

Committed. Connected.

2021 Social and Cooperative Responsibility Report



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1.1 MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT AND CEO



Building a prosperous, sustainable future together

At Desjardins, we're more committed than ever to shaping society and lighting the way for others as we pursue our cooperative financial group's mission for our members and clients and make a difference on key social and environmental issues.

In 2021, we relied on our stability, our adaptability and the dedication of our teams to continue to provide proactive support to all our members and clients, to business owners and to communities during the COVID-19 pandemic.

We're so pleased to see our organization reach new heights and we salute our employees and directors for their hard work.

Thanks to exceptional collaboration across the organization and the trust of our members and clients, we posted strong financial results with surplus earnings before member dividends of \$2,942 million, up 21.6% over 2020. We generated operating income¹ of \$20,405 million, up 10.9% compared to the previous year.

Technology working for people

We invest nearly \$2 billion a year in information technology. We continue to improve all our systems, uphold our strong commitment to security and work to implement our omnichannel transformation.

The driving force behind these updates is our desire to put technology to work for our members and clients. Case in point: we're already rolling out voice recognition to authenticate callers in our client relations centres.

We've also partnered with Google to integrate the distinct features of Quebec French into an

artificial intelligence system. Ultimately, members and clients will be able to speak directly to our automated system instead of having to weed through menu options.

In line with our omnichannel transformation, we've also rolled out several other projects to expand self-service delivery and optimize the overall experience we provide to our members and clients.

And last but not least, our tech development efforts have led to some major firsts for Desjardins! We answered the call to innovate during the pandemic. Over 1,000 delegates attended the first Desjardins Group annual general meeting held entirely online. In the network, 213 Desjardins caisses in Quebec and Ontario held their annual general meetings online and voting increased 281% over 2019.

A socioeconomic leader for a green recovery

We're firmly committed to the socioeconomic recovery, and that focus is clear in several of our initiatives. The first few that come to mind are the GoodSpark Fund and the Momentum Fund, 2 amazing initiatives that support thousands of projects related to employment, entrepreneurship, the environment, innovation, young people and education.

For us, it's not a question: the recovery needs to be green. That's why we joined forces with the Fédération des chambres de commerce du Québec for an online tour of the province to discuss the circular economy. And why we've partnered with the École de technologie supérieure to speed up the shift. We want to help make practices across different sectors of the economy more responsible and sustainable.

Toward more responsible finance

We're fast-tracking the integration of environmental, social and governance (ESG) factors into our planning and operations. Desjardins Group achieved the highest ESG Assessment score of all entities in Moody's ESG Solutions² industry category "Diversified Banks" in North America.

In 2021, we rolled out an ambitious science-based climate strategy and made strong commitments. By 2040, we plan to reach net zero greenhouse gas emissions in our operations, supply chain, lending activities and equity investments in certain sectors. We've also reviewed our procurement policy to align with our sustainable development commitments and open up access for local small businesses and non-profit organizations.

¹ For more information on non-GAAP financial measures, see the **Non-GAAP and other financial measures** section of Desjardins Group's 2021 **Management's Discussion and Analysis** that's available on the SEDAR website at www.sedar.com (under the Fédération des caisses Desjardins du Québec profile).
² This ESG Assessment was originally conducted by V.E., which is now part of Moody's ESG Solutions, a business unit of Moody's Corporation. By providing trusted data, analysis, analytical tools and intelligence, the group enables organizations to identify ESG risks and opportunities, strengthen sustainability action plans and communicate with key stakeholders.

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Desjardins Group was the first Canadian financial institution to join the Business Ambition for 1.5°C developed by the Science Based Targets initiative and the United Nations.

In January 2021, we contributed³ to and became the primary financial partner of a new investment platform for the renewable energy sector called the Power Sustainable Energy Infrastructure Partnership. This was our biggest contribution to green infrastructure in Canada and the US to date.

In the fall of 2021, we made our debut issue of \$500 million in sustainable bonds in the Canadian market. The net proceeds will be used to fund projects with environmental or social benefits.

Growing across Canada to support our members and clients

Over the past year, we’ve stepped up efforts to provide a complete and consistent product and service lineup from coast to coast. We opened a new client relations centre in Mississauga to serve English-speaking members and clients even more efficiently. We also struck up or expanded several partnerships to connect with community needs and share our organization’s values.

We joined over 6,000 people at Toronto Newcomer Day to share what kind of support Desjardins can provide to people coming to Canada. To stimulate economic growth in Ontario and the Atlantic and Western regions, we decided to double the dollar amount of each GoodSpark

Grant as well as the number of beneficiaries for the next round. A total of \$3 million will be given to 150 small businesses in 2022 to help them invest in innovation, employment and sustainable development.

Equity, diversity and inclusion

At Desjardins, we believe that diversity is a strength and that it has a major role to play in our organization. The entire Desjardins team works together to make equity, diversity and inclusion a priority every day. As a result of our efforts, Desjardins was recognized as one of Canada’s Best Diversity Employers by Mediacorp.

We’re proud to have created Empowering Women, a Canada-wide network of women and their allies taking women in leadership to the next level, and to be a partner of the Réseau des Femmes d’affaires du Québec, a network for women in business. When the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation was created, we chose to adopt it as a statutory holiday.

Putting young people first

We support young people’s goals, projects and initiatives. In 2021, we increased our total budget to support youth to nearly \$80 million, including our flagship Together For Our Youth program. To help kids stay in school and succeed, we awarded 3,377 scholarships totalling \$4.1 million.

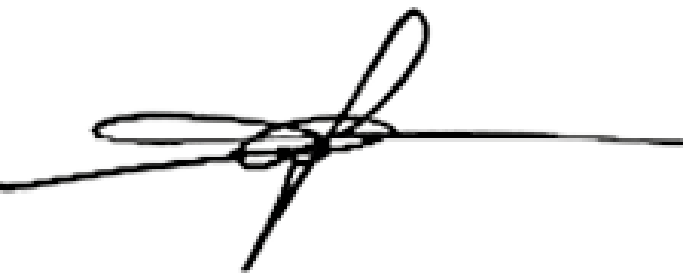
We’ve also continued to work with the Youth Advisory Board. Created in 2016, this board gives members the opportunity to share their ideas with Desjardins Group’s president and CEO,

board of directors, and management committee. That means these young people can voice their opinions on key business issues and social and environmental challenges.

On top of all that, we renewed our partnership with Academos, whose mission is to help young people choose a career. In addition to being the organization’s sponsor, I had the chance to be a mentor. It was an enriching and inspiring experience, and I learned so much about the challenges young people face.

Conclusion

In 2021, the pandemic pushed us to use the strengths and skills of our team to do things differently once again. I’d like to underscore the commitment and exceptional dedication of all of our 2,517 directors and 53,783 employees. Each and every one of them showed an unprecedented ability to adapt without ever losing sight of our mission. I’d like to thank them for everything they do and of course, I’d like to thank our members and clients for their trust.



Guy Cormier
President and CEO
Desjardins Group

³ Together with the Desjardins Group Pension Plan.

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1.2 OUR APPROACH

Rigorous reporting under the highest international standards

Our Social and Cooperative Responsibility Report reflects our commitment to environmental, social and governance (ESG) factors and to gradually integrating them into everything we do. We've divided our extra-financial information into 3 sections based on these key factors. We've also included a section on cooperation to talk about the difference the cooperative model is making for people and communities.

Prepared in accordance with the Core option of the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) Standards, this report emphasizes the importance we place on the ever-changing needs and expectations of our members and clients and on our cooperative nature. By striving to improve the well-being of people and communities, we're helping to develop a sustainable, responsible economy.

Because climate change is our environmental priority, we follow the reporting recommendations of the Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures. This year's disclosure is our fourth, and for the first time, we're presenting it in a separate report. We also comply with CDP¹ reporting requirements.

Our greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions have been independently reviewed by PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP as part of a limited assurance engagement for Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions. To learn more, read [PwC's report](#).

This is our second disclosure under the Principles for Responsible Banking and our third under the Principles for Sustainable Insurance.

In June 2019, we became the first Canadian financial institution to sign the Principles for Responsible Banking. In August of the same year, we also signed the Principles for Sustainable Insurance. And we signed the Principles for Responsible Investment back in April 2010.

In doing so, we committed to holding our operations and reporting to the most widely recognized international standards for our operations and services. It's part of our efforts to always do what's best for our members, clients and communities.

¹ CDP (formerly the Carbon Disclosure Project) is a non-profit organization that studies the climate change impact of the world's largest publicly traded companies.

Note to readers
The letters M and B stand for millions and billions, so \$5M means \$5 million and \$2B means \$2 billion.

Listening to our stakeholders

Every 2 years, we take the pulse of the general public and our members and clients. This started in 2017 with [a wide-ranging survey of our stakeholders](#) using GRI methodology. The most recent survey, conducted in the fall of 2021, reached over 2,000 people in Canada, half of whom were members and clients. It gave us a better understanding of what our members and clients and the general public expect from Desjardins and what they expect in terms of sustainable development.

Founding signatory of:



UNEP
FINANCE
INITIATIVE

PRINCIPLES FOR
RESPONSIBLE
BANKING

[Desjardins Group's PRB disclosure](#)

Signatory of:



PRI

Principles for
Responsible
Investment

[Desjardins Investments Inc.](#)

[Desjardins Global Asset Management](#)

[Desjardins International Development](#)

[Desjardins Group Pension Plan](#)



UNEP
FINANCE
INITIATIVE



PSI
Principles
for Sustainable
Insurance

[Desjardins Group's PSI disclosure](#)

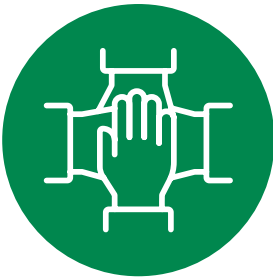
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Our purpose: Enriching the lives of people and communities



The strength of our cooperative

2,517
directors

\$397 billion
in assets

7.5 million
members and clients

\$15.8 billion¹
in indivisible shared wealth held
in the caisses' general reserves

53,783
employees



What we do everyday

Our core business

- Banking services
- Wealth management
- Life and health insurance and property and casualty insurance
- Inclusive and solidarity-based finance

Our target

Always do what's best for
members and clients

At Desjardins, always doing what's best for members and clients isn't just a passing fad. It's a philosophy that dates back more than 120 years to our very beginnings. And it's how we enrich the lives of people and communities every day.



To enrich the lives of people and communities

\$514 million²
redistributed to members and the community

\$250 million
between 2016 and 2024 from the GoodSpark Fund

Almost \$80 million
for youth

-38.1%
difference in the carbon footprint of our own
investments versus benchmark indexes

\$2.5 billion
in purchases

302
electric charging stations in Quebec and Ontario

\$1.48 billion³
in renewable energy infrastructure investments

¹ Included in the \$25.3 billion total reserves presented in Desjardins Group's combined financial statements as at December 31, 2021.
² For more information on non-GAAP financial measures, see the **Non-GAAP and other financial measures** section of Desjardins Group's 2021 **Management's Discussion and Analysis** that's available on the SEDAR website at www.sedar.com (under the Fédération des caisses Desjardins du Québec profile).
³ As at September 30, 2021. Together with the Desjardins Group Pension Plan.

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1.3 OUR CONTRIBUTION TO THE UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

As a cooperative, we're committed to supporting the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Our sustainable development and climate action initiatives directly support 12 of these goals, making us an industry leader.



The goal of our subsidiary Desjardins International Development (DID) is to give underprivileged populations around the world access to diversified, secure financial services that meet their needs. DID, a pioneer in global microfinance, uses an inclusive finance approach that focuses on empowering local communities. DID's support for the agricultural sector contributes directly to improving food security.



Promoting good health and well-being is essential for sustainable development. We offer our members and clients solutions to protect them if their financial security is ever at risk. We support awareness-raising and educational initiatives to reduce traffic-related fatalities and injuries and promote healthy lifestyles. We support the health and well-being of our employees and their families through our pension plans, group insurance plans and other initiatives, like access to telemedicine.



Education is critical to improve people's lives. Our charitable organization, the Desjardins Foundation, is dedicated to helping young people stay in school and succeed academically. We support educational initiatives that encourage young people to become entrepreneurs and that promote sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles. Our financial education programs empower our members and clients to make their own financial choices. We encourage our employees to develop their skills and pursue continuing education opportunities. We also support academic research through scholarships and through partnerships with research chairs, mainly in the fields of cooperation, ethics, responsible finance, circular economy and community development.



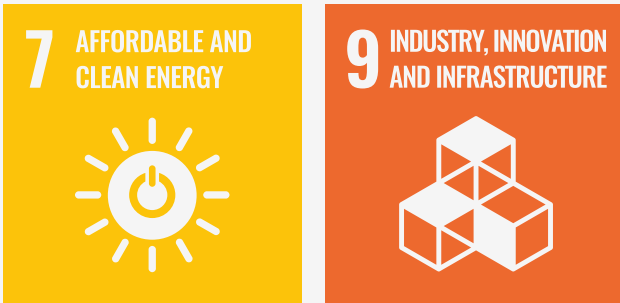
We recognize that diversity and inclusion are major factors in the overall success of our cooperative group, and we're committed to building an organization that reflects our society. We plan to reach gender parity on all senior management teams and the boards of directors of caisses, subsidiaries and the Federation by 2024. We're a member of the 30% Club and have signed the Women's Empowerment Principles.

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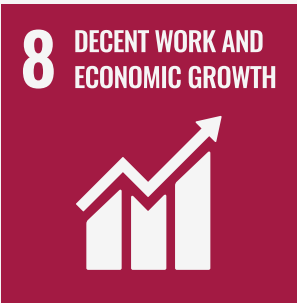
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Together with the Desjardins Group Pension Plan, we have a sizable infrastructure portfolio. Our infrastructure investments are concentrated in the renewable energy sector, which accounts for 45% of this portfolio. We support industry innovation, research and development to improve sustainability. For example, we support Coop Agri-Énergie Warwick, the first agricultural cooperative in Quebec entirely dedicated to producing renewable energy from biomass. We plan to support 5 biomethanization projects and grow our renewable energy infrastructure portfolio to at least \$2 billion by 2025. We've also helped create an ecosystem for circular economy research and action, including setting up an accelerator for the construction sector, as part of a \$2.1 million partnership with Montreal's École de technologie supérieure.



We contribute to the economic and social well-being of people and communities in many different ways. We support initiatives that benefit thousands of young people ages 6 to 30, and up to 35 for young entrepreneurs, across Quebec and Ontario. For 2021, we bumped up our program funding from \$50 million to almost \$80 million. We help micro-enterprises and SMEs grow and provide jobs in urban and rural areas. Through donations, sponsorships, caisse Community Development Funds and other funds, like the \$250 million GoodSpark Fund for the period 2016 to 2024, we support community development projects that help build a sustainable, responsible economy. We currently provide quality jobs to 53,783 people. By decentralizing some of our operations, we're able to help regions grow.



We work together with our suppliers and employees to encourage responsible consumption and production methods. We help educate and train our employees, directors, young people and their families about ESG issues. Our goal is to train over 85% of our employees on sustainable development principles by the end of 2023. We're taking steps to support a just energy transition, and we're leading the way toward a low-carbon economy. We focus on defining current and potential risks and opportunities related to climate change.



As a cooperative financial group, we encourage participation and representation in decision-making through our democratic governance. Through the Desjardins Group Security Office, we have a robust program and effective strategy to fight financial crime, money laundering and terrorist financing. As a socioeconomic leader, we believe in the value created by diversity of all kinds—including gender, background, culture, religion, age, experience, sexual orientation and ability. We've taken a public stance acknowledging the reality of systemic racism and condemning racism and discrimination in all its forms. And we've signed the BlackNorth Initiative and the Canadian Investor Statement on Diversity & Inclusion, among others.

Main publications

- This year we're publishing our report on climate risks separately. The report is aligned with the recommendations of the [Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures](#). This is our fourth climate disclosure and our first time publishing it in a standalone document.
- [2021 Highlights](#)
- [Complete 2021 Annual Report](#)

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1.4 MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR OF THE ESG STEERING COMMITTEE



At Desjardins, we continued integrating ESG factors into our business model and operations in 2021 with support from the ESG Steering Committee, which is made up of vice-presidents from all across Desjardins. Our committee makes recommendations on ESG issues directly to decision-making bodies. Once adopted by the management committee and board of directors, these recommendations become Desjardins's official position. This helps Desjardins keep its actions aligned.

In 2021, the ESG Steering Committee made the following possible:

- Developing a new climate ambition with a target of net zero emissions for our operations and supply chain, our lending activities and our own investments in 3 key carbon-intensive sectors: energy, transportation and real estate
- Joining the Business Ambition for 1.5°C campaign and committing to announcing science-based medium-term targets by the fall of 2023 to reduce our emissions
- Integrating an ESG indicator into calculations for the general incentive plan for Desjardins employees starting in 2022
- Adopting a target for reducing our operational emissions by 41% compared to 2019 levels by 2025 and implementing project governance to reach this target with involvement from all Desjardins Group sectors
- Introducing a series of 10 ESG performance indicators in the performance review used by Desjardins's management committee starting in 2022 and creating ESG governance structures in the business sectors
- Detailing how to apply our business positions on tobacco and vaping, non-conventional weapons and coal across all sectors (read more about our commitments on [page 73](#))

- Launching a mandatory training course on sustainable development principles and responsible finance in 2022, with the goal of training at least 85% of employees by the end of 2023
- Developing a plan for in-depth ESG training for various roles in our business sectors to grow employee knowledge and better support our members and clients in their own climate actions
- Clarifying what our position on countries that pose a higher risk of tax evasion and avoidance means for operations

And alongside these accomplishments, our committee completed 64 ESG analysis or support mandates to guide the business sectors in decision-making and in supporting our business members and clients.

This regular, coordinated work is producing real results: in 2021, we saw an increase in our ESG scores from the main extra-financial rating agencies that provide independent analysis of our practices (see [page 73](#)).

Desjardins is a leader on the Canadian sustainable finance scene as well.

- Our president and CEO is a member of the Sustainable Finance Action Council, which is working on implementing mandatory

climate reporting in Canada aligned with the recommendations of the Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures and reaching more players in the Canadian economy.

- Along with [20 other signatories](#), we have signed the Statement by the Quebec Financial Centre for a Sustainable Finance, championed by Finance Montréal.
- We were at the forefront of the coalition that supported Montreal's successful bid to become a host city for the International Sustainability Standards Board.

By continuing to integrate ESG factors into our operations and by encouraging sustainable finance whenever possible, we're proud to be doing what's best for our members, our clients and our communities.

Enjoy the report!

Pauline D'Amboise
Secretary General and Vice-President
Governance and Sustainable Development

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1.5 KEY INDICATORS OF OUR ESG PERFORMANCE

The table below lists our key sustainable development indicators based on the priorities identified by stakeholders. The table provides an overview of our performance in each area.

We strengthened the management system for our ESG performance in 2021.

Focus area	Indicator	2021	2020	2019
Members and clients				
Cooperative and financial education of members and clients	Investments in cooperation and financial education (\$ millions)	9	7	7
Socially and environmentally responsible products and services	Number of people who received assistance through the Desjardins Mutual Assistance Fund	17,342	14,820	18,078
	Percentage of members who know about our responsible products	32	N/A	N/A
Responsible investment products and services	Volume of responsible investment products and solutions (\$ billions)	12.3	7.4	4.8
A distinctive member/client experience	Number of members and clients surveyed to measure the Net Promoter Score	717,500	500,000	285,000
Privacy protection	Percentage of employees trained on data protection	98.4 ¹	N/A	N/A
Support for business members' sustainability initiatives	Sustainable bonds issued (\$ millions)	500	N/A	N/A
Top employer				
Investment in employee training and skills development	Percentage of payroll invested in training and skills development	2.8	2.7	3.1
Equality and diversity in the workplace	Representation of women in management roles (%)	59.1	59.3	58.7
An inspiring, motivating and secure work environment	Permanent employee retention rate (%)	92.3	94.8	93.9
Alternative transportation	Number of employees in the Alternative Transportation Program	2,410 ²	2,276 ²	8,827

¹ The completion rate is calculated by comparing the number of employees who have completed the training to the total number of employees registered for the training. Data for past years is not available because the calculation method has changed.
² The pandemic caused a sharp decline in the number of employees working on-site and using the Alternative Transportation Program. As at March 1, 2020, this figure was 10,024.

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Focus area	Indicator	2021	2020	2019
Community involvement				
Climate action and adaptation	Total GHG emissions (metric tons of CO ₂ equivalent) ¹	17,547	25,062	40,762
	Carbon intensity (metric tons of CO ₂ equivalent/m ²)	5.4	6.7	9.4
	Reduction in the carbon footprint of our own investments ² (%)	38.1	32.0	14.5
Individual and collective entrepreneurship	Investments to support entrepreneurship (\$ millions) ³	11.3	9.2	8.7
A greener and more unified economy	Investments in renewable energy infrastructure (\$ billions) ⁴	1.48	1.21	1.25
	Number of non-profit organizations that are Desjardins members	33,299 ⁵	31,836	30,442
Economic value for communities	Redistributions to members and communities (\$ millions) ⁶	514	445	445
Community commitment and investment	Ratio of member and community redistributions to surplus earnings before member dividends (%) ⁷	17.5	18.4	17.1
Effective ESG management and integration				
Recognition for our ESG leadership	Percentage of extra-financial rankings placing us in the top 25% of our industry	50	N/A	N/A
Responsible supply chain	Value of purchases from suppliers that have been evaluated based on sustainable development criteria (\$ millions)	1,546	1,158	895
Integration of ESG factors in our operations, products and services	Volume of assets subject to positive or negative ESG screening (\$ billions) ⁸	119.6	110.9	99.6
Ethics, integrity and compliance	Percentage of employees trained on managing conflicts of interest ⁹	61	N/A	N/A
Effective governance	Director representation index in terms of the gender and age of members (%)	93.2	93.1	93.2

¹ The data for 2019 and 2020 was modified following the introduction of more precise calculation methods. To learn more, see [page XX](#) of the Climate Action at Desjardins report.

² Compared to the carbon footprint of the companies that make up the stock and bond indexes.

³ This amount includes donations, sponsorships, partnerships and commitments through our Créavenir and Desjardins Microcredit to Businesses programs.

⁴ As at September 30, 2021. Together with the Desjardins Group Pension Plan.

⁵ In previous years, we defined the number of non-profits based on NAICS Code 813 (Religious, Grantmaking, Civic, Professional, and Similar Organizations). Now we count non-profits based on their legal structure rather than their industry.

⁶ For more information on non-GAAP financial measures, see the **Non-GAAP and other financial measures** section of Desjardins Group's 2021 **Management's Discussion and Analysis** that's available on the SEDAR website at www.sedar.com (under the Fédération des caisses Desjardins du Québec profile).

⁷ Corresponds to the ratio of member and community redistributions to surplus earnings before member dividends (as a percentage).

⁸ Desjardins assets and assets administered by Desjardins for third parties.

⁹ The completion rate is calculated by comparing the number of active employees who have completed the training to the total number of employees, including managers and consultants. Data for past years is not available because the calculation method has changed.

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Awards and recognition

- In a ranking of the largest cooperative groups published in the International Cooperative Alliance’s World Cooperative Monitor report, we ranked **#5 in the world and #1 in North America**.
- For the second year in a row, we were named Quebec’s **most generous company** in an Épisode poll.

2.1 OUR CO-OP

Who we are

Our purpose

To enrich the lives of people and communities

Our goal

To become everyone’s #1 choice

Strong and distinctive values

- Money serving human development
- Personal commitment
- Democratic action
- Integrity and rigour
- Solidarity with the community
- Intercooperation

Our cooperative nature in action

Support for the cooperative movement

At Desjardins, we firmly believe in the importance of cooperatives and mutuals, and actively support their growth. In 2021, we contributed more than \$1.7 million to cooperative organizations in Quebec, across Canada and abroad. As a cooperative institution, we understand the challenges other cooperatives and mutuals face, and we share our cooperative expertise.

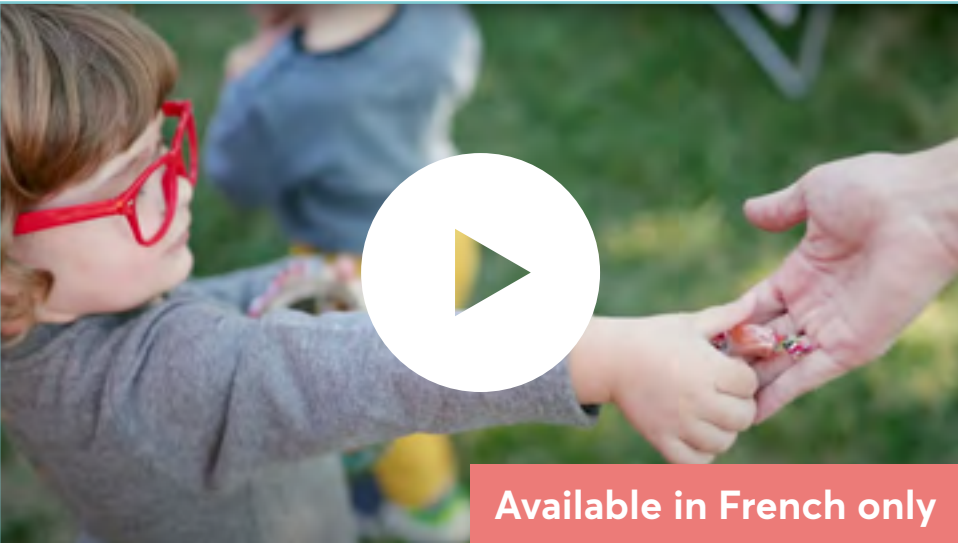
Fundamental training for all our employees

Throughout the year, all our employees participated in the Desjardins Fundamentals learning path. This series of individual and team activities was designed to unite us all in what makes us a cooperative and to remind each of us how our work contributes to our objective of always doing what’s best for our members and clients.

