



Canada Towards 2030

Submission prepared by Mr. Eric Noël for the consultation on the



United
Nations



December 2023
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Three key ideas:

- INTERGOVERNMENTAL PANEL ON THE FUTURE OF HUMANITY
 - NATIONAL TIME SURPLUS ACCOUNTING INITIATIVE
 - INDIVIDUAL PERMANENT EDUCATIONAL ACCOUNT

Chapeau

With regards to POLICY BRIEF 4: BEYOND GDP The limits and deficiencies of the Gross Domestic Product metric have been recognized for a long time. Several new innovative approaches have been tested and pursued over the last decades. For example, *The Legatum Prosperity Index*, co-designed by Oxford Analytica in 2006, is in its 16th annual edition and continues to track a dozen pillars or indicators of drivers of well-being and wealth. The hybrid score allows for a global ranking of countries' prosperity dynamics. It covers topics such as personal freedom, governance, social capital, health, education, enterprise conditions and the environment. This and other indices serve a valuable purpose and should receive more recognition, as well as the consideration of the System of National Accounts leaders when they explore alternative measures of national progress. Therefore, and in theory, a new *Value Dashboard of Key Indicators* should be easily assembled by March 2024. But we suspect that there will be no unanimity and consensus amongst Member States as to those indicators or their specific definitions. We therefore suggest a new, universal national accounting value: **time surplus**. (*Statistical capacity-building and data* shall remain an important element of the "Beyond GDP" plan).

With regards to POLICY BRIEF 10: TRANSFORMING EDUCATION To facilitate the UN *Transforming Education* goals, specifically the promotion of lifelong learning, the global recognition of qualifications and diplomas, enhanced job mobility, and the financing of education, we recommend the universal creation of *Individual Permanent Educational Accounts* at the national level. Implementation and governance assistance at the country-level would be offered by a program bureau hosted within a UN Agency.

With regards to POLICY BRIEF 1: TO THINK AND ACT FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) succeeds in its mission because it provides facts and arguments that are scientific, neutral, professionally prepared and widely communicated. IPCC's work feeds into annual plenaries, COPs, other forums and regional/national decision-making bodies; raising awareness all over the world. We find inspiration in the IPCC's working framework to propose that a new "panel" (the *Intergovernmental Panel on the Future of Humanity*) be established at the *Summit of the Future*. Such panel would focus and formalize the future-oriented data, research and scenarios input needed by the *Future Generations* chapter and other aspects of the *Pact for the Future*. Thus, the concept

below could either become or report to the “*Intergovernmental Forum*” that is currently being considered in the *Common Agenda/Summit of the Future/Recommendations*. (Or the said *forum* becomes a *Plenary Session* of the panel described here.) The “*Envoy for Future Generations*” could be replaced by or act as the President of the new panel.

Chapter I. Sustainable development and financing for development

BEYOND GDP During the *Summit of the Future*, we recommend that Member States agree to establish a consultative group to lead the:

NATIONAL TIME SURPLUS ACCOUNTING INITIATIVE

[Draft concept]

Time is “the” universal, limited and fundamental resource for everyone, everywhere. We are born with a limited number of years to live, thus we all cherish time, albeit in different ways and circumstances. We also all follow a common time keeping system with minutes/hours and a calendar to either scientifically quantify time and physical or biological factors or output, or emotionally qualify time and its benefits or effects (past/present/future states or experiments). Yet what we achieve with this time, individually or collectively, is largely unaccounted for, as is our autonomy in using it (voluntary decisions or not).

We recommend that Systems of National Accounts leaders put a lot more emphasis on citizens’ time; its tracking and performance, and that countries look into a standardized calculations of “*personal time surplus for constant or improved material wealth*”. Such time surplus is created by individual and collective efficiencies in producing desired results or wealth (constant or improved) in less time. In such post-GDP observations, “growth” becomes the result of either diminishing time losses or of expanding the lifespan of either individuals or of valuable assets (not of increased value of goods or services).

Countries could aggregate data about the time (1) required to perform basic necessities or to achieve basic needs (e.g. time required to go to work or to school, to wait for health care services, to gather food, or to earn a required income), (2) voluntarily allocated to personal or social development (to volunteer in a community project, to earn a degree, or to consume culture or play sport), and (3) theoretically saved in the future (more resilient energy, water or transport systems, additional preserved natural resources, leading healthier lifestyles, or extra pension contributions). Better understanding these three sets of times would allow experts to revisit “productivity tracking”, to estimate “productive time” and “elective time” ratios, and thus create *National Time Surplus* indicators. Ultimately, such time surplus logic will reassign policy priorities from “industries and jobs” to “productivity and well-being”. It may even allow the freedom of individually and collectively allocating more of our time to the Common Agenda.

We should think differently about human economic performance, and we should value and quantify time as a core indicator of human progress.

Chapter I. Sustainable development and financing for development

TRANSFORMING EDUCATION We recommend that the following national, yet universal, policy innovation, be discussed during the *Summit of the Future*, with possibly some Member States sharing their related experiments with an:

INDIVIDUAL PERMANENT EDUCATIONAL ACCOUNT

[Draft concept]

Within *Individual Permanent Educational Accounts*, students and workers will compile and profile in a single, unalterable, virtual folder, their academic and training gains throughout their career (previous and new credits or diplomas, including online certifications). Similar to a government issued birth certificate, digital healthcare file, pension account report, the *Educational Account* will be a form of “lifelong passport” to showcase a person’s educational and training path and achievements.

