean-Charles-Bonenfant

Private Members' public bills at the stage of passage in principle

190		An Act to repeal the Act to ensure the enlargement of Parc national du Mont-Orford, the preservation of the biodiversity of adjacent lands and the maintenance of recreational tourism activities
191		Constitution of Québec
192		An Act to amend the Labour Code
193		An Act to amend the Cinema Act
194		Phosphate-Free Detergents Act
195		Québec Identity Act
196		Québec Constitution
391		An Act to declare water a common heritage of the Québec nation

Private bills (passed)

200	CI	An Act respecting The Knowlton Golf Club inc.
202	CPP	An Act respecting an immovable of the cadastre of the township of Letellier
203	CPP	An Act respecting Ville de Sorel-Tracy
204	CPP	An Act respecting Ville de Lévis
206	CPP	An Act respecting Ville de Saint-Jérôme
207	CI	An Act to amend the Act respecting Boucherville Golf Club
208	CI	An Act to amend the Act respecting L'Union des municipalités de la province de Québec (Union of Municipalities of the Province of Québec)
209	CI	An Act respecting Marie Francine Sonia Sophie Bisson
210	CI	An Act to establish the Société du chemin de fer de la Gaspésie
211	CPP	An Act to amend the Act respecting Ville de Varennes
212	CPP	An Act respecting Ville de Matane
213	CPP	An Act respecting Ville de Saint-Augustin-de-Desmaures

Private bills at the stage of clause-by-clause consideration in committee

201	CI	An Act respecting La Compagnie du cimetière Saint-Charles
205	CPP	An Act respecting Municipalité de Caplan

MANDATES CARRIED OUT BY THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEES

Committee on the National Assembly

Establish the membership of the standing committees and the list of temporary chairmen

Committee on Public Administration

Accountability of deputy ministers and chief executive officers of public bodies concerning:

- Residual waste management (Sustainable Development, Environment and Parks and Recyc-Québec) (chapter 5, volume II, Auditor General's report 2005-2006)
- The annual management report for 2005-2006 of the Ministère des Transports
- The annual management report for 2005-2006 of the Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec
- The management of real estate projects, the follow-up to building management in the health and social services network and the watch over major capital asset projects of the Government (CHUM) (Health and Social Services and the Corporation d'hébergement du Québec) (volume I, chapters 3 and 5, volume II, chapter 7, Auditor General's report for 2005-2006)
- The annual management report for 2006-2007 of the Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport
- The follow-up to the cadastral reform (Natural Resources and Wildlife and the Ordre des arpenteurs-géomètres du Québec)

Examination of financial commitments

Other mandates:

- Election of the Committee chairman and vice-chairman
- Clarify, beginning on 1 November 2007, the application of the Balanced Budget Act and propose, if necessary, no later than 20 December 2007, recommendations so as to correct the artificially balanced budget
- Hearing of the Auditor General within the framework of the examination of his annual management report for 2006-2007 and the examination of his financial commitments for the months of April 2006 to March 2007

Committee on Agriculture, Fisheries and Food

Examination of the estimates of expenditure for 2007-2008

Other mandate:

- Election of the Committee chairman and vice-chairman

Committee on Social Affairs

Clause-by-clause consideration: 5 public bills

Examination of the estimates of expenditure for 2007-2008

Consultation:

- General consultation within the framework of the consideration of Bill 63, An Act to amend the Charter of human rights and freedoms

Interpellations:

- The prescription drug policy
- Home support services and support to natural caregivers under the jurisdiction of the Minister of Health and Social Services
- The Québec Government's orientations as regards family assistance

Other mandates:

- Election of the Committee chairman and vice-chairman
- Election of the Committee vice-chairman
- Hearing of the Estrie, Outaouais, Bas-St-Laurent and Chaudière-Appalaches health and social services agencies within the framework of the examination of their annual management reports for 2003-2004 to 2006-2007
- Hearing of the Mauricie and Centre-du-Québec health and social services agency within the framework of the examination of its annual management reports for 2004-2005 to 2006-2007
- Hearing of the James Bay Regional Health and Social Services Centre within the framework of the examination of its annual management reports for 2000-2001 to 2006-2007
- Hearing of the chief executive officer of the Conseil de gestion de l'assurance parentale
- Examination of the reports for 2003-2004 to 2006-2007 on the activities funded by the Fonds québécois d'initiatives sociales as well as the reports for 2000-2001 to 2006-2007 on the activities of the Fonds d'aide à l'action communautaire autonome