The learning path kicked off with videos that provided a glimpse into the lives of some of our members and clients as a reminder of how important that objective is before diving into how this same goal has been at the heart of Desjardins throughout our history, how our cooperative model supports it, and how each of our employees plays an essential role in helping us do what’s best for our members and clients.

Giving back to members through member dividends

In recent years, we’ve made our member dividends even simpler. They now recognize our members’ entire business relationship with Desjardins. In 2021, \$330 million was redistributed to members as individual member dividends for 2020 and 95% of members received a dividend.



Available in French only

Member dividends – Sharing is in our nature

Description (30 s)
Does sharing mean having more or having less? It depends on how you look at it. Maybe together we can all have more. We paid out \$330 million in member dividends for 2020. That’s the power of cooperation.



Member dividends: It’s all about sharing

Description (2 min 26 s)
Member dividends were created as a way to give back to members who choose Desjardins. In the last few years, we’ve made changes to make member dividends more fair and more accessible. Find out how they’re calculated.

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Promoting the cooperative model

December 2020 marked 120 years since Desjardins Group was founded, so in 2021 we celebrated this significant anniversary in the world of Quebec cooperatives with several initiatives. In March 2021 the book *Desjardins, Together for 120 years* was published, tracing the history, development and importance of Desjardins in Quebec, across Canada and internationally.



Meet the author, Pierre Cayouette

Description (3 min 13 s)
Interview with Pierre Cayouette, author of *Desjardins: Together for 120 years*

Our commitment to history and the arts

Alphonse Desjardins Historical Society

For over 40 years, the Alphonse Desjardins Historical Society has been sharing our cooperative’s history with the general public through publications, lectures, interviews, exhibits and educational and thematic activities. The Society manages 2 cultural sites: the Maison Alphonse-Desjardins and the exhibit space at the Desjardins Building. Admission to the exhibits and activities is free. The Society is also in charge of preserving Desjardins Group’s historical legacy through its conservation centre. In 2021, the Society went more digital by developing activities including: a [tour of historical buildings](#), [online activities for school-age kids](#), live events on [Facebook](#), online publications and virtual [exhibits](#).

The Desjardins Collection

We’re committed to supporting the arts and artists and we’ve amassed a sizable art collection. It started in 1978 and has since grown to include over 2,500 works. Through our annual acquisition program, we foster artistic creation by purchasing works from artists from Quebec and across Canada, particularly young up-and-comers. We grow our collection with diversity and inclusion in mind and endeavour to include an equal mix of works by women and men. In 2021, the Desjardins Collection loaned 2 pieces by Serge Lemoyne to the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec for the retrospective *Lemoyne. Hors jeu* that ran from October 2021 to January 2022.



Meryl McMaster ►

Meryl McMaster is a 34-year-old artist of nēhiyaw (Plains Cree), British and Dutch ancestry. Through her art, she explores questions of Indigenous identity, culture and history. She is known for her self-portraits taken during outdoor performances, for which she produces sculptural garments and props. The work shown here was created during the pandemic while she was an Artist-in-Residence at the McCord Museum.

When the Storm Ends I Will Finish My Work
Digital chromogenic print 3/7
2021

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2.2 SUPPORT FOR LOCAL COMMUNITIES

Our cooperative business model is a powerful force for community development

We're firmly rooted in Quebec and growing our presence in Ontario. We help build vibrant communities in many ways, including:

- **Offering products and services** tailored to individual and community needs
- **Launching sustainable development initiatives** in the areas of diversity, climate action and the circular economy
- **Offering relief measures** to support people and communities during the pandemic
- **Promoting financial literacy and inclusion** in Canada and abroad
- **Contributing to long-term community development projects** through the GoodSpark Fund and Community Development Funds
- **Financing individual and group entrepreneurship projects** through La Ruche supported by Desjardins and the Momentum Fund
- **Making crowdfunding available** to individual and group project promoters through La Ruche supported by Desjardins



Our commitment to communities

Donations and sponsorships

In 2021, we pledged close to \$110 million to support sustainable community development through donations, sponsorships, philanthropic partnerships and scholarships, including \$40.8 million from caisse Community Development Funds (CDFs).

Financial contributions – Federation, caisse, component and CDF donations and sponsorships (\$ millions)	2021	2020	2019
Cooperation ¹	—	—	2.6
Culture	10.8	10.1	15.7
Economic development	14.8	10.6	12.3
Education	35.8	22.9	22.6
Humanitarian work and community involvement	19.4	14.3	13.8
Business development	10.8	2.5	5.1
Health and healthy lifestyles	18.3	11.1	14.8
Total	109.9	71.5	86.9
Contribution from Community Development Funds	40.8	35.3	40.1

¹ In 2020, we began reporting contributions to cooperatives directly in the category where the cooperatives operate.

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Some initiatives we supported through donations and sponsorships in 2021

Supporting health and healthy lifestyles for youth

We donated \$750,000 to the Canadian Cancer Society's Relay for Life Youth program. The program encourages young people to organize school fundraisers through a variety of activities.

We also teamed up with the Heart and Stroke Foundation for Ontario's Jump Rope for Heart program. Our \$200,000 donation helps support both components of this program that encourages young people to adopt and maintain a healthy lifestyle at home and at school.

Support for caregivers

L'Appui helps improve caregivers' quality of life and make their day to day easier. Our \$450,000 donation will help fund the new Caregiver Support line and a French-language game created by the organization.

A ray of sunshine for sick kids

The 34th Opération Enfant Soleil Telethon was broadcast live on TVA on May 30, 2021. As a charitable partner, we donated more than \$450,000 toward providing high-quality pediatric care to children across Quebec. Employees, members and clients could also make a donation through AccèsD.

Humanitarian aid in Canada and internationally

We supported the Canadian Red Cross with:

- A \$100,000 donation to the Haiti Earthquake Appeal relief fund to help the Red Cross deliver assistance following an earthquake that killed nearly 1,500 people and injured 7,000 more—this cause means a lot to us because we've been active in Haiti for over 30 years through Desjardins International Development.
- A \$100,000 donation to the India COVID-19 Response Appeal to help provide much needed support to people and communities affected by the rapidly escalating pandemic in that country. This fund supports COVID-19 prevention activities in India, including the distribution of information, hygiene items and food packages, supporting ambulance services and providing logistical support for healthcare services.
- A \$100,000 donation to provide urgent aid to people and communities hit hard by flooding and mudslides after extreme weather in British Columbia.

Community Development Funds

Our Community Development Funds (CDFs) are just one way caisse members give back to their communities in the spirit of solidarity. At each caisse's general meeting, members can decide to give up a portion of their individual dividends and allocate it to their CDF, which is fully managed by the caisse's board of directors. By contributing to their CDF, caisse members support projects that rally various contributors around a common goal and address the needs of a large number of members. Each caisse's board of directors consults with members and partners to determine investment priorities for CDF funds and then selects projects based on these priorities.

[See some of the inspiring community initiatives](#) our caisses and members have helped make possible.



Camp Le Manoir

Description (1 min)
Our caisses in the Charlevoix region support Camp Le Manoir, so young campers can broaden their horizons over the summer.



Caisse Desjardins de Limoilou rolled out a \$1 million eco-friendly fund to support local environmental initiatives.

From left to right: Véronique Jampierre from Collaboration Santé Internationale, Raymond Poirier from Conseil de quartier du Vieux-Limoilou, Alain Sauvé and Evelyne Fortier from Caisse Desjardins de Limoilou, Édith Gilbert from Recyclerie de La Patente, and Stéphane Pellerin and Amélie Chansigaud from Atelier Signes d'Espoir.

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Volunteering and fundraising

We're here for communities through financial commitments and thousands of employee and director volunteers.

Helping youth during Co-op Week

Co-op Week is an opportunity for everyone at Desjardins to proudly celebrate our cooperative nature and the positive impact it has on people and communities. Our theme for 2021 was "Together when it matters most." This year's programming showcased the caring nature of our cooperative model on the backdrop of responsible socioeconomic recovery. The 100% virtual program of financial and cooperative educational activities was designed to produce tangible results for members, clients, employees and directors.

We took the opportunity to announce support to the tune of \$1.6 million from the GoodSpark Fund to help 8 cooperatives carry out their initiatives.



Making a difference with the Desjardins Cares and Shares Campaign

More employees donated in 2021 and they gave more—57.3% of our employees gave to the Cares and Shares campaign. Between everyone's individual donations and the organization's contributions, a record \$7.2 million will be going directly to community organizations across Canada, wherever we do business.

Desjardins Philanthropic Funds

[Desjardins Philanthropic Funds](#) are turnkey solutions for those who want to provide long-term support for causes that are important to them, even after their death. Through these planned giving funds, the Desjardins Foundation encourages members and clients to make a difference in their communities in a way that's meaningful to them.

The coordinated efforts of fund creators is crucial to the beneficiary organizations. When they have reliable, recurring income, they can do more to improve their services, change lives and offer hope.



To date, donor members and clients have created

191
Desjardins Philanthropic Funds:

\$24 million
under management

168
beneficiary organizations

\$2.7 million
given back to the community in 2021

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Employee volunteering programs

Recognizing employee volunteer efforts is one way we boost employee engagement and encourage community involvement.

In 2021, we had to put some volunteer efforts on hold because of the pandemic. But that didn't stop Desjardins volunteers from finding innovative ways to support causes that matter to them!

1,000 volunteers for our youth

Over 1,000 volunteers, most of whom were Desjardins employees and directors, contributed to young people's academic success by reviewing Desjardins Foundation scholarship applications.

Over 103,000 meals from our kitchens

In response to the huge demand Canadian food banks continue to face, our Catering and Reception teams decided to take part in the La Tablee des Chefs's Solidarity Kitchens once again this year. Together with Excelso, our food service provider, our teams prepared 82,334 meals for organizations providing food assistance to individuals in need. Together with the 21,000 meals prepared last winter, we contributed a total of 103,334 meals. The initiative was not only a gesture of solidarity,

it was also a great way for the teams to share their expertise and put their skills to good use as they wait for employees to return to the office.

440 employees across Canada run for a cause

For the fifth year in a row, some 440 employees walked or ran in their neighbourhoods to raise money for school projects. They covered 2,130 km and raised a record \$223,000 to support 55 projects in Quebec and Ontario.



Support for non-profits

A total of 33,299¹ non-profit organizations are members of Desjardins. We support social economy cooperatives, mutuals and organizations whose purpose isn't to turn a profit but rather to meet the needs of their members or the community. We've adapted our procurement policy to factor this into our calls for tenders.

Consultations with local communities

We reach out to local communities to get their feedback on any potential changes in our distribution network. Normally we would meet with local partners during evening events, but this wasn't possible because of the pandemic again this year. Instead, we focused our efforts on the members who needed us the most to make it easy for them to do business with their caisse during these difficult times.

We're committed to remaining the most accessible financial institution. We make sure our service offer keeps pace with expectations by monitoring market trends and member behaviour.

We make our services accessible to all members by working with communities to implement solutions that address local and regional needs.

¹ In previous years, we defined the number of non-profits based on NAICS Code 813 (Religious, Grantmaking, Civic, Professional, and Similar Organizations). Now we count non-profits based on their legal structure rather than their industry.

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2.3 EDUCATION AND SUPPORT FOR YOUTH

Dedicated to supporting youth

Nearly \$80 million for young people

Along with our members, we're pleased to support young people through programs, donations and sponsorships that help them take the next step, achieve their dreams and reach their full potential. We help young people ages 6 to 30 and entrepreneurs up to age 35 be successful in all aspects of their lives: education, work, entrepreneurship, health, wellness and community involvement.

We also launched 2 large-scale campaigns to support youth through 2021's unusual economic and educational challenges. The first focused on employment and entrepreneurship and the second was all about education.

More accessible financing with Créavenir

The [Créavenir Youth Entrepreneurship Program](#) is a financing program that supports young entrepreneurs by providing business startup grants and loans with no collateral required. The program also has a financial education component, and mentoring is provided by local partners with business startup expertise.

2021 snapshot:

- 187 projects supported
- 351 jobs created or maintained
- \$3 million in financing and grants provided under the program, generating investments of \$14.4 million in local communities

Créavenir	2021	2020	2019
Caisse participation rate	90%	90%	83%
Total financing	\$2,440,250	\$1,805,000	\$2,861,675
Total grants	\$533,034	\$378,243	\$782, 156



Bounce back stronger with Desjardins

Description (0 min 30 s)
With its Together For Our Youth program, Desjardins helps thousands of young people, every year, bounce back stronger.

Launching local impact investment

Through our new partnership with the Montreal Social Value Fund (MSVF), we support Quebec's first student-led impact investment organization. With a budget of over \$400,000, MSVF invests in Montreal-based social purpose organizations, including SMEs, enterprising non-profits and co-ops.

Motivation to keep learning

The Desjardins Foundation helps motivate young people to keep learning and succeed academically, from preschool until graduation.

2021 snapshot:

- Close to \$4.6 million awarded to support students, bringing the total to \$36.5 million since the Foundation was created over 5 decades ago
- 398,992 young people supported in Quebec and Ontario, up almost 24% from the year before

Desjardins Foundation Prizes

Through the [Desjardins Foundation Prizes](#), we award schools and youth organizations grants of up to \$3,000 for projects for kids in kindergarten through high school in Quebec, Ontario, Alberta and New Brunswick.

Desjardins employees, directors and agents vote on the winning projects.

2021 snapshot:

- 510 projects supported
- Over \$1.3 million awarded
- 89,803 project participants

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Desjardins scholarships

2021 was a challenging year for college and university students. To encourage them to stay in school, we awarded 3,377 scholarships totalling more than \$4.1 million.

- The Desjardins Foundation supported 1,273 students with financial needs, 881 of whom stood out for their perseverance or community involvement, and 392 who had decided to switch careers or go back to school because of the pandemic.
- Desjardins caisses supported 2,104 students through local scholarship programs totalling more than \$2.1 million.
- A dozen or so of our business partners also awarded close to \$70,000 in scholarships.

We believe it’s important to highlight the level of resilience and determination of these students who buckled down and persevered this year despite the many obstacles in their path.



Donating to organizations that motivate young people to learn

In 2021, the Desjardins Foundation awarded close to \$1.3 million to around 20 partner organizations that worked directly with 198,929 young people and supported 108,987 parents so they could help their children throughout their academic journey. These partner organizations do work in a variety of areas, all of which can have a significant impact on keeping young people in school.

- The Pacific Institute prevents bullying by teaching young people how to resolve conflicts, manage emotions, be empathetic, listen and adapt.
- Fondation Jeunes en Tête strives to destigmatize mental health and gives teens tools to help them cope with stress.
- Éducaloi promotes work/school balance.
- Academos helps young people discover careers that spark their passion for learning.
- Youth Fusion works to keep kids in school with a focus on entrepreneurial education projects in elementary and high schools in Ontario and Quebec.
- Alloprof Parents makes content available so parents can help their elementary and high school-aged children with their school work.

Financial literacy

School Caisse

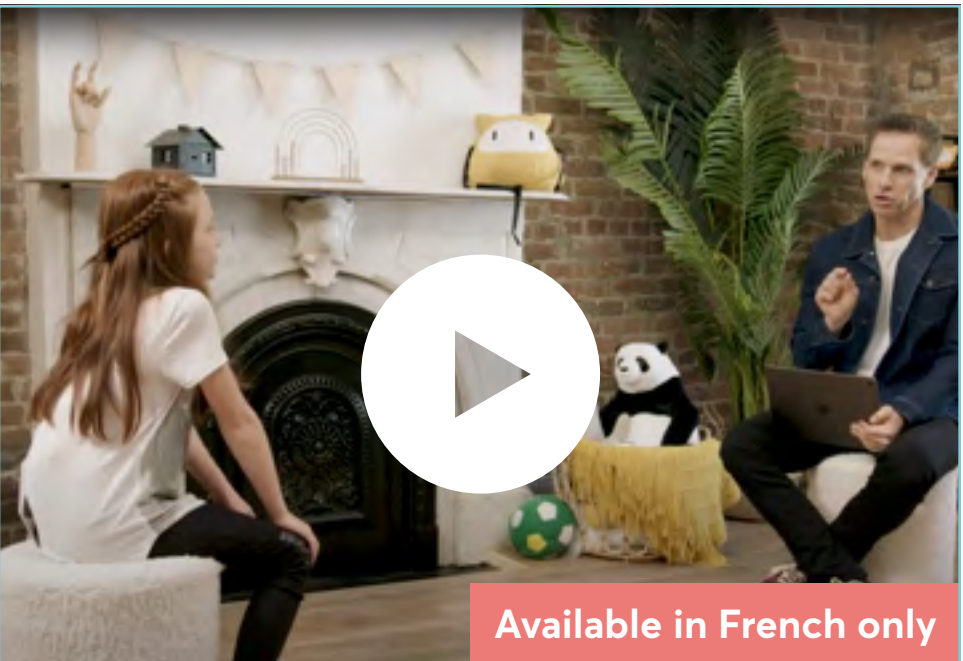
Promoting financial literacy and steering young people toward financial empowerment are fundamental values for our organization. The School Caisse, founded in 1907, is one of our flagship programs.

- Since the fall of 2021, the School Caisse program has been available to all elementary school students in Quebec and Ontario, regardless of whether or not their school participates. Any parent can now enroll their child in the School Caisse online or at the caisse without having to go through their child’s school. Financial literacy for kids has never been so modern!

- In 2021, a total of 80,106 children, ages 5 to 12 in Quebec and ages 5 to 14 in Ontario, took part in the School Caisse program. Despite the pandemic, it was business as usual for 1,221 schools (more than 80% of all schools that take part in the program). Several schools that stopped participating in 2020 got back onboard using online tools.
- The 2021 numbers for www.schoolcaisse.com were way up. The site is full of fun learning activities, videos and games, including Calculo, a tool that has helped nearly 22,559 young people set savings goals.

- Youth dividends reward young people who make regular deposits to their School Caisse account. This encourages them to get into the habit of saving. For the 2020–2021 school year, we paid \$176,990 in youth dividends to 17,699 eligible School Caisse members in Quebec and Ontario.

Want to find out what today’s kids think about [savings](#) and [interest](#)? Check out these videos featuring François Morency from our **Money doesn’t have to be a mystery!** campaign.



Savings

Description (2 min 57 s)

François Morency talks about money with elementary school students. It doesn’t take them long to learn that money can be complicated. But luckily, it doesn’t have to be a mystery!

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Finance Lab: Cooperative education by and for high-school students

We offer an innovative way for today's young people to learn about money and help them reach their goals. Finance Labs are business projects that operate like cooperatives. They're governed by boards of directors that the members—the students of the school—elect at an annual meeting. Students at participating schools can:

- Learn about mobile payments in a secure setting by using them to pay for school activities
- Start up business projects at school and get technical and financial support
- Experience what it's like to be part of a democratically managed cooperative

Despite the pandemic, 19 Finance Labs kept working through 2021, providing services to 14,529 students. While managing Finance Labs, young people acquired valuable knowledge about cooperatives and entrepreneurship while developing their business model through democratic decision-making.

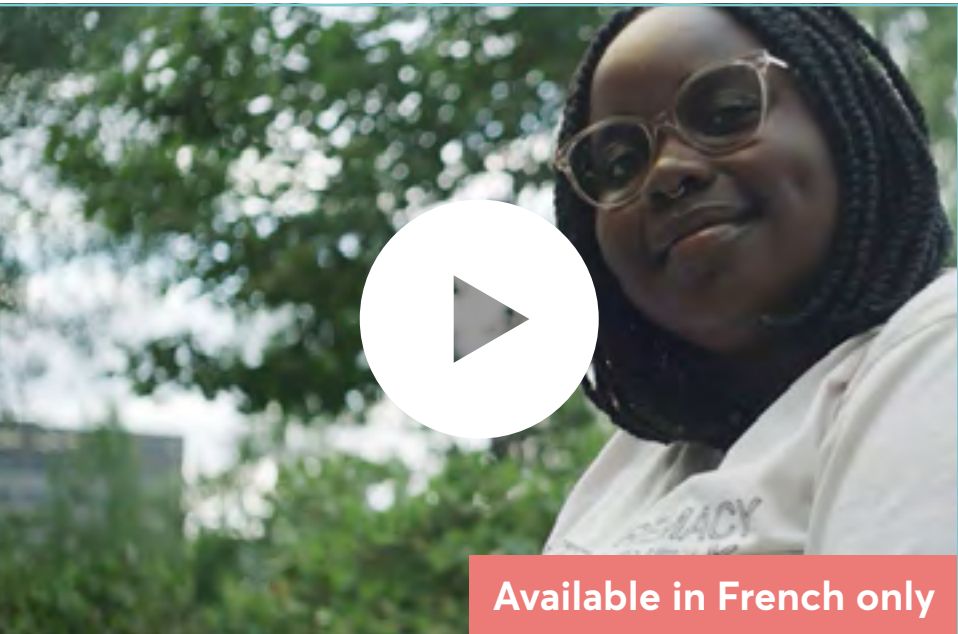
Saving in new ways with the Enhanced Savings Plan

Our Enhanced Savings Plan encourages teenagers to start saving. Young people set savings goals, determine how quickly they want to achieve them and schedule regular transfers. They can get personalized advice at a caisse, online or by phone. They also get a competitive daily interest rate, an annual bonus and an additional bonus if

they meet their savings goal. And if something comes up that derails their plan, they can get their savings back, including any bonuses earned.

Youth campaign encouraging real money talk

Financially empowering young people is one of our top priorities. Our annual campaign focuses on building relationships with young people ages 18 to 30 by offering advice and products that support financial empowerment. This year's campaign included producing [Table rase](#), a no-filter, judgment-free series in French on tou.tv that covered many important money issues.



Available in French only

Table rase Episode 1: In charge of your own destiny

Description (11 min 40 s)
You're the boss! So now what happens? In this episode, we talk about entrepreneurship and what choosing this increasingly popular kind of career really means.

Helping young adults manage their finances with Personal Finance: I'm in Charge

Personal Finance: I'm in Charge® is a free program that helps young adults and newcomers to Canada learn how to manage their finances with confidence. It covers practical issues like high debt levels, social pressure to spend and financial literacy with 17 modules on topics like budgeting, paying for school and responsible investing.

Each module can be offered in-person or online to best serve the participants, who could be individuals, groups, students, sports teams, workers, etc. The program is put on by Desjardins-accredited trainers through a partnership between community organizations, schools and local caisses.

2021 snapshot:

Over \$3.6 million invested by the Fédération des caisses Desjardins du Québec and caisses	66,497 registrations, for a total of 407,134 since 2013	Satisfaction rate of 98%
194 participating caisses in Quebec and Ontario	Partnerships with 114 community, union and school partners, including 5 CEGEPs	409 accredited trainers

Question de ca\$h webinars

We held 2 webinars in French in May and September to offer young people even more financial empowerment support. Media personality Nicolas Ouellet and a Desjardins advisor were the enthusiastic hosts covering themes that matter to young people—like savings, goals, budgeting and investing. Vox pop style interviews sprinkled throughout added to these dynamic events. By broadcasting live on Facebook, we were able to reach youth on a platform they enjoy using.

® Registered trademark of the Fédération des caisses Desjardins du Québec.

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Awards and recognition

- We were the first Canadian financial institution to join the Business Ambition for 1.5°C coalition.
- We were one of the first organizations in Canada to join the Partnership for Carbon Accounting Financials.
- 5 Desjardins buildings were recognized by BOMA Quebec for significantly reducing their energy consumption over the previous 12 months.
- Mediacorp has recognized us as one of Canada’s Greenest Employers every year since 2015.
- We were on [Corporate Knights](#) magazine’s list of the Best 50 Corporate Citizens in Canada for the 8th time.

3.1 OUR COMMITMENT TO CLIMATE ACTION

Climate change is a threat not only to our environment, society and economy, but also to individuals’ physical, mental and financial well-being. Since 1990, we’ve been taking action to protect the environment and mitigate climate change.



Climate Action at Desjardins report (TCFD)

This year’s report is aligned with the recommendations of the Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD) and presented separately from our Social and Cooperative Responsibility Report. The report reflects the priority we—and especially our members and clients and communities—place on climate action.

