

# Identity Paradiplomacy in Québec

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This article explains why Québec is one the most active subnational governments at the international level. Traditionally, researchers discuss paradiplomacy and protodiplomacy, but neither concept fits the case of Québec very well. In Québec, there is a consensus among the political parties that favors "identity paradiplomacy." The fundamental aim of Québec's identity paradiplomacy is to construct and reinforce Québec's national identity by undertaking international actions abroad. Identity paradiplomacy is more intense than typical paradiplomacy and is distinct from protodiplomacy in that it does not aim for political independence. The twofold purpose of Québec's international strategy is to galvanize Québec's development and to achieve international recognition of Québec as a nation abroad.

L'objectif de cet article est d'expliquer pourquoi le Québec est un des États fédérés les plus actifs sur la scène internationale. Règle générale, les spécialistes utilisent deux concepts, ceux de paradiplomatie et de protodiplomatie, pour expliquer les actions internationales des États fédérés, mais ces deux concepts ne rendent pas justice au cas du Québec. Au Québec, il existe un consensus entre les partis politiques pour mettre en œuvre une « paradiplomatie identitaire » dont l'objectif fondamental est la construction et la promotion de la nation québécoise par l'entremise d'actions internationales. La paradiplomatie identitaire est plus intense que la paradiplomatie mais distincte de la protodiplomatie puisque le but de l'action internationale n'est pas l'atteinte du statut de pays souverain.

For well over half a century now, the Québec government has pursued its own international policy parallel to that of the Canadian federal government, a practice known to scholars as paradiplomacy. Nowadays, Québec is part of a small, select group of non-sovereign federated states very active on the international stage (Crikemans 2010). In 2016–2017, the Ministère des Relations internationales et

de la Francophonie (MRIF, formerly MRI) had a budget of close to CAD\$100 million and employed 427 civil servants, with some 183 posted abroad (MRIF 2017a, 1; 51). These are the highest figures of any federated state in the world (Criekemans 2010; Fry 2013). In 2018, Québec has 29 offices in foreign countries, including a Paris office whose status approaches that of an embassy (Gouvernement 2018). In 2016–2017, the Québec government organized 1,575 meetings with “influential personalities,” more than 1,350 activities to promote and communicate the international policy of Québec, more than 120 solidarity projects in 19 countries, and 273 bilateral cooperation projects in 18 countries and regions.

Since 1965, Québec has signed 759 international agreements or “ententes” with sovereign or federated states in close to 80 different countries. Over 385 of these agreements remain in force today. Most involve sovereign countries such as France or the United States (MRIF 2017a, 1). The most important ones concern labor force mobility, education, social security, telecommunications, and the environment. Québec is also part of the Canadian delegation in many international negotiations. The most obvious recent case is its participation in the free trade negotiations between Canada and the European Union (Paquin 2013a).

The question is: why is the Government of Québec so active internationally? Some people might say that it is because Québec is seeking support abroad for independence; scholars label this protodiplomacy. Identity and minority nationalism are certainly a big part of the equation, as we shall see, but that hypothesis would only explain Québec’s international relations in periods when the Parti Québécois (PQ) is the government in power and there is a referendum coming, as in 1980 and 1995. It wouldn’t explain why the biggest financial cuts to Québec’s international actions were made not once, but twice, by a PQ government, the first time in 1996–1997 and the second in 2012–2013. And it would not explain why both the Québec Liberal Party (PLQ) and PQ favor a strong international role for the Québec government. It wouldn’t explain either why Jean Charest, Robert Bourassa, and Jean Lesage, all former Liberal and federalist premiers of Québec, were major contributors to Québec’s international activities. The legacy of Jean Charest and Jean Lesage is huge in regard to Québec’s international presence, even more so than that of Lucien

Bouchard or Pauline Marois, both former PQ leaders and premiers. Jean Charest is currently unmatched in his international efforts (Paquin and Jeyabalaratnam 2016).

Our thesis is that nowadays, there is a consensus among the political parties in Québec that favors “identity paradiplomacy.” The fundamental aim of identity paradiplomacy is to construct and reinforce Québec’s national identity by undertaking international actions abroad. Identity paradiplomacy is distinct from protodiplomacy in that it does not aim for political independence (Paquin 2002; Paquin 2006). The twofold purpose of Québec’s international strategy is to galvanize Québec’s development and to achieve international recognition of Québec as a nation abroad. Many analysts seem to forget that the PLQ is also a nationalist party in the sense that it seeks to promote Québec’s distinctiveness and national identity. Nationalism in Québec does not have the pejorative connotation that it has in France or even the United States where being nationalist typically means being closed to diversity and opposed to globalization. In Québec, it generally means a commitment to maintaining the French language, culture, and heritage within the modern world. This is why the PQ was in favor of free trade in the 1980s. And this is also why Jean Charest, a federalist leader, said in 2006: “In defense of our identity, we federalists are just as aggressive as sovereigntists can be” (qtd. in Nossal, Roussel, and Paquin 2010, 159).<sup>1</sup>

