

# *SKILL AND CREDENTIAL RECOGNITION AND THE REGULATED PROFESSIONS IN QUÉBEC*

## PROMISES, CHALLENGES AND SOME SOLUTIONS

Presentation by

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**Conseil  
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# Presentation Outline

- Basic assumptions or realities
- The situation for Québec
- Key moments in the mobilization of Québec's stakeholders
- Professional Recognition Statistics
- The focus for the future
- Continuing Challenges ■  
of skill and credential recognition
- Critical elements for success
- Appendix A – The Professional System and qualification recognition in Québec
- Appendix B – The Québec Interprofessional Council Action Plan (2001)

# Basic assumptions or realities

- The need of internationally-trained professionals
  - Shortages affecting access to services
    - A «protection of the public» problem in itself
  - Demography ■
  - Social and Economic growth
    - Competitiveness

# Basic assumptions or realities (cont'd)

- Protection of the Public is a legitimate public policy too
  - Risks and gravity of the prejudice to physical, psychological and patrimonial integrity associated with some activities
  - Prevention
    - Training and other competency requirements
    - Surveillance of the practice
  - Disciplinary measures

# Basic assumptions or realities (cont'd)

- There is a possibility of differences/gap in training
  - Practicing a profession is, in part, a cultural act
    - Communication with clients
    - Communication with colleagues and experts
    - Organization of services and work environment
    - Ethics
    - Legal framework
    - Technological platform
  - How to respond to the need of gap training is critical

# Basic assumptions or realities (cont'd)

- The magic tools (cheap, reliable and efficient) are not there yet
  - Whether using a comparing (deducing the competency) or measuring approach
  - To “see the person instead of the papers” is not as easy as it sounds
  - Especially when evaluating work experience
- Being assessed based on a regulation is generally not seen as pleasant or positive

# Basic assumptions or realities (cont'd)

- Integration is a process with many actors, each being responsible for the whole
  - From the Immigration Officer abroad to the potential employer here
  - One action cannot stand alone
  - The credibility of the entire welcoming society lies at each stage and on an efficient sequence
    - Ex.: partial recognition requires for, the next step, a reasonable offer for gap training
    - Avoid deception of immigrants

# Basic assumptions or realities (cont'd)

- Immigrants selection and integration is a mandate of the State
- The need to work together
  - A shared vision
    - - Objectives
      - Attitudes
      - Assumptions
  - Mutual respect between actors
    - Understand and respect each jurisdiction and expertise



# Basic assumptions or realities (cont'd)

- The need to work together (cont'd)
  - Active multilevel dialogue
    - Between head of each system (Immigration, Education and Labour Ministries; Interprofessional Council; Immigrant support community)
      - Keep the shared vision alive and focused
      - Find solutions to organizational and systemic problems
    - Between regulatory bodies and other actors
      - On the ground for each case

# Basic assumptions or realities (cont'd)

## ● The need to work together (cont'd)

- Act where it counts with the people who can deliver
  - In the community the immigrant wants to integrate
  - Economic and industrial frameworks are regional in Canada (5 very different economic regions)
  - Labour market issues varies from one region to another in Canada
  - Necessarily a regional/provincial focus and responsibility
  - Caution with Federal Government's programs and services that are inspired by a coast to coast uniform vision

# The situation for Québec

- Shortages affecting access to services
  - Need of recruitment abroad
  - Some Orders took the initiatives and launched missions abroad with the support of Government
  - Recruitment strategies and services put in place by Government
- Mobility Agreements
  - Growing pressure to compare and review standards

# The situation for Québec (cont'd)

- More demand for accountability
  - Answering to the public we serve and protect
- General issues related to immigration
  - Human Rights, Equity, Fairness
  - Social and economic contribution

# Key moments in the mobilization of Québec's stakeholders

- Creation of the Consultation Group on immigration and admission to professional orders (2001)
  - Ministries of Immigration and Employment
  - Québec Interprofessional Council
  - Immigration Labour Adaptation Committee
- Adoption of an Action Plan by Professional Orders (2001)
  - Information
  - Efficiency and awareness of process – Tools
  - Accountability and transparency
  - Collaboration between Professional Orders