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Net zero emissions by 2040

In 2017, we adopted a clear position on our contribution to the Paris Agreement objectives. We outlined several specific targets, and we achieved them all by the end of 2020 (see the Environment section on [page 34](#) of the 2020 Social and Cooperative Responsibility Report).

In April 2021, in response to the growing expectations of our members and clients, we announced that we'd be implementing an ambitious action plan to achieve net zero emissions by 2040 in our extended operations and supply chain, and in our lending activities and own investments in 3 carbon-intensive sectors: energy, transportation and real estate.

This expanded scope translates into a much more ambitious target for reducing our carbon footprint: the target has increased about 80-fold.

By joining the Partnership for Carbon Accounting Financials, we're aiming to adopt and promote internationally standardized methodologies for measuring financed greenhouse gas emissions.

To pursue this goal and our renewed climate ambition, we joined the Business Ambition for 1.5°C campaign in September 2021 and committed to setting science-based emissions reduction targets within 24 months. We were the first financial institution in Canada to join this coalition.



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Getting started now with specific targets for 2025

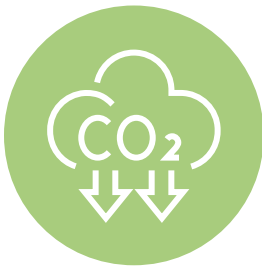
We've set some medium-term targets that we'll renew every 5 years to help us track our progress toward our ambitious goals. For the first 5 years of our plan leading up to 2040, we've committed to:



- **Increasing support for the renewable energy sector**
 - By boosting the share allocated to renewables in our energy sector lending by 35%
 - By investing \$2 billion directly in renewable energy infrastructure (+66% compared to 2020)
 - By supporting 5 additional biomethanization projects



- **Speeding up the transition away from carbon-intensive sectors**
 - By following guiding principles to promote and support businesses in these sectors that:
 - Demonstrate solid ESG performance
 - Factor in climate risk
 - Set credible targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions
 - By setting science-based emissions targets for our own investments and lending activities based on the Science Based Targets initiative's internationally recognized methodology (see the [Climate Action at Desjardins report, page 21](#))



- **Reducing carbon intensity in our supply chain**
 - By working with our 100 biggest suppliers to reduce the carbon footprint of our supply chain



- **Creating mandatory sustainable development training for employees**
 - By making sure at least 85% of our employees complete sustainable development training by the end of 2023
 - By rolling out specialized responsible investment training for all employees who have advisory roles with members and clients as well as employees who design products



- **Other commitments by 2025**
 - Refreshing our sustainable finance product and service lineup for individuals and businesses
 - Reducing our operational greenhouse gas emissions by 41% compared to 2019 levels by 2025 (see [page 26](#))
 - Building partnerships to help business members reduce their greenhouse gas emissions
 - Supporting agents of transformation in our communities (organizations, research chairs, and more; see [page 29](#)).



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3.2 REDUCING OUR ENVIRONMENTAL FOOTPRINT

As part of our commitment to climate action, we’re focusing our environmental efforts on measuring, reducing and offsetting greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from our operations.

Reducing our GHG emissions

After announcing our net zero by 2040 climate plan and joining the Business Ambition for 1.5°C coalition, in October we unveiled our first science-based target for 2025 for our operational emissions. We set a goal to reduce GHG emissions from our operations to 41% below 2019 levels by December 31, 2025.

This target includes emissions from energy consumption in buildings used by Desjardins (as an owner and as a tenant), business travel and paper consumption. In 2021, our emissions stood at 17,547 metric tons of CO₂ equivalent (tCO₂e), down 30% from 2020 and 57% from the 2019 benchmark. PwC Canada verifies this information each year.

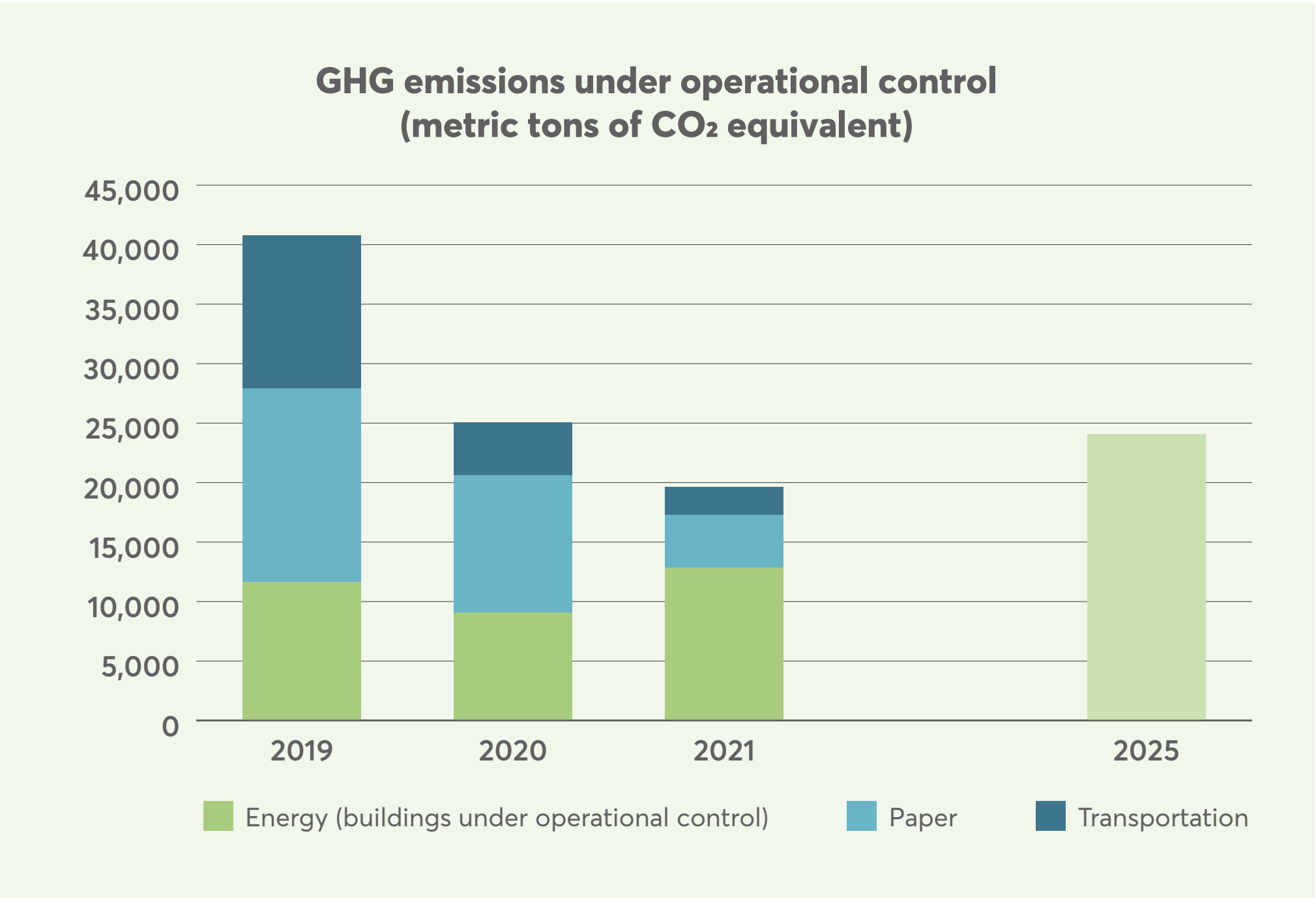
The substantial drop in our GHG emissions from operations in 2020 and 2021 is due in part to our efforts, but also largely to the pandemic, which began in March 2020. Our target of 41% below 2019 levels by 2025 remains relevant as economic activities begin to return to normal.

The carbon footprint of our supply chain, which was recently added to the climate action plan, will be measured before efforts to reduce it begin.

Cooperating for the Climate challenge

To reach this target, we’ve gone into project mode. We’ve created a governance structure, set a schedule for follow-ups, and identified 5 priorities: paper consumption, business travel, energy use in our buildings (since we’re one of the largest private landowners in Quebec), employee buy-in and our supply chain. The project is supported by ambassadors from the business sectors and support functions who are responsible for identifying initiatives that will significantly cut down on emissions as well as engaging employees across the organization and giving them the tools they need to contribute.

We’ve already identified several initiatives for the Cooperating for the Climate challenge. Work began in 2021.



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Real estate

Awards for 5 Desjardins buildings

The winners of Year 3 of the Building Energy Challenge were announced during the BOMA (Building Owners and Managers Association) Québec Grand gala. In 2021, 5 Desjardins buildings were recognized for significantly reducing their energy consumption over the previous 12 months:

- Complexe Desjardins, Montreal
- 150 Rue Des Commandeurs, Lévis
- 6300 Boulevard Guillaume-Couture, Lévis
- 100 Rue Des Commandeurs, Lévis
- 59 Avenue Bégin, Lévis

Launched in 2018, this 4-year competition aims to reduce energy consumption and GHG emissions in commercial, institutional and multi-residential buildings across Quebec by means of collaboration, knowledge sharing, education and innovation.

200 Rue Des Commandeurs earns BOMA BEST Gold certification

BOMA BEST Sustainable Buildings certification recognizes excellence in energy performance and environmental management in commercial real estate.

Waste management

We’ve been managing residual waste at our main workplaces for many years. Our property management teams have rolled out the internal Récüp program to harmonize our approach to residual waste management.

In 2021, 12 Desjardins locations received [ICI on recycle +](#) accreditation.



Recycling single-use masks

At a rate of 2 to 3 masks per person per day, millions of single-use masks are being incinerated or sent to landfills. With the help of Quebec-based social economy business Go Zero, we helped give masks a second life and reduce our environmental footprint. The masks go to social economy partner organizations that disinfect them with UV light, then remove the enclosed aluminum nosepiece and elastics. The masks are then sent to other Quebec businesses that specialize in recycling plastics to be turned into new products.

Business travel

Vehicle fleet

Employees with a company vehicle must choose a hybrid or electric model. We’re pleased to offer employees greener transportation options. Every vehicle Desjardins General Insurance purchased in the last year is a low-emission vehicle. We now have 474 vehicles across Canada, including 243 hybrid, plug-in hybrid or electric vehicles, representing 51% of our fleet.

Sustainable mobility program

Our Alternative Transportation Program encourages employees to use other means of transportation than travelling alone by car. The program is available to employees in our main employment hubs in Quebec (Lévis, Montreal, Quebec City) and Ontario (Greater Toronto Area).

Due to the pandemic, more than 80% of our employees worked from home in 2021. This change had a considerable effect on the number of program participants. As at December 31, 2021, 2,410 employees were taking advantage of incentives like discounts on public transit passes, on-site showers and lockers, a carpool matching app, reserved carpool parking spaces and subscriptions to car-sharing services. That number was 10,024 as at March 1, 2020, prior to the pandemic. Now that working from home is the new normal, our teams are considering how to best adapt our program.

Electric charging station network

In partnership with AddÉnergie and Hydro-Québec, we continued to install electric charging stations at caisse and credit union locations across Quebec and eastern Ontario. To date, 302 charging stations have been installed, including 279 that are available to the general public. Our goal is to build a network of 500 electric charging stations by 2025 for members, clients and communities in Quebec and eastern Ontario.

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Paper consumption

We've put in place a number of initiatives to reduce paper use and rolled them into our Cooperating for the Climate challenge, as part of our broader efforts to reduce operational emissions. These initiatives helped us reduce our greenhouse gas emissions from paper consumption by 18% in 2021, or 3,565 tCO₂e, compared to the year before. Here are a few of our initiatives.

100% recycled paper

Our partnership with paper supplier Rolland is ongoing. In 2019, we made 100% recycled paper manufactured in Quebec the standard for internal printing. We recommend recycled white paper through our internal tools and external printing services.

Partnership with Tree Canada to promote online statements

We added a new tip in the AccèsD Assistant to encourage members to sign up for online statements.

The tip highlights the advantages of online statements and Desjardins's goal to reduce paper consumption to reach its GHG reduction targets.

Every time someone registers for online statements, we donate \$4 to Tree Canada, a non-profit organization working to improve the lives of Canadians by planting and nurturing trees.

Between February and October 2021, a total of 24,648 members made the switch from paper to online statements, which means the same number of trees will be planted across Quebec and Ontario.

E-signature use increasing

In 2021, members and clients used our electronic signature tool nearly 1,922,000 times. That means we saved over 10.6 million sheets of paper and avoided 183 tons of GHG emissions (estimate based on 100% recycled paper), which is the equivalent of the annual emissions of 46 vehicles travelling 20,000 km per year.

Employee buy-in

We're relying on some important initiatives in our business sectors and support functions to achieve the goals of the Cooperating for the Climate challenge and reach our operational emissions target of 41% below 2019 levels by the end of 2025. We're also relying on employee engagement, because buy-in is key for collaborating and making headway to reduce our GHG emissions every day.

To help foster buy-in, we've built a 1,200-strong community of employees who use a sustainable development platform to share tools, information and best practices in line with our targets.

We also have an organization-wide buy-in and change management plan in place to help us achieve the goals of the Cooperating for the Climate challenge.

Supply chain

As part of our 2040 climate plan, we committed to working with our 100 biggest suppliers to gradually reduce the carbon footprint of our supply chain.

In 2022, we'll be working on:

- Calculating GHG emissions in our supply chain with the help of an external specialist
- Identifying the suppliers with the highest carbon footprints and opening a dialogue with them to find ways to reduce GHG emissions
- Setting science-based targets to reduce supply chain emissions

Our operations have been carbon neutral since 2017

Despite all our efforts to reduce GHG emissions, some residual emissions remain. We offset all remaining GHG emissions by purchasing certified carbon offsets. We use the Greenhouse Gas Protocol Standards and ISO 14064 to calculate the reduction in our GHG emissions. Our calculation is reviewed by a credible, independent third party. The projects we support in Quebec, Ontario, British Columbia and Colombia are listed in the GRI Index on [page 30](#).



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3.3 PARTNERSHIPS COMMITTED TO CLIMATE ACTION

Through our many partnerships, we’re committed to helping communities make the energy transition and take climate action. Our partnerships support university research and training, foster the development of real solutions for economic players, and promote climate education and engagement.

Ecosystem of climate action partnerships

Prix Demain le Québec / Future Ground Prize in partnership with the David Suzuki Foundation

The Prix Demain le Québec celebrates citizen-led initiatives and encourages inspiring community projects that have a positive impact on future generations and where we live. For the 7th edition at the start of summer in 2021, the David Suzuki Foundation added 2 new features: a youth prize to celebrate initiatives by or for young people and a new version of the prize for Ontario called the Future Ground Prize. In total, the Foundation received 107 applications in Quebec, including 31 for young people, and 135 in Ontario, including 18 for young people. Over 20,000 people voted.

Every year, we partner with the Foundation to provide a mentorship evening (in French only) to guide and support engaged citizens. It’s an opportunity for young participants to discuss best practices, get inspired and network. In 2021, the theme was “Cultiver notre pouvoir d’agir.”

École de technologie supérieure and Desjardins launch an ecosystem of labs to speed up the shift to a circular economy

We committed \$2.1 million over 5 years to help the Center for Intersectoral Studies and Research on the Circular Economy at the École de technologie supérieure launch an ecosystem of innovation labs in April 2021. These labs will help speed up the transition in key sectors like construction, agri-food, mining and plastics. The resulting projects, developed in collaboration with businesses and stakeholders from the relevant value chains, will then develop and test solutions to be shared.

\$2.2 million to support climate action projects for youth

[We've partnered with 4 associations](#) to help young people of all ages fight ecoanxiety and take action against climate change.



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Awards and recognition

- We finished 2nd in the Market Education category at the **Responsible Investment Association (RIA) Leadership Awards**. This prestigious award celebrates RIA members that educate industry players on responsible investment.
- We were recognized for our **quality customer service** and **banking services** in Quebec with one of BrandSpark’s annual Most Trusted Awards.
- We had a standout year, with **18 wins** at Fundata’s annual **FundGrade A+® Awards** ceremony. 7 mutual funds, 9 guaranteed investment funds and 2 exchange-traded funds won awards for excellent performance in 2021. And for the first time in our history, our responsible investment funds took home some hardware, taking the top prize in 8 categories.
- At the 10th **Americas Structured Products & Derivatives Awards** ceremony, we took home the top prize—the prestigious **Best House, Canada** award—for the second year in a row. This award recognizes the Canadian financial institution with the best structured products. The Zenitude Aggressive Guaranteed Portfolio also earned the **Deal of the Year, Americas** award.
- For the third year in a row, we were a **Refinitiv Lipper Fund Awards** winner for best Canadian mutual fund in the International Equity category. Out of 66 funds, the Desjardins Overseas Equity Growth Fund (F-Class) came out on top. The Desjardins SocieTerra Cleantech Fund also received its first award in the Global Small/Mid Cap Equity category.

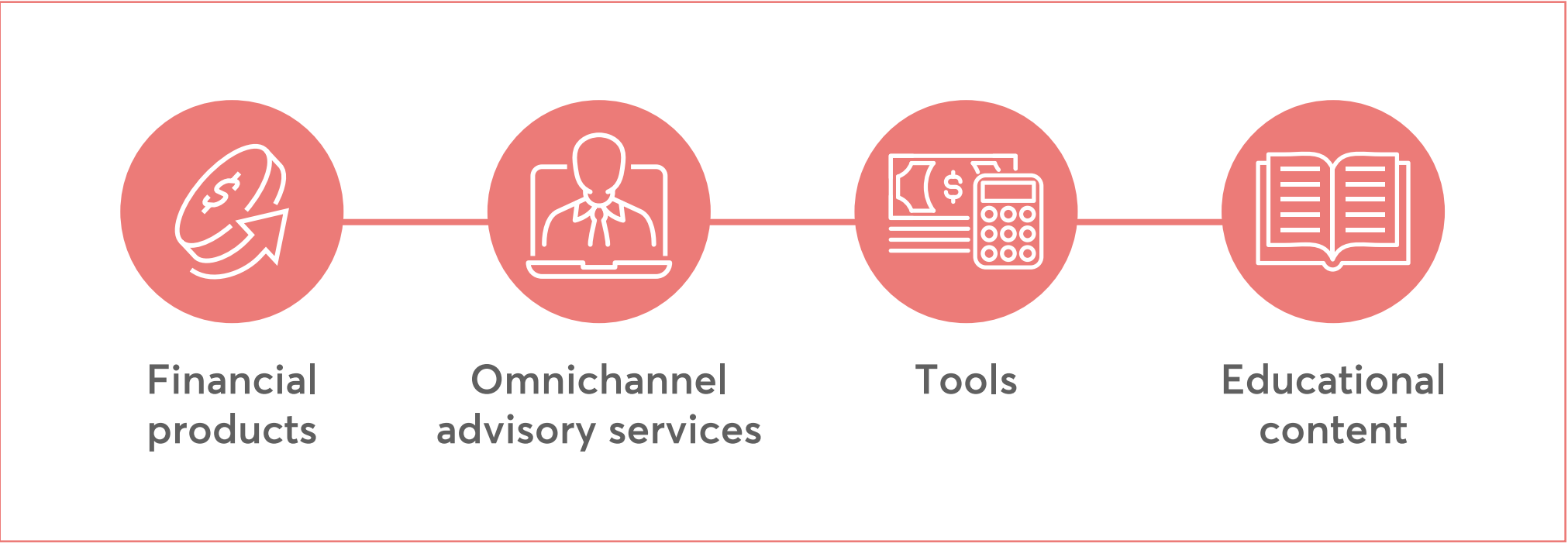
4.1 MEMBER/CLIENT EXPERIENCE

Because we’re a cooperative financial group, our employees are committed to always doing what’s best for members and clients. As part of their day-to-day responsibilities, they empower members and clients financially by making sure each member or client gets the advice, products and services they need.

Supporting the financial empowerment of members and clients

Financial empowerment means being able to stay on top of your day-to-day finances in the long term and achieve your goals. We help all our members and clients take charge of their finances with sustainable financial habits that fit their lifestyle. Supporting our members and clients and making sure they have the tools they need is part of our cooperative nature.

No matter how our members and clients choose to do business with us, we’re there for them. Here are 4 complementary ways we add value for our members and clients and support their financial empowerment:



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Education that supports financial empowerment

At Desjardins, financial literacy has always been central to our mission. We help design and deliver financial and cooperative education programs for members, clients, communities and the general public. In 2021, we invested \$9 million in programs to foster healthy financial habits, financial wellness and financial empowerment.

Financial literacy helps people learn more about money and develop better financial habits. It also makes them more confident about their ability to manage their day-to-day finances and achieve their goals. It's one of our key tools for supporting members and clients in their financial empowerment.

For adults
Desjardins Mutual Assistance Fund

The [Desjardins Mutual Assistance Fund](#) provides individuals experiencing financial hardship with budget counselling and emergency loans. It allows them to address their short-term budget problems so they can make lasting changes to their spending and budgeting habits. This successful program is a partnership between Desjardins and a number of community organizations specializing in financial literacy and budget counselling.

In 2021, a total of 17,432 people received financial guidance and support under this program. This figure includes everyone who took part in individual or group financial education activities.



Desjardins Mutual Assistance Fund	2021	2020	2019
Caisse participation rate	80%	77%	76%
Number of people supported	10,055	8,732	10,096
Number of loans	432	376	614
Total loan amount	\$312,660	\$250,000	\$409,000

Creation of a financial education centre of expertise

One of the founding principles of Desjardins was to empower people financially. Alphonse Desjardins believed caisses must protect their members by empowering them financially through saving and using credit wisely. By creating a financial education centre of expertise, we're doing just that.

A number of platforms are also available for members and clients:

- We've teamed up with the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada and the Canadian Cancer Society to offer helpful tips and tools in the [Financial empowerment and well-being zone](#).
- The Financial Wellness Centre helps group retirement savings plan members save for their goals at every stage of their lives.
- Disnat offers a [learning centre](#) and over [250 educational events a year](#) to make it easier for our online brokerage clients to make informed investment decisions.

In Charge of Your Life and Your Property helps protect seniors from financial abuse

Our goal is to help seniors recognize and learn more about the different types of financial abuse so they can better protect themselves. In 2021, we rolled out a brand-new set of tools for the In Charge of Your Life and Your Property program to better support seniors. Along with their family, they can now watch all 4 of our Simon's Advice videos to learn how to recognize financial abuse and find out who can help them if it happens.

In Charge of Your Life and Your Property is a key part of our seniors support campaign. Our caisse employees receive coaching through the program. They also work with support organizations to identify and prevent financial abuse of elderly members.

Simon's advice: The stranger

Description (2 min 04 s)

Listen to Sylvie's story and see how a scammer might charm someone out of their money after meeting them online. Hear Desjardins advisor Simon talk about what you can do if you think you've been scammed or know someone who has.

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Espace Desjardins

Located on the ground floor of Complexe Desjardins in Montreal, [Espace Desjardins](#) showcases our cooperative financial group. Since opening to the public free of charge in 2014, Espace Desjardins has welcomed over 50,000 visitors. Its central location, modern and high-tech look and passionate guides make it easy and enjoyable for visitors to learn about our cooperative and its more than 120-year history.

For entrepreneurs
Introducing entrepreneurship at an early age

For 23 years, we’ve been working with **OSEntreprendre** to cultivate the entrepreneurial spirit in students from elementary school to university.

Startup Montréal (formerly Montréal inc.) supports the city’s most promising entrepreneurs by providing grants and access to a network of high-level business people and experienced volunteers from the business community. In 2021, we once again partnered with Soirée Mtl inc., an event that showcases young entrepreneurs and connects them with influential members of the business community.

The Desjardins Foundation supports **Youth Fusion’s** initiatives to introduce elementary and high school students to the world of entrepreneurship. In 2021, the organization, which encourages kids to stay

in school, helped more than 500 young people set up entrepreneurial initiatives in a number of schools in urban, rural and Indigenous communities in Quebec and Ontario.

Mentoring young entrepreneurs

[Adopt Inc.](#) is a mentorship program open to all Quebec entrepreneurs ages 18 to 39 who have started their own business. The selected entrepreneurs normally receive financial support, mentoring and training for one year.

Things were a little different last year because of the pandemic, so we continued to mentor the [2 young entrepreneurs](#) we had adopted in 2020 for another year.

Supporting the next generation of farmers

At Desjardins, we understand the importance of lending a helping hand to a new generation of local farmers. That’s why we’re active in the [Fonds coopératif d’aide à la relève agricole](#), a fund that helps young cooperative farmers get financial and professional support and improve their skills.

For immigrants
On Desjardins.com

The [Newcomers section of Desjardins.com](#) makes it easy for immigrants to find the information they need. It has information to help them understand the Canadian financial system and get settled, whether they’re permanent residents or temporary residents like international students.

Teams and services to help immigrants get settled

Newcomers face all kinds of challenges when they get to Canada. That’s where our newcomer support team comes in. We also have 11 caisses and service centres that cater to the Italian, Portuguese and Ukrainian communities. In addition, we’ve developed online training to help newcomers learn how Quebec’s financial system works.