Committee on Planning and the Public Domain

Clause-by-clause consideration: 4 public bills, 7 private bills

Examination of the estimates of expenditure for 2007-2008

Consultation:

- Special consultations within the framework of the examination of Bill 22, An Act to amend various legislative provisions concerning the urban agglomeration of Montréal

Other mandate:

- Election of the Committee chairman and vice-chairman

Committee on Culture

Clause-by-clause consideration: 2 public bills

Examination of the estimates of expenditure for 2007-2008

Consultation:

- General consultation as regards planning for 2008-2010 Québec immigration levels

Surveillance of agencies:

- Conseil supérieur de la langue française

Other mandates:

- Election of the Committee chairman and vice-chairman
- Hearing of the chairman of the Commission d'accès à l'information for the examination of the annual reports for 2001-2002 to 2006-2007

Committee on Education

Examination of the estimates of expenditure for 2007-2008

Surveillance of agencies:

- Comité consultatif sur l'accessibilité financière aux études
- Comité sur les affaires religieuses

Order of initiative:

- Follow-up on the recommendations contained in the report on the school success of Natives

Other mandate:

- Election of the Committee chairman and vice-chairman

Committee on Labour and the Economy

Clause-by-clause consideration: 6 public bills

Examination of the estimates of expenditure for 2007-2008

Interpellation:

- The state of Québec's economy

Consultations:

- Special consultations within the framework of the examination of Bill 41, An Act to foster transparency in the sale of gasoline diesel fuel
- Special consultations within the framework of the examination of Bill 39, An Act to amend the Forest Act and other legislative provisions
- General consultation with reference to the report from the Minister of Labour on the implementation of the Pay Equity Act

Other mandates:

- Election of the Committee chairman and vice-chairman
- Examination of the financial statements and activity reports for 2003-2004 to 2006-2007 of the Fonds national de formation de la main-d'œuvre

Committee on Public Finance

Clause-by-clause consideration: 11 public bills

Examination of the estimates of expenditure for 2007-2008

Interpellation:

- The crisis in the asset-backed commercial paper industry (ABCP) and its impact for the Government of Québec, the government-owned agencies and the public agencies under the jurisdiction of the Minister of Finance

Consultation:

- Special consultations within the framework of the examination of Bill 32, Act to promote the maintenance and renewal of public infrastructures (modified title)

Order of initiative:

- Public hearing of the representatives of the Caisse de dépôt et placement du Québec, including its chairman and chief executive officer, Mr. Henri-Paul Rousseau, on the crisis in the asset-backed commercial paper industry

Other mandates:

- Election of the Committee chairman and vice-chairman
- Continuation of the debate on the Budget Speech

Committee on Institutions

Clause-by-clause consideration: 7 public bills, 5 private bills

Examination of the estimates of expenditure for 2007-2008

Consultations:

- General consultation within the framework of the examination of Bill 9, An Act respecting the safety of persons on certain premises and amending the Act respecting safety in sports
- Special consultations within the framework of the examination of Bill 46, An Act to amend the Professional Code and the Chartered Accountants Act in respect of public accountancy
- Special consultations within the framework of the examination of Bill 54, An Act to amend the Police Act and other legislative provisions
- Special consultations within the framework of the examination of Bill 50, An Act to amend the Professional Code and other legislative provisions in the field of mental health and human relations
- General consultation with reference to the evaluation report of the Act to reform the Code of Civil Procedure and to the report on strategic lawsuits against public participation (SLAPP)

Other mandate:

- Election of the Committee chairman and vice-chairman

Committee on Transportation and the Environment

Clause-by-clause consideration: 3 public bills

Examination of the estimates of expenditure for 2007-2008

Consultations:

- Special consultations within the framework of the examination of Bill 42, An Act to amend the Highway Safety Code and the Regulation respecting demerit points
- Special consultations concerning the Government's sustainable development strategy

Order of initiative:

- Residual waste management

Other mandate:

- Election of the Committee chairman and vice-chairman

ALLOWANCES GRANTED TO MEMBERS

Wage bill of members:

Regular remuneration (includes base allowance and additional allowance)	\$10,973,115
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Other allowances:

