

Profile of CIRIEC-Canada

CIRIEC-Canada is a scientific Association which gathers together group members (public enterprises, co-operatives, mutual societies, associations, pension funds, trade unions, university research centres, training institutes) and individual members (researchers, teachers, students and practitioners). The purpose of our Association is to contribute to the building up of a plural economy through an informed and critical support of the development of the collective economy (social and public) and through the promotion of the general interest.

For more than 50 years CIRIEC-Canada has thus worked in the field of research, liaison, distribution and transfer, in bringing together academic and practitioners, from the social economy and from the public economy, and in propelling activities designed to sustain and develop a vision of what makes a contribution to general interest objectives.

In keeping with its mission, considering its unique character as an association with a double transversality of object (social-economy enterprise and public enterprise) and membership (researchers and practitioners) and considering its reading of the main contemporary trends of its economic, social and political environment, CIRIEC follows the following strategic orientations:

1. Through its research, training, information and distribution activities it contributes to the recognition of collective enterprises and their specificities as a development model and as a form of organisation promoting collective interests and serving the general interest;
2. It is a crossroads for discussion, analysis, research and transfer on the enterprises belonging to the social and public economy, based on an approach of partnership with its members (persons, organisations and networks);
3. It contributes to the advancement of practices of collective enterprises in a perspective of sustainable development;
4. It acts as an agency of transfer of knowledge in the co-construction of practical skills and knowledge relating to the collective enterprise, and this in an original approach of partnership with its members and groups of researcher and practitioner members;
5. It participates in and contributes to the international bodies for discussion and research on collective enterprises (associational, community, cooperative, mutualist, private-public);
6. It contributes towards interesting teachers and young researchers in the collective enterprise as a model for sustainable development.

Seen thus, CIRIEC is an interchange of expertise in research, in training and in support for the development of a plural, social, solidarist economy.

Activities 2014-2016

After serving as President of CIRIEC International from 2012 to 2014, the President of CIRIEC-Canada, Mr. Léopold Beaulieu, is currently Honorary President of CIRIEC International.

During 2014 and 2016 CIRIEC-Canada, its members, its Board and its Executive Committee were regularly present in the meetings of CIRIEC International and in the scientific activities. Among other things we actively participated in the follow-up on the works of the CIRIEC International Scientific Council (ISC) and of two other Scientific Commissions, "Social and Cooperative Economy", and "Public Services / Public Enterprises". Special mention may be made of the participation of Luc Bernier, first for assuming the presidency of the ISC from 2011 to the end of 2014 and also for the appearance of his work published by CIRIEC international, *Public Enterprises Today: Missions, Performance and Governance - Learning from Fifteen Cases / Les entreprises publiques aujourd'hui : missions, performance, gouvernance - Leçons de quinze études de cas*. Turning to the Commission "Social and Cooperative Economy", mention is made of the appointment of Marie J. Bouchard to the presidency, and also the recent appearance of *The Weight of the Social Economy. An International Perspective*, under the scientific editorship of Marie J. Bouchard and Damien Rousselière, published by CIRIEC International.

50th anniversary of CIRIEC-Canada

The symposium *Économie sociale et finance solidaire*, jointly organised by CIRIEC-Canada, CRISES, the Angus Development Company and the Université du Québec à Montréal, was held in the UQAM, on 4 February 2016. It was the occasion to celebrate the 50th anniversary of CIRIEC-Canada, the 45th of the Caisse d'économie solidaire Desjardins, the 30th of CRISES and the 20th of Fondation. Several members of national sections of CIRIEC were involved in the success of this event. At the end of the symposium, an honorary doctorate was awarded to Mr. Léopold Beaulieu. This doctorate was conferred upon him by the Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM), in recognition of his unflinching commitment to the place of the social economy and sustainable development and of his great influence in the matter in Quebec.

The webcasting of the day allowed, and still allows, a high visibility among those interested by the social economy and solidarity finance. It is still possible to book successes with different broadcasting:

[To view the symposium...](#)

To mark the 40th anniversary of CIRIEC-Canada, Benoît Lévesque had conducted research and edited the history of CIRIEC: *Le CIRIEC-Canada 1966-2006 - Quarante ans de partenariat en recherche sur les entreprises*

publiques et d'économie sociale. Luc Bernier then followed with an update of that work, adding the last ten years. The launch is planned for some time during the autumn of 2017, on the occasion of an event that will gather members from various periods of CIRIEC.

The 2015 CIRIEC-Canada Annual Symposium

The Annual symposium of CIRIEC was held on Monday 25 May 2015, in the wider context of the 83rd Congress of Acfas, at the University of Quebec in Rimouski. The Scientific Committee was made up of Carol Saucier, Luc Bernier and Évariste Feurtey. The theme of the symposium was:

Energy policy and sustainable development: intelligent use of energy resources

Quebec is experiencing a period of evaluation and redefinition of its energy policy. In this respect various interests confront our society: the energy requirements, the scale of climate change throughout the world, subscription to a perspective of regionalised sustainable development, the interest of continuing to develop renewable resources and under what conditions, the relevance, or not, of beginning to use mineral oil resources. The symposium examined three angles of approach:

Workshop 1: Energy policy, strategic choices and energy resources.

Workshop 2: Carriers of energy projects and social acceptability.

