

# ECE services in Quebec : What about quality and equality of chances?



Presentation to Atkinson Center Task Force  
January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2018

## Introduction: AQCPE wants to ignite a national conversation on quality

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- Quebec is an important laboratory in the country for ECE development and AQCPE wishes to share its experience;
- 20 years of trial and error have demonstrated there is a considerable risk that rapid development can unfold at the expense of quality;
- It's very difficult to fix quality "after the fact", once its levels have become uneven or poor;
- Children across Canada and their families could benefit from stakeholders sharing experience and working towards better quality across the board;
- There is no reason why work-family balance should be achieved at the expense of quality.

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# Association québécoise des CPE

AQCPE represents Quebec's Centres de la petite enfance (CPEs) and family-based subsidized daycares.

We are Quebec's leading voice on all early childhood-education related issues.



# A brief history of Quebec's network of ECE services

## Development 1997-2003

Supply cannot meet demand

Human and financial resources are growing, but still insufficient.

Growth in CPEs is prioritized.

More emphasis put on work-family balance than on quality.

## Growth 2003-2010

Popularity of CPEs is growing fast and interest outpaces demand.

Human and financial resources are growing slower than demand.

New strategy to increase supply: government now prioritizes for-profit, non-subsidized spaces.

Work-family balance is made easier, but quality remains low and varies significantly from one service to another.

## Maturity 2011-2016

Supply is beginning to meet demand.

End of universality : Fee hikes and differentiated fees according to family income. Severe cuts to subsidized services.

Expansion of for-profit services clearly prioritized.

Work-family balance is within reach.

Quality is scaling back across the board due to for-profit services.

## Consolidation 2016-2020

Supply may surpass demand in some regions. Some families choose commercial over CPE because of incentives.

Additional cuts.

Work-family balance is achieved but at the expense of quality, which should be the main focus.

Recognition that early childhood is part of the education pathway, but uneven quality.



## Equality of chances: are we living up to our ambitions?

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**POLITIQUE  
FAMILIALE**

Les enfants au cœur  
de nos choix



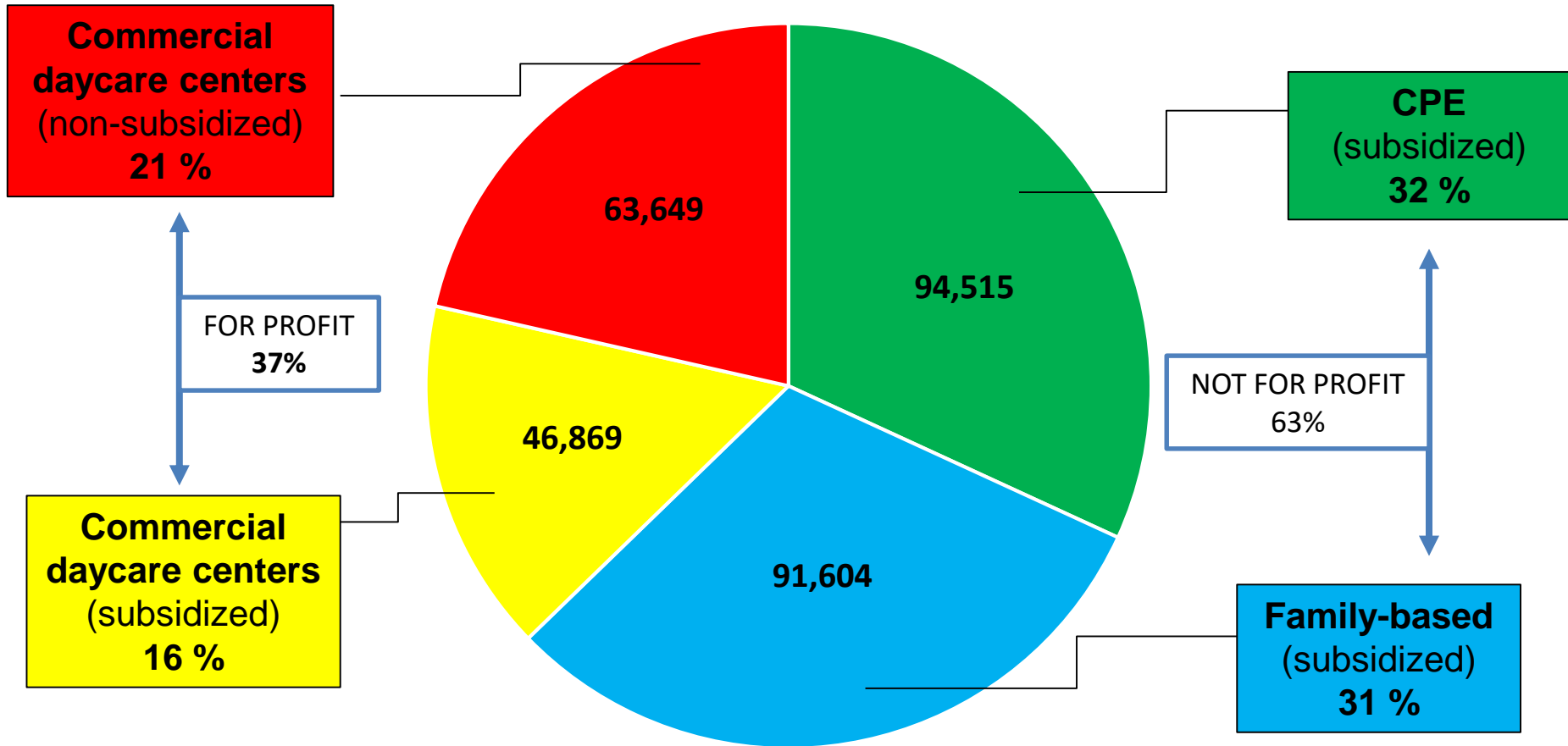
« We must not forget that this economic stimulus policy requires better work-family balance, more equitable policies and more incentives to work.