The distinction between paradiplomacy, identity paradiplomacy, and protodiplomacy is important (McHugh 2015). It helps to make sense of Québec’s international activities abroad and to explain the relative continuity of action between the PLQ and the PQ. It also helps us understand why Québec’s international activities are very institutionalized; the province seeks to imitate the degree of institutionalization of sovereign states, albeit on a much smaller scale. We should not see these three concepts as opposed to one another. Rather, they constitute a continuum (see Table 1).

On the left, we have paradiplomacy. This is the kind of diplomacy typically done by states in the U.S. or the Canadian provinces. In the center, we have identity paradiplomacy. This is the kind of diplomacy that we find in Québec, Flanders, and Catalonia. These regions, besides doing typical paradiplomacy, include a strong identity component in their international activities. On the right, we have

Table 1: Paradiplomacy, identity paradiplomacy, and protodiplomacy



Definition		
“direct and, in various instances, autonomous involvement in external-relations activities” (Soldatos 1990, 37).	The fundamental aim of identity paradiplomacy is to construct and reinforce the national identity of a non-sovereign state by undertaking international actions abroad.	Seeking support for independence abroad.
Activities		
Export promotions, attraction of foreign direct investments, education, environment, energy, science and technology, security, etc.	In addition to paradiplomatic activities, international actions to promote the “national” distinctiveness of the minority nation. For example, international strategies to promote cultural distinctiveness and branding the nation abroad, bilateral meetings with leaders of foreign sovereign states, etc.	In addition to paradiplomatic and identity paradiplomatic activities, international actions to secure international recognition for national independence. For example, Québec’s actions with regard to France in 1980 and 1995.

protodiplomacy. Protodiplomacy reflects the international activity of a subnational region such as Québec or Catalonia in support of its national independence.

Panayotis Soldatos, who coined the term, defines paradiplomacy as “direct and, in various instances, autonomous involvement in external-relations activities” of federated states (Soldatos 1990, 37). Paradiplomacy responds to functional need. We can talk about paradiplomacy when a subnational or non-central government, like the Government of Québec, mandates an actor, often a minister, to negotiate or enter into relations and defend the interests of this

government directly with other actors abroad. These actors may be sovereign states, federated states, NGOs, or private sector actors. Paradiplomacy is thus similar to normal diplomacy with the major difference that non-central governments are not recognized actors in international law. They cannot become full members of international organizations or be part of an international treaty (with some exceptions as in the case of the federated states of Belgium) (Lequesne and Paquin 2017). But they often participate in international negotiations and in the work of international organizations within their national delegations – in the case of Québec, within the official Canadian delegation. Protodiplomacy is when a non-central government actively seeks international recognition to become independent, as did Québec before the 1980 and 1995 referendums and Catalonia before the referendum of 2017.

Among the main issues addressed in paradiplomacy are economic and trade policy, foreign investment, efforts to attract decision-making centers, export promotion, science and technology, energy, environment, education, immigration, labor force mobility, multilateral relations, international development, and even human rights (MRIF 2017b). Paradiplomacy is also increasingly concerned with security issues, especially transborder security (Morin and Poliquin 2016). Even though the phenomenon is not new, it has been growing in importance since the 1960s (Aldecoa and Keating 1999). In reaction to globalization, non-central governments have been expanding their presence abroad (Nossal, Roussel, and Paquin 2011; Criekemans 2010).

The goal of this paper is thus to explain why Québec is one the most active subnational governments at the international level. Four major variables or underlying forces account for the development of paradiplomatic activity in the world (Paquin 2002; Paquin 2004). The first (the independent variable) relates to the global or international system. This phenomenon is known today as globalization and does not need much discussion. The second, dependent factor is the personality of decision makers, especially in their policy-making role. International relations activity tends to be unequally distributed among regions in a single country. The emergence of foreign policy at the federated-state level owes much to the personality of certain politicians. Unlike Ontario, Québec's international relations history is marked by major international players and true innovators and policy entrepreneurs

including Jean Lesage, Paul Gérin-Lajoie, Daniel Johnson Sr., Claude Morin, Louise Beaudoin, and Jean Charest. The process in Québec has been generally cumulative, with some exceptions (Paquin 2012). In the case of Ontario, the opposite is true (Dyment 2001; Paquin 2013b).

