

**PRESS RELEASE**

**For immediate publication**

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## **THE CPP LAUNCHES ITS QUEBEC MUNICIPALITIES RANKINGS**

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**Montreal, October 7, 2013** – In the lead-up to the municipal elections across the province on November 3, the HEC Montréal Centre for Productivity and Prosperity (CPP) has just released its ***Annual Quebec municipalities rankings***. “We want to offer all Quebecers a tool that not only tells them how much the services provided by their municipality cost, but also allows them to compare such spending with that of other similar-sized municipalities,” explains Robert Gagné, Director of the HEC Montréal Centre for Productivity and Prosperity.

“It was a tremendous amount of work to make this information widely available and understandable. Although in theory all this data is accessible to all Quebecers, you need to be really determined and have some special expertise in order to interpret it in a meaningful way,” the Director points out. A total of 1,110 municipalities were examined, 17 cost indicators were studied and over 100,000 pieces of data were compiled. The information is presented in a variety of ways: rankings by region, population size, metropolitan community and agglomeration. The result is that with just a few clicks residents can now find out how much their own municipalities spend on such items as management, snow removal, roads, police and fire departments, sewers, drinking water distribution, and garbage and recycling collection.

To give as many Quebecers as possible access to this veritable gold mine of information, the CPP has joined forces with [La Presse](#). Its many different platforms made it the ideal partner to achieve this objective.

### **Only some meet their obligations**

The information presented in the rankings comes from the management indicators and financial reports that municipalities are required to submit to the Ministère des Affaires municipales, des Régions et de l'Occupation du territoire (MAMROT) every year. Although all Quebec municipalities are supposed to provide the department with this data, many failed to do so within the time limits while others made certain errors or in some cases do not offer some of the services included in the study. As a result, only 686 of the 1,110 municipalities in the database are listed in the *Annual municipalities rankings*, since the researchers were unable to gather sufficient data to ensure the reliability of their findings for the ones that are excluded.

“We managed to come up with 17 cost indicators for 686 municipalities representing over 90% of the Quebec population, for 2011, the latest fiscal year available,” says CPP Project Director Jonathan Deslauriers, co-author of the study. The CPP’s goal with this exercise is to equip Quebecers so that they can put pressure on their municipal councils to obtain quality services at the lowest possible cost.

### **Rankings that raise some questions**

When consulting the *Annual municipalities rankings*, one might wonder, for instance, why it costs more per kilometre of snow removal in Rivière-Éternité than in Quebec City, the province's second-largest city. And why the municipality of Sainte-Adèle, with 11,709 residents, pays \$333 per resident for its dedicated police department, while the same service costs \$198 in the municipality of Sainte-Marie, with the same number of people to protect.

When it comes to the agglomerations, the rankings also raise a number of questions. For example, why are expenses so much higher for one municipality than another within the same agglomeration? In the Montréal agglomeration, for instance, why does the municipality of Senneville cost much more to manage (\$1,204 per resident) than Dollard-des-Ormeaux (\$212 per resident)? Why are road maintenance costs 4.7 times higher in Montreal West than in Baie-D'Urfé? For the Longueuil agglomeration, some data are also apt to raise eyebrows. One might well wonder why it costs nearly twice as much to maintain a kilometre of the sewer network in Boucherville (\$9,767) as in Saint-Lambert (\$5,481).

“Clearly, there are various explanations for these higher costs: road repairs, rising crime rates, snowier winters, etc. Some municipalities may also have decided to offer enhanced services: more frequent garbage and recycling pickups, organic waste pickups, better snow removal, etc. For that reason, the rankings aren't designed to judge municipalities' performance, but to give Quebecers a way to know where their municipal taxes go and to question their elected officials if they feel that these expenses are too high,” Gagné concludes.

In keeping with its mission, the CPP studies productivity in Quebec, especially in the public sector. These rankings are a first step toward measures aimed at boosting productivity in the municipal realm.

#### **For more information:**

- Consult the [different rankings](#) – by region, population size, metropolitan community and agglomeration.
- Téléchargez le [communiqué en français](#).

#### **About the Centre for Productivity and Prosperity**

The HEC Montréal Centre for Productivity and Prosperity, created in 2009, has a twofold mission. First of all, it is devoted to research on productivity and prosperity, mainly in Quebec and in Canada as a whole. The Centre then shares its research findings, making them widely accessible and, in the end, educating people about productivity and prosperity. For more information on the Centre, visit [www.hec.ca/cpp](http://www.hec.ca/cpp).

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