

The Investissement Québec Language Policy

1. Purpose

This policy includes rules that must be applied by all Investissement Québec staff, regardless of their professional category or status.

The content of this policy draws on the provisions of the “Charter of the French Language” (the Charter) and the “Politique gouvernementale relative à l’emploi et à la qualité de la langue française dans l’Administration” (government language policy) passed by Cabinet on November 12, 1996 (decision no. 96-312), as well as provisions of the “Politique sur les marchés publics” (decision no. 99-325), and the “Politique d’utilisation du français dans les technologies de l’information” (decision no. 92-262).

While taking existing practices into account and in light of the experience gained, this policy will facilitate the application of the Charter. And in case of doubt, French must be given priority.

In the course of its activities, Investissement Québec communicates with natural and legal persons, companies, government and non-government organizations, in Québec as well as outside Québec.

In its communications, Investissement Québec applies the Charter, the government language policy and this policy. It must also take its economic mission into account, more specifically concerning the role it plays outside Québec and with existing and potential foreign investors.

2. Responsibility

The president and chief executive officer is responsible for applying this policy. The executive committee acts as a permanent committee for the purposes of the government language policy. It sees that this policy is disseminated, that French is used on a permanent basis at every level of Investissement Québec and ensures the exemplary nature of measures taken to that end. In addition, the committee is charged with ruling on any specific question related to the enforcement of this policy.

3. Name and titles on business cards

3.1 Investissement Québec and members of its staff are designated solely by their French name. However, where required by international usage, another language can be used provided French remains predominant.

3.2 Business cards are in French. However, for representatives of Québec posted abroad, or in the course of international activities, they can be in another language.

4. Texts and documents

4.1 For the purposes of this policy, the words “texts and documents” mean administrative texts and documents written or published by Investissement Québec. The expression “written communications” means any correspondence, text or document that Investissement Québec addresses to other governments or legal persons either directly or through a natural person, where the content is personalized. Annual reports, legal acts or opinions, research, statistics, working papers or collective notes, for instance, are not written communications for the purposes of this policy because their content does not depend on the addressee.

4.2 Investissement Québec texts and documents are written and distributed in French only.

4.3 Texts and documents intended for outside Québec can be translated into another language; they can be written only in another language solely if they are produced specifically for that purpose.

4.4 Electronic media used by Investissement Québec (websites, etc.) must be in French. However, translations in other languages can accompany the French text separately to enhance Québec’s presence on international communications networks, provided the general presentation of the site reflects the official nature of the French.

4.5 Texts and documents of Investissement Québec that impose an obligation (notices, invoices, statements of account, mandatory reports) and other information texts and documents must be in French.

4.6 Notices of convocation, agendas and minutes of Investissement Québec and its subsidiaries must be written in French.

5. Written communications with natural persons

5.1 All Investissement Québec correspondence with a natural person must be in French, unless the communication is a response to a letter written by such person in another language.

5.2 Admail and non-personalized mailings of documents, brochures and leaflets by Investissement Québec sent to natural persons must be in French. However, if requested by a natural person, such a document can be sent in another language.

6. Written communications with legal persons (businesses, incorporated companies, associations, etc.)

6.1 In its written communications with legal persons established in Québec (businesses, incorporated companies, associations, etc.), Investissement Québec uses only the official language. However, these communications can be accompanied by a version in another language on paper without letterhead or signature and marked “translation”. In addition, where there is a French version of a corporate name, it alone appears in written communications from Investissement Québec.

6.2 Printed material from Investissement Québec (forms, purchase orders, invoices, receipts and related documents) sent to legal persons must be in French.

6.3 In its written communications with legal persons, corporations or businesses not established in Québec, Investissement Québec may use a language other than French.

7. Written communications with the federal and provincial governments

When a staff member communicates in writing with the federal government or with the government of a province where French is an official language, he must use French exclusively. The same rule applies to written communications to local representatives of the federal government by a representative of Québec posted abroad. Communications to other provincial governments are in French, but may be accompanied by an English version, on paper without letterhead or signature and marked “translation”.

8. Written communications with foreign governments and international organizations

Where written communications are sent to a foreign government or an international organization, they are always in French. They may be accompanied by a version in another language, on paper without letterhead or signature, marked “translation” in the target language, when they are sent to a country, government or international organization where French is not an official language or working language. This rule applies subject to international custom in effect.

9. Written communications within Investissement Québec or between Investissement Québec and Québec departments and organizations

Newsletters, notes, correspondence and notices within Investissement Québec or between Investissement Québec and Québec departments and organizations must be written in French.

10. Agreements with governments

Agreements with the federal government or with the government of a province where French is an official language, are entered into in French only. They may be entered into both in French and in another language with other governments, the two versions being equally valid. In the case of multilateral agreements, they can be entered into both in French and in other languages, the various versions being equally valid.

