

CIRIEC-Canada, 2022-2024 activities

Presentation

Initiated in previous years and active since 1966, the Interdisciplinary Centre for Research and Information on Collective Enterprises (CIRIEC-Canada) brings together collective members (public enterprises, cooperatives, mutual societies, associations, labour funds, trade unions, university research centers, training institutes) and individual members (researchers, teachers, students and practitioners). The purpose of our scientific association is to contribute to the construction of a plural economy, through informed and critical support for the development of the collective economy (social and public) and by promoting the general interest in economic and social development.

CIRIEC-Canada is one of 14 national sections of CIRIEC International, headquartered in Liège, Belgium. This organization strives to promote international exchanges between the various types of enterprises that are oriented towards the collective or general interest, and between the world of practice and the scientific community, bringing together 750 researchers.

For nearly 60 years, CIRIEC-Canada has been involved in research, liaison, dissemination and transfer, bringing together academics and practitioners from the social economy and the public economy sectors.

CIRIEC-Canada contributes to the recognition of collective enterprise and its specific features as a mode of development and organization that promotes collective interests and serves the general interest. It serves as a hub for reflection, analysis, research and knowledge transfer on enterprises in the social and public economy, based on a partnership-oriented approach with its members (individuals, organizations and networks). It supports the advancement of collective enterprise practices from a sustainable development perspective. It acts as a knowledge-transfer organization fostering the co-construction of knowledge and practical know-how related to collective enterprise, through original partnerships with its members as well with research and practice communities. It also takes part in and contributes to international forums for reflection and research on collective enterprise. Finally, it seeks to engage educators and young researchers in collective enterprise as a model for sustainable development.

* * *

OVERVIEW AND HIGHLIGHTS 2022-2024

The year 2022 was marked by the departure of Léopold Beaulieu and the arrival of Marc Picard as President of CIRIEC-Canada. The 2022-2024 period is therefore one of transition for CIRIEC-Canada, and our relaunch process will continue over the coming months.

On the social front, the climate emergency whose consequences are increasingly being felt, the post-COVID-19 pandemic and the rise in conflicts around the world are highlighting major challenges. The role and impact of public authorities and their organizations as well as the importance of the social and solidarity economy (cooperatives, mutual societies, associations) are more important than ever for a better future. For us, bringing together practitioners and researchers from both the social economy and the public sector to promote the development and dissemination of knowledge is an essential tool for tackling current and future challenges.

Activities at CIRIEC International

The members of the Board of Directors and the Executive Committee continued their active participation in CIRIEC International's governing bodies and its scientific activities. Léopold Beaulieu is Honorary President of CIRIEC International. Marie J. Bouchard chairs the "Social and Cooperative Economy" Scientific Commission, and Martine Vézina is also a member. Luc Bernier is a member of the Scientific Commission "Public Enterprises / Public Services". These members of the Board of Directors of our national section are also deputy and substitute members of the International Scientific Council (ISC).

Noteworthy are the preparation and the participation in the 33rd CIRIEC International Congress in Valencia (Spain) in June 2022; the International Symposium in Thessaloniki (Greece) in May 2023; and the 9th International Research Conference on the Social Economy in Seoul (Korea) in July 2023.

Finally, the United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force on Social and Solidarity Economy (UNTFSSE) held its 4th Technical Symposium in Montreal in October 2023. CIRIEC-Canada and CIRIEC International were actively involved in this event, which was organized in partnership with the Government of Quebec, the City of Montreal and the Caisse d'économie solidaire Desjardins. It was also an opportunity to mark the 10th anniversary of the adoption of Quebec's Social Economy Act.

CIRIEC-Canada's activities

At the national level, we were very active, and our relaunch plan continued. During this period, CIRIEC-Canada also recruited a staff member to provide administrative and coordination support.

CIRIEC-Canada takes advantage of its Board of Directors meetings to host a seminar to share and exchange the results of academic research or strategic orientations carried out by practitioners. Among the themes addressed during the 2022-2024 period are democratic governance of collective enterprises; changes in government intervention in housing; social and community housing in Vienna; and regional economic development and entrepreneurship in collaboration with Quebec's Ministry of Economy, Innovation, and Energy.