Workshop 3: Energy policy and sustainable development of the regions.

The 2014 CIRIEC-Canada Annual Symposium

The Annual symposium of CIRIEC was held on Monday 12 May 2014, in the wider context of the 82nd Congress of Acfas, at the Concordia University, in Montreal. The Scientific Committee of the symposium was made up of Marguerite Mendell, Marie J. Bouchard and Luc Bernier. The theme of the symposium was:

Research through partnership and the transfer of knowledge: Lessons and issues for collective enterprises

Certain themes of social sciences call for partnership approaches and the distribution and transfer of knowledge. The research drive is known as a methodology in the social sciences but, for some time now, the sights have been set above and beyond with a more partnership-based approach, where the problems of research are mapped out jointly by actors and researchers alike. The co-construction of knowledge is not only a process, it is also a new epistemology. Partnership in research and transfer of knowledge rely on a double transversality: between environments of practice and environments of scientific research; and between the organisations or actors sharing the same interests without having the same activity (e.g., trade unions, public enterprises, social economy, etc.). What are the characteristics of the themes

of the social sciences that could more particularly benefit from a partnership approach? What does the partnership bring to these themes? How do these circuits of co-construction of knowledge actually work? This symposium raised several epistemological and methodological questions inseparable from the societal issues that demand new approaches in the social sciences. This symposium sought to identify the methodological innovations and trigger debate around this question.

Seminars presented during meetings of the Board

16 April 2016 - **How is the weight of the social economy measured? What are the stakes with this measurement?**

Presented by Marie J. Bouchard, Professor at Université du Québec à Montréal (UQÀM) and Damien Rousselière, Agrocampus Ouest, France and UQÀM.

26 February 2016 - **Demutualisation of cooperatives and mutual societies: look out for the good indicators!**

Presented by Jean-Pierre Girard, head of courses at UQAM.

2 December 2015 - **Inequalities: the shaky foundations of the new *modèle québécois***

Presented by Alain Noël, professor of Political Science, Université de Montréal.

30 September 2015 - **Social democracy 2.0: Quebec versus the countries of Scandinavia**

Presented by Stéphane Paquin, Professor, École nationale d'administration publique.

30 January 2015 - **Converging views on the social enterprises**

Presented by Luc Bernier (ÉNAP), Marie J. Bouchard (UQAM) and Martine Vézina (HEC Montréal).

28 November 2014 - **The International Summit of Cooperatives 2014: the repercussions, the Declaration and the main conclusions**

Presented by Stéphane Bertrand, Executive Director of the International Summit of Cooperatives.

19 September 2014 - **The State and the role of the State's companies in 2014**

Presented by Luc Bernier, Professor at ÉNAP, Codirector of the Centre de recherche sur la gouvernance (Cergo).

The CIRIEC-Canada review, *Économie et Solidarités*

The review first appeared in 1968 under the name *Canadian CIRIEC Review / Revue du CIRIEC Canadien*. In 1978 it became *Coopératives et développement - Revue du Ciriec*. It took its present name *Économie et Solidarités - Revue du CIRIEC-Canada* in 1996.

The review of CIRIEC-Canada builds on the basis of the main characteristics of any association such as CIRIEC, in particular the mobilisation and strength of its networks and partnerships. These are found in two different yet complementary places, within CIRIEC, in university circles and among the collective enterprises.

The review *Économie et Solidarités* is now disseminated in electronic mode. It is possible to consult the articles and features of the review direct on the website of Érudit. This is a significant quality leap, making the review more readily accessible to a more numerous readership. It is also a responsible move, since it softens the ecological footprint of the review. It is therefore well in line with the values promoted by CIRIEC-Canada that we should urge our readers to follow us in this green direction. The back numbers of the Review are available on the internet site of CIRIEC-Canada:

[To consult the numbers ...](#)

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The Bulletin of the Watch on Research on the Social Economy

A watch on research on the social economy had been set up by the Canadian Research Chair on the Social Economy, UQAM 2003, within the scope of an activity initiated by CIRIEC International (with Benoît Lévesque, Luc Bernier and Marie J. Bouchard).

The Research Chair on the Social Economy completed its works in 2013 without finding anyone to take over the watch activity, so the Chair had no choice but to end it. In 2016 CIRIEC-Canada thus undertook to support that activity temporarily for 6 months. Steps will be taken to find a long-term solution for the upkeep of this watch on research on the social economy.

The SECOIA Project

The Belgian Section of CIRIEC is associated with the Walloon Government in a study on the evaluation of impact of added value created through practices specific to enterprises of the market social economy. On the international side of this study CIRIEC-Canada was approached to suggest experts having supported/supervised/tested and put into practice evaluation methods

intended to "objectivise" the added values of the social economy, more particularly in the form of measurable indicators. Marie J. Bouchard led this mission of review of these practices and the application of these indicators.

CIRIEC Archives

The archive material of CIRIEC-Canada has been available for consultation since autumn 2014.

The Secretariat of CIRIEC-Canada

The Secretariat of CIRIEC-Canada is situated at the Sherbrooke University (Campus de Longueuil). A research expert, Suzanne Poirier, is on duty.

The CIRIEC-Canada internet site

An internet site frequently consulted in Canada and from other countries, a source of valuable information on CIRIEC-Canada and on the social economy: <http://www.ciriec.ugam.ca> .