**We must not forget either that the purpose of this policy is to ensure that our children can live in a more just society, one that will give them every chance of success. »**

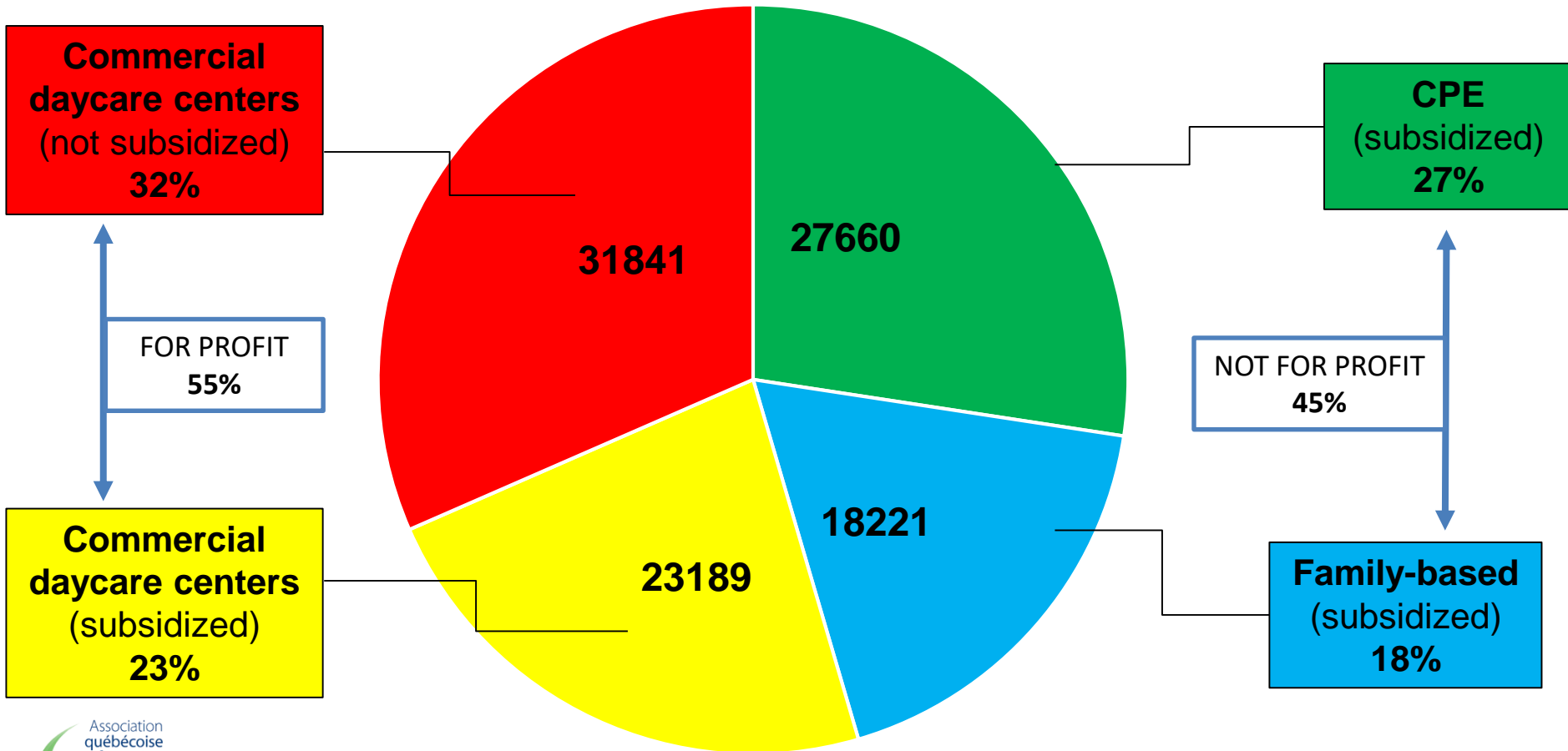
Lucien Bouchard, Premier of Quebec, 1997

