



## **Stress and personal finances: close to four out of ten Québécois find managing their personal finances difficult**

Feb 11, 2014

MONTREAL, Feb. 11, 2014 /CNW Telbec/ - According to a CROP poll<sup>1</sup> conducted for Laurentian Bank, more than a third of all Québécois consider the management of personal finances to be a difficult task. This situation can lead to a lot of stress during the RRSP season, particularly among those who feel they don't have sufficient means to save. Moreover, the repayment of debt also constitutes a major concern for 42% of Québécois.

Saving for retirement can indeed be difficult, especially for those preoccupied with reimbursing money owed. To make matters worse, the resulting stress can have serious repercussions on physical health.

Generally speaking, people tend to make use of the necessary tools to take care of their physical well-being. However, this is not always the case when it comes to their financial health, as evidenced by the survey findings below:

- 72% of respondents indicated that they regularly consult their family doctor
- 40% of respondents rely on the expertise of financial professionals
- 39% of respondents who don't consult a financial advisor consider it to be hard to manage their personal finances

Just as the family physician does with respect to physical health, the financial advisor can establish a realistic and overall review of one's financial health and propose a series of concrete solutions. "Meeting with a financial advisor once a year is sufficient to develop a savings plan or strategy for repaying debts," underlines Guylaine Dufresne, F.P., Senior Manager of Investment and Financial Planning. "Furthermore, conducting a review of one's financial situation can help reduce stress. The financial advisor brings an outsider's view to the situation and can allow savers to identify solutions they may not otherwise have seen on their own." Laurentian Bank's expert financial advisors are accessible via the institution's extensive network of 153 branches across Québec and are trained in finding solutions suited to the specific needs of each individual.

According to Guylaine Dufresne, there are three fundamental strategies that everyone can apply to optimize their saving and, thus, reduce the stress that can be associated with managing personal finances.

### **1. Knowing one's net worth**

Calculating one's assets and subtracting all liabilities provides for an accurate picture of one's net worth or estate value," she explains. "It is important to complete this exercise at least once a year to determine how one's financial situation is evolving. By doing this analysis with an advisor, an effective strategy can be found to help grow net worth more rapidly."

### **2. Establish a realistic budget**

"The basis for managing personal finances is knowing one's income and cost of living," emphasizes Ms. Dufresne. By establishing a budget that takes all expenses into account, it becomes easier to determine one's saving capacity. "People don't hesitate to save for such things as the purchase of a home or a future trip. They should do the same for their retirement."

### **3. Have the means to save**

Systematic saving remains one of the best ways to have money set aside for one's golden years. In that regard, by regularly debiting a specific amount from one's account, it is easier to make a habit out of saving. Moreover, for those who don't have enough money put aside to invest, or who wish to take



advantage of unused contributions, it could be advantageous to take out an RRSP loan or draw on an RRSP line of credit.

"There is no single answer that is ideal for everyone," concludes Guylaine Dufresne, "and with the multitude of financial products available, it can be hard to determine the best solution. A financial advisor can help savers see more clearly and gain an accurate picture of their situation to be able to make more informed financial choices."

### **About Laurentian Bank**

Laurentian Bank of Canada is a banking institution whose activities extend across Canada. Recognized for its excellent service, proximity and simplicity, the Bank serves one and a half million clients throughout the country. Founded in 1846, it employs some 4,000 people whose talent and dedication has made it a major player in numerous market segments. The institution has \$34 billion in balance sheet assets and more than \$37 billion in assets under administration.

Laurentian Bank distinguishes itself through the excellence of its execution and its agility. Catering to the needs of retail clients via its extensive branch network and constantly evolving virtual offerings, the Bank has also earned a solid reputation among SMEs, larger businesses and real estate developers thanks to its growing presence across Canada and its specialized teams in Ontario, Québec, Alberta and British Columbia. For its part, the organization's B2B Bank subsidiary is a Canadian leader in providing banking and investment products and services to financial advisors and brokers, while Laurentian Bank Securities is an integrated broker that is also widely known for its expert and effective services nationwide.

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<sup>1</sup> The survey was conducted by CROP between December 9 and 13, 2013 among a Web panel of 1,000 Québécois.

SOURCE Laurentian Bank of Canada

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