Offers for newcomers

- A number of advantages, including no service charges for one year for eligible newcomers
- Access to an unsecured credit card for newcomers with no credit history in Canada
- The ability to open an account while in their home country
- The option to transfer funds to their account before they get here
- Access to Visitors to Canada Insurance for newcomers awaiting provincial health insurance and visa holders with no insurance

Tools that support financial empowerment

We now offer even more tools to empower our members and clients financially. Here are the initiatives we rolled out in 2021.

Improvements to My retirement

For many workers, income from an employer-sponsored pension plan is a very important number when planning for retirement. That’s why we’ve added this income to My retirement, which is available under My savings goals on AccèsD. A new text box explaining employer-sponsored pension plans helps members enter the correct information into the tool, so they can get a better overview of their situation.

We’ve also added a new feature to My retirement so members can plan their savings goals and run retirement simulations. Within about 10 minutes, members can set savings goals that will allow them to maintain their lifestyle during retirement.

Emergency fund for 12-to 30-year-olds

For more than half of all young workers and students, unexpected expenses are a source of stress. To help them deal with the unexpected, we made improvements to the My savings goals section on AccèsD and in the Desjardins mobile services app so that members ages 12 to 30 can easily set up an emergency fund. There’s a tool they can use to quickly find out how much they need to save. They can then start taking action right away by opening a separate account for their emergency fund and scheduling automatic transfers.

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Helping others during the pandemic



We’ve deployed a number of measures to support our members and clients in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. The main relief measures, in effect since March 16, 2020, have evolved in order to offer solutions at all times for members and clients in financial difficulty, by providing solutions tailored to their needs.

Onsite vaccination centre

For several months last year, our building at 150 Rue Des Commandeurs in Lévis was home to a vaccination centre overseen by the Centre intégré de santé et de services sociaux de Chaudière-Appalaches. The vaccination centre was open to the surrounding community, as well as to employees and their families. Vaccines were administered in the order set out by the government—our employees, members and clients were not given priority.

To serve the community, we provided people, a place, supplies and financial support to help with vaccination efforts. Setting up a vaccination centre was one way we helped limit the spread of COVID-19. In all, 150 employees lent a hand and more than 10,000 vaccine doses were administered at the centre.

Desjardins Insurance Better Things Moments: Supporting frontline workers and communities

Connecting with communities is important to Desjardins Insurance and its agents. Through the Better Things Moments program and community events, we showcase our caring values with authentic conversations about our products and services. The pandemic restricted connecting in person at most events. With Desjardins Agents, we focused on Better Things Moments, providing 450+ surprise and delight activities for frontline workers and at long-term care facilities and food banks, bringing much needed joy through coffee runs, flower deliveries and donations to name a few.

Measures for insurance clients

In addition to keeping the relief measures we introduced in March 2020 in place, we developed longer-term solutions for our members and clients:

- Since we were expecting to pay fewer car accident claims as a result of the pandemic, we froze or lowered the premiums of many of our insureds with passenger vehicle coverage.
- We also limited home insurance premium increases across Canada.
- To keep pace with changing driving habits, we introduced a new version of Ajusto, our optional personalized premium program.

Measures for businesses

We continued to offer a personalized approach, adding relief measures, advisory services and support for impacted entrepreneurs.

We were also there for business members who were still waiting for their Canada Emergency Business Account (CEBA) application to be approved. To speed up the assessment and approval process, we proactively reached out to members to see if they needed help finalizing their CEBA application.

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Promoting digital security

Gamechanging acquisition for digital identity in Canada!

Interac has acquired exclusive Canadian rights to the digital identity services of fintech SecureKey. As a co-owner of Interac along with 7 other Canadian financial institutions, we helped with the acquisition of SecureKey, which was critical to advancing digital identity in Canada. Through the 7-year agreement reached on October 1, we'll eventually be able to offer current and future members and clients a 100% digital identity verification experience.

New voice recognition technology

We're rolling out new technology in our client relations centres that lets us confirm the identity of callers faster and improve fraud detection. We can use this secure voice recognition technology to confirm a caller's identity, with their consent. It's like a voice fingerprint that's designed to protect members and clients.

Training and awareness-raising for security and fraud prevention

We took advantage of Cyber Security Awareness Month to roll out our new **Sharpen your cyber reflexes** campaign. The campaign improves cybersecurity by talking about different kinds of scams and promoting features and strategies like strong passwords.

We offer educational content on security-related topics, including phishing, authentication best practices, get-rich-quick scams (aimed at youth) and transaction best practices.

We help our members keep their money safe by telling them about all the AccèsD features designed to protect them, like 2-step verification, credit card fraud alerts and the ability to lock or replace a credit card. We also introduced security alerts to prevent fraud through texts, emails and push notifications.

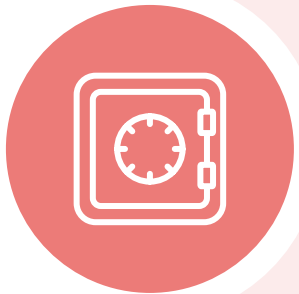
These measures help members and clients protect themselves against identity theft, credit and debit card fraud and certain other types of online fraud.

Digital security tips page

We created a [page](#) with advice that covers everything from recognizing phishing emails to sending Interac e-Transfers securely and protecting personal information. Members and clients can check it out for tips, tricks and tools to help them stay safe online.

Desjardins Identity Protection

All our members and clients are covered by [Desjardins Identity Protection](#), one of the best programs of its kind in Canada.



Protection

Accounts and assets at Desjardins are fully protected against unauthorized transactions.



Support

If a member or client's identity is stolen, we can provide individual support through every step of the identity recovery process.



Reimbursement

If a member or client's identity is stolen, they may be reimbursed up to \$50,000 for certain expenses incurred to restore their identity, such as notary or attorney's fees and lost wages.



Equifax credit monitoring service

This credit monitoring service gives members and clients daily access to their credit report for 5 years and alerts them to key changes to their file. It also comes with identity theft insurance.

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Improving the member/client experience



Empowering members and clients with a streamlined online experience

Mortgage pre-approvals in just a few clicks

We’ve added a new feature in the Home section on AccèsD and in the Desjardins mobile services app so future homeowners can get a mortgage pre-approval in under 5 minutes. Online mortgage pre-approval mean members can quickly find out how much they can borrow, plus they get a mortgage rate guarantee and a pre-approval certificate and letter.

New Omni mobile app

Omni is our all-in-one app that helps clients manage their insurance and reach their financial goals. With this modern digital solution, they can access their insurance and group retirement savings plans, and make a variety of transactions. Omni gives plan members a better, simpler experience and a wealth of resources to help them manage their health and financial well-being.

Student profile section on AccèsD

We’ve added a new section on AccèsD where students can create a profile so they can get products adapted to their needs and personalized advice on how to manage their money.

Products and services geared towards our members and clients

New product development and underwriting policy for property and casualty insurance

We’ve adopted a new policy for home and auto insurance to ensure that our product development and underwriting actions put the interests of our members and clients first and ensure they’re treated fairly. For example:

- Our product availability and offers must meet objective segmentation criteria to ensure accurate, fair and justified underwriting.
- Our underwriting guidelines must comply with the principles relating to the fair treatment of members and clients for the relevant region, province or territory.

We use the same underwriting criteria for everyone. A person’s cultural or ethnic background is not a factor—we only look at risk.

New reimbursement platform for group insurance

Our new reimbursement platform makes plan members’ lives easier by processing their claims in real time.

No-fee Desjardins Online Brokerage transactions

Desjardins Online Brokerage has made the financial markets even more accessible by eliminating transaction fees on stock and ETF trades (CAD and USD).

Solutions designed to help our business members thrive

Tax-saving solutions

We offer solutions to help small business owners and incorporated professionals lower their tax bill by combining products from 3 different sectors (investment, group retirement savings, and life and health insurance).

Expanded cybersecurity insurance

We now offer higher coverage amounts for compromised data and cyberattacks, and we cover the fees charged by firms specializing in ransom negotiation. When businesses take out these 2 additional coverages, they have access to the resources they need to manage cybersecurity incidents.

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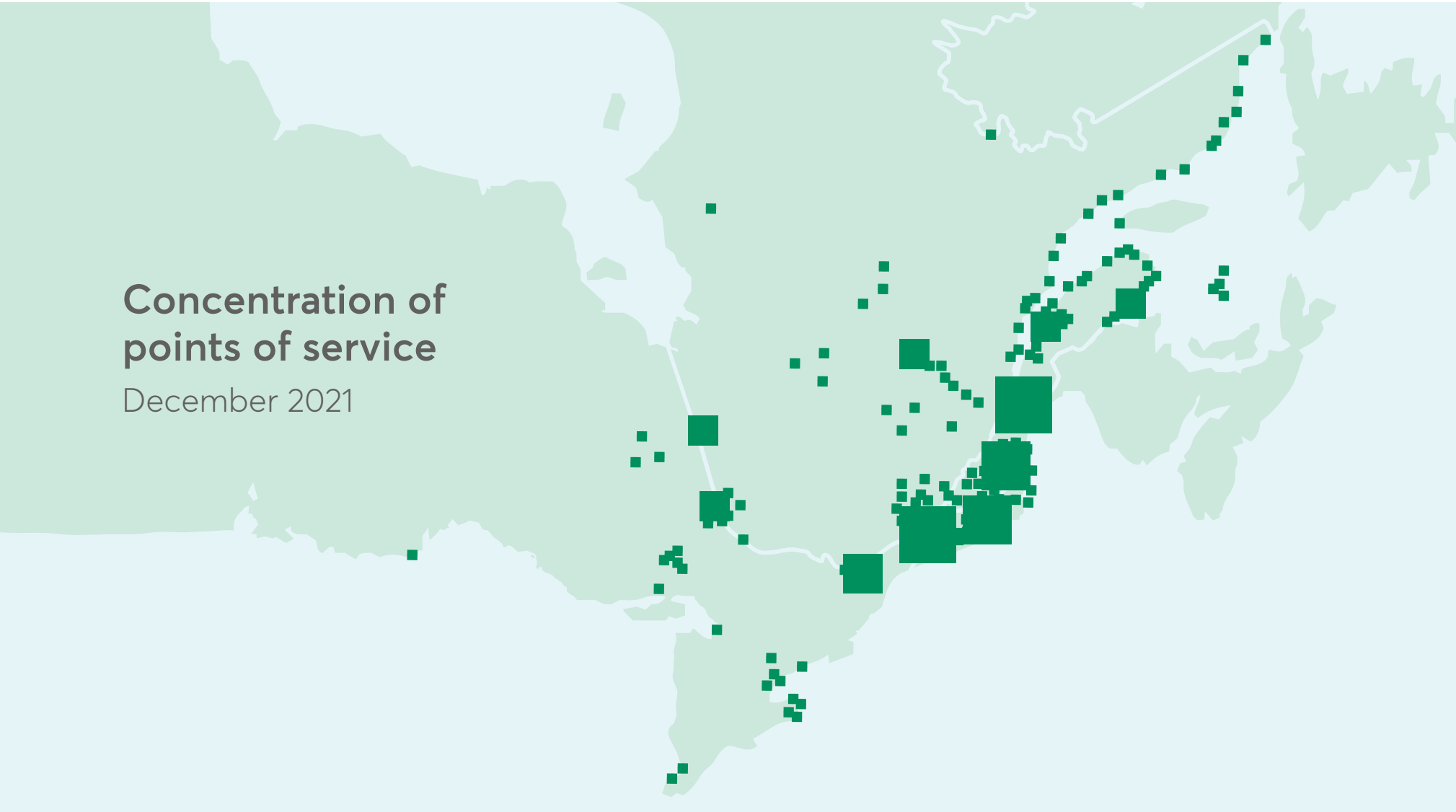
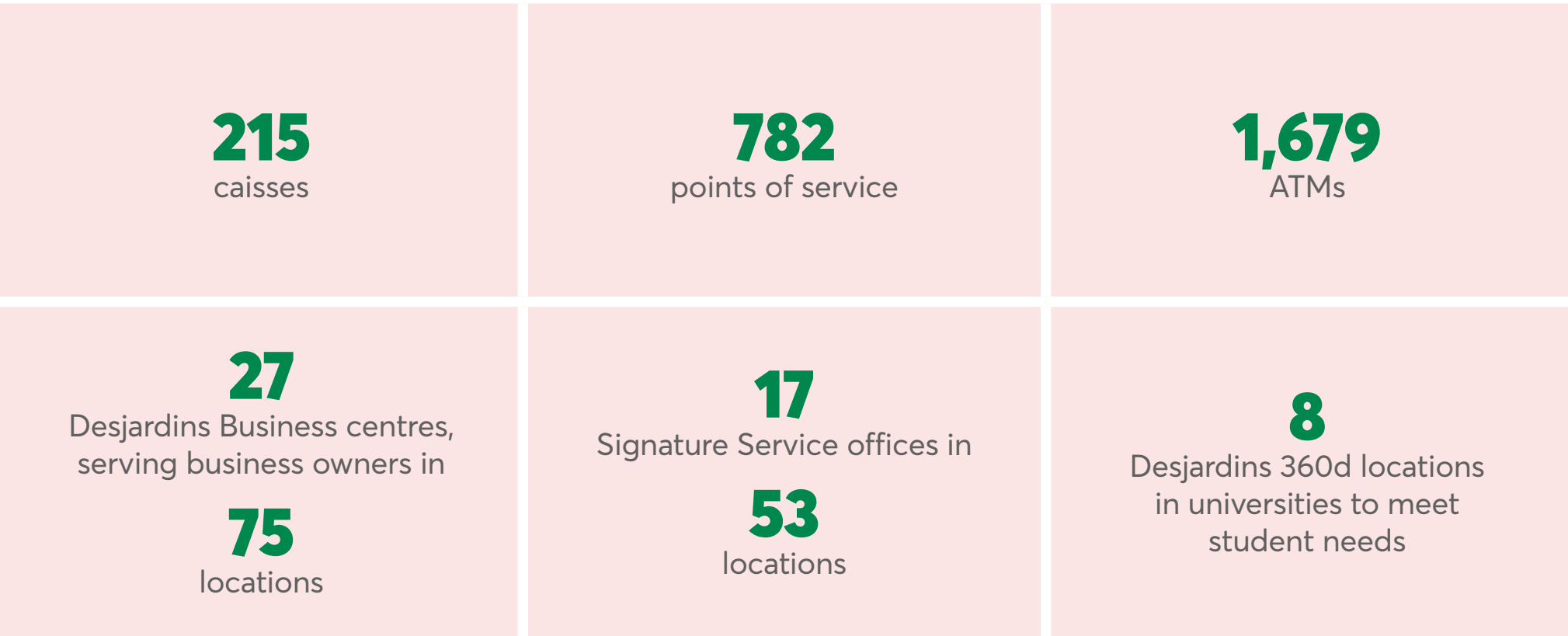
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Convenient services and expertise

An extended network in Quebec and Ontario

In Quebec and Ontario, members have access to:



Serving sparsely populated regions

In 2021, we operated a total of 782 points of service, including caisse head offices, service centres (in Quebec), branches (in Ontario) and complementary network centres. In Quebec, 141 of these points of service—19.4% of the total—were located in low-density areas (with fewer than 2,000 residents). As a comparison, the big banks operated about 1% of their branches in these areas. Members and clients who live in these areas can also access our financial and insurance products and services online and by phone.

Other services in Quebec and Ontario

Quebec and Ontario members and clients have access to thousands of employees and advisors through our life and health insurance, property and casualty insurance, securities and wealth management subsidiaries.

We’re constantly rethinking the way we operate to meet our members’ and clients’ ever-changing needs. In 2021, members carried out 1.34 billion financial transactions on AccèsD and in the Desjardins mobile services app, 5.7% more than the year before. Teller and ATM transactions dropped by 2.5% and 10%, respectively. In Quebec, Desjardins has more ATMs than any other financial institution.

As at December 31, 2021, our 215 caisses offered telephone service from 6 a.m. to midnight, 7 days a week. Our members can call for information and advice about banking and investing and make an appointment with a caisse advisor. Many caisses are also now open on Saturdays to accommodate their members’ schedules.

Since March 2021, members and clients have been able to buy life and health insurance over the phone. We set up a client relations centre so that members and clients who start their individual insurance application online can get help finalizing their purchase.

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Other ways we’re making it easier to access our products and services

- All Desjardins ATMs are accessible to people with visual impairments or reduced mobility. Members can already use their voice to make everyday transactions like deposits, withdrawals and bill payments at our new ATMs. Other features will be rolled out gradually in 2022.
- Members who can’t use an ATM due to a permanent disability are eligible for ATM rates even if they complete their transactions with a teller.
- We offer solidarity-based finance products and related budget counselling and education services to those in need.
- Our goal is for all Desjardins websites, mobile apps and public content subject to the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* to continually meet W3C’s Level 2.0 AA Web Content Accessibility Guidelines.

Meeting all kinds of needs
Desjardins 360^d

We’ve developed a one-of-a-kind concept in North America for young people: [360^d](#). These hip, friendly financial service centres work with caisses to serve young members and workers ages 18 to 30 on university campuses. In April 2021, a new 360^d location officially opened at the École de technologie supérieure in Montreal.

Mobile branches

Our mobile branches are another innovative way members can do business with us. We’ve transformed 2 buses into modern, welcoming financial service centres on wheels. Our environmentally friendly mobile branches are powered by built-in solar panels and run on biodiesel.

Signature Service

Signature Service provides comprehensive wealth management assistance to members with complex financial needs. Our 360° offer (protection, investments, financing, etc.) revolves around the member’s financial plan and is supported by a multidisciplinary team of experts. Signature Service works closely with other networks specializing in wealth management, including Desjardins Private Wealth Management, Desjardins Securities and Desjardins Online Brokerage, as well as with our Desjardins Business centres.

Online Business Centre

Our Online Business Centre is there for our business members when they need it. From 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. on weekdays and from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. on weekends, we help make life easier for businesses by providing phone and online support for day-to-day financial management, financing, savings and insurance products. We also provide advice for startups and growing businesses about grants, microcredit and government programs.

Desjardins at the Montréal-Trudeau International Airport

We’re available at the airport for our members and clients. Our relationship managers provide financial advice in several languages with or without an appointment, and our employees working at the kiosk answer impromptu questions before international trips.

Each year, lots of seasonal workers come to Canada to help support our agri-food industry and local vegetable growers. Desjardins squads greet them at the airport in Spanish, helping them open accounts to deposit their Canadian pay and activate their debit cards. By doing so, our squads help them prepare to start work at local agricultural businesses while contributing to their financial empowerment from their first day on Canadian soil.



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Services available outside Quebec and Ontario thanks to intercooperation

In the rest of Canada

Outside Quebec and Ontario, we rely on our life and health insurance and property and casualty insurance subsidiaries as well as the cooperative community and the caisses in Manitoba and New Brunswick to offer our members and clients financial products and services tailored to their needs:

- Advisors and representatives from our partner organizations, as well as Desjardins Agents
- 37 points of service and 66 ATMs in Manitoba (Caisse Financial Group) and New Brunswick (UNI Financial Cooperation)

In Florida

Desjardins Bank serves Desjardins caisse members and Canadians in Florida and across the United States. Our members can use Desjardins Bank whether they're permanent residents, snow birds or just visitors. Desjardins Bank's head office and 3 service centres are in areas popular with Canadians: Hallandale Beach, Pompano Beach and Boynton Beach. Desjardins Bank provides quality service in English and French at these locations.

In Europe

Our Desjardins Representative Office (Europe) supports our growth in both the personal and business markets.








Maintaining an open dialogue on the internet

New and improved newsroom

To help us communicate more effectively with our members and clients and reach a larger audience, we've completely redesigned our newsroom. Members and clients can now access relevant dynamic content.

Social media

Number of followers as of December 31, 2021:

	29,020
	352,148
	203,354
	25,345
	11,230

All caisses use Facebook to communicate with their members and get their input. Each week, over 2 million people view Desjardins's Facebook posts.

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A one-of-a-kind approach to responsible investment

Not only do we offer our members and clients a wide range of responsible investment (RI) solutions, but we show them exactly what their investments can do for people and the planet. Thanks to our more than 30 years of RI expertise, we’ve been able to create diversified solutions so our members and clients can make a difference without compromising on the financial performance of their investments.

We offer close to 50 RI product options, making us a Canadian leader in the field. As at December 31, 2021, we had almost \$12.3 billion in RI assets under management.

- Find out more:
- [Choosing responsible investment](#)
 - [Responsible investing, a lever for change](#)
 - [Understanding responsible investing](#)

- 2021 snapshot:
- **38% of Desjardins Funds unitholders** now hold **SocieTerra** funds or portfolios, up from 29% in 2020.
 - SocieTerra fund and portfolio **assets under management rose by \$3.1 billion** in 2021, to a total of more than \$8.1 billion in assets under management. That’s a 63% increase in 1 year!

Committed to spreading the word about responsible investment

To encourage people to learn more about and choose RI products, we created some videos that put member stories in the spotlight. In the videos, 3 members with Desjardins RI products talk about what motivates them to expect more from their money. When people hear these stories, they see that, with RI, the money they invest can generate more than just a profit—it becomes a profitable driver of change for investors, communities and the environment.

We also launched a number of other initiatives to help get the word out about responsible investment. We produced educational videos and held webinars on the benefits of RI and the positive impact it has on the environment and communities.

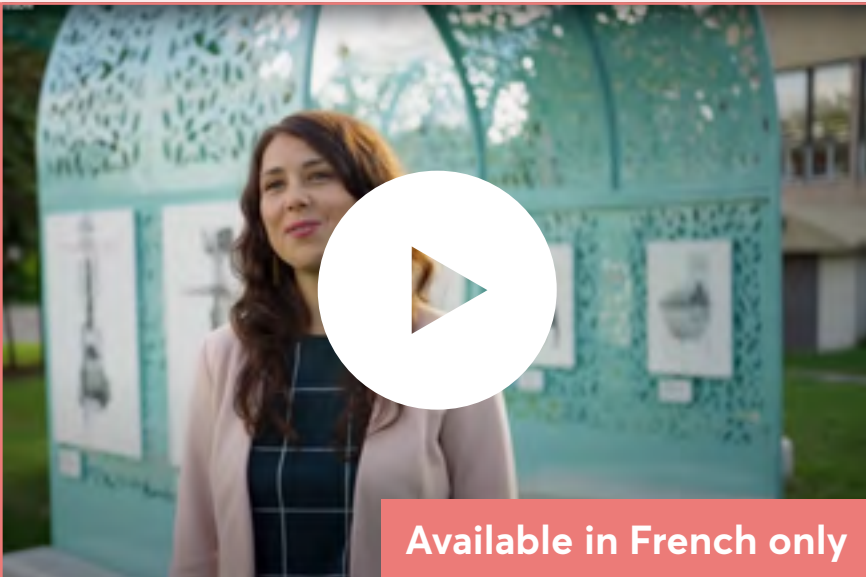
We added information on [DesjardinsFunds.com](#) about the companies we include in our SocieTerra portfolios, as well as extra-financial performance indicators (icons) to help our members and clients make even more informed decisions.



Available in French only

Marion and responsible investment

Description (1 min 27 s)
"I know we can make a difference," says Marion. Discover her story through her interest in social responsibility and her relationship with her community. Find out why she chooses responsible investment.



Available in French only

Gabrièle and responsible investment

Description (1 min 15 s)
"I feel like I'm contributing to something big," says Gabrièle. Discover her story through her interest in governance and her desire to see greater diversity on boards. Find out why she chooses responsible investment.



Available in French only

Stéphane and responsible investment

Description (1 min 23 s)
"I want to do my part to protect the environment," says Stéphane. Discover his story through his interest in sustainable development and his relationship with nature. Find out why he chooses responsible investment.

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A new responsible investment exchange-traded fund (ETF)

Desjardins Global Asset Management introduced the Desjardins RI Emerging Markets – Low CO₂ Index ETF. This ETF is listed on the Toronto Stock Exchange and mainly invests in companies in emerging markets. The companies selected are environmental, social and governance (ESG) leaders in their industries. This fund excludes some major greenhouse gas emitters, which significantly reduces the portfolio’s carbon intensity.

This investment product rounds out our range of RI ETFs, which already has 9 low-carbon ETFs and 1 fossil-fuel free ETF.

ETFs are attractive options for members, clients or investors who want access to a sophisticated investment strategy, without having to invest a minimum fixed amount.

Changes to our market-linked guaranteed investment fund lineup

Responsible Option Guaranteed portfolios

We rolled out our new Responsible Option Balanced Guaranteed Portfolio and Responsible Option Aggressive Guaranteed Portfolio. These

portfolios are for members who want to invest in a turnkey solution that brings together companies from a variety of economic sectors and regions around the globe that have been carefully selected for their ESG practices. The variable return is tied to the Priority Terra, Diversity and Sustainable Water Management baskets. We’re the only Canadian financial institution to offer an ESG portfolio with capital guaranteed at maturity.

Opportunity Guaranteed Investment – Electric Transportation

Offered exclusively by us and for a limited time, this market-linked guaranteed investment (MLGI) has a 6-year term and consists of 20 international companies set to gain from the shift to electric transportation. It includes companies involved in manufacturing and powering electric vehicles. This MLGI uses a selective formula that excludes the top 3 and bottom 3 securities when calculating returns.