# Distribution as of September 30th, 2017

## TOTAL: 296 637 places

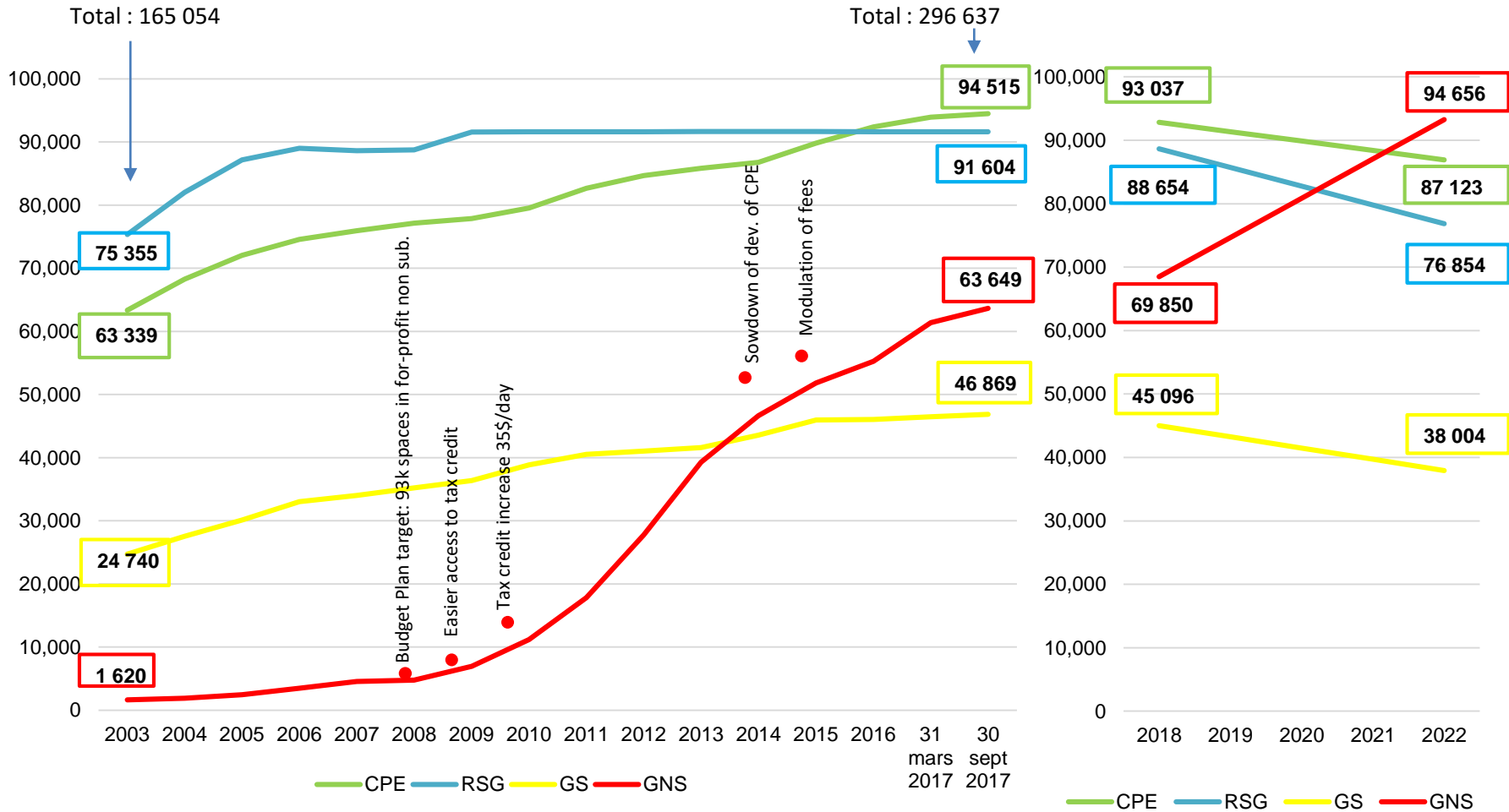


**Distribution as of September 