The other two domestic factors affecting subnational governments consist of the type of state, on the one hand, and identity and minority nationalism, on the other. These four fundamental variables may not explain everything, but they represent the underlying forces that account for the worldwide phenomenon of paradiplomacy. Québec and other non-central governments face similar pressures from globalization, with more or less intensity. Depending on their type of state, they have more or less reason to promote their spheres of domestic jurisdiction internationally. But the fundamental difference between the Government of Québec and other non-central governments is explained by identity and minority nationalism.

Unlike Québec, most federated states are not part of a minority nation that developed its paradiplomacy in reaction to the majority nationalism of the dominant country (Paquin 2004; Paquin 2006). Nationalism is a shared trait of the top three federated-state governments most active in international relations: Québec, Flanders, and Catalonia, suggesting that this identity variable is fundamental (Paquin 2005; Lecours and Moreno 2001). In Québec, Catalonia, and Flanders, nationalism partially explains the intensity of the international activities of these non-sovereign nations. This factor has, moreover, been grossly underestimated in the literature on this phenomenon. The following discussion will address paradiplomacy in relation both to the type of state – touching upon economic, transborder, environmental, and security interests – and to identity and minority nationalism.

### Type of state

In the scholarly literature, type of state refers both to a state's system of government (democratic or otherwise) and its institutional structure (unitary, decentralized, or federal). For example, paradiplomacy is harder to conduct and less common in authoritarian regimes than in democratic systems. Democratization thus made paradiplomacy possible for a number of Mexican federated states (Schiavon 2010). The type of state variable also factors in the degree of decentralization. The

more decentralized a political system, the more fields of jurisdiction federated states have to defend and promote. Federated states with a high number of jurisdictions tend to have greater resources and larger bureaucracies. This factor explains why paradiplomacy first emerged within federal systems (Soldatos 1990; Lequesne and Paquin 2017).

Within Canada's federal system, the province of Québec has many constitutional jurisdictions (the economy, natural resources, labor, health, education, and culture), a large government, and important financial resources. The division of power in relation to foreign affairs is a subject of debate in Canada. Authors like Grace Skogstad talk about a "de facto shared jurisdiction" (Skogstad 2012, 202). Two major reasons explain this situation. First, although the Canadian government can negotiate international treaties in the fields of jurisdiction of the Canadian provinces, it does not have the power to force the provinces to implement such treaties (Skogstad 2012, 204; VanDuzer 2013; Kukucha 2013, Kukucha 2008; Paquin 2013a; Paquin 2005). International treaties must be implemented at the proper level of government through a law of incorporation. In Canada, international treaties must thus be implemented by the federal government but also by the provinces and even by municipalities. Because of this situation, Canadian provinces have become more important actors in international negotiations during the past 50 years. This issue is very important since, according to de Mestral and Fox-Decent, "roughly 40 per cent of federal statutes implement international rules in whole or in part" (de Mestral and Fox-Decent 2008, 578).

The second reason is that a fair number of international treaties now deal with both international and domestic issues, and it is becoming harder than ever to determine the boundary between the two. Today virtually all government activity falls into the field of competence of at least one intergovernmental organization, and frequently many more. In this way, in the context of international organizations and international conferences, themes are dealt with that relate to education, public health, cultural diversity, the environment, business subsidies, the treatment accorded to investors, and the removal of non-tariff barriers to agriculture, services, and so forth. The enlargement of the stakes on the international scene means that, when it comes to making decisions concerning foreign policy, all ministries, from the least to the most important, have seen at least part of their activities become

internationalized. As a result, ministries of foreign affairs no longer have the ability to centralize decision-making and representation or to control all functions concerning foreign affairs.

Because of this situation, many authors consider that foreign policy must now be conceived as a multi-level governance system in which the actors in a federal state structure are interlinked (Bache and Flinders 2004; Hocking 1993; Hooghe and Marks 2003; Jeffery 2000). Multi-level governance scholars emphasize the existence of “imperatives of cooperation” between central governments and sub-state governments. Implementation of a coherent foreign policy inevitably entails consulting with – and even according a significant role to – federated states through national intergovernmental mechanisms, so that they may play an active part in the larger state’s foreign policy. Thanks to such consultation mechanisms, sub-state governments in India, Argentina, South Africa, Canada, Spain, Belgium, and Germany have gradually become more engaged in foreign relations, while state-level involvement remains minimal in the United States (Michelmann 2009, 7). As the requirements of cooperation become more important, we see an increase in “executive federalism,” where both the federal prime minister and provincial premiers actively participate in intergovernmental negotiations of international treaties.

