

# 2005 2009

Strategic Plan



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*Commission de la représentation  
électorale du Québec*



*The mission of the Commission de la représentation électorale, an independent institution that reports directly to the National Assembly, is to draw up the electoral map of Québec and, when required, those of municipalities and school boards, by promoting the consultation of citizens and by assuring them fair and equitable representation.*



# Our Mission

## Composition

The Commission is made up of the Chief Electoral Officer, who is its Chairman, and two commissioners, who are appointed by resolution, approved by two-thirds of the Members of the National Assembly.

## Areas of Responsibility

### Provincial electoral map

The delimitation of the territory into electoral divisions represents one of the foundations of our electoral system. In Québec, the responsibility for establishing the boundaries of the electoral divisions lies with the Commission. It draws up the electoral map of Québec after having held public consultations in various regions of Québec and after having heard the comments of elected officials.

The process that leads to the establishment of the electoral map is governed by the Election Act. This legislation stipulates that the electoral map must respect the principle whereby the vote of each elector is of equal weight. It also stipulates that an electoral division must represent a natural community established on the basis of demographical, geographical and sociological considerations.

In the performance of its duties, the Commission enjoys a decision-making power, which ensures its independence in relation to all stakeholders.

## Electoral maps of municipalities and school boards

Under the Act respecting elections and referendums in municipalities and the Act respecting School Elections, those municipalities that are subject to the obligation of dividing their territory into electoral districts and all of the school boards of Québec must draw up an electoral map in preparation for the holding of an election on their territory.

The legislator has entrusted the Commission with the responsibility of approving the electoral map of a municipality or a school board that does not respect certain criteria set out in the Act. When electors are opposed to the division adopted by their municipality or their school board, it is the Commission which draws up the electoral map.

As is the case at the provincial level, the Commission's decisions are not subject to appeal and are binding.

*An institution that is recognized for:*

**the importance of its role within  
Québec's electoral system...**

... because the Commission's role and status are of major importance in the division of the territory for electoral purposes in our democratic system.



# Our Vision

**its expertise...**

... because the work of the Commission is based on an in-depth knowledge of the territory and the population, as well as on principles that guide the delimitation of the territory for electoral purposes.

## Impartiality and Transparency

The Commission carries out its duties with complete impartiality and transparency. Whether it be at the provincial level or at the municipal and school levels, the Commission ensures compliance with the principles governing the division of the territory and makes sure that the population is informed of its decisions.

## Attentiveness

The consultation of citizens represents a decisive stage in the process leading to the establishment of an electoral map. The Commission does everything in its power to facilitate the participation of the population in its work and pays careful attention to all of the representations made.

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# Our Values

## Fairness

Within the context of its work, the Commission makes sure that citizens enjoy fair and equitable representation in the National Assembly and on the councils of their municipality or their school board.



*A number of changes being observed in society will have an impact on the Commission's work in the years to come. Whether these changes are demographical, sociological or technological in nature, the Commission must take them into account and evaluate them properly, in order to fully carry out its mission.*

## Context and Stakes



### **Lack of Knowledge about the Commission de la représentation électorale**

The population has only a very limited knowledge of the Commission's role and independent status. Yet more than 25 years have passed since the National Assembly entrusted the Commission with the responsibility of establishing Québec's electoral map to prevent partisan influence.

Over the years, the Commission has been entrusted with new responsibilities at the municipal and school levels, bearing witness to the important place that the institution holds within our democratic system.

Citizens must be well informed if they are to have a better understanding of the role played by the Commission. For example, the electoral map is one of the basic components of Québec's electoral system, and it is important to preserve the trust that citizens have in the integrity of the process that leads to the establishment of this map.

## Sociodemographic Context

Québec's demography is characterized by an unequal distribution of the population over its territory. In urban and periurban areas, there is a large concentration of the population in a relatively limited area, whereas elsewhere in Québec the opposite phenomenon is observed. The aging of the population and population shifts to urban and periurban centres point to a continuation of this trend in the years to come.

This sociodemographic context is a major stake for the Commission. At the time of the establishment of an electoral map, the Commission must take into account the demographical changes, the characteristics of the population, the specificity of Québec's territory, as well as the delimitation criteria that must be applied.

## Reform of the Voting System

A draft bill to reform the Election Act was tabled in the National Assembly in December 2004. This draft bill provides for the establishment of a new voting system of the mixed-plurality proportional representation type.

The government's proposal defines the criteria that could guide the Commission's work when the next delimitation is made. Under the proposal, the provincial electoral map would have 77 single-member divisions that would be grouped within districts, the number of which could vary from 24 to 27.

The Commission must evaluate the effects of the proposed reform on the establishment of the next provincial electoral map. Where applicable, the Commission must be ready to begin delimitation work in accordance with the new rules, after the next provincial general election.

## Information Technologies

Information technologies are evolving constantly, and the Commission must be able to take advantage of the progress made in this area. In recent years, the growing use of geomatics has allowed the Commission to improve the processing of geographical, demographical and sociological data, as well as to facilitate their analysis.

The efforts in this field must continue. When carrying out its work, the Commission must be able to benefit from powerful tools, including information systems, that enable it to acquire a good knowledge of the various components of the territory.



## Responsibilities in the Municipal and School Fields

Every four years, municipalities and school boards must draw up an electoral map in preparation for the holding of future elections. In 2006, 69 school boards will have to divide their territory into electoral divisions. In 2008, 230 municipalities will be called upon to divide their territory into electoral districts.

