Majority of Quebecers in favor of a leaders' debate exclusively on the environmental and climate crisis

Montreal - Quebec, June 6, 2022 - With the provincial election campaign launching soon, Vire au vert, a coalition of environmental and citizen groups, is asking Quebec’s news networks for a leaders' debate exclusively on the environmental and climate crisis, including the solutions proposed by the political parties. A recent Léger poll* shows that 56%** of Quebecers believe that it is relevant to hold such a debate.

"The climate crisis and the collapse of biodiversity affect many aspects of our daily lives, whether it is our physical and mental health, our safety, the cost of our groceries or our public finances. The climate crisis also risks accentuating inequalities, because it has disproportionate effects on certain groups. The format of traditional debates does not give enough time or focus to environmental issues***," state the Vire au vert groups.

Quebecers are concerned

Quebec society is very affected by these environmental crises and their transversal and multidimensional impacts. Considering the magnitude of extreme weather events - floods, forest fires, heat waves, droughts, tornadoes, etc. - 73% of Quebecers say that they are worried about the impact of climate change on their health (respiratory problems, new diseases, etc.) and on public health. The same percentage is concerned about the costs that climate change has on public funds and their personal finances.

60% of those surveyed believe that the Quebec government is not doing enough to adapt Quebec to the consequences of climate change, such as flooding, erosion and the premature degradation of infrastructure. As far as mitigation, 64% consider that governments have generally not done enough to limit the consequences of climate change on vulnerable groups and marginalized communities in Quebec.

"The message from Quebecers on adaptation, mitigation and protection of the environment is clear. Their concern about the consequences of climate change is palpable and their expectations for the government to do better have increased. A leaders' debate exclusively on the environmental and climate crisis is therefore necessary and essential," affirms Vire au vert.
Platform and debates

To be able to act more ambitiously, quickly, coherently and inclusively, we must prepare Quebec to face current challenges. We must make our living environments healthier, more equitable and more resilient to prepare for the future.

For the upcoming election campaign, Vire au vert has shared a series of recommendations with the political parties. The 48 recommendations are grouped into seven categories: climate and energy, transportation and land use, agriculture and food, biodiversity and nature, ecofiscality and nature-based economy, integrated water management, and environmental and climate justice governance.

"With the latest IPCC findings urging humanity to drastically change course, party leaders and candidates must propose comprehensive solutions to the climate crisis during the election campaign. It must be clear for the voters how ambitious the parties intend to be on this issue over the next decade," concludes Vire au vert groups.

Vire au vert also provides support, personalized coaching and mobilization tools to help citizen groups and local organizations meet with their candidates, whether in the form of a non-partisan debate on environmental issues and solutions to the climate crisis or via one-on-one meetings. Vire au Vert's Week of Debates will take place from September 18-25, 2022.

- Ends-

Cahier de propositions
Site: https://www.vireauvert.org
Réseaux Sociaux: Facebook, Instagram

Notes to editors:

*The poll was conducted in French, asking for a debate in French. The party leaders have already canceled the English debate, but our request for a debate to focus on environmental issues remains.

**56%: slide 8 of the survey report indicates that 56% find this debate proposition totally relevant, 34% totally irrelevant, 10% had no opinion on the matter. In other words, it is not 44% who are opposed to the idea of a debate exclusively on the environment.

***It should be noted that in 2018, during the "Face-à-Face Québec 2018" organized by TVA, no segment was dedicated to the climate and the environment. It was briefly mentioned in the "Economy and Public Finances" segment at the very end of the debate. In the same exercise presented on Radio-Canada, "Le Grand débat des chefs 2018", only 16 minutes were devoted to the environment over the two hours.

****Recommandations are available in French only, but an English spokesperson is available.

*****The debates will be organized in French.

This web survey was conducted among 1,004 Quebecers who could speak French or English. The data was collected from May 27 to 29, 2022. Results were weighted by gender, age, mother tongue, region, education and presence of children in the household to ensure a representative sample of the Quebec population. The maximum margin of error for a sample drawn from a panel is ± 3.1%, 19 times out of 20.
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