30, 2017**  
**TOTAL : 100 911 places**

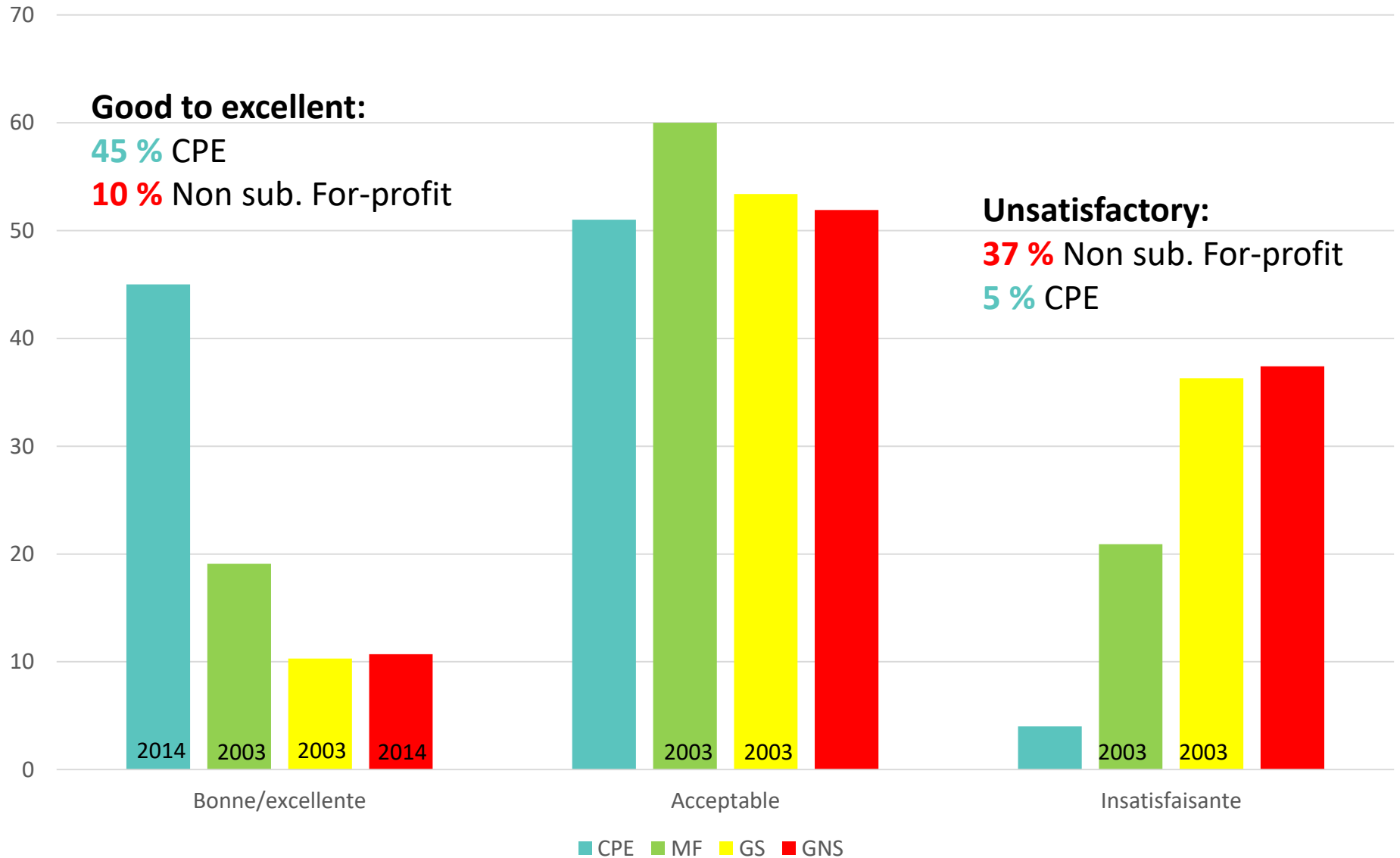




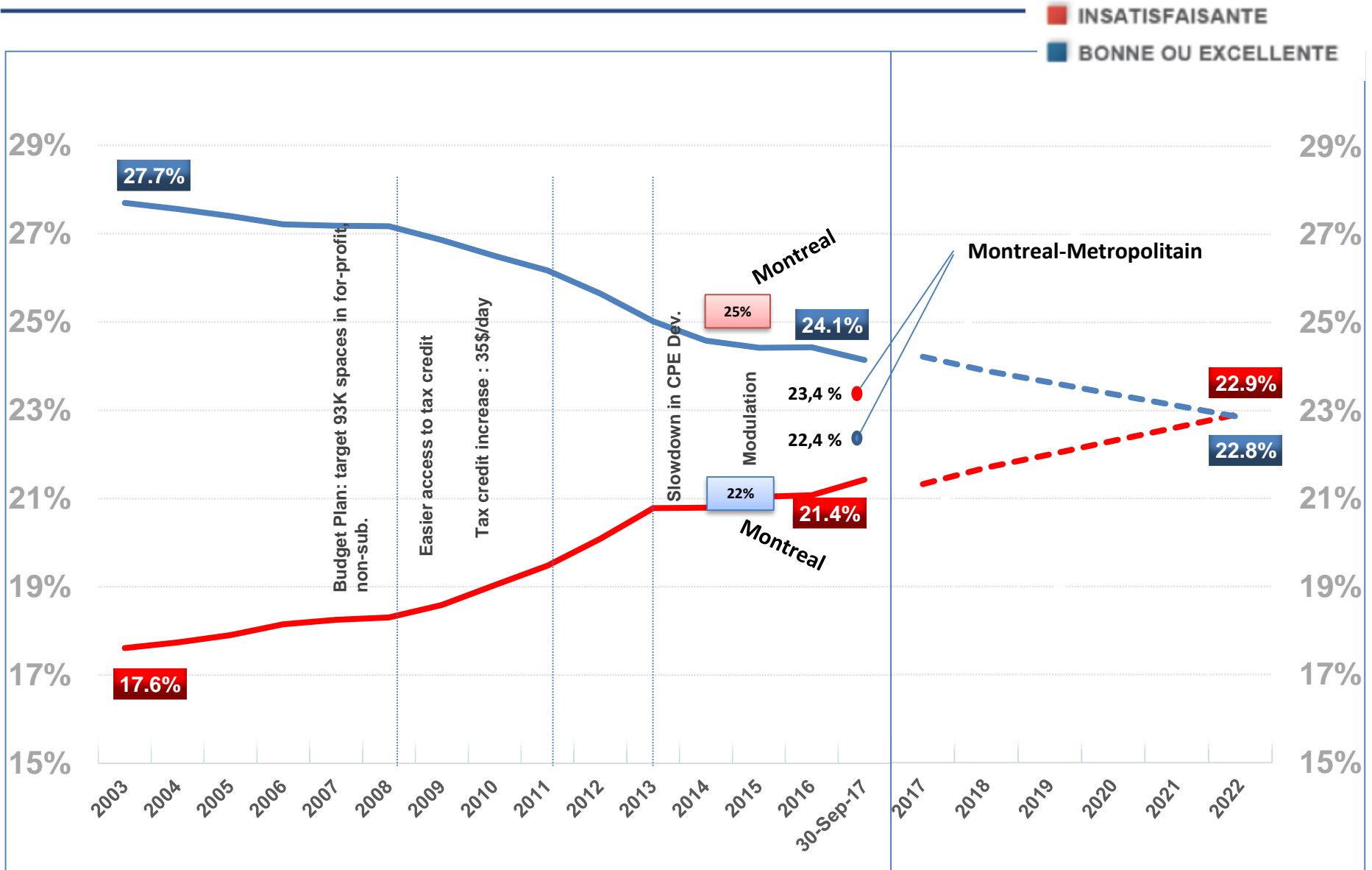
# DISTRIBUTION OF SPACES FOR THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF ECE SERVICES 2003-2022 AND AVERAGE LEVELS OF QUALITY FOR EACH TYPE



