

Entering professional practice through the France-Québec MRAs: findings and future prospective

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Let's jump to conclusions

- **Once complementary formations have been prescribed, places have to be available (specially for health professions)**
- **Importance of informing workplaces and employers of French professionals' value, once admitted by professional order**
- **FTP's bring unique skills that can contribute, even only locally, to profession's evolution; unrecognized skills may be useful and contribute to professionalism**
- **Experienced professionals often have families, bringing further logistic levels to integration into local society (school for kids, job for wife/husband...). Although not among objectives looked after by professional system, these aspects have an important impact on success of entry into professional practice of FTP.**

Presentation plans

- **Overview of MRAs, history and development**
- **Review of case studies: lawyers, nurses, doctors, pharmacists**
 - **Course of entry into profession through MRA**
 - **Research results**

General questions

Concluding remarks

What are MRAs? a crash course (1st of 2)

Entry into professional practice for FTPs...

Traditional mode vs Innovating (MRA)

- **Traditional entry for FTPs**
 - mostly through individual evaluation
 - some profession-specific agreements establish some standardized compensation measures (engineers, doctors, nurses for example)
 - individual definition of steps to enter profession
- **Innovating through MRAs**
 - Examination of training correspondence and discrepancies
 - Analysis of professional practice contexts
 - If major differences: measures to compensate
 - Eligibility is then defined, alongside appreciation of similarities and differences
 - Entry into profession thus “collectively” granted

What are MRAs? a crash course (2nd of 2)

- **Vast area of implementation**
 - **Seen as an alternative to basic harmonization**
 - **Can apply to goods, services, delivery of services, types of policies...**
 - **Governance without government?**
 - **Importance of confidence between actors**
 - **A race to the bottom? ... false alarm... (Schmidt 2007)**

Legal context - Part I

- **First, a framework and 5 general principles**
 - **Protection of the public**
 - **Maintaining professional services' quality**
 - **Equity, transparency and reciprocity**
 - **Effectivity of mutually recognized professional qualifications**
 - **Proficiency in local language (French)**

Legal context - is there a final chapter?

- **MRAs are living beings**
 - **Following the 5 principles: application in each national context**
 - **Looking at mutually facilitating mechanisms**
 - **Questioning apparent discrepancies in rules**
 - **“Learning by doing”**
 - **Annual bilateral follow-up meetings**

France-Québec MRAs: a brief history

- **October 17, 2008: signing of MRAs' Framework Agreement**
- **Regulating bodies received a strong political command to actively negotiate to conclude with French counterparts, towards implementation**
- **Annex to Agreement specifies close timeframe to establish terms of specific Arrangements:**
 - **among 10 professions: had to be done by December 31st, 2009**
 - **other professions had to conclude by December 31st, 2010, or “before any other date as determined by the bilateral Committee”**

In Quebec, Department of International Affairs is responsible of Agreement's implementation, in collaboration with Office des professions du Québec and other actors of the professional system

Each MRA had to be translated into specific rulings adopted by each professional organization

MRAs by numbers – How many professionals from France?

Professions	MRA is in effect since...	Number of received admission demands, 2012-2013		Number of delivered permits, 2012-2013		Number of delivered permits, total*	Number of Order members, 2013-2014
Social worker	4-15-2010	17	22	19	22	57	12 101
Lawyer	8-12-2010	22	17	18	14	70	25 095
Doctor	11-25-2010	56	50	29	32	98	19 873**
Architect	1-25-2011	n/d	11	12	13	41	3 541
Pharmacist	3-3-2011	34	43	5	15	23	8 673
Nurse	7-7-2011	251	366	213	190	572	73 145
Engineer	7-18-2013	n/a***	59	n/a***	38	38	55 286
Proportion among 26 professions with MRA		380 / 485 (78,3%)	568 / 673 (84,4%)	296 / 334 (88,6%)	324 / 376 (86,2%)	899 / 1 033 (87,0%)	197 714 / 265 021 (74,6%)

* Most MRAs were effective earlier than 2012, therefore the total number may exceed 2012-2013 figures.