In addition, governments (or digital banking) could allow workers to save money or receive funding for tuition at any age in these same *Individual Permanent Educational Accounts*. In several countries, these could be tax-free educational savings account, open to foreign donors who could transfer individual scholarship money (public or private grants). Proper governance rules would be established, including on contribution limits and withdrawals conditions.

Last, considering both the important tech-driven work and career changes ahead, and our demographic transition, individuals and employers should set aside more time for future training. “Time” is an essential yet very difficult element to find, particularly for adult workers with dependents. Creating time banks as a subset of these *Individual Permanent Educational Accounts* would allow the accumulation of time units that workers can later withdraw to pause their current job and return to school (for a few months or a year or two). This would strengthen personal, employer and state commitments, and help with the planning and scheduling of continuing education or training activities. Moreover, it would help secure workers’ right to lifelong learning and, hopefully, their right to keep their job when they decide to take a leave for educational or training purposes.

A UN agency could oversee or help quick-start an international office that would facilitate the launch, at the country-level, of standardized *Individual Permanent Educational Accounts* legal and administrative basics; the on-going improvement of such a system; and, later,

compare best practices between countries. Governments could also agree to the open-data sharing of these accounts for statistical purpose, facilitating research on education policies and the work of the international office.

Chapter IV. Youth and future generations

TO THINK AND ACT FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS During the *Summit of the Future*, we recommend that Member States decide to create the:

INTERGOVERNMENTAL PANEL ON THE FUTURE OF HUMANITY

[Draft concept]

The *Intergovernmental Panel on the Future of Humanity* (IPFH) will be the United Nations body for assessing the likely long-term impacts of emerging changes on future generations.

The United Nations' *Intergovernmental Panel on the Future of Humanity* (IPFH) will unite the world's leading long-term trends experts to play the unique role of applying both domain expertise and strategic foresight to responsible long-term governance, socio-economic preparedness, and inter-generational fairness.

This new UN Panel will regularly provide policymakers at both the multilateral and national levels with the most comprehensive and authoritative future-oriented scientific assessments of emerging changes that could either improve or deteriorate the well-being of future generations.

The IPFH will be instrumental in creating both awareness of and a broad, evidence-based consensus on the potential impacts of critical emerging change factors on humanity's future. Emerging change factors will encompass mainly technological innovation, but also demographic, environmental, health, geopolitical, economic, social, and outer space developments. IPFH's main publications will be its *State of the Future Reports* and *Good Ancestors Reports*.

The IPFH's *State of the Future Reports* will have five features:

- (1) explain the significance of emerging changes for the future of humanity;
- (2) provide scenarios on how they could evolve in the next 30 years;
- (3) present potential impact assessments (risks and opportunities in decades from now);
- (4) define likely quantitative and qualitative effects on future generations' well-being and optionality; and
- (5) offer policy options for managing, accelerating or mitigating such long-term changes.

In addition, the IPFH's *Good Ancestors Reports* will collect and share examples of long-range public policies that are susceptible to protect or improve the interest and resiliency of future

generations, providing important guidance for long-term public policy planning, programs, incentives and investments, and for improved global cooperation.

Additional IPFH Activities and Working Groups will be organized to facilitate knowledge sharing and enhancement, and to stimulate and grow the IPFH community.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL PANEL ON THE FUTURE OF HUMANITY (IPFH)

[continued]

To be defined:

- IPFH Bureau, structure and responsibilities
- IPFH Reports (*State of the Future, Good Ancestors, Technical*, etc.)
- IPFH Activities
- IPFH Working Groups
- IPFH funding mechanism
- IPFH communication strategy



The *Canada Towards 2030* project is a non-partisan and non-prescriptive foresight research initiative founded by Eric Noël. It has hosted more than 40 events attended by some 8,500 participants in Canada (coast-to-coast), the US, Europe and Asia, and has received donations from more than ten organisations. The initiative aims to increase Canadians' awareness of long-term trends, helping them improve their ability to anticipate change, to adapt, and to innovate. The project has more than ten partner-organisations, and its contents include several multimedia presentations, essays, a foresight workbook, and trends data showcased at the G7 Summit (Charlevoix), *The Economist*, C2 Montréal, and at conferences and meetings hosted by APEC, Asia Pacific Foundation, Atlantic Provinces Economic Council, Business Council of BC, CIBC, CPPIB, Conference Board of Canada, EDC, EY, Thomson Reuters, CFA and CPA Canada, Association des Économistes du Québec, QG100, the Premier Ministre du Québec, the Prime Minister Offices of Singapore and of Japan, etc.

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Eric Noël is a Canadian economist, international foresight specialist and long-term thinking advocate known for his innovative and prescient research on global issues and trends. He helps multinationals, governments, pension funds, and international organizations anticipate and plan for tomorrow's markets and politico-economic challenges. For 25 years, he was a senior executive at Oxford Analytica, one of the world's best private think tanks. He has served the United Nations and several of its agencies as a consultant from 1999 to 2018. He has led critical assignments in some 30 countries and has advised on transactions totalling more than \$US30B. Eric Noël is also the Initiator of the *Canada Towards 2030* project, and *Chair – Canada, Millennium Project*. He has dedicated his career to long-term thinking (“*Failing to plan is planning to fail.*”) and better research in support of better governance (“*To go where we want to go, to do what we want to do, what and who do we need to know?*”).

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