Sovereign states generally seek to exercise their constitutional jurisdictions fully. The same applies to federated states, which are, at least in theory, sovereign within their fields of jurisdiction. It is in the interest of provincial governments to protect their fields of jurisdiction against federal interference and sometimes even to seek greater independence or autonomy from the central power. Consequently, the provinces are not inclined to yield matters of provincial jurisdiction to the federal government when they extend to the international arena. They generally feel that these matters are their responsibility. There is, of course, substantial asymmetry among provinces: the greater a province’s resources, the greater its means to protect its constitutionally enshrined interests. The rest is a question of political will.

In the decades following Confederation, the international interests of the provinces, like those of the Dominion of Canada, were essentially limited to attracting immigrants and forging commercial ties (Beaudoin 1977). Since then, however, the scope of provincial interests has broadened to the point where today, provincial governments are

as concerned about free trade and environmental issues as their federal counterpart. The provinces maintain an international presence to protect their interests in a number of fields. To illustrate this point, we address the significant issues of business interests, transborder relations, the environment, and security (Michaud and Ramet 2004).

### Economic interests

Economic interests refer notably to Québec's strategies to promote exports, attract foreign investment and international events, and build a positive image to spur investment in the province. Protecting and promoting business interests accounts for most Canadian provincial government activity abroad. When Québec maintains delegations abroad, organizes trade missions, and establishes diplomatic relations, it does so primarily with a view to stimulating economic growth through business, investment, or tourism. Québec seeks to expand foreign markets – especially in manufacturing and natural resource extraction – to develop secondary sectors, and to raise new capital. Québec also works to protect its business interests against commercial maneuvering by competitors.

This is far from a new phenomenon. Between 1867 and the end of the nineteenth century, historian Jean Hamelin noted, Québec was already pursuing foreign capital. In 1881, Québec premier Adolphe Chapleau spent nearly six months in France, largely to secure loans for the province. He returned to Québec intent on further developing Québec–France relations. The following year he appointed a general agent for Québec in Paris, Senator Hector Fabre, who held the position until 1910. His mandate was to attract French immigrants and promote cultural exchanges and trade. Fabre was also a driving force behind the establishment of Montréal's French Chamber of Commerce. Honoré Mercier was another premier who spent time in Paris to secure provincial loans (Hamelin 1969, 16–26).

This situation would change at the beginning of the twentieth century as American capital came on the scene. Instead of investment, Québec began looking for new markets for exports. New foreign offices were opened for this purpose. In 1908, the Québec government enacted a law establishing a foreign office in the United Kingdom, which opened in 1911. In 1914, Québec posted a general agent in Brussels (Hamelin 1969); the federal government had already done so

in 1907. Québec was not the only province to do so. Ontario's U.K. foreign office also opened in 1908. Québec closed all its delegations after the Great Depression. During the Second World War, a delegation was opened in New York City, which still exists.

Since the 1960s and 1970s, accelerated economic and financial globalization has meant an increasingly important economic role for the provinces. Policies to attract foreign investment and promote exports were critical (Lisée 2006; Paquin 2016). The expansion of Québec's international presence began with the opening of delegations in Paris in 1961, London in 1962, Rome and Milan in 1965, and Chicago in 1969. Québec then opened delegations in Boston, Lafayette, Dallas, and Los Angeles in 1970, in Munich and Berlin in 1971, in Brussels in 1972, in Atlanta in 1977, in Washington in 1978, in Mexico City and Tokyo in 1980, in Beijing and Santiago in 1998, in Shanghai and Barcelona in 1999, in Mumbai in 2007, in São Paulo in 2008, and in Moscow in 2012. Several offices would eventually be closed (Lafayette, Dallas, Chicago), though the Chicago office was subsequently reopened and a new one was added in Houston in 2015.

Today economic issues remain priorities of the Québec government. It comes as no surprise that the United States, by far Canada's biggest trading partner, is the primary focus of Québec's paradiplomacy (Paquin 2016). Since the mid-1990s, every Canadian province has traded more with bordering U.S. states than with neighboring provinces (Courchene 2000; 2003). Québec also seeks to protect its economic interests abroad. Since the early 1980s, the Québec government has vigorously protected its interests against American softwood lumber producers who lobby to impose high tariffs on Canadian imports. Québec and other provincial premiers also frequently visit major U.S. financial centers such as New York, Chicago, Atlanta, and Los Angeles in pursuit of new markets and capital.

