



Summary of the Report on the 2023 Provincial Public Youth Consultation



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Between September and November 2023, the provincial government's Youth Secretariat (le Secrétariat à la jeunesse) ran 15 consultations covering 16 regions of the province, aiming to hear from youth aged 12 to 35, and youth-serving organisations, about their needs and ambitions. The information collected from the consultation process will structure the province's third "Plan d'action jeunesse de la Politique québécoise de la jeunesse 2030," which, in turn, determines government spending priorities and initiatives. As with the Secretariat's previous Plan d'action (2021-2024), these conversations were structured around seven different "axes d'intervention"; employment, entrepreneurship, the environment, culture, education, health, and citizenship.

The government believes these axes continue to reflect the primary areas of interest to youth. Y4Y was present at four of the consultations, namely those for the regions of Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean, Montérégie, Montréal, and the closing event in the Capitale-Nationale. Our organisation, furthermore, submitted a brief to the Secretariat, in an attempt to reflect the priorities expressed by English-speaking youth in Y4Y's network. Below is a brief summary of the Secretariat's findings from the consultation process, based on the results compiled in the "Rapport de la consultation publique pour la jeunesse 2023."

Employment: A plurality of youth respondents stated that one-day internship programs in varied professional environments would be their preferred method of finding a stimulating job. Seeking a healthy balance between work and personal life, youth emphasised their hopes that the labour market can adapt to them and meet these expectations. It is important to them that their job aligns with their values. Youth want to be better equipped to develop their basic and transversal skills.

Entrepreneurship: A plurality of youth respondents stated that having support and guidance (mentoring, professional advice, etc) would best promote the development of their entrepreneurial side. Many youth stressed the importance of promoting an entrepreneurial culture in their schools, where mistakes are considered healthy learning, and not as failure. Doing so would help demystify the different business models earlier on in their lives. This would afford more opportunities for youth to experiment and innovate.

Environment: A plurality of youth respondents stated that facilities like safe bike paths, public transport, zero waste grocery stores, access to bulk goods, object exchange platforms, etc. would be the best ways for them to take real, concrete action on climate change. Youth and organisations consulted are clearly concerned about the environment and climate change; they want their voices heard and demand greater involvement in the conversations about solutions. To encourage greater ecological behaviour, youth and organisations urge favourable environments to more easily do so. They recommend increased educational efforts, alongside sharing progress and success stories, so as to generate greater hope among young people.

Culture: A plurality of youth respondents stated that making French classes more fun would be the best immediate action to take so as to promote French-speaking Québec culture among young people. The youth consulted want cultural offerings to occupy a greater and more accessible place in their lives. Many shared their beliefs about the importance of further promoting the great diversity of Québec culture. These youth seek a positive approach to the promotion of the French language, one which focuses on showing the benefits of speaking French both in Québec and abroad.

Education: A plurality of youth respondents stated that a good teacher or speaker would be the most motivating way to encourage school perseverance. Youth and organisations consulted want their schools to be a healthy, safe, and caring environment. Competent, qualified, and passionate teaching staff is crucial to them. Youth want to benefit from support resources, both during and outside of school hours. Many stated we ought to focus more on students' efforts and their pleasure of learning, rather than solely on academic success rates. The youth want greater access to higher education, notably through increased financial aid or remuneration for internships.

Health: A plurality of youth respondents stated that a lack of time is their main obstacle to adopting healthy lifestyle habits. The youth consulted are aware that good physical and mental health is essential to their development. They want to rediscover the pleasure of physical activity. According to these youth, this would require free sports equipment and more accessible facilities. Youth were also concerned about mental health, believing we must promote greater self-esteem, as well as the importance of taking care of ourselves.

Citizenship: Many youth respondents stated they wished that the government would prioritise projects by and for young people. The youth consulted value citizen participation; they want to get involved and fight for causes that are dear to them. They crave a caring, welcoming, fair, and respectful society. Many requested further consultations so that the government could more consistently take into account their aspirations, concerns, and vision for themselves in public policies.

Altogether, over 1,300 people participated in these consultations; 647 completed an online survey, with 450 of them being between the ages of 12 to 35; 100 briefs were submitted. Unfortunately, Y4Y observed very low to non-existent English-speaking youth participation at these consultations. There is no available data on whether those who answered the online survey had English as their first official language spoken. We recommend more advanced notice as to the timing of the consultations. Furthermore, an incentive program for increased youth attendance, both English and French-speaking, may be a useful addition.



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