Allowances for expenses, attendance and allowances for political activities	\$2,912,962
Transition allowances (includes allowances granted when a Member leaves)	\$546,725
Travel from electoral division to the Parliament Building	\$1,200,339
Lodging in or around Québec City	\$1,435,441
Additional allowance for the purchase of furniture and office equipment during the first term of office	\$95,777
Electoral division office operation expenses	\$5,299,309

Other expenses:	Members' staff	Office of Members holding parliamentary functions	Total
Wage bill	\$13,768,983	\$7,122,478	\$20,891,461
Travel expenses	\$359,387	\$586,551	\$945,938
Research services of political parties			\$2,729,558

MANDATES OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE BRANCHES

The **Secretary General** is the highest-ranking public servant of the Assembly and chief advisor to the President and the deputation in the interpretation of parliamentary procedure. The Secretary General oversees and manages the personnel of the Assembly, sees to the administration of routine business and carries out the other duties that are assigned to him by the Office of the National Assembly, of which he is the secretary.

The **Office Secretariat and General Secretariat Directorate** sees to the organization and follow-up of the proceedings of the Office and informs the Members concerning their working conditions and the services that are available to them. It also assists the Secretary General in the routine administration of his office, in addition to coordinating and carrying out institutional mandates and projects.

The **Legal and Legislative Affairs Directorate** advises the Assembly in legal matters and provides all professional services regarding the drafting of private Members' public bills and private bills.

The **Protocol and Visitor Services Directorate** coordinates protocol activities and ceremonies at the Assembly and is responsible for visitor and information services, as well as for guided tours.

The **Interparliamentary and International Relations Directorate** advises Assembly authorities on interparliamentary and international relations and coordinates the activities of the Assembly in this area.

The **Security Directorate** advises Assembly authorities on all security and safety measures and is responsible for the safety of persons and property as well as for the security of buildings and offices of the Assembly.

The **Associate General Secretariat for Parliamentary Affairs and Procedure** coordinates, plans, and supervises the activities of the parliamentary sector and assists the Secretary General in his role as advisor on the proceedings of the Assembly and the parliamentary committees. It provides the professional expertise in the field of parliamentary jurisprudence and carries out studies in doctrine.

The **Library Directorate** is responsible for the conservation of parliamentary documents and the management and retrieval of archives. It maintains a collection meeting the needs of current and future users. It offers various reference, press documentation and research services to parliamentarians and to the administrative branches of the National Assembly.

The **Assembly Secretariat Directorate** prepares, ensures the proper conduct of and follows up on the sittings of the Assembly. It assists the Secretary General in the preparation and coordination of the opening and closing of sessions.

The **Committees Secretariat Directorate** provides all professional and administrative services required by parliamentary committees for the organization and conduct of their activities.

The **Legislative Translation and Publishing Directorate** provides all professional and technical services as regards the translation, revision, publishing and printing of legislative texts and answers the translation needs of other administrative branches.

The **Associate General Secretariat for Administration and Information** plans, directs, coordinates and supervises the activities of the administrative and information sector directorates, in addition to providing all professional and technical services associated thereto. It assists and advises the Secretary General in his role as manager of administrative affairs as well as on digital information security.

The **General Directorate for Information** plans, directs, coordinates and supervises the activities of the communications, broadcasting and publishing of debates and educational programmes directorates. It assists the Secretary General in his responsibilities for the outreach initiatives of the Assembly and coordinates the activities planned for the 400th anniversary of Québec City.

The **Communications Directorate** promotes outreach by informing the public on the democratic role of the Assembly. It is responsible for the institution's communications and public relations. It provides graphic design, publishing, drafting and revision services as well as an information service to Press Gallery journalists.

The **Debates Broadcasting and Publishing Directorate** coordinates the television broadcasting of the parliamentary debates, press conferences and certain special events, as well as the audio recording of the parliamentary proceedings for the transcription, revision, editing and production of the *Journal des débats* (Hansard).

The **Educational Programmes Directorate** coordinates the development, organization and conduct of educational programmes and materials for target clienteles and provides professional and technical support for the organization and conduct of parliamentary simulations.

The **Building Management and Telecommunications Directorate** advises Assembly authorities and provides goods and services for the management and furnishings of buildings, and telecommunications.