Lawyers (1/2)

- **To become member of Quebec Bar:**
 - **Satisfy eligibility criteria (registered in a bar in France; accredited in France through one of two recognized diploma;**
 - **Success in the Quebec Bar examination (rules, ethics), offered in August and January**
 - **Payment of required fees (membership, insurance, etc.)**
- **Main differences:**
 - **Language**
 - **Art of pleading**
 - **Central role of Bar**

Lawyers (2/2)

- **Recommendations from the case study:**
 - **Familiarize local employers to MRA's validity and value**
 - **Further inform and publicize candidates in France on immigration steps**
 - **Offer a training on language differences and professional practices (interrogating witnesses; art of building up a case before court sessions)**
 - **Review documentation before exam, to better prepare for daily law work and to the fact that candidates are experienced lawyers, not students**
 - **4-month optional formation should be made mandatory**

Nurses (1/2)

- **Relatively simple procedure: national State diploma in France, simple uniform accreditation (unlike engineers); being registered by France's National Order; minimal recent practice;**
- **MRA is very effective, recent figures show constant influx, ca. 200/year**
- **Quebec health system constant in need of nurses**
- **13 weeks workplace training: no logistics issues**
- **Failure 3-4%**

Nurses (2/2)

- **Main differences:**
 - **Professional practice has differing goals (right to refuse treatment)**
 - **Relations with other professionals**
 - **Hygiene rules**
- **Recommendations from the case study:**
 - **Salary issues – officially settled but not applied by every organisation**
 - **Differences in skills perception among colleagues, limiting integration of French nurses in the workplace**
 - **Window of brain gain through recognition and use of specialisation**

Doctors (1/2)

- **To become member of Quebec Medical College:**
 - **Hold a State diploma delivered from a French University**
 - **Specialised in France in a sanctioned programme**
 - **Succeed in completing a 13 weeks adaptation stage**
 - **Being registered on France's national order**

13 weeks stage: place according to priority, fixed by Health Department

If among priority, 1 000 \$ per week; if not, no payment

Job placement afterwards dependant of Health Department distribution of positions and workforce

Doctors (2/2)

- **Main differences:**

- Private in France vs public in Quebec: global paradox
- Organizational differences in work organisation, in medical vocabulary, and inter-professional relations
- Double earnings

- **Recommendations from the case study:**

- Stage a bit long, but useful
- First financial input comes 5 months after arrival; need to be able to sustain own needs in the meantime
- Blogs and social media are an essential source of specific information, important to disseminate among coming colleagues

Pharmacists (1/2)

- **To become member of Quebec order of pharmacists:**
 - **Having legal aptitude to act as a pharmacist in France**
 - **Having obtained 1 or another of 2 official titles following formation in France**
 - **Completing one or another of the 2 compensation measures included in MRA**
 - **Formation (16 months) and stage**
 - **Exam, much shorter formation and same stage**
 - **No salary during 16 months' formation**
 - **Might be paid as technical assistant, limiting professional integration**

Pharmacists (2/2)

- **Main differences:**
 - In Quebec, more clinical role in hospital practice
 - More responsibility regarding patients' health status
 - Differing work organisation
- **Recommendations from the case study:**
 - Necessity to have Canadian residence to get into formation or exam makes procedures unduly long
 - Need to review compensation measures to better meet integration needs of French pharmacists
 - Logistic difficulties in finding formation places
 - Shortage of pharmacists (especially institutional) favors institutional arrangements to shorten entry into profession

General remarks

- **Surprise! Language can be an issue (different terms and use of terms)**
 - **Can be supplied by a simple guide to everyday use of terms, mostly professional**
 - **Further than language, culture...**
 - **A second, more subtle layer of surprises**
- **Importance of coordinating with all actors involved, from the start (case of doctors and pharmacists, compared to nurses)**
- **Business case to be valued with institutional actors**

Back to conclusions

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- **FTPs bring unique skills that can contribute, even only locally, to profession's evolution; unrecognized skills may be useful and contribute to professionalism**
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- Questions, comments ?



- Thanks for your attention !

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