### Transborder interests

Québec's geographic position makes it necessary for it to coordinate policies and strategies with its U.S. neighbors and provides an incentive to take part in international relations. Globalization, integrated North American markets, and interdependence have all helped intensify relations between Québec, other Canadian provinces, and U.S. and Mexican states. Federated states within each of the three North

American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) member countries – ten Canadian provinces and three territories, 50 U.S. states, and 31 Mexican states and one federal district – have responded to shared challenges by concluding numerous bilateral and multilateral agreements and implementing sub-state transnational partnerships. Dramatic growth in trade with U.S. states – especially border states – has forced the provinces to initiate interprovincial consultations and coordinate actions with their U.S. counterparts to address issues of provincial jurisdiction.

Today more than 400 agreements are in force between U.S. states and Canadian provinces – over 100 on environmental and natural resource issues alone. Two-thirds of these agreements have been signed in the last 20 years and involve at least 46 U.S. states and every Canadian province (Paquin 2008; Gouvernement 2005). The Canadian and U.S. governments are not signatories on about half these agreements (Fry 2013). There are also more than 20 trade corridors linking Canadian provinces and U.S. states, created after U.S.–Canada trade grew in the wake of NAFTA. Québec and several other Canadian provinces also take part in the National Association of Security Companies (NASCO) summits that bring together U.S. and Mexican states (Chaloux 2012; Paquin 2016; Parent 2001).

Québec's elected officials and civil servants carry out hundreds of missions to the U.S. and Mexico each year. When the provinces suggested creating a lobby group to represent them in Washington, Canada responded by establishing a Provincial-Territorial and Parliamentary Affairs Section of the Advocacy Secretariat at the Canadian Embassy; this also allows Ottawa to keep an eye on provincial activities in Washington. Alberta's government has been represented within this embassy since March 2005. Ontario, which is already represented at the Canadian Consulate in New York, is planning to follow suit. Québec turned down the federal government's invitation because it has its own government office in Washington in addition to those in New York, Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Los Angeles, and Houston. In Mexico, Québec has a government office, while Ontario is represented within the Canadian Embassy in Mexico City. In comparison, a dozen U.S. states are represented in Canada, while some 18 others are represented in Mexico.

The intensification of transnational relations has also given rise to often highly specialized sub-state transnational organizations,

with Québec often playing a key role (Paquin 2016; Chaloux 2009; Government of Canada 2005). These organizations act in a wide range of fields such as healthcare, climate change, shared water resource management (e.g., in the Great Lakes), navigable waters, law enforcement, energy, fighting forest fires, environmental protection, border security, electrical grid management, and bridge and road network administration.

Most sub-state transnational organizations were created in recent years, many in the wake of NAFTA. Usually, one or more Canadian provinces join existing American organizations, some of which bring together members of Parliament and Congress, while others include premiers and governors. For example, since 1995, Québec has been an international member of the Council of State Governments, which has been active since 1933. Québec has also been a member of the Eastern Regional Politics Conference since 1990. The National Conference of State Legislatures, created in 1975 to promote communication among U.S. state legislatures and give them a unified voice in Washington, has included Québec's National Assembly as an associate member since April 2000 (Chaloux 2009).

The most important coordination mechanism is undoubtedly provided by "mini-summits" such as the Conference of New England Governors and Eastern Canadian Premiers, founded in 1973. The conference brings together six U.S. states (Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont) and five Canadian provinces (Québec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, and Newfoundland) (Chaloux 2009; Lubin 1993). The first summit was held in the summer of 1973. It became an annual event in the wake of the oil crisis that occurred later that year in October, driven in part by interest in large Canadian hydroelectricity reserves from U.S. states looking for alternative energy sources. Today the conference focuses primarily on economic matters, but issues such as energy, agriculture, transportation, tourism, the environment, and (especially post-9/11) border security are also up for discussion. Since 2000 private sector actors have also attended. The Council of Great Lakes Governors, created in 1983, has eight U.S. member states; Ontario and Québec signed on as associate members in 1997 (Chaloux 2009; Dymont 2001).

### Environmental issues

The Québec government finds itself increasingly compelled to take action to protect its interests at the international level, especially in response to concerns over environmental issues. There is no doubt that Québec is one of the leading non-central governments in climate change negotiations, for example. As early as 1992, Québec was represented in Rio for the Earth Summit (United Nations Conference on Environment and Development), which gave birth to the famous United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Convention on Biological Diversity (Chaloux, Paquin, and Séguin 2015; Chaloux and Paquin 2012).

On the issue of climate change, the strategy of the Government of Québec is twofold. Québec is very active with other non-central governments such as U.S. states in promoting concerted action to reduce climate change. In 2013, Québec and California created a carbon market that was at the time the second biggest in the world (Chaloux, Paquin, and Séguin 2015). Since 2007, the Québec government has been a very active participant in the Climate Group, for example. The Climate Group is an association of multiple actors such as non-central governments but also business organizations from all over the world. The Climate Group promotes the development of green technology or the “clean revolution.” Several times, former Premier Charest even co-chaired one of the most important events of the association, the Climate Leaders’ Summit, which takes place during a conference of parties to the United Nations (UN) climate change negotiations.

