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2007-2008 Budget The Prosperity of the Regions: the Major Theme of the Prebudget Consultations

Québec, January 29, 2007 – The Minister of Finance, Michel Audet, today began a series of prebudget consultations on the theme: *Greater Prosperity for the Regions*. The consultations will be held with representatives of the business community, the regions, unions and various organizations. The public is also invited to take part in an online consultation on the ministère des Finances du Québec website.

Greater prosperity for the regions

According to Mr. Audet, “The regions face a variety of challenges that vary in intensity. The resource regions, central regions and large cities are faced with very different development dynamics requiring different means and solutions. On the other hand, each region has its own strengths that it can draw on to develop its economy and create wealth.”

Over the last few years, the government has taken steps to raise prosperity in every region. Each region now has major intervention levers and more resources to chart their future and assume their rightful leadership role.

The upcoming consultations will enable the government to discuss with organizations, associations, groups, business leaders and experts interested in this issue and to gather views from citizens. They will deal with the efforts the government should make to keep a balanced budget while finding additional ways to support the development potential of the regions.

“I hope that these prebudget consultations will enrich our thinking. We will pay attention to the comments we receive and they will be reflected in our action,” the Minister of Finance added.

The discussion paper, *Greater Prosperity for the Regions*, which has just been posted on the website of the ministère des Finances, contains a wealth of information on Québec’s economy and the development of the regions.

Online consultation

For the second year in a row, the Department will hold an online consultation from Tuesday, January 30 to Friday, February 19, 2007. Persons interested in participating are asked to visit the following address as of Tuesday, January 30: www.finances.gouv.qc.ca. In 2006, more than 2 700 people completed the online questionnaire.

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Source: Catherine Poulin
Office of the Minister of Finance
418 643-5270
www.finances.gouv.qc.ca