Diversity Guaranteed Investment

The Women’s Impact Guaranteed Investment has been replaced with the Diversity Guaranteed Investment. For us to select a company’s securities, the company must have an in-house diversity policy and at least 30% female representation on their board of directors.



Our Green Program for consumers and businesses

To support our members, clients and communities in a just energy transition, we offer a number of environmentally responsible products for consumers and businesses.

Green homes

We encourage our members and clients to invest in environmentally friendly homes. With our Green Homes Program, anyone who purchases a green new build or makes green renovations is eligible for a wide range of advantages, including:

- Cashback on their mortgage
- Discounts, some free services, competitive rates and much more

Green discounts for drivers

With a Desjardins Auto Loan with the Green Option, members and clients can buy a new hybrid or electric vehicle at a competitive fixed interest rate. Depending on the province, they may also qualify for a discount on their auto insurance. More than 50 new hybrid and electric models are eligible for our exclusive financing rate.

Discounts for environmentally friendly buildings and commercial vehicles

In Quebec, we also offer discounts for certain types of environmentally friendly buildings and commercial vehicles.

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Improving the member/client experience

We're keenly focused on the member/client experience. We're working to improve this experience on all channels members and clients use to do business with us, whether online or in person, in Quebec, Ontario or anywhere else.

Satisfaction surveys

In 2021, we assessed 110 types of interactions across all our channels and business segments through satisfaction surveys. Over 717,500 members and clients shared their feedback with us by answering our 5 new standard questions. Managers then contacted over 58,000 members and clients to hear more about their recent interactions with us. Member and client feedback revealed that our main strength is the service our advisors and agents provide.

We're always encouraging colleagues to share best practices to improve the experience of members and clients across the organization. We also require all of our employees to take training on sound commercial practices.

Net Promoter System survey: 1 million responses from our members and clients!

In September 2021, we received the millionth response to our new and improved Net Promoter System survey. But what's even more impressive is the quality of the feedback we've obtained through these surveys. We use the responses to analyze and improve our services and offers so we can always do what's best for our members and clients.

Omnichannel survey

For the second year in a row, we surveyed Desjardins members on their omnichannel preferences. The survey helps us track how members and clients like to interact with us during the various stages of buying our financial products, depending on their age and the product type. Being able to understand behaviours and preferences makes it easier to ensure that our strategies and initiatives keep pace with the changing needs of our members and clients.



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4.2 SOCIOECONOMIC LEADERSHIP

We believe in economic development that respects both people and the environment and that benefits both present and future generations. Our caisses have always been drivers of economic and social development, promoting financial literacy to help individuals and communities take charge of their futures.

At Desjardins, we’re committed to enriching the lives of members and communities. We help build sustainable and responsible national and regional economies. We’ve developed tools and programs to help us fulfill our mission nationwide, which our caisses then tailor to their local communities.

Direct economic impacts

Direct economic value generated and distributed

By choosing to do business with us, our 7.5 million members and clients enable our cooperative to have a direct impact on the place they live and the people in their community.

Desjardins (\$ millions)	2021	2020	2019
Operating income ¹	20,405	18,399	17,862
Total income	20,320	21,473	20,757
Non-interest expense	9,566	8,297	8,032
Salaries	3,553	3,101	2,970
Employee benefits	857	777	676
Member dividends	387	330	317
Remuneration on capital stock	208	210	211
Income taxes on surplus earnings	860	661	651
Indirect taxes	1,641	1,491	1,434
Sponsorships, donations and scholarships	110	72	87
Reserves and undistributed surplus earnings	26,867	23,190	21,311

¹ For more information on non-GAAP financial measures, see the **Non-GAAP and other financial measures** section of Desjardins Group’s 2021 **Management’s Discussion and Analysis** that’s available on the SEDAR website at www.sedar.com (under the Fédération des caisses Desjardins du Québec profile).



One way we support regional development is by decentralizing some of the Federation’s and subsidiaries’ operations. The caisses are also active in their local communities. The Desjardins Shared Services Centre has more than 3,000 employees providing administrative services to the caisse network and handling certain financing transactions. We chose our 28 Shared Services Centre locations, including one in Ontario, based on our goals of:

- Decentralizing operations to outlying regions
- Spreading operations evenly across 3 main regions (western, central and eastern Quebec)

By consolidating their administrative operations, caisses can focus on business development and service delivery for members and clients.

We also operate client relations centres outside of urban centres:

- Online Business Centre and Accès Desjardins – Granby: 415 employees work at the Carrefour de la coopération serving individuals and businesses.
- Accès Desjardins – Trois-Rivières: 470 employees work in 2 call centres serving individuals and businesses.
- Student Advisory Centre – Gaspé: 89 employees handle financial services for students, including government-backed student loans, lines of credit, savings and referrals for home and auto insurance.
- Life and health insurance sales – Rimouski: About 20 employees assist Quebec members with their banking product and basic insurance coverage needs.

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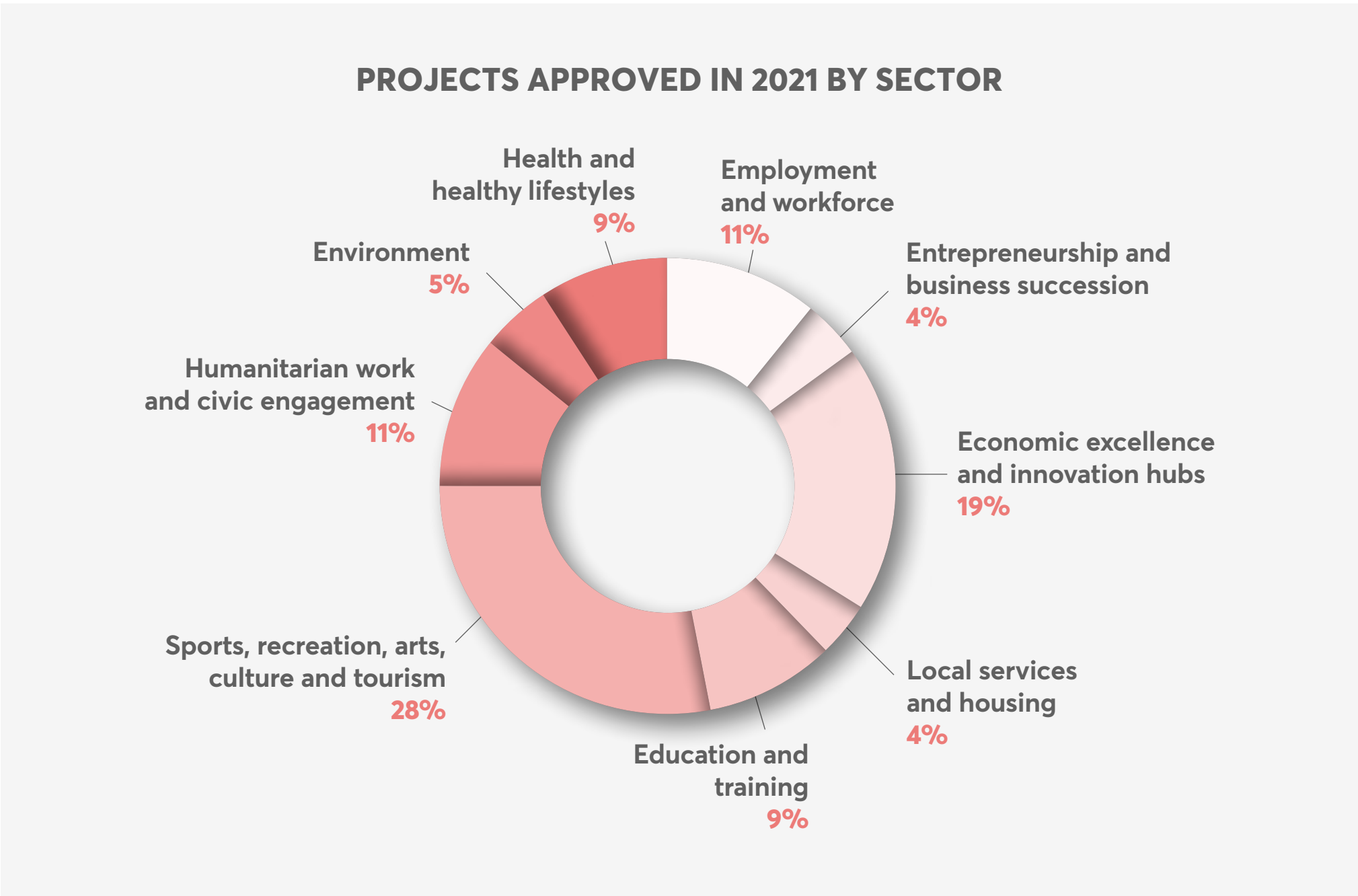
Socioeconomic recovery

GoodSpark Fund

The GoodSpark Fund is a flagship initiative to jump-start regional development and the socioeconomic recovery. We’ve committed to invest \$250 million from 2016 to 2024 in community projects that have the potential to shape our society. Our goal is to support initiatives in Quebec and Ontario that address key community priorities.

As at December 31, 2021, we had committed a total of \$147 million to support 652 initiatives benefiting members, communities and regions. With strong roots in the community, projects that receive funding are supported by an entire ecosystem. These projects will:

- Help create, revitalize or grow nearly 24,000 businesses
- Improve the services available to more than 1.2 million people



2021 key projects

Rebon numérique job training

Issue: The digital industry has not escaped the current labour shortage. In Quebec, it’s estimated that 6,500 jobs in the industry are left unfilled each year.

Solution: Provide an innovative training solution focused on hands-on learning, teamwork and real-life situations, backed by active teaching methods that get people into the workforce quickly. Students follow tailored learning paths and are supported by a small team of professionals. This new learning opportunity is being offered at the Cégep de Sainte-Foy and the Cégep de Chicoutimi, which is adapting the model to the rural reality in Saguenay–Lac-Saint-Jean.

Research chairs in greenhouse production

Issue: Food security and self-sufficiency are vital to Quebec society. Producing fruit and vegetables in greenhouses year-round could provide a possible answer, while also helping people buy local.

Solution: Create 2 research chairs, one focusing on energy efficiency and the other on environmentally friendly pest control, with the backing of the Producteurs en serre du Québec. The solutions tested will be scalable for greenhouse growers of all sizes. Solutions will tackle heating greenhouses, collecting and storing energy from excess heat and humidity during the day, reducing relative humidity, limiting greenhouse gases and minimizing the use of pesticides.

Shelter Movers

Issue: Survivors of intimate partner violence often face many obstacles when it comes to deciding to leave their abuser. Having to leave their belongings behind is one of them.

Solution: Set up a chapter of Shelter Movers in the Chambly and surrounding area. The organization provides free moving and storage services to help survivors leave their abusers safely. Shelter Movers will pack, move and store belongings while the person is living at a shelter. The organization can help with urgent exits, escorting the person to their home to retrieve their belongings, and transporting belongings to a new home. With volunteers and security agents or police officers present, the organization creates a safe environment at a high-risk time, which lessens the burden on survivors.

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All in for our communities

Learn more about how the GoodSpark Fund is benefiting people and communities through some of the inspiring initiatives that it has helped to roll out since 2016.

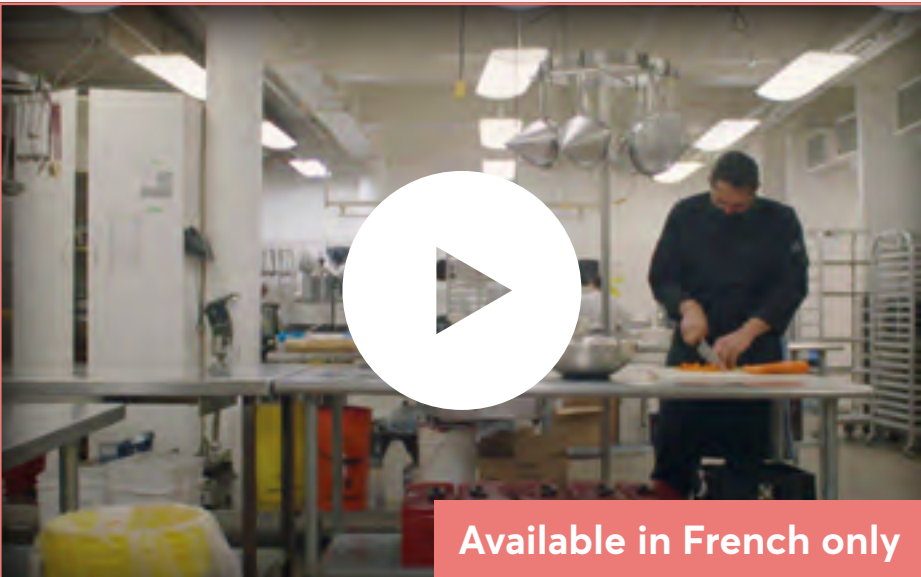


Available in French only

Groupe 3737

Description (1 min 00 s)

By focusing on integration, diversity and inclusion, Groupe 3737 drives economic and social development to promote job creation and the growth of businesses and organizations in communities with diverse backgrounds.



Available in French only

La Cantine pour tous

Description (1 min 00 s)

La Cantine pour tous is a network that rallies social businesses and organizations around the common goal of promoting food security. Together, they offer healthy, affordable meals to people in need.

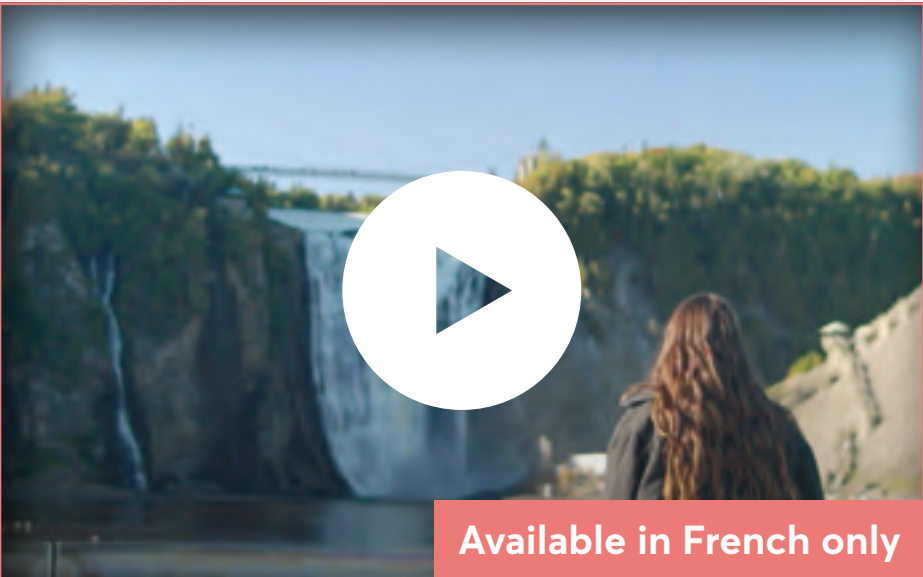


Available in French only

Société VIA

Description (1 min 00 s)

Société VIA's mission is to create quality jobs for people with functional limitations. The organization helps them join the workforce and get training, while actively contributing to sound waste management.



Available in French only

Vaolo

Description (1 min 00 s)

Vaolo's Expérience Québec program is designed to promote local businesses and tourism across the province. Explorers inspire travellers by sharing their short-stay experiences on the program's platform.

Momentum Fund: A tool for supporting the growth of small and medium businesses

We announced special funding to help business owners get back on their feet and protect jobs impacted by the pandemic. To meet the growing needs of businesses during the COVID-19 crisis, we added 4 new project categories. Businesses can apply for financial support under these 9 categories: innovation, business succession planning, access to foreign markets, investment in talent, investment in energy-savings equipment, digital transformation, ergonomics and physical distancing, psychological support and business model transformation.

In 2021, we provided \$3.9 million to Quebec and Ontario businesses by granting up to \$10,000 in non-repayable funding to 587 businesses to support their projects.

Grants for small businesses in Ontario, Western Canada and Atlantic Canada

With a focus on socioeconomic development, the 2020 Desjardins Insurance GoodSpark Small Business Grants program received applications from Desjardins Agent Network agents and Desjardins Financial Security Independent Network advisors on behalf of local businesses. Early in 2021, 75 small businesses were each awarded local advertising and \$10,000 in grants, with some also receiving consulting support from the Schulich School of Business. Each of these small businesses had unique initiatives, pivoting their focus during the early stages of the pandemic to make a collective difference in their communities.

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After the success of last year’s program, we’re increasing our investment this year to double the number of recipients and double the amount of each grant. A total of \$3 million will be given to 150 small businesses in 2022. These \$20,000 grants, complemented by the financial advisory offers provided by our networks, are supporting the socioeconomic recovery in Ontario, Atlantic Canada and Western Canada.



Supporting female business owners with financing and more

We want to help grow businesses as part of a sustainable economic recovery. One of the ways we’re doing this is through our partnership with the Réseau des Femmes d’affaires du Québec. Together, we’re launching a platform that provides access to requests for proposals for contracts with large companies.

“Women in business face many challenges and they’re often bigger than the ones their male counterparts face. That’s why we’re taking action across Quebec, providing targeted resources to accelerate the development of women-led businesses.”

—Guy Cormier, President and CEO of Desjardins

Expanding crowdfunding

Through our partnership with **La Ruche**, we’re able to provide an effective, recognized and secure crowdfunding solution. The platform provides an extra funding option for our community involvement strategy. Members and the general public can participate in crowdfunding campaigns to support inspiring community initiatives.

In 2021, La Ruche expanded to include 3 new regions: Gaspésie–Îles-de-la-Madeleine, Montérégie and Centre-du-Québec. People in these regions can now show their support for local projects that are important to them. La Ruche provides a solution for business owners, citizens and organizations looking to raise funds for their startup or growth.

Giving cooperative projects a boost

The **Défi Propulsion Desjardins** is a business accelerator challenge for cooperatives. We partnered with La Ruche and the Fondation pour l’éducation à la coopération et à la mutualité to encourage cooperative projects and businesses across Quebec. The challenge’s 7 finalists received a total of \$29,000 in grants and were given the opportunity to:

- Pitch their project at the RDV 2021 coopération + mutualité congress in September and collect funding from participants
- Benefit from additional exposure to jump-start their crowdfunding campaign
- Receive expert advice on cooperative and business development

Support for local economies

Supporting local businesses

We created the **Desjardins 100% Members Platform**, an online tool that helps Desjardins entities and employees find and support our business members. Through this buy-local initiative, we’re able to show our commitment to entrepreneurship and help maintain and create jobs outside urban centres. In addition to boosting sales, the platform helps business members forge ties with our 53,783 employees, who feel invested in the success of local businesses.

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Desjardins Microcredit to Businesses

The [Desjardins Microcredit to Businesses program](#) helps entrepreneurs and self-employed workers without access to traditional credit get business advice and flexible alternative financing they can afford.

Run in partnership with 17 organizations from the MicroEntreprendre network, the program is designed to help:

- Micro-entrepreneurs and self-employed workers who don't have access to traditional credit
- Newcomers to Canada who need help getting their startup off the ground

2021 snapshot:

- **840** businesses supported
- **\$7,482** in average financing
- **1,155** jobs created or maintained
- **90%** repayment rate
- **\$1.2 million** in financing provided under the program, generating investments of \$7.8 million in local communities

Desjardins Microcredit to Businesses

	2021	2020	2019
Caisse participation rate	77%	70%	61%
Total financing	\$1,226,205	\$721,150 ¹	\$900,685

¹ Data for 2020 has been adjusted to reflect the current period's presentation following a change in methodology.

See how the Desjardins Microcredit to Businesses program has helped engaged entrepreneurs reach their goals:

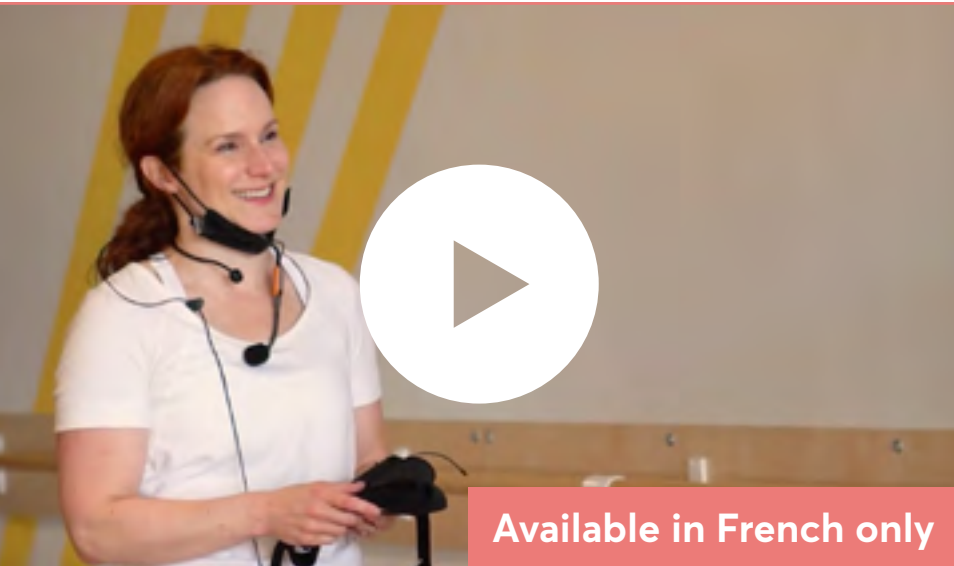


Available in French only

Les Jardins Taureau & Bélier

Description (1 min 01 s)

Les Jardins Taureau & Bélier is making its mark in biointensive market gardening.



Available in French only

Studio Jüa

Description (1 min 10 s)

Studio Jüa's founder went from being a fitness buff to managing her own pilates studio.



Available in French only

Foubrak

Description(0 min 56 s)

Foubrak successfully transitioned from being a home-based business to opening a small food production facility that makes sweets, pastries and baked goods free of the top 9 allergens.



\$11.3 million
invested in entrepreneurship in 2021

This figure includes donations, sponsorships and partnerships, as well as commitments through our Créavenir and Desjardins Microcredit to Businesses programs.

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Indirect economic impacts

At Desjardins, we help build sustainable communities across Canada and around the world by growing local economies, supporting businesses, creating good jobs, training directors and working towards the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

Injecting capital to help regions and cooperatives grow

In Quebec, Desjardins Capital Management Inc. uses its many funds to invest in regional economies. These investments:

- Encourage entrepreneurship in younger generations
- Boost productivity and help businesses expand to new markets
- Promote the emergence of industry leaders across business sectors
- Keep homegrown businesses from leaving

As at December 31, 2021, we had committed \$2.0 billion to 677 businesses, cooperatives and funds. This includes \$1.3 billion for 490 businesses that are based somewhere other than Montreal or Quebec City and \$177 million for 31 cooperatives. And since 2014, we’ve committed over \$230 million to regional county municipalities in economic decline.

Desjardins Capital Management Inc. manages the following funds:

- Capital régional et coopératif Desjardins, a public fund with over 113,000 shareholders
- Desjardins Capital PME, a fund that supports business growth, expansion and acquisition
- The Transatlantic Fund, a fund that helps French businesses break into the North American market—starting in Quebec—and helps Quebec businesses move into the European market—starting in France
- The Essor et Coopération Fund, a fund created with the Conseil québécois de la coopération et de la mutualité to support cooperative development

Total capital invested by Desjardins Capital Management Inc. in Quebec in 2021

Development and venture capital investments at cost	\$1,823 million
Investments at cost in cooperatives or other businesses located in resource regions	\$345 million

Capital régional et coopératif Desjardins: 20 years of leveraging collective strength

Capital régional et coopératif Desjardins (CRCD) is a public tax-advantaged fund managed by Desjardins Capital Management Inc. with shares sold by our caisse network. CRCD celebrated its 20th anniversary in 2021. Since 2001, the CRCD ecosystem has invested \$3.3 billion in more than 1,200 Quebec businesses and cooperatives. This has actively contributed to economic development outside Quebec’s urban centres. A third of these businesses and cooperatives are located in resource regions and nearly 75% are located in places other than Quebec City and Montreal.

Innovation challenges for a better world

Partnering with the Fédération des chambres de commerce du Québec to talk about the circular economy

We’re a major sponsor of an online province-wide tour designed to fast-track the shift to a circular economy. This joint initiative with the École de technologie supérieure’s Center for Intersectoral Studies and Research on the Circular Economy (CERIEC) offers businesses and economic development agencies a full program of online training and workshops. Training is available to each of Quebec’s 17 regions through the Fédération des chambres de commerce du Québec’s 130 chambers of commerce. By the time the initiative wraps up, more than 500 businesses and organizations will have received training. The general public will also have access to practical and scientific resources and tools online on the [tour’s website](#) (in French only).

Helping our members prosper in the green economy

We teamed up with Québec Net Positive for Low Carbon SME, a series of 5 workshops designed to help Quebec SMEs become more familiar with forward-looking scenarios, transition pathways and the rapid evolution of sustainable finance. Equipped with this new knowledge, business owners and managers will be able to engage in a constructive dialogue with their stakeholders and better target their efforts to access the resources available to take profitable and sustainable climate action.