CIRIEC-Canada is also a member of TIESS (Territoires Innovants en Economie Sociale et Solidaire / Innovative Territories in Social and Solidarity Economy) where Martine Vézina, Professor at HEC Montréal, is our representative on the Board of Directors.

We would also like to highlight the work of the Director and Editor, Annie Camus, in re-launching CIRIEC-Canada's scientific journal and developing our website.

Overview of 2022-2024 activities

At the international level, the members of the Board of Directors and the Executive Committee continued their active participation in CIRIEC International's governing bodies and its scientific activities.

At the national level

- Holding seminars and exchange sessions to which all members are invited.
- CIRIEC-Canada is renewing its action plan for the coming years, focusing in particular on expectations, collaborations and increasing the number of member organizations. Work continues on relaunching the CIRIEC-Canada journal and on revising and increasing the importance of the website.

Seminars of CIRIEC-Canada

Over the past two years, CIRIEC-Canada presented an extensive program of seminars, both online and in hybrid format:

2022:

- April 1, 2022
Mr. Alain Coulombe, President and CEO, Société de développement de la Baie-James (SDBJ)

Theme: "The Société de développement de la Baie-James, a unique and successful model for the economic development of the James Bay territory"

- April 20, 2022

Mrs. Marie J. Bouchard, Professor, Department of Organization and Human Resources, Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM)

Theme: **"The perimeter of the social economy"**

- May 4, 2022

Mrs Marie-Soleil Tremblay, Professor, École nationale d'administration publique and Mr. Martin Frappier, Deputy Director General, Chantier de l'économie sociale

Theme: **"Evolving governance: what to understand? What to remember?"**

- Governance of state-owned enterprises - legislation and other mechanisms for continuous improvement
- Democratic governance of collective enterprises

- September 29, 2022

Mr. Marcellin Hudon, Director of Asset Development, Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal (OMHM)

Theme: **"Housing: from structural changes to government intervention"**

- October 27, 2022

Mr. Christian Yaccarini, President and CEO, Société de développement Angus

Theme: **"Pointe-aux-Trembles' future development project from a State partnership perspective"**

- December 6, 2022, in collaboration with Effet-I and TCJ Avocats - Mr. Felice Scalvini, Vice-President of the International Cooperative Alliance

Theme: **"Co-construction and co-production - Public-SSE network"**

2023:

- January 26, 2023

Mrs. Sonia Gagné, President and CEO, RECYC-QUÉBEC

Theme: **"RECYC-QUÉBEC: the organization and its priority projects"**

- November 10, 2023

Mr. Daniel Gagné, Director General, Local and Regional Economic Development Branch, Ministère de l'Économie, de l'Innovation et de l'Énergie (MEIE)

Theme: **"Le Ministère de l'Économie, de l'Innovation et de l'Énergie (MEIE) et le secteur Développement économique régional et de l'entrepreneuriat (DERE)"** (The Ministry of Economy, Innovation, and Energy (MEIE) and the Regional Economic Development and Entrepreneurship Sector)

- December 6, 2023

Mr. Jean-Pierre Girard, Mission Director, partner and co-founder of EFFET-I

Theme: **“2023 Vienna mission report on social and community housing”**

2024:

- February 15, 2024

Mr. Raphael Ziegler, Associate Professor at HEC Montréal and Director of the Institut international des coopératives Alphonse-et-Dorimène-Desjardins (IICADD)

Theme: **“The Institut international des coopératives Alphonse-et-Dorimène-Desjardins (IICADD) and the PortailCoop”**

- March 15, 2024

Mrs. Hanen Khemakhem, Professor, Department of Accounting Sciences, Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM), and Mr. Michel Séguin, Professor, Department of Organization and Human Resources, UQAM, co-holders of the Desjardins-Guy Bernier Chair in Cooperation.