# Key moments in the mobilization of Québec's stakeholders (cont'd)

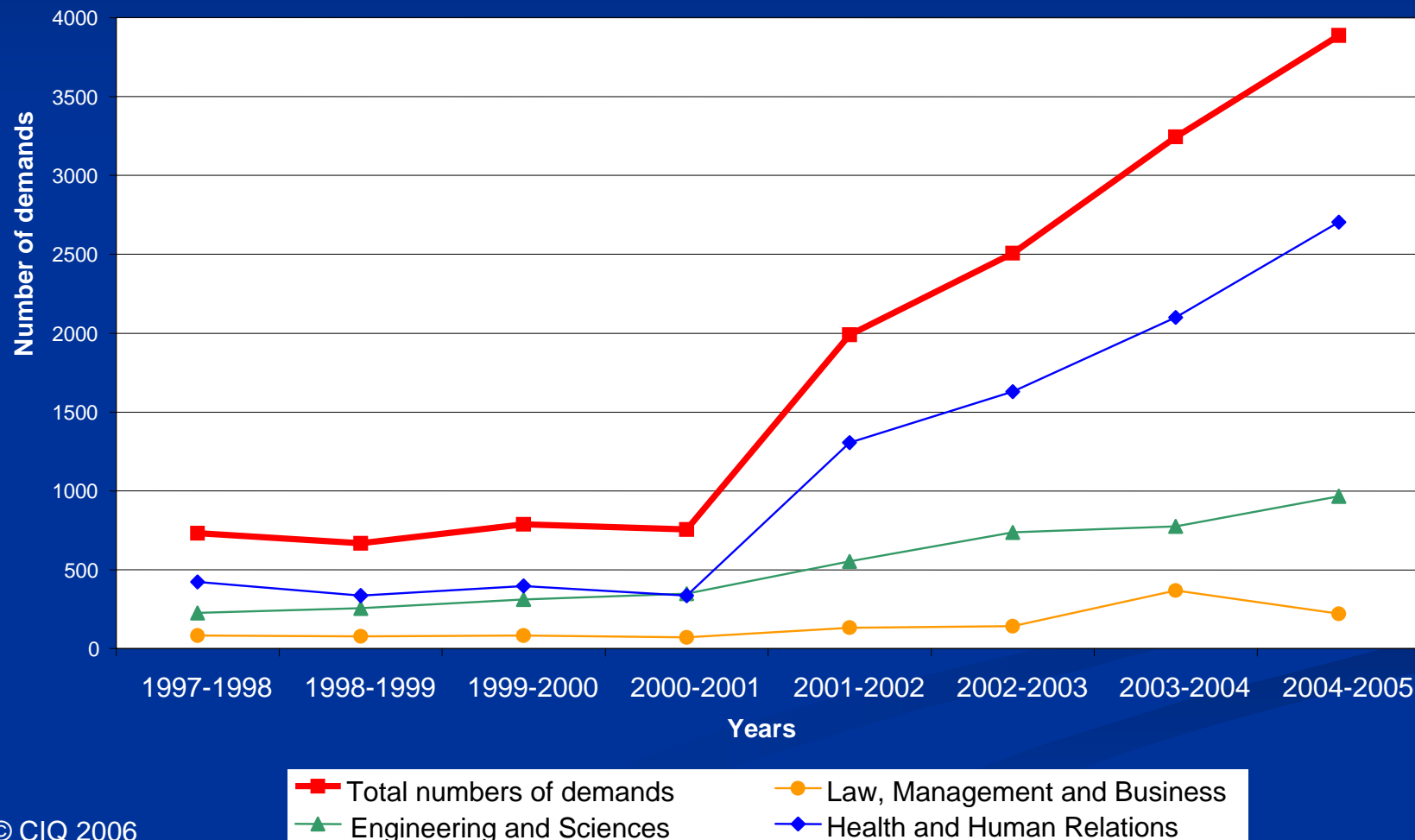
- Continuing Education and Qualification Recognition Governmental Policy (May 2002)
  - Ministries of Immigration, Education, and Employment
  - Québec Interprofessional Council
  - Immigration Labour Adaptation Committee

