

Professional mobility between France and Quebec. Understanding the role and pertinence of mutual recognition agreements



Research project based at the Institut National de
recherche scientifique INRS – Centre Urbanisation,
Culture, Société

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Plan presentation

- General MRA context
- Historical overview
- Identity and role of political/legal actors
- Research context
- Constrasting examples: social workers, nurses; quick overview of doctors, pharmacists, lawyers...
- Discussion and conclusion

Introduction

- Aim of study: To look at entry into practice of regulated professions in Quebec, by French professionals (8 categories)
- MRA : innovative process, aims at facilitating professional mobility in both directions

Progress in time

- 2008: initiation of France-Québec MRAs through political agreement;
- 2013: implemented by regulations among
 - 26 professions
 - 49 trades
 - 6 administrative functions
 - ... a few more in preparation

5 directing principles:

- Protection of the public (health, security)
 - Maintaining professional service quality
 - Respecting norms related to French language proficiency
 - Equity, transparency and reciprocity
 - Effectivity of professional qualifications MR
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- Professions: 92% of France-Quebec MRA users

How MRAs were implemented

- 26 regulated professions: equivalence found on both sides / differences could be bridged
- Regulating bodies from each jurisdiction met to define exercise of profession, extent, limits...
- Thus, elaborating rules of eligibility and complementary measures, as needed

Research context

- Our research: 8 case studies of regulated professions (electrical and mechanical engineer, lawyers, doctors, nurses, pharmacists, social workers and architects)
- Document and understand professional practice entry in Quebec for French professionals among professions offering a MRA
- Identify main gateways and facilitators

Social worker

(let's start with an easy one)

- French State Diploma « assistant de service social »
- Payment of required membership fees
- By end of 2013:
 - Legal authorization to exercise profession under MRA since April 2010: 57
 - Delivered in 2012: 19
 - Delivered in 2013: 22

Comparing work contexts

France/Quebec (Social workers)

- Important workplace diversity, in France and Quebec
- Precarity similar on both sides
- In Quebec, important vocational training market offers
- Important to understand legal context of practice
- « Surprise »...: Most employers ask to produce a Diploma equivalence and a previous work experience in Quebec

Case study: French Nurses in Quebec

- French State Nurse Diploma + complete studies in France; registered member of *Ordre national des infirmiers de France*
- Professional experience: 500 hours or diploma (maximum 4 years old)
- Deposit and analysis of documents (694\$)
- TRP (temporary restrictive permit, 6 months) for 3 months (75 days) training in clinical setting
- Registering as member of OIIQ (\$)

Nurses MRA: results

- By end of 2013:
 - Legal authorizations to exercise profession delivered under MRA since July 2011: 572
 - In 2012: 213
 - In 2013: 190
 - Among the 26 professions: most used (from France to Quebec)

Engineers, doctors, lawyers...

- Idiosyncratic variations related to each profession's particularities, but still... trans-professional trends can be seen
- Variable job market capacity of absorption
- Various individual aspects, mostly related with reason of migration:
 - Following spouse?
 - Age/career stage
 - Strategic aspects (job market, comparative salary, etc.)

Discussion - conclusion

- MRA ≠ guarantee of a good socioprofessional insertion
- Best insertion cases: those who had previous work experience in Quebec before MRA process (and therefore, social network)
- Many recognition problems faced by professionals after the MRA process, in working context (from colleagues and employers, and sometimes even regulating body, often related to novelty and lack of information)
- « Alternative » modes of insertion to get around under-recognition of experience among experienced engineers
- Questions around autonomy of professions, relations with management, relations with other professionals: new terms under new territory

Concluding remarks

- Third logic: yes, but in interaction, co-construction with market and government
- New professionalism: transnational movements bring comparison, reflexivity, especially on role of management and regulating bodies
- Complex set of factors to consider for analysis of barriers and facilitators of entry into professional practice for foreign-trained professionals