Québec also recently joined an organization known as nrg4SD (Network of Regional Governments for Sustainable Development). This organization was created during the Earth Summit of 2002 with the goal of pushing for wider recognition, notably in international law, of the key role of subnational governments in promoting sustainable development and mitigating climate change.

In North America, in addition to being active in the Conference of New England Governors and Eastern Canadian Premiers over environmental issues, Québec is a key player with California in an association called the Western Climate initiative (WCI). The WCI was created in 2007 and is an association that unites non-central governments or “independent jurisdictions” of Québec, Ontario,

British Columbia, Manitoba, and also California. The goals of this organization are to develop regional targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and to participate in a multi-state registry to track and manage greenhouse gas emissions. These actions made possible the creation of a market-based program to reach a common target (Chaloux, Paquin, and Séguin 2015).

The Government of Québec also tries to have an impact in international climate change negotiations through the Canadian diplomatic channel. While non-central governments or subnational governments cannot become full members of an international conference or an international organization, they can exercise influence over what position the national government will defend at these negotiations. Québec, along with other Canadian provinces, has influenced the Canadian government in the past. For example, Québec can delegate a representative within the Canadian official diplomatic delegation. As a member of the Canadian delegation, the Government of Québec can have access to the representatives of other countries, the negotiation forum, side events, and also the press conference.

This situation has become very common in recent years. Since 1995, representatives of the Québec government have always been present at the Conference of the Parties of the UN negotiation on climate change. Ministers from the Québec government were there 11 times out of 17 and the Premier of Québec was present at the negotiation twice. All representatives, including Québec's civil servants, were included in the larger Canadian delegation. Some representatives of the Government of Québec are called "super delegates" and are allowed to participate directly in some meetings of Canadian diplomats, notably during the daily briefing on the ongoing negotiation. The Government of Québec is also very active in the side events which are held in parallel to the climate change negotiations. These side events include meetings and conferences about multiple aspects of policy related to climate change. Representatives of the Québec government also hold multiple bilateral meetings with leaders from various parts of the world as well as members of the civil society (Chaloux and Séguin 2012).

### Security interests

In Canada, matters of international security and territorial defense are generally associated exclusively with the federal government. This association is justified insofar as these activities fall under national defense and border protection, two federal fields of jurisdiction (Morin and Poliquin 2016). But the provinces are also involved in security, which can come under their jurisdiction in two ways. First, under Section 92 of the Constitution of Canada, the provinces (and municipalities, which are under provincial jurisdiction) play a central role in protecting the civilian population and enforcing laws through policing. Until very recently, a clear line seemed to separate activities aimed at protecting the territory from foreign threat, a federal matter, and those pertaining to domestic security, a provincial concern.

A number of phenomena have called this separation into question, leading the provinces to take a greater interest in security and defense. According to Québec's Ministère des Relations internationales: "At the turn of the century, several threats to international stability arising from non-military factors, such as terrorism, transnational crime, pandemics and environmental degradation, are among the direct responsibilities that Québec has solely or jointly with the federal government" (MRI 2006, 67). We can now add cybercrimes to this list of issues.

The growing threat of terrorism has come to the forefront, especially post-9/11. Fighting terrorism demands provincial resources (police, fire fighters, healthcare providers) as much as, if not more than, federal resources (armed forces, information services, Canada Border Services Agency, etc.). Québec's MRI speaks to this issue:

Canada and Québec are not safe from a terrorist attack. This is why the Québec government has taken special measures to increase security. It has made legislative changes to secure the issuance of vital records and to act more effectively in the event of a breach of immigration law. The Sûreté du Québec and the Police Department of the City of Montréal, in collaboration with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, are involved in an integrated national security team and the fight against terrorism. The Department of Public Safety has created a working group on chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear threats. An emergency preparedness plan is in place to manage the consequences of disasters of various kinds, including those of a terrorist attack. (MRI 2006, 68)