# Key moments in the mobilization of Québec's stakeholders (cont'd)

- Parliamentary Task Force on Access to Regulated Trade and Professions (2004)
  - Consultation and report in March 2005
- Work Group on the Recognition of Credentials and Skills (2005)
  - All relevant stakeholders appointed by Cabinet
  - Personal commitments from the Minister of Immigration and the Prime Minister
  - Action and solution driven
  - Comprehensive report in December 2005

# Professional Recognition Statistics

Number of demands for equivalence received  
between 1997-1998 to 2004-2005





# Professional Recognition Statistics

Decisions by the Professional Orders  
between 1997-1998 and 2004-2005

- Complete equivalence granted 34,6 %
- Partial equivalence granted 47,6 %
- Acceptance rate ■ 82,2 %
- No equivalence granted 17,8 %

# The focus for the future

- Priority on professions experiencing shortages
  - Ex.: Health, Engineering, Technology
- Better information
  - Requirements for practice
  - Work environment
  - Labour market
- Better assessment and recognition
  - Developing partnership with external expertise
    - Better information on foreign training programs
  - Developing more adequate and efficient tools
    - Competency charts
    - Exams designed in relation with competency chart and with a bridging program divided by modules
    - Bridging programs for groups presenting the same profile

# The focus for the future

- Counselling and orientation of the candidates
  - Government and Professional Orders
    - Processes
    - Resources
    - Programs
- Targeted recruitment abroad
  - Countries with more comparability
- Partnership with training institution
  - Assessment
  - Development of bridging programs

# Continuing Challenges of skill and credential recognition

## ● Time

- Development of credible and efficient tools
- Development of programs
- Changing regulations and policies
- Recruitment



## ● Resources

- Scarcity of government funds
- Investment vs. expense
- Resources of Professional Orders come mainly from licensees and are devoted to surveillance of the practice

# Continuing Challenges of skill and credential recognition (cont'd)

- Ongoing legitimacy and efficiency challenge
  - Adoption by the Professional Orders of Québec of a Declaration on Principles and Good practices for the recognition of equivalence of skills and credentials (February 2006)
  - Comprehensive evaluation and review process until March 2007

# Critical elements for success

- Need of a champion in every areas and partners
- Inclusive and respectful approach between partners
- Active multilevel dialogue
- Bring the regulatory bodies together
- Need of sustained leadership supported by a clear political commitment
- Realistic but positive message by all
- Sufficient investment of resources by Government

A useful link...

[WWW.PROFESSIONS-QUEBEC.ORG](http://WWW.PROFESSIONS-QUEBEC.ORG)

# APPENDIX A

- The Québec Professional System - Principles
- The Québec Interprofessional Council
- The Office of the Professions
- Qualification recognition – Principles and conditions ■