Theme: **“Presentation of the Desjardins-Guy Bernier Chair in Cooperation”**

The CIRIEC-Canada journal, *Économie et Solidarités*

The journal was first published in 1968 under the name *Canadian CIRIEC Review / Revue du CIRIEC Canadien*. In 1978 it became *Coopératives et développement - Revue du CIRIEC*. Then in 1996, it was renamed *Économie et Solidarités - Revue du CIRIEC-Canada*.

Since 2010, the journal is available in digital format in open access on the Érudit platform.

Under the direction of Annie Camus, the journal is preparing to take off again with the same rigour, the same concern to publish accessible scientific articles and to promote research in social economy and public economy in French. The journal's relaunch has received significant financial support, notably from the Caisse d'économie solidaire Desjardins, the Conseil Québécois de la Coopération et de la Mutualité (CQCM) and the Société de développement Angus. This support enabled the journal to hire a staff member.

The first two relaunch issues are currently being prepared and are scheduled for publication in the next fiscal year (2025).

The [P094 – Fonds CIRIEC \(1964-2014\)](#) / P094 – CIRIEC Archives has been compiled and is now available for consultation at HEC Montréal. Part of this collection will also be integrated into the PortailCoop for online access. The Institutional Information and Archives Management Service at HEC Montréal has also agreed to process and host our more recent archives in digital format. This process is currently underway.

* * *

2024-2025 President's report

It is hard to talk about 2024-2025 without mentioning the ever-present US president. Before the campaign, during the campaign and as president, there was not a day when he did not capture attention.

Most of the time, the topics discussed were either absurd or completely to the right of the political spectrum. This way of doing politics, of communicating, has had the impact of diverting our attention from the general context, from the facts.

Although we had been promised an end to the main international conflicts, geopolitical tensions persisted and continue to weigh on market confidence. This has not prevented moderate economic growth. Inflation is down, but persistent. Central banks are maintaining high interest rates to combat inflation, which is slowing investment and consumption.

Closer to home, the housing crisis persists despite the efforts of governments and civil society actors. The social economy is generally doing very well, and the cultural sector is surely the one still suffering most from the post-pandemic context.

At the public level, we have observed that in this crisis, the Quebec Government has chosen to broaden its partnerships, notably by involving the private sector and tax-based funds. The 2024-2025 period will have allowed us to witness the birth of a new parastatal company, Santé Québec, which has raised controversy and, above all, many questions.

Throughout the year, this brief background has influenced our discussions and the development of our actions. We can take comfort in the fact that our neighbor to the South enabled us to consolidate our beliefs in the values of solidarity and cooperation and the importance of CIRIEC, as well as contributing to the development of an unprecedented sense of belonging to Canada.

2024-2025 HIGHLIGHTS

At the international level

At the level of CIRIEC international, the years 2024-2025 allowed us to get back on track, or nearly so. The 34th CIRIEC International Congress, scheduled for April 2024 in Costa Rica, had to be moved to the fall for local political reasons. The fragile context meant that fewer participants were able to attend, but it must be said that, despite certain pitfalls, the Congress was a success.

Because of the postponement, the Quebec delegation was smaller than expected. Even so, nearly a dozen of us took part. The quality of our contributions enabled us to stand out and to make ourselves better known. It was at this point that the idea of organizing the next edition of the CIRIEC Congress in Montreal began to take concrete shape.

For his part, our colleague Luc Bernier shone once again at two conferences organized in Paris by CIRIEC-France and CIRIEC International on June 7 and November 8, 2024 (see the [international activity report](#)).

Our presence in international governing bodies and the scientific commissions has enabled us to take part in the network's evolution, while helping Québec to enhance its visibility on the international stage.

National Section

At national level, we were more dynamic than ever. CIRIEC members are highly committed. We have achieved many notable achievements, and the following provides an overview.

Our seminars are becoming increasingly structured, enabling us to plan our meetings more effectively and thus reach audience that are less easily accessible. The involvement of everyone has also enabled us to strike a balance between the subjects presented. We have therefore had the pleasure of participating in seminars on both the social and public economy. Without our members' networks, this would not have been done so easily. This approach gives us confidence for the future.