11. Contracts and benefits with legal persons established in Québec

11.1 Investissement Québec shall not award any contract, benefit or non-repayable financial contribution to a business that has been found to be in violation of the provisions of chapter V of title II of the Charter that apply to it.

11.2 Documents, plans and specifications filed with Investissement Québec by a corporation or a legal person for the purposes of obtaining a contract must be written in French.

11.3 Investissement Québec stipulates, in financial assistance contracts, that advertising and signage accompanying the performance of such contracts must comply with the applicable regulation regarding commercial advertising and signage.

11.4 In procurement contracts, Investissement Québec complies with the provisions of the Charter.

11.5 Concerning other contracts, they must stipulate that reports submitted by the business to Investissement Québec must be in French.

12. Contracts with a legal person outside Québec

12.1 Contracts and calls for tender made in Québec are in French only. Where a contract is entered into with a business that has an establishment, subsidiary or division in Québec but whose head office is outside Québec, the French text may be accompanied by a version in another language. The two versions are equally valid. They can be written either in French or in another language, at the request of the co-contractor, if they are entered into outside Québec.

12.2 Contracts entered into by Investissement Québec outside Québec may be in French or, at the request of the co-contractor, in another language.

13. Services to the public

13.1 In its dealings with the public, the personnel of Investissement Québec must take it as read that French is the common language of Québec.

13.2 It must never be assumed that a person wishes to be addressed in another language, or that he wishes to receive correspondence in a language other than French.

13.3 The first language of contact with the public, on the telephone or in person must always be French, and any staff member tasked with communicating with an individual must initiate communication in French.

13.4 A staff member is authorized to continue the conversation in another language at the request of the other party.

13.5 Where a staff member replies to a person who addressed him in a language other than French, he must first check whether the person understands French. If he does not or if in doubt, the staff member may continue the conversation in another language.

13.6 Staff members speak French at meetings with representatives of businesses established in Québec; however, they may use another language if the business established in Québec is a subsidiary or a division of a business with its head office outside Québec, and representatives from head office also take part in the meeting.

13.7 Speeches and addresses given in Québec by a staff member in carrying out his duties are in French. If authorized by the president and chief executive officer, they may be given in a language other than French if justified by the circumstances.

Speeches and addresses given outside Québec may be in a language other than French.

13.8 As a general rule messages must be recorded in French, in particular those on answering machines and voice mail. If there is a message in another language, it must come after the French message.

13.9 At trade fairs and exhibitions, information concerning Investissement Québec must always be available in French.

13.10 Documentation on display stands must be available in French. However, a version in another language may be displayed separately.

13.11 On signs displayed in Québec, French is the only language used. However, French and another language may be used where required for public safety or in accordance with the exceptions stipulated by the regulations on administrative signs.

On signs installed outside Québec, a language other than French can be used.

14. Language of work

14.1 French is the language of work.

14.2 At internal working meetings, staff members have a right to express themselves in French.

14.3 A candidate for a position must have knowledge of French appropriate to the position. Requiring knowledge of a language other than French is forbidden unless required by the duties of a position.

14.4 Investissement Québec job offers must be published in the daily newspapers in French. They may also be published at the same time in a daily in another language.

15. Information technology

15.1 Provided it is available, equipment, including computer hardware and peripherals made available to staff must be inscribed in French.

15.2 Investissement Québec must apply the policy on the use of French in information technologies for the development of any automated systems or the normal renewal of technologies, provided healthy competition is maintained, the resulting financial impact is acceptable and the associated costs are within its capacities.

15.3 Investissement Québec reports to the Office de la langue française on the application of the policy on the use of French in information technologies.

16. Mastery and quality of the language

16.1 Every Investissement Québec text or document intended for wide distribution must be revised by competent services.

16.2 French upgrading activities are included in Investissement Québec's human resources skills upgrading plan.

16.3 Reference works and writing assistance tools made available to Investissement Québec staff, including on computerized work stations, must be in French.

16.4 Terms that have been standardized or recommended by the Office de la langue française must be used in Investissement Québec texts and documents.

17. Application

17.1 Investissement Québec renders account for the application of the language policy in its annual report.

17.2 For the purposes of section 17.1, each year the General Secretary of Investissement Québec, after consulting with the committee referred to in section 2, signs a certificate attesting to the application of or the problems encountered in the course of applying the language policy.

18. Coming into force

18.1 This policy comes into force the thirtieth day following its approval by the board of directors of Investissement Québec.

This policy comes under the responsibility of the Executive Vice-President, Corporate Affairs and General Secretary. It was approved by resolution IQ01.188 of the Board of Directors of Investissement Québec on September 25, 2001 and replaces corporate directive 113-97, "Relations linguistiques avec les gouvernements féd., prov. et étrangers".