In addition to the responsibilities that the Commission has under the provisions of the applicable electoral legislation, the Commission provides professional and technical assistance to municipalities and school boards in their delimitation work.

Over the next few years, the Commission wishes to continue its efforts with a view to offering municipalities and school boards high quality assistance and support, as well as training activities. A better understanding of the rules governing the delimitation of the territory by the various stakeholders contributes to the setting up of an electoral map that ensures a fair and equitable representation of electors on the councils of their municipality and their school board.

*The Commission has identified two major orientations for its 2005-2009 strategic plan. They will guide the Commission's work over the next few years and will enable the Commission to carry out its mission fully.*

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# Strategic Orientations



## **First orientation**

### **Ensure a fair and equitable representation of citizens**

The first strategic orientation represents the very purpose of the Commission and is at the heart of its concerns.

This orientation entails two main intervention approaches that deal with the Commission's work at the provincial, municipal and school levels.

## Intervention approach

### An electoral map that reflects the population

The fruit of long analysis and integration work, the drawing up of an electoral map requires an in-depth knowledge of the social, economic, geographical and demographical characteristics of the communities and the territory.

At the provincial level, the work that will lead to the establishment of the next provincial electoral map must be planned meticulously and carried out carefully to ensure that the map reflects the characteristics of Québec.

At the municipal and school levels, the Commission intends to fully play the role that the legislator has entrusted it with in order to ensure citizens fair and equitable representation.

#### Institutional Objective 1

Carry out all of the preparatory activities and undertake the work leading to the establishment of the next electoral map of Québec.

#### Institutional Objective 2

Have carried out the studies required for the examination or establishment of the electoral map of a municipality or a school board.

## Intervention approach

### Constant support and on-going training for municipalities and school boards

Over the next few years, the Commission wishes to continue offering technical and professional support to school boards and municipalities within the context of the work carried out to draw up the electoral map of their territory.

The Commission also intends to pursue its efforts to ensure a good understanding of and to promote the principles governing the delimitation of the territory among secretary-treasurers and clerks of municipalities as well as among presidents of school boards.

#### Institutional Objective 3

Train and support the partners of the municipalities and school boards.

## Second Orientation

**Be a performance-oriented organization through the quality of its communications with citizens, its research and its information systems**

The second orientation concerns three elements which the Commission deems essential. They help ensure that the Institution remains performance-oriented and that it successfully carries out its delimitation work.

### Intervention approach

#### Well targeted communications

Over the next few years, the Commission would like to foster greater awareness on the part of the population and elected officials concerning its role, its values, the context in which it is working, and the important place that the division of the territory holds in our electoral system.

The Commission would also like to inform the population of its work in order to promote citizen participation in public consultations. Indeed, citizens play a key role, and the Commission pays special attention to all of the representations made.

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#### Institutional Objective 4

Continue the efforts with a view to better informing the various stakeholders about the Commission's role and values, as well as the rules governing the delimitation of the territory.

### Intervention approach

#### Up-to-date research and powerful tools

To ensure that its work proceeds smoothly, the Commission must have quick access to data that are recent, reliable and diversified. It must also invest in research to have a better understanding of social changes.

Moreover, in recent years, information systems have proven to be indispensable tools. The Commission wants to continue exploring the possibilities offered by these technologies to optimize the processing of computer data.

#### Institutional Objective 5

Continue research activities for a better knowledge of the community and changes in society.

#### Institutional Objective 6

Make an optimum use of information systems.

Strategic Plan

**2005-2009**



## Our Mission

The mission of the Commission de la représentation électorale, an independent institution that reports directly to the National Assembly, is to draw up the electoral map of Québec and, when required, those of municipalities and school boards, by promoting the consultation of citizens and by assuring them fair and equitable representation.

## Our Vision

An institution that is recognized for:

- the importance of its role within Québec's electoral system
- its expertise

## Strategic Orientations

1 Ensure a fair and equitable representation of citizens

## Intervention Approaches

An electoral map that reflects the population

Constant support and on-going training for municipalities and school boards

## Institutional Objectives

**1** Carry out all of the preparatory activities and undertake the work leading to the establishment of the next electoral map of Québec

**Indicator:**

- The percentage of achievement of the activities stipulated in the planning

**2** Have carried out the studies required for the examination or establishment of the electoral map of a municipality or a school board

**Indicator:**

- The number of studies carried out

**3** Train and support the partners of the municipalities and school boards

**Indicators:**

- The percentage of achievement of the planned training activities
- The number of tools put at the disposal of partners

## Our Values

- Impartiality and transparency
- Attentiveness
- Fairness

 Be a performance-oriented organization through the quality of its communications with citizens, its research and its information systems

Well targeted communications

Up-to-date research and powerful tools

**4** Continue the efforts with a view to better informing the various stakeholders about the Commission's role and values, as well as the rules governing the delimitation of the territory

**Indicators:**

- The preparation of a public relations plan
- The implementation of planned activities

**5** Continue research activities for a better knowledge of the community and changes in society

**Indicator:**

- The carrying out of the research activities stipulated in the research plan

**6** Make an optimum use of information systems

**Indicators:**

- The number of systems designed
- The number of information system updates

## **La Commission de la représentation électorale**

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