The **Computer Services Directorate** guides, advises and provides services regarding computer and electronic office systems (software, applications, equipment, training) and manages the computer population and the local and extended networks.

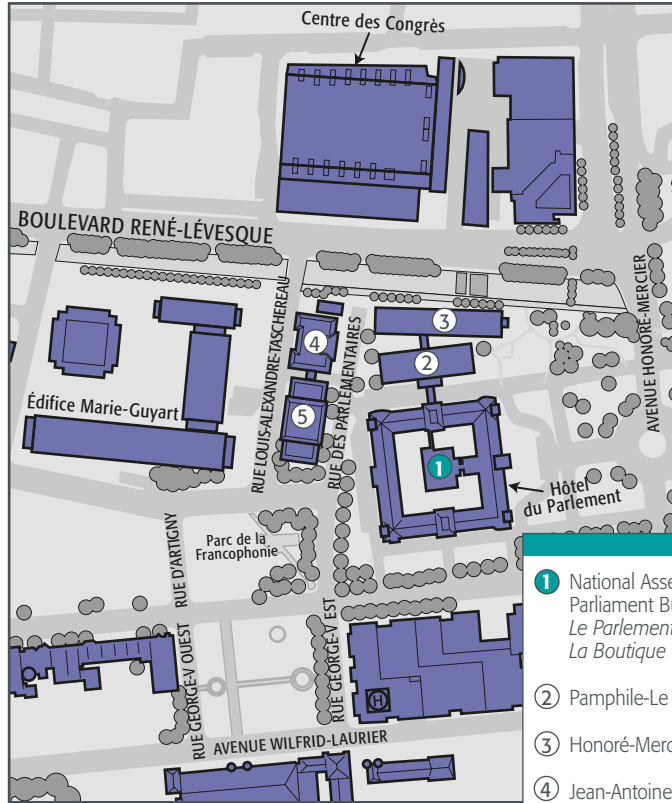
The **Planning and Development Directorate** provides support to Assembly authorities as regards the achievement of strategic objectives. It develops a management framework as well as significant evaluation indicators in addition to coordinating the implementation of policies and programmes in the area of human resource management planning.

The **Financial Resources, Procurement and Audit Directorate** advises and provides services relating to financial management, budget preparation and accounting operations. It also dispenses procurement services.

The **Human Resources Directorate** is responsible for all operations and support and counselling services relating to human resources management for the benefit of the administrative branches and the parliamentarians.

The **Material Resources and Restaurants Directorate** provides support services to the parliamentarians and the administrative branches, particularly as regards mail delivery and messenger services, printing and photocopying, office supplies and the distribution of parliamentary documents. It is also responsible for food services and the management of the restaurants.

SOME PRACTICAL INFORMATION



Plan of downtown Québec City
Parliament Hill – buildings and parking areas

- ① National Assembly
Parliament Building
Le Parlementaire Restaurant
La Boutique
- ② Pamphile-Le May Building
- ③ Honoré-Mercier Building
- ④ Jean-Antoine-Panet Building
- ⑤ André-Laurendeau Building

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

Parliament Building
Québec City (Québec) G1A 1A3

General information

Telephone: 418 643-7239
Toll-free number: 1 866 DÉPUTÉS (1 866 337-8837)
Fax: 418 641-2638
www.assnat.qc.ca

GUIDED TOURS

Schedule*

Monday to Friday: from 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

From 25 June to Labour Day:

Monday to Friday, from 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Saturdays, Sundays and 24 June and 1 July:

from 10:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Closed on 1 September

Reservations are required for groups of 10 persons or more.

OUTDOOR GUIDED TOURS

From 25 June to 31 August:

Everyday from 10:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Information

Telephone: 418 643-7239
Fax: 418 641-2638
E-mail: accueil@assnat.qc.ca

LE PARLEMENTAIRE RESTAURANT

Opening hours*

Monday to Friday:
from 8:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Reservations

Telephone: 418 643-6640
Fax: 418 643-6378

LA BOUTIQUE

Opening hours*

Monday to Friday:
from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

From 24 June to Labour Day:

also open weekends,
from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Information

Telephone: 418 643-8785
Fax: 418 528-6022
E-mail: laboutique@assnat.qc.ca

* Modifications without prior notice

National Assembly of Québec
Parliament Building

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1 866 DÉPUTÉS

