

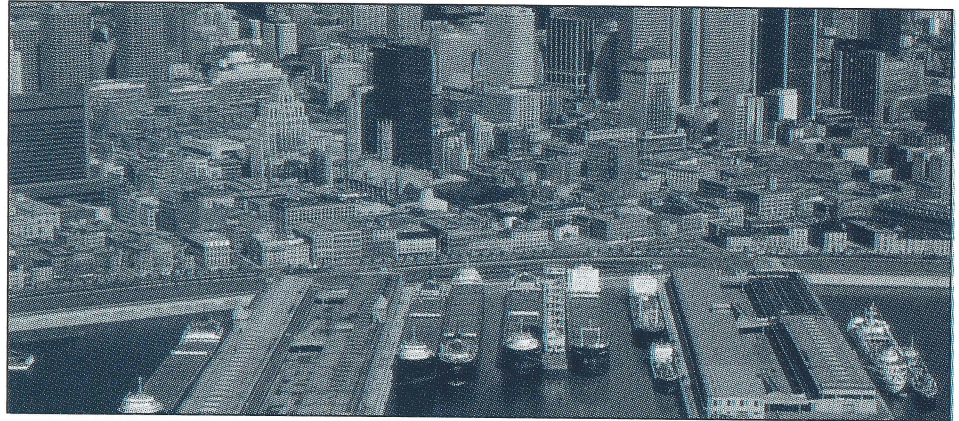
Quebec: Canada's Principal Trading Partner with Ukraine

As the birthplace of French culture in America, Quebec enjoys a unique character. The first French explorers in search of treasures settled in this land at the beginning of the XVIIth century. Today, more than 80% of the 7.5 million Quebecers use French as their mother tongue. Moreover, they adopted a Charter some twenty years ago to protect their language amid an English-speaking North America.

Quebec is the largest province of Canada (1,667,926 km²). On the banks of the St. Lawrence River which is one of the longest land-locked seaways in the world, we find the administrative Capital, Quebec City, the only fortified town in North America. Following a decision by UNESCO, Old Quebec has become part of the world heritage. With its 3 million people, Montreal is the heart of economic life in Quebec. This city also has one of the most important sea harbours in America. In the eyes of its numerous visitors, Montreal is a futurist metropolis with its wide network of underground walkways.

Industry

With a substantial Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of \$170 billion, Quebec is considered a leader in the main Canadian high technology industries, such as aerospace, pharmaceutical products, telecommunications, hydroelectricity and metal transformation. For example, on its own Quebec produces 45% of all pharmaceutical products in Canada and accounts for half of the total Canadian production in aerospace. Montreal is considered a major city in the field of civil aviation. Moreover, Montreal houses the Headquarters of the *International Civil*



Montreal, with nearly 3 million population, is the second largest francophone city after Paris.

Aviation Organization (ICAO). In the area of telecommunications, Quebec has a state-of-the-art system. Montreal has been one of the first cities in the world to use digital telephone communications. Quebec know-how in hydroelectricity is already well recognized. In that industry, the Crown Corporation *Hydro-Québec* generates, transmits and distributes essentially all the electricity in Quebec (total power of 37,000 MW).

The natural resources sector plays an important role in the economy. The wood and paper industry accounts for more than 15% of the manufacturing sector (about 10 billion dollars). Metal transformation is also an important industry, particularly in regional development. In this regard, Quebec is one of the largest world producers of light metals such as aluminum and magnesium.

Finally, agriculture in Quebec is well developed and specialized in dairy and farm products. Quebec is one of the largest pork producers and exporters in the world.

Economy: Open to the World

Quebec's economy is one of the most open systems in the world. The international export ratio compared to domestic product was 33.8% in 1995.

This openness has considerably increased in the last ten years with the implementation of North American Free Trade agreements. The United States is by far the most important trade partner of Quebec, with more than three quarters of the exchanges (81% of the total in 1995). The automobile industry is the first source of export in Quebec, followed by electrical and electronic accessories, paper and aluminum.

The emergence of Quebec on the world markets accounts for the growth of a number of local industries like

Bombardier, Québécoir, SNC Lavalin, Cascades, etc. Quebec firms are supported in their efforts abroad by the Quebec government which has a network of delegations throughout the world. The general delegations of Quebec are located in Paris, Brussels, London, Vienna, New York, Mexico and Tokyo.

A Dynamic Society

Economically as well as culturally, Quebec society is a dynamic one. In order to develop their entrepreneurship, Quebecers have created unique institutions like the *Caisse Populaires Desjardins*, the *Caisse de Dépôt et de Placement* which manages a retirement fund with assets valued at over 50 billion dollars, and the *Fonds de solidarité* which is an investment fund created by one of the most important trade unions.

Quebec dynamism is reflected in its post-graduate education system which has seven universities of which 4 are francophone and 3 are anglophone. Considering education as a priority, Quebecers have ensured that the tuition fees today remain the lowest in Canada.

Cultural life in Quebec is known for its diversity and its originality with a large number of annual festivals such as the *International Jazz Festival* (June), the *Just for Laughs Comedy Festival* (July), the *World Films Festival* (August), the *Quebec Winter Carnival* (February). The *Cirque du Soleil* and the *Montreal Symphony Orchestra* are known worldwide. Although several sports events take place in Quebec, hockey is by far the one that most awakens the passions of Quebecers.

Ukraine-Quebec relations in today's economy

In the past, it wasn't important to know that when it is 9 o'clock in the morning in Quebec, it is 4 o'clock in the afternoon in Ukraine.



UKRAINE-QUEBEC BUSINESS COUNCIL

The UQBC is a non-profit corporation which enjoys the full support of the government of Quebec and Ukraine as a bilateral trade association. Its objective is to encourage economic activity between Quebec and Ukraine by counselling governmental bodies and providing advice and support to Quebec and Ukrainian businesses and individuals in matters of business, mutual trade and investment.

UQBC represents the Canada-Ukraine Chamber of Commerce in Quebec and offers the benefits of full membership privileges in the *Chambre*. Through this affiliation it enjoys the active cooperation of the *Ukraine Chamber of Commerce and Industry* and other major business associations in Ukraine. Membership is available to corporations, academic institutions, partnerships, trusts, foundations, associations and individuals in Quebec and Ukraine.

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