The reflection process surrounding our bid to host the CIRIEC International Congress in Montreal in 2026 was a major part of our agenda. We almost picked up every stone to ensure that this project was within our grasp. The project is taking shape, the partners are mobilized and the main financial backers involved have shown great interest. CIRIEC International's choice of Montreal is already attracting a great deal of interest from our international partners.

In terms of relaunching the Journal, the process proved more complex than expected. We encountered a number of challenges, but the perseverance of Annie Camus and Élizabeth Duboc has been exemplary. We published our first issue thanks to a text written by Thierry Pauchant (HEC Montréal) and

Chantal Line Carpentier (UN). The next issue is on the drawing board and should go more smoothly. This is an important step in our relaunch plan.

Our membership has grown steadily over the past two years. We are very proud to have welcomed significant new partners from both the public and social economy sectors. CIRIEC-Canada is enriched by these organizations, but above all by the people who represent them and who share our commitment to social, environmental and economic issues.

It was also a year of administrative consolidation. Chantal Malo is our key pillar in this area. Her steady management ensures that the organization is exemplary in this respect. A number of achievements, which may seem trivial, have been made to ensure our organization strength on the eve of Congress 2026. The revision of our visual identity, logo and related elements is underway, and will enable us to update and better showcase our fine organization.

Ultimately, without a dedicated staff member, it would be more difficult to get things done. We have succeeded in mobilizing numerous financial contributions over a number of years. As a result, we can now offer a full-time position to our coordinator. Élizabeth Duboc's contribution is significant, making our lives much easier and offering us interesting prospects for the future.

On a sadder note, we learned of the passing of Michel Jean, who served on the CIRIEC-Canada Board of Directors for some ten years. We extend our deepest condolences to his family.

2024-2025 activities

Seminars of CIRIEC-Canada

CIRIEC-Canada takes advantage of its Board of Directors' meetings to present a seminar to share and exchange the results of research carried out by academics or strategic orientations adopted by practitioners. This year, CIRIEC-Canada presented a large number of seminars, most of which were co-modal, with some in person in Montreal and others online:

2024 (continued):

- May 2, 2024
Mrs. Chantal Line Carpentier, Head of Trade, Environment, Climate Change and Sustainable Development at the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development.

Theme: “Presentation of the United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force on the Social Solidarity Economy (UNTFSSE)”

- June 6, 2024

Mr. Bernard Ndour, Managing Director of the CAP Finance Social Finance Fund

Theme: **“Presentation of the CAP Finance Social Finance Fund”**

- September 20, 2024

Mr. Michel St-Cyr, Strategic Advisor and former General Manager of Espace La Traversée

Theme: **“The dual role of management in social entrepreneurship”**

- November 22, 2024

Mr. André Fortier, expert in residence at the École nationale d'administration publique and former Secretary General and Clerk of the Executive Council and Associate Secretary General for Senior Positions

Theme: **“Relations between government and state-owned enterprises”**

2025:

- January 8, 2025

Mr. Luc Bernier, full professor at the University of Ottawa's École supérieure d'affaires publiques et internationales and Vice-President, Academic Affairs, CIRIEC-Canada

Theme: **“Sustainable development and state-owned enterprises: towards a different model”**

- February 14, 2025

Mr. Thierry Pauchant, Honorary Professor at HEC Montréal

Theme: **“The invention of the social economy: Adam Smith's surprising legacy”**

* * *

2026 Projects

Organization of the 35th CIRIEC International Congress in Montreal in 2026

At its meeting on January 8, 2025, the CIRIEC-Canada Board of Directors decided to host the next CIRIEC International Congress. This major event will take place in Montreal from October 5 to 8, 2026. CIRIEC-Canada and its members, in collaboration with CIRIEC International, are actively working on the organization of this event, which will be the second international congress held in North America since the one held in Montreal in 2000.