Given the phenomenal growth of trade with the United States, provincial prosperity has come to depend on access to the American market. This has led the provinces to adopt initiatives to discourage U.S. authorities from implementing standards whose stringency might impede trade or hinder the free movement of people (Kirkey, Paquin, and Roussel 2016). The Québec government shored up cooperation with bordering U.S. states by concluding memoranda of understanding on information sharing with Vermont and New Hampshire, as well as a cooperation agreement on the fight against terror with New York State. The governments of both Québec and Ontario are part of the Northeast Regional Homeland Security Directors Consortium, which includes ten U.S. states and three Canadian provinces (MRI 2006, 68). Both provinces also helped implement a range of measures to increase security and efficiency at the Canada–U.S. border. On 12 December 2001, Canada and the United States decided to build a “smart border.” Several related programs require provincial cooperation: NEXUS, which accelerates border clearance procedures for U.S. and Canadian citizens; FAST/EXPRESS, which fosters quick and secure shipping; and C-TPAT (Customs Trade Partnership Against Terrorism), which aims to expedite the transit of preinspected goods through customs. Transborder organized crime has also spurred the provinces to assume greater control over security policy. Transborder crime includes drug and tobacco smuggling, smuggling of contraband weapons, human trafficking, and money laundering. These are not small-scale concerns; in 2004, the UN Office on Drugs and Crime estimated the number of drug users at 200 million and the total value of the drug trade at US\$320 billion (MRI 2006, 68).

### Identity and minority nationalism

Last but not least, minority nationalism and identity influence paradiplomacy. When a province or non-central government possesses a distinct identity – ranging from mere regionalism to highly institutionalized nationalism like Québec’s – it fosters development and boosts the intensity of the federated state’s international activities. Such conditions also engender identity paradiplomacy. The identity mismatch between the central power and the federated state mobilizes identity entrepreneurs and spurs higher intensity paradiplomacy.

Minority nation identity builders play an active role in international relations because the failure to do so would leave the field open to the central government to promote its conception of national identity. In the words of Renaud Dehousse:

Accepting the central government's exclusive control of international relations is equivalent to the regional authorities allowing it to intervene in this way in areas that are traditionally reserved for the regional authority. The reaction of regional nationalist leaders to what they perceive as a threat to their national existence is universally negative. (Dehousse 1989, 284)

Identity is thus one of the main drivers of Québec's international activities, while it is not a factor in other Canadian provinces or in U.S. states.

Even if nationalism in Québec dates far back, something changed in the 1960s. An unapologetically nationalist discourse emerged in Québec during the Quiet Revolution to justify stepping up international relations (Paquin 2006). Premier Jean Lesage, in his speech inaugurating the Maison du Québec in Paris, stressed that Québec is more than just another Canadian province. He presented not the province but the "state" (*État*) of Québec as a lever against the threat of assimilation in North America. For Lesage, the Maison du Québec in Paris "is an extension of the work we have undertaken in Québec" (qtd. in Bernier 1996, 30).

This is not to suggest that Lesage intended to work clandestinely to achieve Québec's independence. The PLQ's federalist leanings are beyond doubt. Lesage was a former Liberal minister in Ottawa under Louis St-Laurent. For Claude Morin, a deputy minister in the Québec government under Lesage, Québec's international actions were not the work of politicians or civil servants discreetly laying the groundwork for independence. Rather, the desire to play an active role on the international stage served domestic ends: international policy decisions were "related to concrete problems or needs felt in that time" (Morin 1987, 35). One significant factor, for Morin, was the strong desire of politicians and officials for Québec to have an international presence. By doing so, the new wave of 1960s Québec nationalism sought to break with traditional nationalism, particularly the policies of the Union Nationale and the *Grande Noirceur* period.

Even before this time, many Québec intellectuals sincerely wished for stronger ties with foreign countries. The Canadian government, found to discriminate against francophones by the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, was not a compelling option; Quebecers thus pinned their hopes on the Québec state. Naturally, Québec turned to France, where some of the (generally Francophile) Québec elite had already pursued university studies (Mesli 2014). Quebecers, the vast majority of whom were francophone, would have found it hard to countenance an interest in another country such as the U.S. or U.K. Nor would these countries have been as receptive to Québec's efforts as France was.

In 1960, as Québec was building its state apparatus, France-Québec rapprochement was seen as an important "nation-building" tool. Québec faced difficulties that could be more easily solved with the help of a country like France (Paquin 2006). This led to the first international agreements on cooperation and education. The education system had been overhauled since the arrival of Jean Lesage's Liberals, who created the first-ever Québec Department of Education. Understandably, Québec's needs were great in this area – particularly in terms of labor and technical expertise (Mesli 2014). Policies fostering cooperation with France would allow Québec to catch up more quickly, responding to what were felt to be accrued deficiencies. France had the financial and human resources to lend Québec the specialists it needed to develop its own system (Morin 1987, 37). From the early 1960s, Québec would establish a set of cooperation policies with France and other French-speaking countries to strengthen the status of the French language and bolster the development of Québec as a nation (Bélanger 1994, 425). In 1965, Paul Gérin-Lajoie, Québec's Deputy Premier and Minister of Education, would also use nationalist arguments to justify developing an international policy for Québec: in his view, Québec was inadequately represented by the federal government, and the Canadian foreign services ignored the French-speaking world. Gérin-Lajoie felt it necessary for Québec to forge closer ties with francophone countries because federal diplomacy was not doing the job.