# Quebec surveys on quality of ECE services, 2003 & 2014

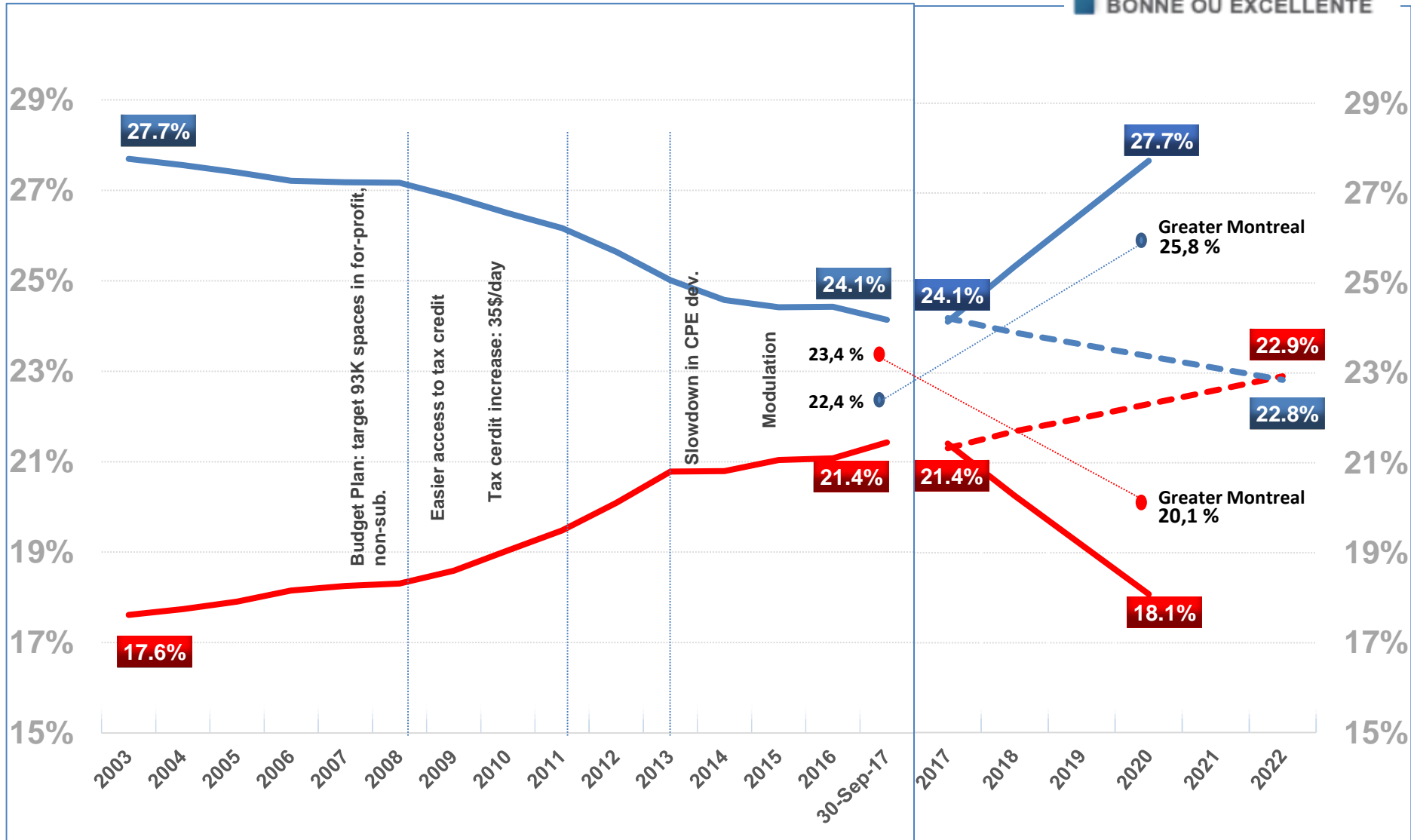


# STUDIES OF EVOLUTION OF QUALITY LEVELS FOR ALL TYPES OF ECE SERVICES SINCE 2003 AND PROJECTION TO 2022



# SCENARIO TO IMPROVE QUALITY : ELIMINATION OF 30,00 SPACES IN FOR-PROFIT, NON-SUBSIDIZED DAYCARE

■ INSATISFAISANTE  
■ BONNE OU EXCELLENTE



# What do we do now?

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We improve

We move  
backwards

Status quo





# AQCPE's repositioning : from activist to leader and agent of positive change

## 2018

Actions to directly and indirectly stimulate public awareness and support of the importance of quality in order to influence political candidates in the 2018 Quebec Fall election.

Bill 143. OECD Conference in Paris.

## Spring 2017

Summit on ECE. Over 30 organizations representing 2 million citizens signed on to the Declaration.

## 2015

Mobilisation against cuts in subsidized ECE services and against modulated fees : 200 000 signed petition, 50 000 demonstrators.

## Summer/Fall 2017

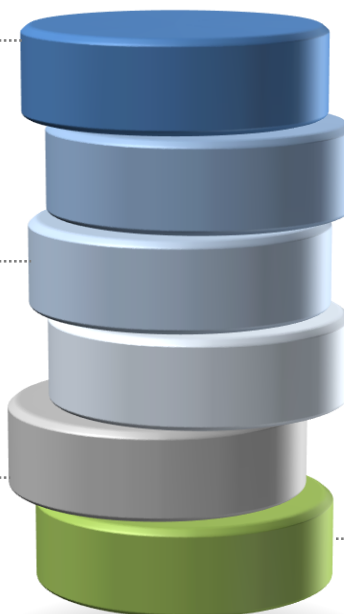
Follow-up on Declaration. Creation of a steering committee to gather more signatures. Meetings with political parties. Mobilization of parents and influencers.

