

The Government focuses on the productivity of Quebec companies

Montreal, March 20, 2010 – HEC Montréal enthusiastically welcomes the Quebec government's decision to invest in research into the productivity of Quebec companies. Finance Minister Monique Jérôme-Forget allocated a \$6 million envelope for this purpose over a four-year period in her budget.

"We are very pleased to be able to contribute to efforts to support Quebec companies, by offering the expertise of our professors and researchers," said HEC Montréal Director Michel Patry. "The mandate being assigned to the Institute of Applied Economics is perfectly in line with the School's major research goals. HEC Montréal has always been committed to contributing to society, and this is another excellent opportunity to honour that commitment."

The Quebec government will fund research by the Institute of Applied Economics at HEC Montréal, mainly to analyze the basic causes of lagging productivity in the Quebec economy and suggest solutions.

"The idea is not to make observations and comparisons concerning productivity, but rather to diagnose problems and come up with viable solutions," explains Robert Gagné, an Economics professor at HEC Montréal and a researcher with the Institute. "Productivity isn't a choice, a lifestyle or a value. You don't choose to be productive. We have no option but to be productive, and to take new steps to make sure that Quebec can keep pace with the most efficient and productive economies around the world."

Robert Gagné is a professor with the Institute of Applied Economics at HEC Montréal. He holds a PhD in Economics from the Université de Montréal. He co-chaired the Advisory Panel on Fiscal Imbalance of the Council of the Federation in 2005-2006 and chaired the Quebec government's task force examining tax measures for resource regions and the new economy in 2007-2008. Professor Gagné is a Fellow of the Centre for Interuniversity Research and Analysis on Organizations (CIRANO), and is particularly interested in applied microeconomics, transportation econometrics and industrial organization.

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Information:

Centre for Productivity and Prosperity
HEC Montréal
Tel.: 514-340-6449