It has often been claimed that Québec's diplomacy emerged to make up for the underrepresentation of francophones in the Canadian diplomatic service. Studies presented during the Royal Commission

on Bilingualism and Biculturalism supported this view. Canada's Department of Foreign Affairs even attempted to stonewall the work of two Québec academics officially mandated by the Commission to study whether Canada's biculturalism was upheld in the Department of Foreign Affairs. In his report on the matter, Gilles Lalande wrote: "It is surprising that the law of numbers has not allowed a single French-speaking career officer to be head of mission in the vast majority of countries where Canadian interests are considered the most important" (qtd. in Patry 1980, 79). The Glassco Commission came to the same conclusion in 1962, finding that "the number of French Canadians holding key positions in the government administration is insignificant" (Hicks 2006, A17). If Québec failed to act on international relations, it would be left to the federal government to negotiate international agreements in Québec's fields of jurisdiction. In the context of the 1960s Quiet Revolution, that was simply not an option.

Other factors also led Québec to chart its own international course. International relations are, in theory at least, a matter for sovereign nations. Becoming an international actor able to meet with heads of state was a giant symbolic leap for Québec – and a highly attractive prospect for identity builders (Lecours and Moreno 2001, 4). Branching out into the international scene can also be a strategy to strengthen identity domestically. Appearing in an international setting raises the Québec premier's profile and prestige at home. Developing strong bilateral relations with sovereign states like France is also critical. Québec, a sub-state entity, has managed to cultivate closer ties with France than Canada, a sovereign nation, has forged with Great Britain. With President Charles de Gaulle recognizing Québec in his 1967 "Vive le Québec libre" speech, and with Québec taking a seat alongside sovereign nations at international conferences, the psychology of nationhood in Québec was utterly transformed in the 1960s.

Emerging in the 1960s, Québec's desire to take its place in the world was also bolstered by globalization: Québec nationalism now favored developing international strategies (Paquin 2001; Keating 1997). Québec nationalism, once a protectionist, autarkic impulse, today champions free trade and international expansion (Lachapelle 2018; Lachapelle 2000). For Alain Dieckhoff (2000) Québec nationalism cannot be reduced to a simple shift in mood, or the awakening of

a primitive tribal force, but is rather a fundamental manifestation of modernity. Québec's leaders used nationalism to justify support for regional integration and free trade with the United States. Pierre Martin explains that "Québec has not endorsed free trade (with the United States) despite its nationalism, Québec chose free trade because of its nationalism" (Martin 1995, 2).

In Québec, the big fear was the resurgence of protectionism in the United States, and as the U.S. market was already very important for Québec exports, a consensus emerged quickly on the issue of free trade among the political parties in Québec. The PLQ under Robert Bourassa believed that free trade with the U.S. would have the advantage of reducing the capacity of the Government of Canada to intervene; (its national economic policies were seen as detrimental to Québec's interests). For the PQ, free trade with the U.S. would promote North–South rather than East–West trade, which would make Québec less dependent on the Canadian domestic market, in addition to substantially reducing the costs of independence if it were to come (Paquin 2001).

## Conclusion

Several conclusions can be drawn from this discussion. Paradiplomacy is not a new phenomenon, and Québec's case is certainly not unique. But it is truly interesting that compared with all other non-central governments active internationally, Québec is the most consistent, most professional, and best adapted to the nature of the international system (Criekemans 2010). The primary reason that Québec is the most active non-central governments abroad is related to nationalism and identity. No other non-central governments share the same characteristics. The only non-central governments that come close to Québec are Flanders and Catalonia. They have not achieved the status of Québec yet, essentially because they have been active internationally for a shorter period of time. And in both cases, they see Québec as the model to emulate.

We should also not blow Québec's case out of proportion. Québec's international presence remains very small compared to Canada's. Just at the level of budgetary resources, the differences between Québec and Canada are enormous. Even though Québec's international relations budget is considerable, the resources devoted to international relations

by Canada dwarf Québec's. The overall budget of the MRIF is around CAD\$150 million, while the budget of its federal counterpart, the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) is close to CAD\$1 billion. In addition, if we include the budget of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and the Department of National Defence, then we are talking a total budget for Canadian foreign affairs of around CAD\$25 billion.

## Note

1 All translations by the author.

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