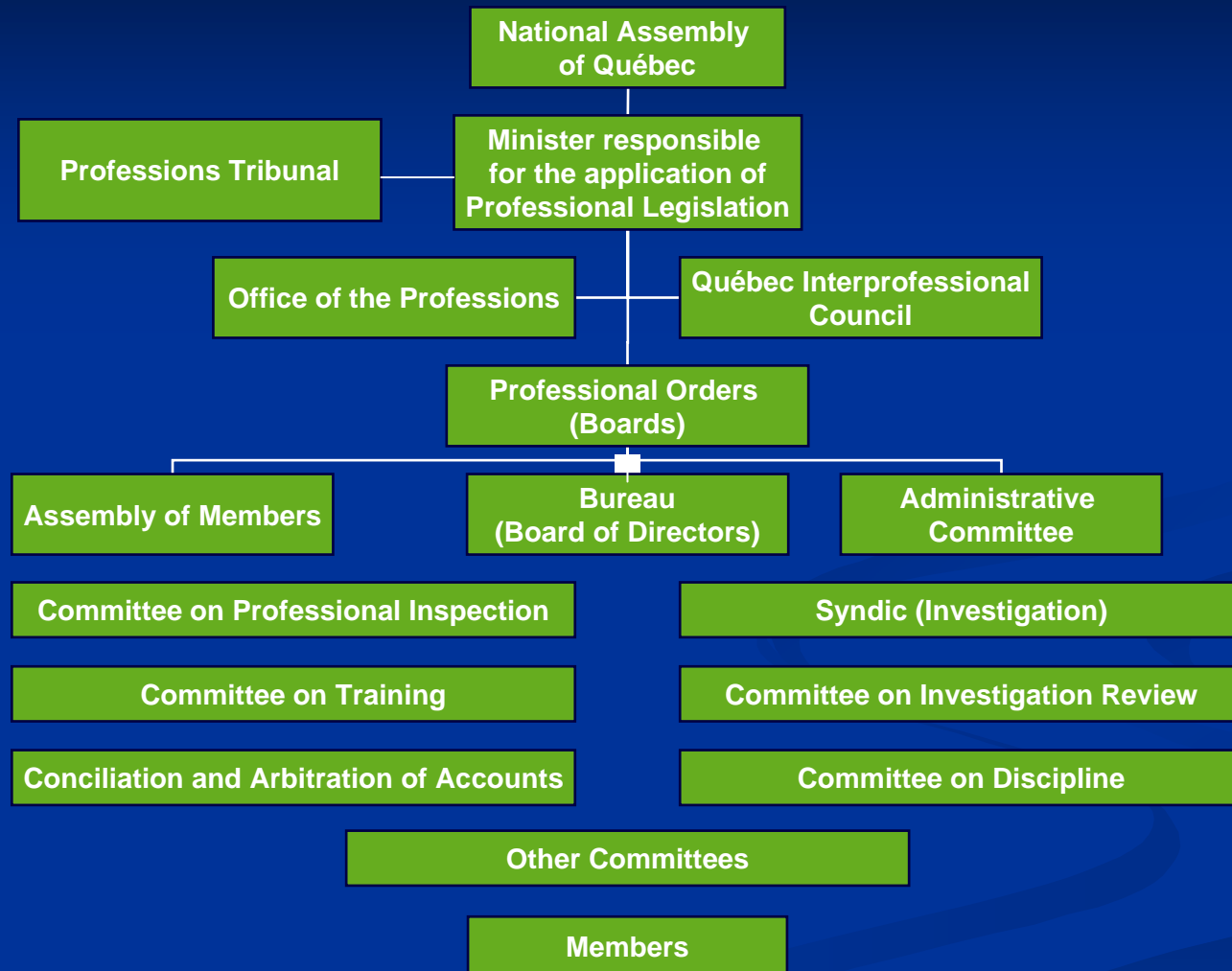
# The Québec Professional System - Principles

- Protection of the Public
  - Risks and gravity of the prejudice to physical, psychological and patrimonial integrity
  - Training and other competency requirements
  - Surveillance of the practice
  - Disciplinary measures
- One basic model for institutions and procedures
  - *Professional Code*, in force since 1974

# The Québec Professional System - Principles

- Betting on the expertise of professionals for:
  - Self-regulation
  - Self-discipline
  - Self-management
  - Self-finance
- Accountability and transparency
  - Presence of representatives of the Public
  - Main Regulations approved by the Government and made public
  - Public reporting on activities
  - Overseeing governmental body

# The Québec Professional System



# The Québec Interprofessional Council

- Founded by the Orders in 1965
  - Need to exchange views on issues of common interest
  - Need of a collective voice
  - Voluntary membership
- Recognised by the *Professional Code* in 1974
  - Association of Orders
  - Collective voice
  - Advisory status to the Government
  - Collaboration, training and services
  - Mandatory membership and financing

# The Office of the Professions

- Surveillance of Professional Orders in ensuring the protection of the public
  - Investigate on a Professional Order in financial difficulties (as authorized by the Minister)
- Designation of representative of the public on the Board of Directors of the Professional Orders
- Advisory status to the Minister and to the Government
- Legislative and Regulations processes
  - Study and draft bills and some regulations
  - Examine and comment or approve some regulations coming from the Professional orders