Available in French only

Invest with purpose

Description (1 min 02 s)

For 20 years, Capital régional et coopératif Desjardins has been growing wealth in our communities. Thanks to its shareholders and partner funds, CRCD has invested \$3.3 billion in 1,200 businesses and cooperatives across Quebec.

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Supporting the transition to sustainable, connected mobility

As a key partner of Propulsion Québec, we support all the cluster’s efforts and initiatives to promote the growth and expansion of Quebec’s intelligent and electric transportation ecosystem. We also sponsored a study on private funding in the intelligent and electric transportation industry. The study was conducted to get an overview of industry funding, based on the growth phases of businesses.

Climate Challenge: Fintechs and the fight against climate change

Startup in Residence leverages our expertise, network and values to support startups that have a positive socioeconomic impact on communities in Canada.

In the spring of 2021, we asked: How can Canadian fintech startups help society address the challenges of climate change and support a just transition to a low-carbon, more sustainable, resilient and inclusive model?

Finalists received mentoring and support from roughly 20 experts from across Canada.

- [Aquantix](#) helps investment teams by quantifying climate risks and clearly illustrating them for each of their investments.
- [SR.ai](#) creates better ESG research tools for investors, backed by cutting-edge artificial intelligence and algorithms.

The top 2 startups joined our Startup in Residence program, which provides expert guidance for 8 months. A total of \$45,000 in grants were awarded to the winners.



Available in French only

What makes the Startup in Residence program unique

Description (2 min 16 s)

Startup in Residence is an accelerator that was launched in 2017. The 8-month program provides guidance and support to startups that have a positive socioeconomic impact on communities.

Cooperathon: The biggest open innovation competition in Canada

The Cooperathon brings citizens, communities, entrepreneurs, researchers and academic and institutional groups together to build a socially responsible future. This marathon of cooperation aims to find innovative solutions to real social issues. The theme for the sixth year of the competition was “Lead the change. (Re)boot together.” The Cooperathon awarded more than \$150,000 in prizes and grants to teams whose ideas stood out for their potential for social impact.

This year, there were 2 grand prizes: one for Beta teams, already in the development stage and working on a prototype, and another for Alpha teams, who had an idea but were in the early stages without a prototype.

The Beta team grand prize was awarded to Vope Medical for its development of AI-driven software that delivers constant clear vision in minimally invasive surgery.

The Alpha team grand prize was awarded to DeepBlue Greens. Indoor farming offers a potential solution to improving food security. To boost productivity, DeepBlue Greens created Voltaponics™, an innovative plant nutrient delivery system.

Lup won the Ontario-Atlantic-West Impact Prize. Their team designed a waste recovery solution that uses cloud-based software for tech manufacturers to streamline their quote process with customers.

The sixth edition of the Cooperathon attracted 650 participants. As part of the program, 50 partners helped recruit participants and provided mentoring and training. In all, 44 startups tackled challenges focusing on the environment and climate change, cities and regions of the future, and the impact of technology.

Intrapreneurship program for Ontario, Atlantic Canada and Western Canada

We launched the Intrapreneurship program, whose objective is to help our employees develop their skills while empowering them to think like entrepreneurs and inspire positive change within our communities. Participants worked in teams to develop solutions to the following challenge: “How can we improve and accelerate the recovery of the socioeconomic environment?” The winning project, The Ripple Effect, created a cooperative startup ecosystem for young Indigenous entrepreneurs.

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Desjardins Disaster Relief Fund

The Desjardins Disaster Relief Fund provides emergency financial support to members and clients affected by disasters not covered by their insurance. The fund has an annual budget of 1% of Desjardins General Insurance Group’s net income. It’s available to help:

- Desjardins General Insurance and The Personal policyholders
- Desjardins members in Quebec

Preventing injury, illness and death

Our investment in road safety

We invest in road safety to help reduce collisions and prevent injuries and fatalities on our roads.

Partnerships

- Through long-standing partnerships with organizations like Parachute and the Traffic Injury Research Foundation, we promote education and awareness of road safety issues (dangers of distracted and impaired driving) and new vehicle safety technologies.
- Because motor vehicle collisions are the leading cause of death in young people ages 16 to 19, we support Parachute’s National Teen Driver Safety Week.
- We also partner with Operation Red Nose and arrive alive DRIVE SOBER®, both of which are committed to eradicating impaired driving.

Ajusto

Desjardins Insurance’s Ajusto® program has been encouraging and rewarding good drivers since 2013 to help make our roads safer. Building on our experiences in recent years, we launched a new version of Ajusto in the spring to take safe driving a step further. Trips are now analyzed on an ongoing basis, rather than over a set period, which encourages drivers to adopt and, more importantly, maintain better driving habits so they can avoid collisions and potentially save lives. The new Ajusto program is available in Quebec and Ontario.

Supporting mental health to reduce absenteeism

Desjardins Insurance pinpointed 6 key indicators Canadian employers can use to identify employees whose physical, mental or financial health is at risk. With mental health being the leading cause of absenteeism¹ and presenteeism in the workplace, these 6 key indicators (productivity, demographic profile, lifestyle habits, financial wellness, financial engagement and mental health) help employers stay on the lookout for warning signs. By giving employees tools to live a healthy, balanced life, companies can create wellness-friendly workplaces, despite ongoing pandemic uncertainty.

New developments in the Healthy Weight program

The Healthy Weight program’s unique approach goes straight to the source, tackling several factors at once to help plan members manage their weight in a realistic and sustainable way. We now cover prescription drugs for the treatment of obesity under our standard service offer. As of August 1, 2021, these drugs also no longer require confirmation of the person’s body mass index to be covered.

Transition program supporting the development of biosimilars

We’ve adopted a biosimilar switch strategy (similar to government initiatives) to help reduce costs and facilitate the arrival of these types of drugs in the Canadian market.



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Responsible and inclusive procurement

Responsible procurement

For us, procurement is more than simply acquiring goods and services. It’s a strategic process that’s based on many principles: using resources responsibly, incorporating ESG factors into all procurement processes and adopting the 5Rs (rethink, reduce, reuse, recycle and repurpose).

We use the BNQ 21000 self-evaluation checklist to continually improve our approach to responsible procurement. We’ve adopted a responsible procurement rule based on our procurement policy. Regardless of the nature or value of the goods or services being purchased, our goal is to ensure that procurement decisions follow sound financial management principles and incorporate sustainability considerations.

Standardizing sustainable procurement practices

In line with the caisse network’s procurement policy, we adapted our sustainable development questionnaire for SMEs to cover purchases by the caisse network. Caisses can now easily assess each supplier’s commitment to upholding ESG criteria when making their final decision.

Diversity and inclusion in procurement

In 2017, we signed a statement of commitment to the Conseil d’économie sociale de l’île de Montréal’s L’économie sociale: j’achète! initiative.

We’ve developed a supplier diversity program that values companies that are at least 51% owned and operated by either women, members of the LGBTQ+ community, members of an Indigenous community, members of a visible minority group, people with disabilities, veterans, social economy organizations or people under 35. One of the program’s goals is to encourage equitable procurement of goods and services from suppliers from these groups.

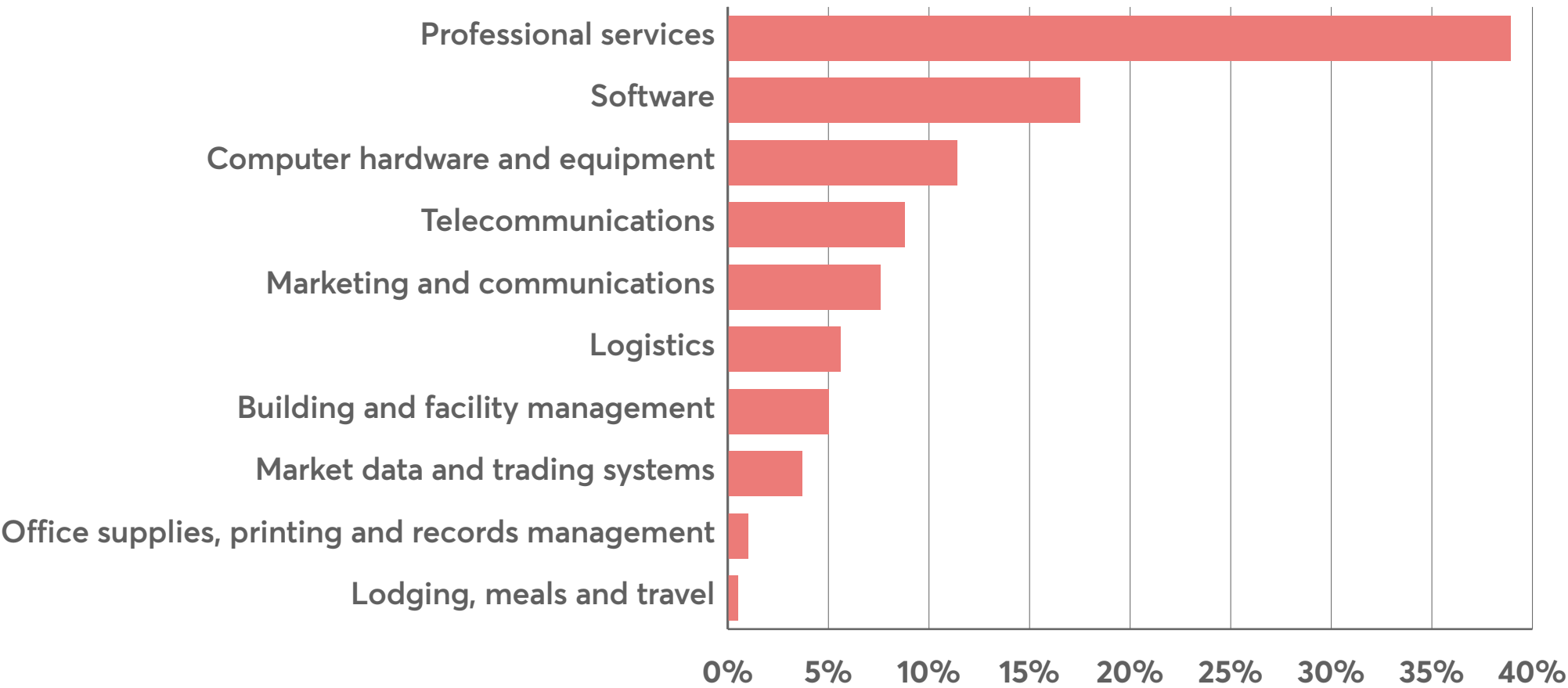
To learn more about diversity and inclusion at Desjardins, see the Equity, diversity and inclusion section ([page 60](#)).

Local purchasing

As a socioeconomic leader, we give priority to goods and services that are located as close as possible to our physical locations, provided that all other competitive bidding conditions have been met. In 2021, we purchased \$2.4 billion in products and services from 1,991 suppliers, most of which are based in Canada.

Breakdown of purchases made by Desjardins in 2021

(excluding claims and excluding purchases made with Visa cards and by the caisse network)



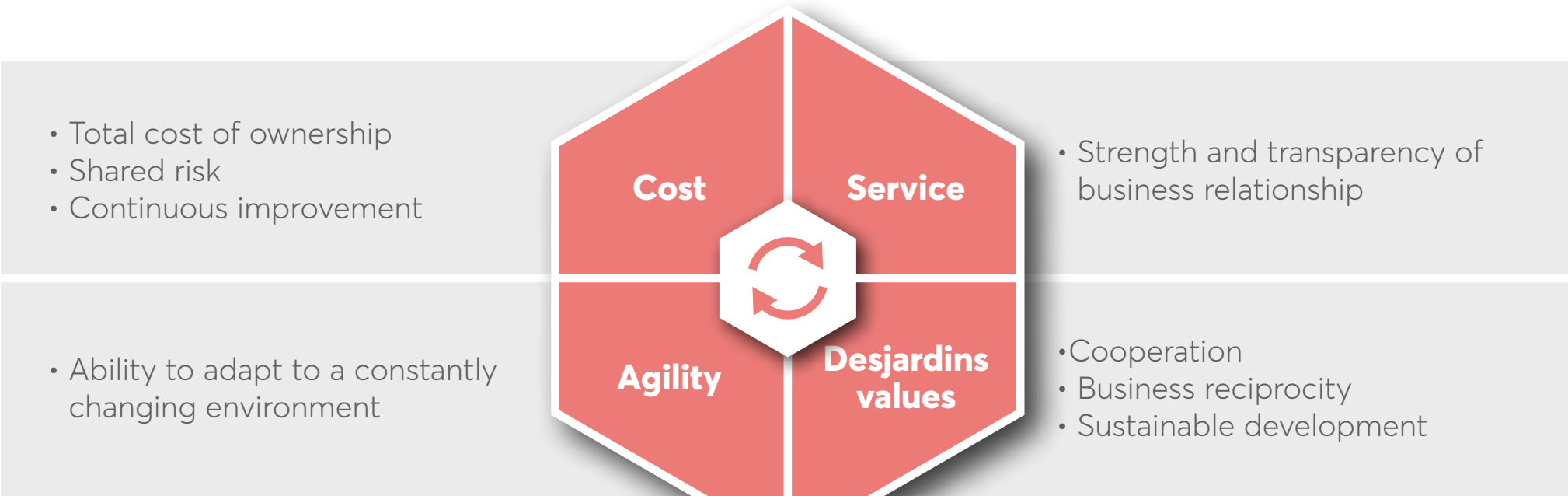
Supplier ESG performance

As part of our strategic procurement process, we assess the overall performance of our suppliers using 4 main criteria:

1. Cost

2. Service
3. Agility

4. Our values



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We've standardized our supplier sustainability and social responsibility assessments. All our suppliers now have to answer a questionnaire that covers 3 areas:

- 1. Environmental criteria (E)
- 2. Social criteria (S)
- 3. Governance criteria (G)

Based on the answers, we assign each supplier an ESG score. We consider this score, along with factors based on our cooperative and sustainability values, in their overall assessment.

	2021	2020	2019
Suppliers assessed	12.4% (247 out of 1,991)	14.1% (294 out of 2,080)	10.6% (242 out of 2,280)
Products and services purchased from assessed suppliers	60.0% (\$1.50 billion out of \$2.5 billion)	58.0% (\$1.16 billion out of \$2.0 billion)	49.7% (\$895 million out of \$1.8 billion)



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4.3 INCLUSIVE AND SOLIDARITY-BASED FINANCE

Solidarity-based finance programs

Through strategic partnerships with community organizations, we continued to expand our solidarity-based finance activities in Quebec and Ontario.

In 2021, we invested \$13.9 million in these programs. Almost all our caisses (97.3%) offer at least one solidarity-based finance product.

Learn more about our solidarity-based finance products:

- Desjardins Mutual Assistance Fund (see the **Member/client experience** section, [page 33](#))
- Créavenir Youth Entrepreneurship Program (see the **Education and support** for youth section, [page 19](#))
- Desjardins Microcredit to Businesses (see the **Socioeconomic leadership** section, [page 48](#))

Inclusive finance around the globe

Inclusive finance offered worldwide

For more than 50 years, [Desjardins International Development](#) (DID) has worked to support the economic empowerment of disadvantaged populations living in developing and emerging countries. DID promotes inclusion and financial literacy to create sustainable economic opportunities and to empower people to act.

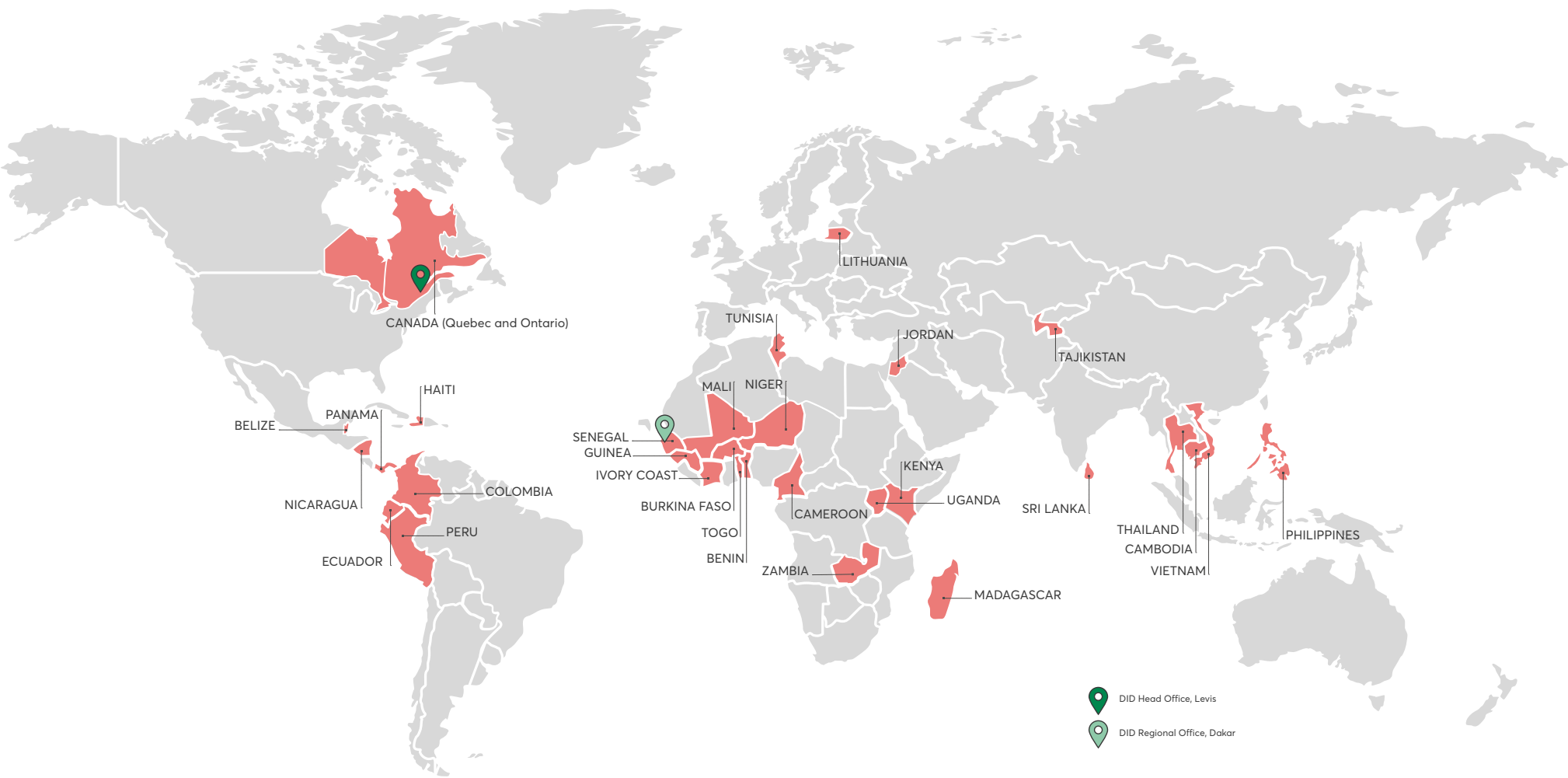
Through technical assistance projects and impact investing, DID uses finance to support inclusive, sustainable development. DID serves:

- Entrepreneurs so they can grow their businesses and create jobs
- Farmers so they can adopt more efficient techniques and earn a better income
- Women so they can exercise their leadership and decision-making power with confidence
- Young people so they can access the tools and knowledge to make their dreams and goals a reality

Over DID's more than 50 years of existence, it has made a difference for tens of millions of people through nearly 700 technical assistance projects and investments in 65 countries.

Experience has shown us that access to financial services is essential for development: it reduces inequality, promotes food security, spurs economic growth and combats climate change. It improves living conditions for everyone.

To learn more about DID and its history, read [Développement international Desjardins: 50 Years of Inclusive Finance](#).



Contribution to the development of inclusive finance institutions in developing and emerging countries¹

	2021	2020	2019
Number of members and clients at partner institutions	— ²	17,284,317	17,565,810
Savings volume at these institutions	— ²	\$11,715 million	\$9,328 million
Outstanding credit volume	— ²	\$12,773 million	\$10,895 million

¹ Data includes institutions that received technical support from DID and institutions that received a loan or investment through DID's investment subsidiary.
² Data for 2021 will not be collected and compiled until June 30, 2022, which, for many of the financial institutions involved, is the regulatory deadline to file their audited results.

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Investment funds for developing and emerging countries

For 25 years, DID has made funds available to inclusive finance institutions to support their performance, growth and sound governance. During that time, DID has invested \$59 million and supported 35 inclusive finance institutions, impacting millions of families.

Our extensive knowledge of the inclusive finance sector allows us to direct our resources where they're likely to have the greatest impact: small institutions that focus on the sustainable inclusion of disadvantaged populations.

With an initial budget of \$50 million, our Aequitas fund is a catalyst for development financing.

In 2021, our investment activities provided support to 11 inclusive finance institutions in 10 countries, as well as 2 investment funds that benefit more than 1 million clients and their families.



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4.4 RELATIONSHIPS WITH INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND COMMUNITIES

Through our caisse network, we’re present in the majority of Indigenous communities in Quebec, where we support local socioeconomic development for the benefit of Indigenous members and clients. Because creating an inclusive environment for these communities is important to us, we put together several initiatives in 2021 to raise awareness among our employees and stakeholders of the realities and issues facing Indigenous Peoples.

Our caisse network at the service of Indigenous communities

Through our caisse network, we’re able to serve the vast majority of Indigenous communities and people in Quebec.

Caisse	Reserve or municipality	Community
Nicolet	Odanak	Abenaki
Godefroy	Wôlinak	Abenaki
Haute-Gatineau	Rapid Lake	Algonquin
Témiscamingue	Timiskaming	Algonquin
Amos	Pikogan	Algonquin (Abitibiwinni)
Est de l’Abitibi	Lac-Simon	Algonquin (Anishinabeg)
Haute-Gatineau	Kitigan Zibi	Algonquin (Anishinabeg)
Témiscamingue	Kebaowek	Algonquin (Kebaowek)
Nord de Lanaudière	Manawan	Atikamekw
Pekuakami	Obedjiwan	Atikamekw
La Tuque	Wemotaci	Atikamekw
Chibougamau		Cree
Eenou Eeyou	Mistissini	Cree
Eenou Eeyou	Waswanipi	Cree
Wendake	Wendake	Huron-Wendat
Saguenay–Saint-Laurent	Essipit	Innu
Sept-Îles	Lac-John	Innu

Caisse	Reserve or municipality	Community
Tête-à-la-Baleine	La Romaine	Innu
Sept-Îles	Maliotenam	Innu
Pekuakami	Mashteuiatsh	Innu
Sept-Îles	Matimekosh	Innu
Havre-Saint-Pierre	Mingan	Innu
Mingan-Anticosti	Mingan	Innu
Havre-Saint-Pierre	Nutashkuan	Innu
Manic-Outardes	Pessamit	Innu
La Tabatière	Saint-Augustin	Innu
Sept-Îles	Uashat	Innu
Baie-des-Chaleurs	Gesgapegiag	Mi’gmaq
Vallée de la Matapédia	Listuguj	Mi’gmaq
Haut-Saint-Laurent	Akwesasne	Mohawk
Sainte-Agathe-des-Monts	Doncaster	Mohawk
Kahnawake	Kahnawake	Mohawk
Lac des Deux-Montagnes	Kanesatake	Mohawk

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Financing

Individuals

We know it can take a long time to get a government loan guarantee. In 2022, we plan to roll out a program that will streamline the mortgage approval process by not systematically relying on government loan guarantees.

Turnaround times and borrowing costs will be similar to those available to other communities we serve. The program will also provide access to a broader range of mortgages and personal insurance products.

Business services

In Quebec, the majority of our commitments with Indigenous governments are in the real estate and public infrastructure sectors.

Financing for business projects

Our infrastructure and project financing team is involved in several renewable energy projects owned in part by Indigenous communities. As at December 31, 2021, these farms in Ontario and Quebec were able to produce 379 MW.

Insurance

Property and casualty insurance

Insurance held by members and clients from Indigenous communities:

- As of the end of December 2021, 4,263 insurance policies (home and auto) were held by members and clients from 43 Indigenous communities in Quebec, including many in remote regions such as Waskaganish, Chisasibi and Kuujjuaq.

Group insurance

At the end of 2021, 8 businesses and band councils from Indigenous communities across Canada had group insurance with us, for a total of more than 8,600 plan members and beneficiaries.

Investment

Shareholder engagement

In 2021, our Desjardins Global Asset Management (DGAM) teams:

- Contributed to a discussion paper called “The Value in Indigenous Relationships,” an initiative led by the Mining Association of Canada. The paper was the result of a round-table discussion held to provide issuers, investors and others in the financial ecosystem with insights on best practices to successfully engage in meaningful relationships with Indigenous Peoples.
- Participated in a Reconciliation Dialogue Workshop with Reconciliation Canada.

- Took part in a round-table discussion hosted by the Reconciliation and Responsible Investment Initiative (RRII), a partnership between NATOA and SHARE, to discuss *Investing for Today, Tomorrow, and Future Generations: A Guide for Indigenous Investors* (Hexavest).
- Participated in the Workshops on Reconciliation and Indigenous Rights organized by the RRII (Hexavest).

