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Saved a lot on the Move to Canada

-There is no doubt that it was too expensive to only be located in Norway, says Funcom boss.

Quebec allows Funcom to pay four developers for the price of three. The former industrial city of Montreal is the center of Quebec's large-scale investment in programs to encourage new industries to establish themselves in the city.

The Multimedia Tax Credit program has made the game industry especially interested in the area. The Norwegian Funcom has moved much of its development department there, similarly to big game companies like Ubisoft, Electronic Arts and Square Enix.

- The province really paves the way for us. Among other things, we have reduced labour costs for skilled labour by up to 37.5 percent, says CEO Trond Arne Aas to Dagensit.no.

In addition, you get tax cuts for costs of recruitment, training and quality assurance. The requirement is that you will undertake the production of some form of multimedia and that you must have offices in Quebec. To get the maximum tax reduction you must produce titles that are in French in addition to other languages.

- There was no doubt that it was too expensive to be only located in Norway, so a relocation of part of the business was nevertheless necessary, says Aas.

Much to Save

However, in addition to taking away more than a third of labour costs there are also other benefits in Quebec.

- They give tax cuts also to other multimedia than games. We also get reduced costs for the production of films to promote our games and access to companies that create them, says Aas.

Through special agreements one can also get more tax cuts. For example by working with Canadian industry on research and development.

"Everyone" Moved

For Funcom this move fit well and the process of moving staff has proceeded beyond all expectations.

- Many of our employees are young and without family obligations and they think this is exciting. In an internal survey in advance of the move more than half said that they were willing to move, says Aas.

The Development Section of Funcom Montreal presently consists of between 80 and 90 people, virtually all of which are transferred from Norway. More are on their way across the Atlantic.

- The Section in Quebec is about as big as the one we have in Oslo today, says Aas.

Remains Norwegian

The favourable conditions in Canada have not tempted the company to flag out.

- No, we have no plans of this. It is important for us to maintain a connection to Norway. Moreover, the Norwegian authorities are also beginning to pave the way for our industry, so the future looks promising, says Aas.