# Qualification Recognition - Some principles

- The Right to obtain a permit
  - Established by the *Professional Code*
  - If the conditions are met
  - Orders do not control supply or demand
  - Orders are responsible for the recognition process
- Standards, conditions and process
  - In a Regulation approved the Government and made public

# Qualification Recognition - Conditions

- General condition of the *Professional Code*
  - The need to be specifically trained for professional practice
  - Diploma (degree or program) giving access to a permit
    - 
    - recognised by Regulation of the Government
    - 390 diplomas or programs are recognised for the 50 different professional permits
      - Curriculum monitored by a statutory joint committee on training (Orders and Colleges or Universities)

## Qualification Recognition - Conditions (cont'd)

- Proficiency in French according to the *Charter of French Language* (and all previous language laws since the 60s in Québec)
  - Communication skills are an integral part of the professional competency
  - The professional must be able to communicate efficiently with its client and its colleagues.
  - Québec is in majority a French speaking society.



# Qualification Recognition - Conditions (cont'd)

## ● Equivalency

- Mandatory regulation on standards and process for equivalence of diplomas or training
- Legal basis for equivalence :
  - Level of **knowledge** and **skills** equivalent to the level that may be attained by the holder of a recognised diploma giving access to the permit
- Issues related to information and documents
  - Availability, sufficiency and validity

# Qualification Recognition - Conditions (cont'd)

## ● Analysis-Evaluation

- Different types of requirements :
  - Level of education
  - Subjects covered
  - Number of hours or credits
  - Internship
  - Work experience
  - Specific training (ethics or else)
  - Exam (knowledge, performance, simulation)

# Qualification Recognition - Conditions (cont'd)

## ● Analysis-Evaluation

- Possible complementary factors for evaluation (if not a requirement) :
  - Education
  - Internship
  - Work experience ■
- More Orders are developing competency charts
  - Mainly college and technical level professions
  - Not all yet in use in qualification recognition
  - Universities fall behind in the competency approach

# Qualification Recognition - Conditions (cont'd)

## ● Decision

- By the Bureau or a special committee
- Complete equivalence granted
- Partial equivalence granted
  - Information is given to the candidate on what is needed to complete his profile and on the programs and resources available
  - Issues about access to specific training and internship (gap training)
- No equivalence granted

# Qualification Recognition - Conditions (cont'd)

## ● Review of the decision

- By the Bureau, after representation made by the candidate



# APPENDIX B

- The Québec Interprofessional Council Action Plan (2001)



# The QIC Action Plan

- A commitment and statement
  - Adopted unanimously in December 2001 by the Assembly of the 45 Orders
    - First step to build a partnership (trust)
  - Endorsed in February 2002 by the Consultation Group on immigration and admission to professional orders
  - Announced in April 2002 in a joint press conference of the Québec Minister of Immigration and the President of the Interprofessional Council
  - On top of actions by specific Professional Order

# The QIC Action Plan (cont'd)

## 1. Working together

- Mainly through consulting and working groups (focused on action and solution)
  - To maintain partnerships
  - To help each other achieving our goals
  - To monitor actions collectively
- With the Québec Ministries of Immigration and of Employment
- With the Immigrants support Groups
- With the Colleges and Universities
- With the employers



# The QIC Action Plan (cont'd)

## 2. Information

- Adaptation of the information (plain language)
- Production of more information material
- Tour of the Immigrant support Groups
- A realistic but positive message

# The QIC Action Plan (cont'd)

## 3. Efficiency and awareness in the process

- Gathering and sharing between orders of efficient and good practices
- Training sessions on other tools and resources relevant to qualification recognition
- Intercultural relations training for people responsible for processing requests for equivalency

# The QIC Action Plan (cont'd)

## 4. Accountability and transparency

- Adoption of a Declaration on Principles (February 2006)
  - Equality, fairness, objectivity, transparency, openness, periodic review
- Survey of good practices (February 2006)
- Collecting detailed data on the requests, the performance of the process and its outcome