In 2022, the responsible investment team will complete a 5-hour Indigenous cultural awareness course offered by NVision Insight Group.

Human rights and stakeholder engagement are among the top 6 ESG issues that DGAM prioritizes. Priority issues influence DGAM’s investment selection decisions and shape its shareholder engagement practices.

DGAM incorporates respect for human rights and stakeholder engagement into its ESG analysis practices. To this end, it monitors companies to verify that they have put in place:

- A governance structure that guarantees respect for human rights
- Due diligence policies, guidelines and procedures to protect the rights of employees working for the company and in its supply chain
- A framework for consulting with stakeholders to ensure projects obtain a social licence to operate

In addition to assessing companies, DGAM also engages companies on the issue of human rights and relations with stakeholders and Indigenous communities. To date, these discussions have primarily involved companies from the metals and mining and fossil fuel sectors.

To learn more, read the **Shareholder engagement** section of DGAM’s [Report on Responsible Investment Activity](#).

Example of a company in our portfolio that has an exemplary stakeholder engagement program: [Agnico Eagle: Success grounded in respect for Indigenous communities](#).

Partnerships with Indigenous communities for infrastructure investments

White River Hydro Project (19 MW, northern Ontario)

The White River Hydro Project, owned in equal parts by Regional Power and Pic Mobert First Nation, has already led to the creation of 17 full-time jobs and the hiring of 3 local community members. The 3 hydroelectric plants in operation help reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 170 kt each year and provide electricity to 40,000 households.

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Rivière-du-Moulin Wind Farm (350 MW, Quebec)

The Innu and Huron-Wendat Nations have partnered with us for this 350 MW wind farm near Saguenay, Quebec. (To learn more, see DGAM's [2020 Report on Responsible Investment Activity](#).)

Grand Renewable Solar, Haldimand County (100 MW, Ontario)

Six Nations of the Grand River has partnered with us for a 100 MW solar farm near St. Catharines, Ontario.

Cypress Wind Farm in Medicine Hat (201 MW, Alberta)

In partnership with the Blood Tribe in Stand Off, Alberta, a wind farm is being built and managed by EDF Renewables. We plan to join the consortium when the wind farm begins operating, likely in the first quarter of 2023.

Socioeconomic leadership

We've adopted an equity, diversity and inclusion plan for 2022–2024 that includes initiatives such as internships specifically for Indigenous youth. We also plan to set targets for the number of Indigenous employees in order to increase their representation in our workforce.

Intrapreneurship program for Ontario, Atlantic Canada and Western Canada

The 2021 winner was a project to support young Indigenous entrepreneurs. See the **Socioeconomic leadership** section, [page 50](#).

Promoting the inclusion of Indigenous suppliers

In line with our values and our goal to be a strong socioeconomic leader, we promote the inclusion of suppliers from many different backgrounds, including Indigenous communities.

Great Bear Forest Carbon Project in British Columbia

We buy certified carbon credits from the Great Bear Forest Carbon Project to support the ecosystem-based management approach shared by the government, environmental groups, local forest companies and Indigenous Peoples. This project supports the conservation and biodiversity of the largest temperate rainforest in North America while contributing to the well-being of Indigenous communities.

Youth and financial literacy programs

New Pathways Foundation

In 2021, the Desjardins Foundation renewed its partnership with the New Pathways Foundation, donating \$15,000 in scholarships. These scholarships promote academic perseverance and provide financial assistance to Indigenous youth in Quebec working toward their high school diploma.

Students can use the scholarships to buy school materials or pay for services they need.

In 2021, 31 Indigenous students in Quebec were awarded these scholarships.

We also awarded the foundation an additional \$200,000 to lead a camping caravan across traditional lands and do outreach with Indigenous youth across Quebec. This province-wide tour will promote self-confidence and cultural pride and empower youth to take action to achieve their dreams and be their best selves. The caravan will offer a variety of new opportunities and experiences directly in communities.

Desjardins scholarships

In 2021, we awarded 34 Desjardins Foundation and caisse scholarships to students who self-identify as Indigenous.

Desjardins Foundation Prizes

In 2021, 4 schools and organizations in Indigenous communities received Desjardins Foundation Prizes to help them carry out inspiring projects for kindergarten to high school students. At École Annie Whiskeychan Memorial Elementary School, in the Cree community of Waskaganish, the literacy project leader put together a collection of books by Indigenous authors and illustrators so students could see themselves reflected in literature and learn the joy of reading.

Personal Finance: I'm in Charge

Personal Finance: I'm in Charge® is a free program that helps young adults and newcomers to Canada learn how to manage their finances with confidence. (See the **Financial literacy** section, [page 21](#).)

Caisse Desjardins de Wendake, Caisse Desjardins du Pekuakami, Caisse populaire Kahnawake and Caisse Desjardins Eenou Eeyou all participate in this program. With the help of stakeholders in the Côte-Nord region, a promotional pamphlet about the program is now available in Innu.

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Raising awareness about Indigenous issues and realities

The National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, created to honour the victims and survivors of residential schools, reminds us of the importance of reflecting on and raising awareness of the history and experiences of Indigenous Peoples.

We made this important day a holiday for all Desjardins employees to give everyone time to pause and remember the harm done to Indigenous Peoples.

Several activities to raise awareness about Indigenous realities

On June 21 in honour of National Indigenous Peoples Day and in late September in honour of the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, we hosted 2 webinars for employees. Both webinars encouraged employees to pause and reflect by helping them become more familiar with the history and lived experiences of Indigenous Peoples.

Kateri C. Jourdain, a First Nations member, hosted the first webinar. She sits on the boards of Caisse Desjardins de Sept-Îles and the Fédération des caisses Desjardins du Québec.

Alexandre Bacon, from the Innu community of Mashteuiatsh, hosted the second webinar. He specializes in the challenges facing Indigenous Peoples, with a special focus on governance and autonomy.

Inspiring Indigenous voices

We asked [4 inspiring Indigenous individuals](#) to share their unique and motivating experiences. This initiative was a resounding success with our employees and the general public. The articles we posted on our website have been viewed more than 17,000 times and were also published by Quebecor media and the newspaper *La Presse*. We also featured their stories in 4 social media posts that reached an average of 200,000 readers and generated strong engagement. Lastly, we included them in our newsletters.

Educating future healthcare professionals about Indigenous realities

Through our sponsorship and donation program, we support an Indigenous Peoples in the Community initiative that aims to educate future healthcare professionals about Indigenous realities in communities and urban areas from an ecological, economic, political and cultural point of view. Videos will be filmed and edited in collaboration with the Regroupement des centres d’amitié autochtones du Québec ([Quebec association of Indigenous friendship centres](#)) over a 2-year period. Videos will be made for students in audiology, occupational therapy, kinesiology, medicine, nutrition, speech therapy and physiotherapy.



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Awards and recognition

- We were ranked one of Canada’s Best Diversity Employers and Top Employers for Young People by Mediacorp Canada.
- We were #61 on *Forbes’* list of the World’s Top Female-Friendly Companies.



4.5 EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

As a cooperative and a socioeconomic leader, we believe in the value created by diversity of all kinds—including gender, background, culture, religion, age, experience, sexual orientation and ability. An equitable, diversified and inclusive workplace allows us to better meet the needs of our members, our clients, our teams and the communities we serve.

We follow the principles shared by all cooperatives. One of these principles is open and voluntary membership. That means we promote our cooperative nature by welcoming and serving people from all communities. It’s why we’re committed to building an organization that reflects the richness of our society and that celebrates diversity.

A 2024 strategic plan for achieving our equity, diversity and inclusion goals

We engaged in a strategic reflection on diversity and inclusion to guide us on the path we’ve chosen to take from 2021 to 2024. Spurred by everything we’ve done in recent years to become an even more inclusive organization, we renewed our commitment to go even further by identifying 4 guiding principles to help us roll out an organization-wide plan promoting equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI). The plan covers our people management practices, our business practices and our social responsibility practices. More specifically:

- We’ve publicly committed to a rigorous process to help us ensure equity, diversity and inclusion across our entire organization and be recognized as a caring and inclusive employer.

- We created an EDI office and appointed a chief EDI officer. The office and its team of seasoned professionals are committed to working with all employees to build an equitable, diversified and inclusive organization that will benefit society as a whole.
- We’ve added equity to our diversity and inclusion program. Equity guarantees fair treatment and equal access to job or advancement opportunities. It also refers to the actions we take to identify and eliminate potential obstacles that prevent certain groups from fully participating in all aspects of life at Desjardins.
- We enhanced governance to streamline our EDI efforts across the organization (member/client experience, supplier program, governance, etc.).

Setting and tracking 2021–2024 targets

Our approach as a caring employer focuses mainly on ensuring representation of the communities we serve. In 2021, as part of our strategic plan, we identified representation indicators for the following 3 priority groups:

- Women, with a goal of reaching gender parity for senior management positions and positions on the Federation and caisse boards of directors
- Youth
- Members of ethnocultural communities (including Indigenous Peoples), with representation indicators for senior management positions

Managers in our main business sectors can track the indicators using a dashboard and tailor their action plans to specific challenges. Our management committee also discusses the indicators to ensure that we stay focused on our goals and that everything we’re doing will help us achieve them.

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Breakdown of caisse directors and employees

Caisse director representation (%)		2021	2020	2019
By gender	Women	47.0	44.9	44.4
	Men	53.0	55.1	55.6
By age group	Under 35	17.9	15.2	15.4
	35–49	26.9	25.7	25.6
	50–64	33.1	33.5	33.9
	65+	22.0	25.6	25.0

In 2021, the director representation index in terms of the gender and age of members was 93.2%. This index weights gender and age equally.

Employee representation by gender (%)		2021	2020	2019
Senior managers ¹	Women	36.4	34.3	33.3
	Men	63.6	65.7	66.7
Managers	Women	59.1	59.3	58.7
	Men	40.9	40.7	41.3
Employees	Women	64.5	66.0	67.3
	Men	35.5	34.0	32.7

Employee representation by age group (%)		2021	2020	2019
Senior managers ¹	Under 30	0.0	0.0	0.0
	30–44	23.0	20.6	20.0
	45–54	48.7	49.5	49.2
	55+	28.3	29.9	30.8
Managers	Under 30	3.3	2.8	3.3
	30–44	47.7	45.9	44.7
	45–54	34.4	35.9	37.1
	55+	14.6	15.4	14.9
Employees	Under 30	20.7	20.0	20.7
	30–44	41.7	40.8	39.6
	45–54	21.4	22.4	23.0
	55+	16.1	16.9	16.7

¹ In 2018, the definition of senior manager was expanded to include the management level of director (class 7 or higher).

Representation of cultural communities ² (%)	2021	2020	2019
All of Desjardins Group	16.4	13.8	12.6
Senior managers	7.0	5.8	5.1
Managers	9.7	8.6	8.2
Employees	17.1	14.3	13.0

² Senior managers, managers and employees who voluntarily self-identified as a visible minority, ethnic minority or Indigenous Person.



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Creating a culture of equity, diversity and inclusion

Raising awareness about diversity and inclusion

Our #TogetherForReal events help employees and board members become more aware of the issues and challenges that people who are part of minority groups face, and realize how we can all help each other discover and fully experience the wealth of diversity. During these meetings, we look at intersectionality to explore the challenges faced by people who are part of more than one minority group in greater detail.

Here are some of the events and issues we focused on:

- Black History Month
- International Women’s Day
- International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia
- Neurodiversity
- Unconscious bias
- National Indigenous Peoples Day
- National Day for Truth and Reconciliation
- International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women
- International Migrants Day

Combatting racism and discrimination

To support the sectors that work closely with our members and clients, we’ve committed to creating healthy and safe work environments that are free of any form of discrimination. Tools and content are available to help manage difficult situations involving members and clients. We’re committed to respecting and valuing diversity in all its forms.

We’ve also arranged discussion groups, that are held every 2 weeks, on racism and discrimination. It’s a safe place where employees can speak freely and it helps make everyone aware of the challenges racialized persons face. These groups, which started up after the murder of George Floyd, are extremely popular among our employees.

Unconscious bias: How to spot and avoid it

Since 2020, we’ve been offering caisse board members training on unconscious bias. In 2021, we continued to promote this training to help board members become more mindful when carrying out their responsibilities.



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Concrete efforts to promote equity, diversity and inclusion

Women

Empowering Women

In February 2021, we introduced Empowering Women, a Canada-wide network of all women and their allies at Desjardins. This network gives our female employees and directors an opportunity to grow, connect, stay informed and share their stories. We've developed an online and mobile platform that they can use to network, get information and participate in activities and forums.

Female Empowerment program

Developed in partnership with [The A Effect](#), this program is open to all women, so they can tap into their full potential. More than 95% of the over 2,000 women who have now completed the program highly recommend it.

We've also created a learning path just for female business owners. Not only does this initiative help them network with other entrepreneurs, but it's also a great opportunity for them to collaborate, grow their knowledge and help others.

Female leadership development program

In 2021, we continued to offer leadership development programs for women at various management levels, including:

- A joint program with The A Effect that provides women with tools for communicating their goals more effectively. In 2021, 120 women participated in the program.

- Our Women in Leadership Excellence program, which helps women with great potential become confident leaders.
- A mentorship platform that offers a dynamic and personalized way to grow professionally by sharing experiences, knowledge and ideas with a Desjardins mentor.

Podcasts encouraging female leadership in caisse boards of directors

We teamed up with [The A Effect](#) to develop a series of 12 French-language podcasts with tips and strategies from successful women on how to achieve a rewarding career. There are 3 original podcasts featuring inspiring female caisse board chairs, plus 9 other podcasts on topics like confidence, risk-taking, exercising influence and power dynamics.

Women in Governance certification

In 2021, we earned Gold Parity Certification from Women in Governance. This certification looks at parity in management bodies, but also assesses an organization's succession planning and structures that provide women at all levels with opportunities for career advancement. Women in Governance is an organization founded in 2010 to support women in their leadership development, career advancement and access to board seats.

Black people

Since signing the BlackNorth Initiative in July 2020, we've taken steps to uphold our commitment. We've also been setting ethnocultural minority targets, including one to ensure representation in senior management positions.

Black History Month

In February 2021, we rolled out activities to mark Black History Month. We kicked off the month with a talk by BlackNorth Initiative's Executive Director, Dahabo Ahmed Omer. A true role model for members of all Black communities, she has played a key role in improving the lives of Black Canadians. Throughout Black History Month, employees were invited to share what they know and what they've learned about Black history and culture.

Remembering George Floyd

In May 2021, we marked the anniversary of George Floyd's death with a round-table discussion. We invited distinguished guests for an open discussion on the impact this tragic event has had here in Canada.

LGBTQ+ community

For 13 years, our LGBTQ+ committee has been raising awareness across the organization about the realities this community faces. The committee supports and sponsors a number of activities and helps put on annual events. It also looks at issues impacting our employees, members and clients.

Awareness-raising and support

We produced an [awareness-raising video](#), for internal and external viewers, to highlight what we do to support LGBTQ+ communities. We've also told all our employees about the ProAlly training we're presenting in partnership with Fondation Émergence.

On International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia, we hosted a talk to help our employees learn more about how LGBTQ+ rights are changing and what it's like to be transgender in Quebec.

We've taken steps to make our communications and internet content more inclusive and we've updated our language directive to reflect our position.

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Newcomers

We have a dedicated team of 60 employees [serving newcomers to Canada and visible minorities](#), as well as a representative office in Europe.

Newcomers have access to [webinars](#)—in English, in French and in Spanish on request—to help them get to know our banking and financial system better. We’ve also created a [Facebook page](#) for new immigrants and people who are planning to come to Canada. On the page, they’ll find content and presentations with everything they need to know to successfully get settled in Canada

Our cultural community development team is present for immigrant communities through strategic local and national partnerships.

We also provide these clients with plenty of information and financial education materials, including:

- [Settling down, studying and working in Canada: Our guide to help you prepare for your arrival](#)
- [Preparing to live in Canada](#)

Indigenous Peoples

See the **Relationships with Indigenous Peoples and communities** section, [page 56](#).

Donations and sponsorships

Through donations and sponsorships, we support a wide array of initiatives promoting EDI. Here are some of the promising initiatives we support:

Pathways to Education

This organization offers resources and a support network to help young people in low-income communities graduate from high school and build a foundation for their future success.

Université de la Rue

This organization has set up a collaborative platform to train and raise awareness among medicine and health sciences students about community life and vulnerable populations. Right now, the platform is aimed at students in the Université de Montréal’s healthcare program. Depending on how well things go, the solution may soon be rolled out across the province.

City of Toronto

The city offers a youth skills development pathway in financial services for Toronto young people, particularly Black, Indigenous and racialized youth. The goal is to create a more equitable and prosperous future for BIPOC clients, colleagues, and communities by removing barriers and expanding employment opportunities through accessible skills development training.

Toronto Community Benefits Network

This network partners with community, labour and government organizations to expand opportunities in the unionized construction industry among historically disadvantaged communities and equity-seeking groups. These communities and groups include Black, Indigenous and other racialized people, with a focus on women, youth, newcomers, local businesses, minority-owned businesses and social enterprises. Community benefits agreements ensure that the workforce and supply chain building public infrastructure projects reflect the diversity of the City of Toronto and that residents in areas where development is occurring experience neighbourhood and environmental improvements that support quality jobs and strong local economies.

Talent acquisition

We’re now recruiting abroad to meet growing labour needs in various fields of employment.

The team of experts working in our Immigration Support Centre helps temporary foreign workers and Desjardins managers with the immigration process.

The talent acquisition team ensures bias-free candidate screening. In 2021, the team started working on an initiative to make the application process anonymous as of 2022.

Supplier diversity

In 2021, we rolled out our supplier diversity program to make good on our commitment to broaden access for under-represented groups in Canada.

In addition to introducing new inclusion processes, we continued to collect data from our suppliers to determine and categorize their diversity profile.

To ensure we have best practices in place for diversifying our supply chain, we renewed our Canadian Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce and Women Business Enterprises Canada Council memberships in 2021.

Members and clients: Equitable products and services for all

See **New product development and underwriting policy for property and casualty insurance** in the **Member/client experience** section, [page 37](#).

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Awards and recognition

- We were ranked one of Canada’s 100 best employers in 2021 according to *Forbes* and distinguished ourselves within the banking and financial services industry, placing 2nd in that category just behind the Bank of Canada. *Forbes* also ranked us #93 on its list of the World’s Best Employers.
- Mediacorp ranked us one of Canada’s Top 100 Employers for the 11th straight year.
- We were ranked one of Canada’s Top Family-Friendly Employers by Mediacorp Canada.
- In 2021, the Desjardins Mentorship Program won a bronze medal from the Brandon Hall Group for leadership development in the Best Advance in Coaching and Mentoring category.
- We came in at #12 in LinkedIn’s annual ranking of ability to advance, skills growth, company stability, company affinity, gender diversity and educational background.
- Our project on transforming how we work was selected as a finalist for project management excellence in PMI Montréal’s 2021 Elixir Contest. The jury was impressed with how well the project was executed and our commitment to offering a solution to enrich the employee experience, helping us stand out as a top employer yet again.

4.6 ENGAGED EMPLOYER

At Desjardins, people are the backbone of our business. Our 53,783 employees enjoy great work conditions, training opportunities and benefits. We believe that talent development is based on building a strong manager-employee relationship and maintaining an authentic dialogue throughout the year. By managing talent inclusively, we’re able to help all our employees reach their full potential. Everyone is invited to contribute so that we can meet our business challenges, together. This vision now plays a key role in how we expect our managers to act. When you work for us, you have access to a world of career possibilities and a huge community of passionate employees and leaders who want to see you get ahead. You’re also part of a vibrant cooperative financial group that values diversity and inclusion.



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One of Quebec’s leading employers

[Desjardins is one of the best employers in Canada](#), and there are many perks to working here:

- Job opportunities in 20 or so different fields and more than 800 job profiles in both financial and non-financial fields (education, information technology, communications, etc.) across Canada and abroad
- Innovative management practices and tools to offer managers and employees a people-focused experience and a rewarding career with opportunities to explore other roles within the organization
- Competitive total compensation package that includes great benefits
- A flexible work environment that promotes work/life balance
- An organization-wide commitment to sustainable development and responsible finance
- Learning opportunities through training and skills development

Total compensation for employees

We grow engagement by offering our employees a total compensation package that focuses on their well-being and financial security:

- Competitive base salary
- General incentive plan that recognizes collective achievements
- Life and critical illness insurance

- Disability insurance
- Extended healthcare insurance, including drug, health and dental coverage
- Competitive benefits for major life events, such as the birth or adoption of a child
- Wellness initiatives
- Access to group RRSPs with a wide range of investment solutions
- Defined benefit pension plan

Work/life balance

Various options are available to help our employees achieve work/life balance, including:

- Flexible work schedules (compressed work week, flexible hours, etc.)
- Telework (hybrid or full time) as a separate work arrangement
- Time off (4 weeks of vacation as of the first year of employment, including 5 days when you’re hired, 12 statutory holidays, 2 paid days for family obligations, etc.)

Options may vary by individual needs, job requirements and working conditions.

New work arrangements and relief measures

In 2021, we continued to have as many employees as possible work from home to keep everyone healthy and safe. The ways we work will continue to evolve based on public health measures.

Before COVID-19, about 5% of our employees were already working from home full time. But once the pandemic hit, we quickly adapted so that more than 80% of our employees could work from home to limit the spread of COVID-19. When the public health measures are lifted, our employees will have access to new work arrangements based on their responsibilities and the organization’s needs. Our new work arrangements mean greater flexibility about where employees will be working. There will be 3 possibilities: 100% in the office, 100% at home and a combination of working in the office and at home.

In 2020, we implemented innovative measures to be there for employees who were not able to work from home during the pandemic—paying for their parking or taxis, giving them an extra half-day of vacation per week, paying for childcare expenses, and even reimbursing them for the cost of cancelled personal trips that weren’t covered under their insurance. These measures evolved during the pandemic to keep pace with new circumstances.



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Employee health and wellness

We offer our employees and managers a wide range of health and wellness services and initiatives, including:

- A reimbursement program for health and wellness expenses that encourages employees to take care of their physical and mental health
- A permanent \$1,000 allowance for the reimbursement of ergonomic and IT equipment and accessories
- An employee assistance program that offers a number of services to help employees through difficult times
- A Health is Cool 360° platform that includes a wealth of healthcare information and useful resources
- A telemedicine service that provides online access to healthcare professionals for greater flexibility and a better work/life balance
- A sleep health program that offers tips, support and screening
- A number of tools, videos and talks to help employees and managers take care of their physical health and achieve balance through the new hybrid work arrangements



Talent management and employee experience

Our engagement level reached a new high 2021

Despite the pandemic, the average engagement rate at Desjardins was 84%, the highest rate since we implemented Officevibe in 2017 and well above the 76% average in 2021 for other companies using this platform.

A talent management approach to help each employee reach their full potential

In 2021, we rolled out a new talent management approach that aims to help our employees reach their full potential and meet our business challenges. By using specific and standardized criteria (self-awareness, motivation to develop, perception of being efficient and adaptability) to take a closer look at what each person has to offer, we're able to develop our talent even more by having the right person, in the right place, at the right time.

New onboarding camp

On June 1, we launched our online onboarding camp for new employees. At the camp, they learn more about the Desjardins Fundamentals (see the **Cooperation** section, [page 13](#)) and how to always do what's best for members and clients. Since the launch, 5,000 new employees have attended the camp. The average satisfaction score is 9/10.

Desjardins behaviours

We've adopted a set of behaviours to help us always do what's best for members and clients.

Covering aspects like writing in plain language, making things easier, sharing information and focusing on being relevant instead of striving for perfection, these 8 employee and 8 manager behaviours allow everyone in our organization to act as one big team and always do what's best for members and clients.

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New employee hires and employee turnover

The retention rate for permanent employees is 92.3%, which is a testament to our engaging and dynamic work environment.

Permanent employees – External hires	2021 (#)	2021 (%)	2020 (#)	2020 (%)	2019 (#)	2019 (%)
By age group						
Under 30	3,436	39.4	1,808	40.6	2,473	47.1
30–44	3,877	44.5	1,919	43.1	2,034	38.7
45–54	1,039	11.9	529	11.9	554	10.6
55+	361	4.1	192	4.4	191	3.6
By gender						
Women	4,790	55.0	2,172	48.8	2,872	54.7
Men	3,923	45.0	2,275	51.2	2,380	45.3
By location						
Quebec	8,144	93.5	4,008	90.1	4,630	88.1
Ontario	496	5.7	377	8.5	550	10.5
Rest of Canada	73	0.8	62	1.4	72	1.4

Permanent employee departures (%)	2021	2020	2019
Resignation rate	7.7	5.2	7.0
Retirement rate	2.3	2.3	2.9
Involuntary departure rate	1.7	1.9	2.1
Turnover rate	11.7	9.5	12.0

Breakdown of permanent employee departures (turnover)	2021 (#)	2021 (%)	2020 (#)	2020 (%)	2019 (#)	2019 (%)
By age group						
Under 30	1,760	31.2	1,140	26.8	1,408	27.7
30–44	1,990	35.3	1,353	31.9	1,691	33.2
45–54	554	9.8	496	11.7	612	12.0
55+	1,334	23.7	1,251	29.6	1,379	27.1
By gender						
Women	3,447	61.1	2,681	63.2	3,339	65.6
Men	2,191	38.9	1,559	36.8	1,751	34.4
By location						
Quebec	5,009	88.8	3,825	90.2	4,502	88.4
Ontario	555	9.8	370	8.7	538	10.6
Rest of Canada	74	1.3	45	1.1	50	1.0

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Skills development and training

Hours of training

In 2021, we invested \$107.3 million—or 2.8% of our total payroll—in 1.6 million hours of staff training and development activities, in large part through the Desjardins Cooperative Institute.