## 2016

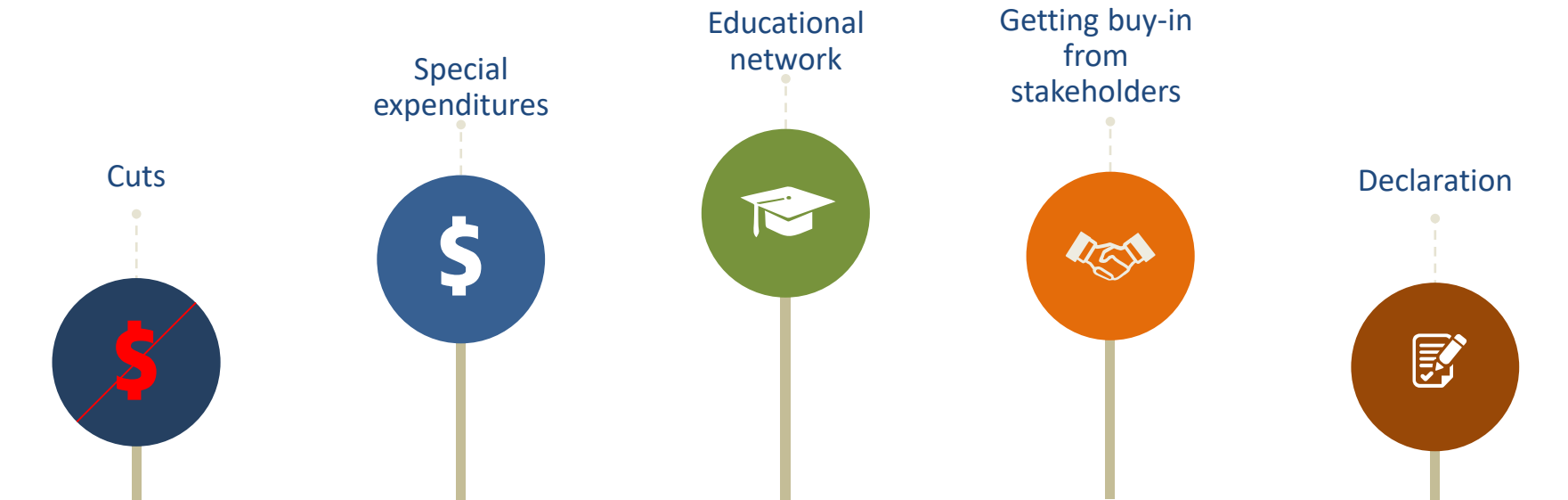
Commission on early childhood education. 14 cities, 23 experts, 135 groups, 167 briefs, 416 citizens, 5000 parents surveyed.

## 2014

Mobilisation against modulated fees, petition of 75 000 names and demonstration attracting 75 000 people.



## Making some strides



- The cuts made during this government's term have been partially cancelled and replaced by special budgetary allocations.
- Government cancelled modulation of fees for 3rd child and cut it by half for the 2nd.
- Government officially recognizes that ECE is part of the educational curriculum
- Organizations that have signed our Declaration represent more than 2 million people



What now? How can we influence decision-makers to opt for quality?



# Quebec votes in 2018



- Have governed Quebec for 15 of the past 20 years
- In favour of modulation of fees according to family income
- Want to maintain a variety of models (public & private)
- In favour of 4-year old free kindergarten for underprivileged



- Adopted the family policy in 1997 (low fee, universal, extended parental leave)
- In favour of a minimal universal fee; against modulation of fees
- Inclination towards free ECE for all children
- Very critical of for-profit centers



- Against modulation of fees
- Free 4-year-old kindergarten for all children
- Not very receptive to the importance of quality ECE between 0-3 years old
- Mandatory screening of all 3-year-old children



- Support CPEs
- In favour of free, universal ECE services
- Not for profit and social economy

Partenaires  
nationaux

- Follow-up on Summit and Declaration
- Social advocacy leading up to the election

# Our plan for Quebec

1

- Identify champions

2

- Identify ambassadors

3

- Identify influencers

4

- Know candidates' background

5

- Know your arguments

6

- Adopt a strategy
- Develop communications tools

7

- Create or adapt tools

8

- Organize town halls

9

- Coordinate local, regional and provincial actions

10

- Ongoing monitoring of results and adapting strategies

# And the rest of Canada?

- Ignite a national conversation;
- Meet with various stakeholders in other provinces;
- Support provincial organizations and experts who are already in the field advocating for quality by sharing Quebec's experience.



# Thank you !