Programs for upgrading employee skills

At Desjardins, we encourage our people to develop skills that align with our strategic priorities and cooperative values. Our skills development program has 3 components: leadership development and cross-sector training (both provided by the Desjardins Cooperative Institute) and job-specific training (provided by the business sectors). In 2021, we helped our people grow by focusing on the behaviours needed for our cultural shift, the prevention aspect of information technology security and physical security, the skills needed in the digital era and mental health.

Continuing education

We offer support in many forms to employees who wish to further their education at recognized educational institutions:

- Flexible work schedules
- 100% paid training time when training is a job requirement and 50% paid training time for field-specific academic training outside of work hours
- Reimbursement of tuition fees and the cost of required textbooks and material upon successful completion of a course

Planning for the future

We offer paid internship programs to college and university graduates. These programs give participants the opportunity to acquire skills and knowledge specific to the financial sector. In 2021, we hired 655 interns. It’s win-win: Interns get valuable on-the-job experience and our teams get additional help.

Intensive retirement planning sessions are available to members of the Desjardins Group Pension Plan who are 50 or older. In 2021, 888 people participated in these sessions.



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Awards and recognition

- We rose to #157 on Léger Marketing's ranking of Quebec's most reputable companies—the highest climb in the rankings (+27 places).



5.1 PEOPLE-FOCUSED GOVERNANCE

At Desjardins, the primary purpose of our governance practices is to support our mission of contributing to improving the economic and social well-being of people and communities. Based on strong cooperative values, our approach to governance takes into account legal and regulatory requirements and the long-term interests of our organization and our members and clients.

To learn more and read the 2021 governance highlights, see the [Governance section of Desjardins Group's Annual Report](#).

General meetings held 100% online

Desjardins Group general meetings are a high point in our cooperative group's democratic life. For the second year in a row, they were held online because of the pandemic. With the new remote, live voting system we introduced in 2021, delegates from across Quebec were able to elect members of the board of directors and the Board of Ethics and Professional Conduct.

In the network, 213 Desjardins caisses in Quebec and Ontario held their regular annual general meetings (AGMs) online between March 29 and April 25, 2021. We made innovative changes to AccèsD so that in addition to being able to vote on member dividends, members could also elect their caisse's directors. Nearly 3 times more members voted compared to in-person voting at the 2019 AGMs.

By innovating and adapting, we were able to protect our underlying democratic values. The big steps we've taken in the last 2 years have made us even more optimistic about the growing number of members taking part in their caisse's democratic life.

Community representation and diversity on Desjardins's board of directors

In addition to the chair, the board of directors can count on the contribution of 15 elected members from the caisse network, representing our cooperative roots, and 6 co-opted members with complementary skills and backgrounds. Other than the chair, the directors are all independent from Federation management. There are 8 women (36%) on the board, including one Indigenous woman.

Overview of caisse and Federation democratic structures

Community collaboration groups

These groups bring together caisses in a specific area whose members share an economic and social connection.

These groups ensure collaboration between caisses in a community and intercooperation for the benefit of members. Their activities include implementing and promoting financial literacy and solidarity-based finance initiatives. Groups meet up to 5 times per calendar year, in person or remotely.

Each caisse is represented by either its chair or another director appointed each year by the caisse. The group must also have at least one director under the age of 35 or a young intern director.

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Desjardins Collaboration Forum

The Desjardins Collaboration Forum is responsible for discussing strategic issues and influencing strategic planning. The Collaboration Forum is also how we consult caisses about changes to the democratic and governance structure of the Federation, among other things.

The Desjardins Collaboration Forum is made up of the Desjardins Group President and CEO, the chair of each caisse (or a director appointed to replace them) and the general manager of each caisse. The members of the Federation’s board of directors and Board of Ethics and Professional Conduct are also part of the Collaboration Forum, but without voting rights.

The Desjardins Collaboration Forum met 4 times in 2021 to discuss topics such as:

- The roles of Desjardins stakeholders
- The status of operations
- Support for businesses
- 2022 budget directions
- The legislative and regulatory ecosystem in Quebec and the rest of Canada and its impact on Desjardins
- Changes to the organization’s financial structure
- Financial literacy and financial empowerment for our members and clients

Desjardins Group’s electoral college

The president and CEO is elected by an electoral college made up of the caisse board chairs or the directors designated to replace them (when necessary).

Each vote is weighted according to the number of members in each caisse.

Nomination and Election Committee

This committee consists of at least 5 members appointed by the Federation’s board of directors. It oversees the proper conduct of the election process for positions on the board of directors and the Board of Ethics and Professional Conduct (BEPC). It also recommends candidates for co-opted director positions on the Federation’s board and appointed director positions on subsidiary boards. The committee also oversees the election of the President and CEO of Desjardins Group. With the exception of one position reserved for an independent director from the Federation’s board, committee members are not members of the Federation’s board or the BEPC.



Including youth in decision-making

Youth Advisory Board

Our Youth Advisory Board is made up of 4 caisse members, 4 caisse directors and 4 Desjardins employees, all between the ages of 18 and 35. Reporting to the President’s Office, its mandate is to give our board and management committee insight into the priorities of young adults. By giving our young members a voice, the Youth Advisory Board helps us improve the way we serve and meet the needs of young people.

The Youth Advisory Board has continued its work during the pandemic and a new cohort was appointed for a 2-year term in March 2021. The advisory board met 7 times in 2021. They also met with the Desjardins Group Management Committee and board of directors to discuss topics such as strategic planning for 2021–2024, post-pandemic work arrangements, creating value, and feedback from members and clients. The advisory board also looked at financial literacy, our climate ambition, digital identity and growth.

Young Intern Director Program

Our [Young Intern Director Program](#) provides an opportunity for young people between the ages of 18 and 30 to:

- Represent their community on their caisse’s board of directors
- Play an active role on the board, without voting rights
- Contribute to the democratic processes of Canada’s leading cooperative financial group

This program gives participants hands-on experience supporting our mission of financial education and cooperation and our commitment to young people and communities.

As at December 31, 2021, we had 109 young intern directors in Quebec and Ontario.

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5.2 RESPONSIBLE FINANCE

We’ve signed internationally recognized responsible finance commitments. We’re dedicated to accelerating the integration of environmental, social and governance (ESG) criteria into our business decisions and activities.

We follow our sustainable development policy and the recommendations of our ESG Steering Committee to incorporate ESG factors into our operations. In line with this, we’ve also taken strong positions on certain industries, as noted on the right of this page.

Our ESG performance according to external rating agencies or organizations

Rating organization	Rating (at January 31, 2022)	Position among diversified banks in North America
MSCI	A	
Moody's ESG Solutions	55/100	#1 out of 13 (July 2021)
Sustainalytics	14.9	#1 out of 13 (January 2022)
CDP (previously the Carbon Disclosure Project)	B	

Sustainable development policy

As we do every 5 years, we updated our sustainable development policy in 2020, making ESG criteria even more central to our practices. For the first time, we adapted the policy to include our caisses. This move will help us take a more unified approach to sustainable development at the local level, in keeping with our goals.

As at December 31, 2021, the policy had been adopted by 178 caisses out of 215, which is 83%. Our goal for 2021 was to have all caisses adopt the policy. We’re on track to reach that goal in 2022.

To learn more, read our sustainable development policies for [Desjardins Group](#) and the [caisses](#) (caisse policy in French only).



ESG positions

We’ve taken several strong positions on sectors that don’t line up with our sustainable development goals. We’ve also clarified our position on some ESG challenges. The ESG Steering Committee adopted the rules for applying these positions to give our business sectors clear guidelines for implementing them.

Tobacco

Tobacco and vaping products are harmful to both consumer health and the environment. We decided to stop investing in these industries and became one of the first organizations in North America to sign the Tobacco-Free Finance Pledge. The pledge was developed in collaboration with the United Nations Environment Programme Finance Initiative to support global anti-tobacco efforts.



Coal

In 2020, we upheld our commitment to divest from the coal sector and became the first financial institution in North America to join the Powering Past Coal Alliance. Promoted by Canada, the UK and the United Nations, this coalition of businesses, governments and organizations is working to accelerate the phase-out of unabated coal power.



We committed to divesting from coal, while providing support on an exceptional basis to companies in the industry with a clear and firm plan to transition from coal to renewable energy in line with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Guidelines (by 2030 for OECD countries) and our own [position on coal](#).

Reclaim Finance reported that we’d adopted one of the world’s most robust coal exit policies—and the most robust in North America.

[Read Reclaim Finance's full analysis of our position on coal.](#)

Non-conventional weapons

We exclude certain weapons subject to international treaties, such as anti-personnel mines; cluster munitions; nuclear, biological and chemical weapons; and weapons of mass destruction.

For other defence and security products, services and players, we conduct a case-by-case analysis mindful of the potential for military, security or police equipment to be misused, as well as the risk of corruption and diversion.

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Exposure to sectors¹ on which we have a stated position

We monitor the application of our positions through quarterly reporting on our exposure, as shown in the table below.

	Coal	Tobacco	Non-conventional weapons
Share of our investments ²	0.1%	0.01%	0.02%
Share of our financing ³	< 0.001%	< 0.001%	—

¹ Criteria: [see our 2020 Social and Cooperative Responsibility Report \(page 84\)](#).
² The residual exposure in our investments is chiefly due to indexes, which make it difficult to exclude certain securities (regulatory and cost issues). Our teams are looking at ways to reduce our exposure to these sectors through passive management.
³ The share of our financing is calculated by dividing loan commitments to companies in excluded sectors by our total financing.

International frameworks and commitments for responsible finance

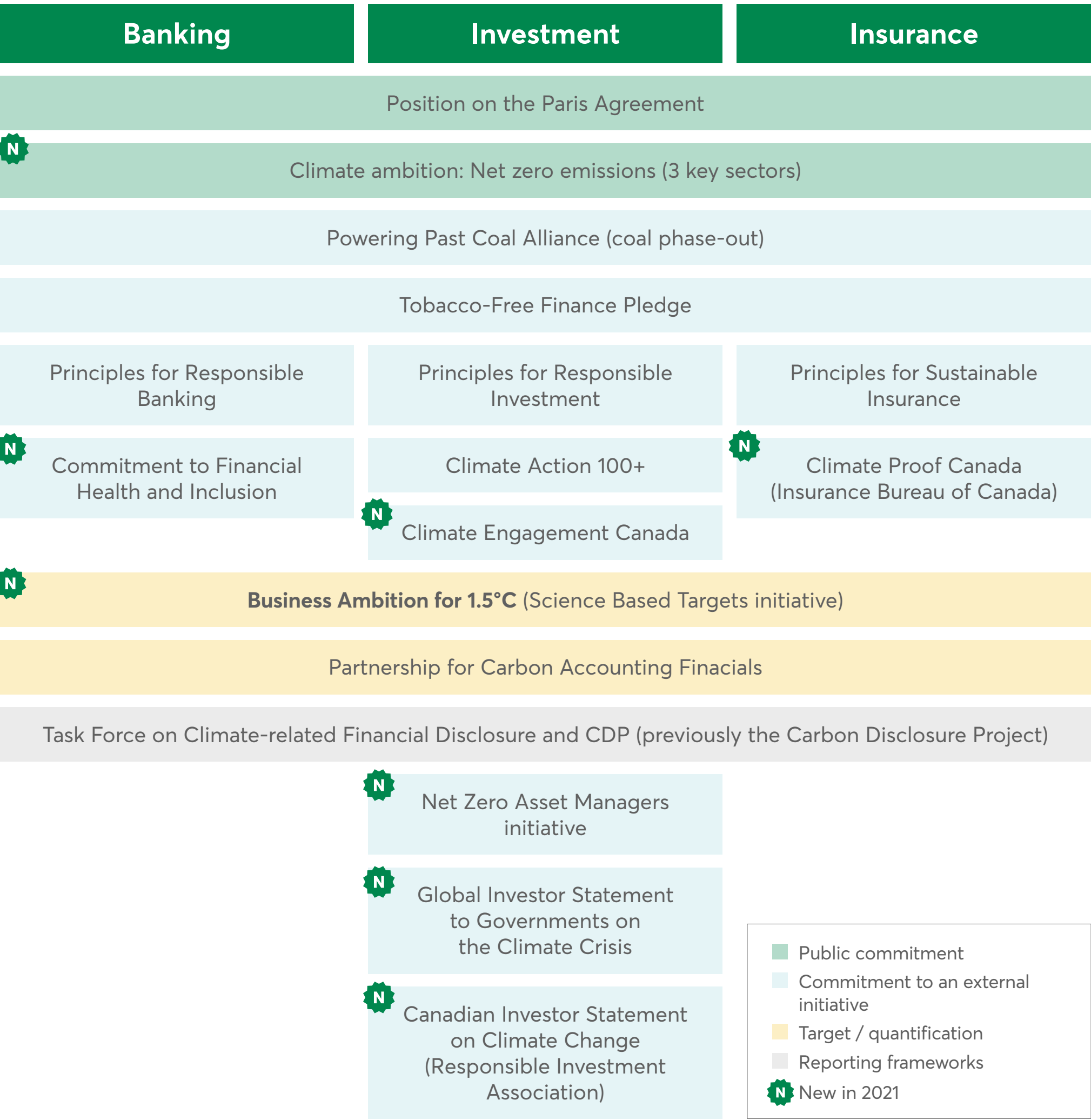


We continued to take strides to advance responsible finance regulations and frameworks in 2021.

[Finance Montréal recognized](#) our active support for Montreal’s successful bid to become a host city for the International Sustainability Standards Board. Our president and CEO, Guy Cormier, regularly contributes to the Sustainable Finance Action Council, which consists of public- and private-sector financial experts. We were also the presenting partner of the first Sustainable Finance Summit organized in October 2021 by Finance Montréal.

As a leader in responsible finance, we comply with internationally recognized principles and frameworks. The following table provides an overview of our commitments.

Commitments and initiatives: Climate change and responsible finance



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Financing

To learn more about how we’re integrating ESG initiatives into our financing operations, see the [Principles for Responsible Banking report](#).



Rolling out an ESG chart for medium-sized businesses

In 2021, we adapted the ESG chart used to grant and review financing for large businesses to suit medium-sized businesses (over 500 employees). That means going forward, we’ll be able to take ESG criteria into account when granting financing to medium-sized businesses.

Guiding principles for businesses in carbon-intensive sectors

We’ve adopted some guiding principles and tools to assess carbon-intensive businesses and prioritize supporting a just energy transition for the ones with solid ESG performance, climate risk action plans and credible targets for reducing GHG emissions.

\$500 million to finance social and environmental projects

In September 2021, we made our debut issue of \$500 million in sustainable bonds. The net proceeds raised from this issue will be used to finance or refinance loans, investments and internal or external projects that meet the green assets or social assets eligibility criteria, such as renewable energy, energy efficiency and affordable housing. The interest in this program is a testament to how relevant and robust it is.

To learn more, see the Climate Action at Desjardins report ([page 13](#)), read the [report on our sustainable bonds issue](#) or refer to this [infographic](#).

Insurance

To learn more about how we’re integrating ESG initiatives into our insurance operations, see the [Principles for Sustainable Insurance report](#).



Joining the Sustainable Finance Working Group

The Insurance Bureau of Canada (IBC) invited Valérie Lavoie, Executive Vice-President, Property and Casualty Insurance, to join the Sustainable Finance Working Group. The working group’s mandate is to develop industry positions on questions of sustainable finance and extra-financial reporting and promote them to regulators and the federal government. The working group will develop white papers and positions to guide sustainable finance and reporting policy and regulations.

Ranked #5 in ShareAction report

We received international recognition for our responsible practices in property and casualty insurance and life and health insurance, ranking #5 out of 31 in the first edition of the *Insuring Disaster* report published by ShareAction. The report is evidence of the ESG progress made by our insurers (Desjardins General Insurance Group and Desjardins Financial Security) and our asset manager (Desjardins Global Asset Management) and demonstrates our transparency. The ranking is based on performance in the areas of governance, climate change, human rights and biodiversity, in both investment and underwriting activities. ShareAction is a European non-governmental organization that’s working to build a more responsible global investment sector.

Investment

We’re committed to maintaining exemplary practices. That’s why 4 of our components have signed the Principles for Responsible Investment (PRI) under the United Nations Environment Programme Finance Initiative (UNEP FI). [See their reporting on page 5 of this document](#).



Responsible investment (RI) means integrating ESG factors into investment selection and management decisions and taking a long-term view by investing in companies with a focus on sustainable development.

We’re a leader in RI in Canada with the largest range of RI products and nearly \$120 billion in assets subject to ESG filters as at December 31, 2021. Today, we are a leading proponent of the approach across the country.

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A \$330 million investment in renewable energy

In January 2021, we became a strategic anchor investor in a new investment platform dedicated to the North American renewable energy sector through a partnership with alternative asset manager Power Sustainable. We contributed \$330 million,¹ representing a third of this \$1 billion platform.

Key responsible investment commitments in 2021

Around the world:

- **Net Zero Asset Managers initiative:** A group of investors aiming for net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. Launched in December 2020, it has 236 signatories and US\$57.5 trillion in assets under management.
- **Climate Action 100+:** An initiative of investors asking companies to improve their governance on climate change, reduce their greenhouse gas emissions and strengthen their climate-related financial communication.
- **FAIRR (Where’s the beef?):** An investor network focusing on ESG risks in the global food sector.

In Canada:

- **Canadian Investor Statement on Climate Change:** A statement, coordinated by the Responsible Investment Association, expressing Canadian financial institutions’ commitment to climate action through their investment practices. We’re one of the 36 founding signatories, representing more than \$5.5 billion in assets under management.
- **Climate Engagement Canada:** An initiative fostering dialogue between the financial community and Canadian businesses to promote a just transition to a net zero economy. We’ll be working with around 20 other investors to initiate dialogue with Canadian businesses on adopting best practices for climate change risks and opportunities.

Carefully selected companies

We use an innovative approach to integrate ESG criteria into our investment process. Our portfolio managers assess the financial health and ESG practices of companies when selecting and monitoring investments. We believe that a company that cares as much about its ESG policies as it does about its financial performance is better equipped to meet the challenges of the global economy (see our [responsible investment process](#)).

Shareholder engagement

We’ve also chosen to engage with companies in which we have stocks or bonds through dialogue and shareholder voting. Our components publish detailed reports about this each year.

To learn more, see [DGAM's Policy on the Exercise of Proxy Voting Rights](#).

How we select portfolio managers

Our criteria prioritize portfolio managers renowned for the quality of their approach and their results, including ESG integration. All Desjardins Funds portfolio managers are PRI signatories. For the SocieTerra line, we choose portfolio managers that firmly believe that taking ESG factors into account in corporate management creates value.



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5.3 DESJARDINS GROUP SECURITY OFFICE

The Desjardins Group Security Office launched in early 2020 and continued to grow throughout 2021. It currently employs 1,166 professionals. The Security Office’s primary mission is to reaffirm Desjardins’s commitment to security by protecting members and clients, their assets and their personal information. It is responsible for identifying and responding to all types of security threats. Our experts handle situations involving privacy protection, information security, physical security, data governance, financial crime and fraud prevention.

To learn more about how we keep our members and clients safe, see the **Promoting digital security** section ([page 36](#)).

Creating the Desjardins Liaison Office

We continued to develop security mechanisms throughout 2021 by strengthening the consistency of Security Office actions and implementing cross-sector security strategies. We launched the Desjardins Liaison Office to interface with law enforcement agencies and other financial institutions. The Liaison Office is a central hub for all requests for cooperation or information, including those from the police. Since the Liaison Office was established, dialogue with the police has been very positive, as has the response from our partners.

We’re the first Canadian financial institution to create this kind of communication channel. There is a formal process in place between Desjardins and the police to cooperate during missing persons investigations, including AMBER Alerts.

In 2022, the Desjardins Liaison Office will expand its activities across Canada to work with the Ontario Provincial Police and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. We’re also currently working on strengthening international ties to be able to cooperate with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) in the US and the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) elsewhere around the world.

Launching the Security for Everyone dashboard

We rolled out a new dashboard, Security for Everyone, to increase our employees’ understanding and accountability around security. This dynamic, interactive platform helps our employees and managers adopt security best practices in their day to day.



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Mandatory security training

In 2021, we raised awareness about cybersecurity with managers and shared the training program with employees.

Training	Objective	Employees	Managers	Completion rate ¹	Deadline
Security introduction training (Security for Everyone dashboard)	A collection of training videos about different security practices, including information security, fraud, financial crime, data governance, physical security and personal information protection.	●	●	Completion rate per video: ² <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduction to security: 34%• Information security: 27%• Financial crimes: 25%• Data governance: 23%• Physical security: 23%	March 31, 2022, or within 3 months of hiring
Protecting personal and confidential information is everyone’s business!	This training explores how to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify personal and confidential information• Understand the roles and responsibilities of the organization and its employees• Protect information by applying the need-to-know principle• Identify and report privacy and information security incidents	●	●	98.4% ³	Within 3 months of hiring
Identifying phishing emails	This training explores how to recognize the red flags of fraudulent emails so employees don’t fall for phishing attempts.	●	●	78%	Within 3 months of hiring
Conflicts of interest: Don’t look the other way!	This training explores the basics of how to recognize conflicts of interest and what to do when they occur.	●	●	61%	Within 3 months of hiring
Sound commercial practices at Desjardins	This training explores how to identify and apply sound commercial practices with members and clients.	●	●	90%	December 31, 2021, or within 3 months of hiring
Privacy policy and the types of consent	To show our commitment to security and kick off activities surrounding the adoption of Bill 64, ⁴ we updated our privacy policy and types of consent.	●	●	76%	January 31, 2022, or within 3 months of hiring

¹ The completion rate is calculated by comparing the number of active employees who have completed the training to the total number of employees, including managers and consultants.
² The training videos launched gradually between October 2021 and January 2022. The deadline to complete the training is March 31, 2022. The published completion rate only takes into account employees who completed the training in 2021.
³ The completion rate for the **Protecting personal and confidential information is everyone’s business!** course is calculated by comparing the number of active employees who have completed the training to the total number enrolled.
⁴ An Act to Modernize Legislative Provisions as Regards the Protection of Personal Information.

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Training	Objective	Employees	Managers	Completion rate	Deadline
Anti-corruption training	This training explores how to understand what corruption is, recognize at-risk situations and respond appropriately to protect the organization and do what’s best for members, clients and communities.		●	64% ¹	December 31, 2021, or within 3 months of hiring
Desjardins identity and access management: A specific training program designed for managers!	This training explores how to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Determine best practices for identity and access management• Recognize manager responsibilities		●	89%	December 31, 2021, or within 3 months of hiring
The business manager role and their delegate in identity and access management	This training explores how to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify the responsibilities of business managers and their delegates• Identify the steps to follow to process an access request• Identify next steps when a request is incomplete		●	92%	December 10, 2021, or within 3 months of hiring
The access management technician (AMT) and their manager: When the protection of members’ and clients’ assets depends on their actions	This training explores how to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify the responsibilities of an access management technician• Identify the steps to follow to process an access request• Identify next steps when a request is incomplete		●	77%	December 10, 2021, or within 3 months of hiring

¹ Although this training is only mandatory for managers, it’s available to all Desjardins employees. The published completion rate is calculated by comparing the total number of active employees who have completed the training to the total number of employees, including managers and consultants.

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Appendices

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- Climate Action at Desjardins (TCFD)
- Principles for Responsible Banking (PRB)
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- Sustainability Accounting Standards Board (SASB)

Partnerships to boost research and innovation in cybersecurity

We collaborate and build security partnerships with industry peers to promote research and innovation in the field.

In 2021:

- We continued the partnership we launched in 2018 with [Cybereco](#), a multi-sector cybersecurity reference in Quebec and the rest of Canada that helps limit the risks of cyber threats by educating businesses and individuals about fraudulent practices.
- We launched a [cybersecurity challenge](#) for Canadian startups with a total of \$45,000 in grants up for grabs and the opportunity to join Desjardins’s Startup in Residence accelerator and receive up to \$250,000 in funding.
- We actively contributed to innovation in the field of cybersecurity by helping set up a [research chair in cybersecurity and AI](#) at the École Polytechnique de Montréal and a [research chair in cybercrime prevention](#) (site in French only) at the Université de Montréal.
- We partnered with [École Cybersécurité](#) (site in French only) to recognize and encourage young people under 30 who have demonstrated a commitment to the field of cybersecurity.

