

(6) Provincial differences lead to some conflicts in setting out training goals; school hours vary between six and eight hours a day for vocational training provincially.

(7) In the past 15 years, all issues dealing with vocational training have been matters of unanimous agreement.

(8) Political science, religion, sport, German and a foreign language are taught in addition to vocational subjects which include mathematics and science.

(9) Vocational achievements are tested by local Chambers of Industry and Commerce; the in-school component is evaluated separately by the school.

(10) The type of particular training given by employers depends on market demand.

(11) There are 420 recognized apprenticeable trades. A reduction of trades has been discussed to give the system more flexibility.

(12) Employers can propose the introduction of new trades to the Federal Ministry of Economy; unions and provincial education ministries discuss the need for a new trade; if there seems to be a need, the federal/provincial coordinating committee examines the proposal and sends it to the Federal Education Ministry which works with the Federal Institute for Vocational Training to develop a framework for enterprise-based training; the provinces establish in-school training policy. This process can take between six months and five years. The final stage is the establishment of training guidelines by the Chambers of Industry and Commerce and their acceptance by the Ministry of Economy.

(13) Vocational training orders (guidelines) are reviewed and updated every five years.

(14) Depending on regional needs, new subjects can be introduced quickly in addition to basic guidelines, on an informal basis.

(15) Universities aren't as adaptive to needs for new subjects or new technological training as are high schools and vocational schools.

(16) There are uniform diploma exams that provide national standards for university studies.

(17) Nine years of compulsory schooling to age 15/16 is minimum in all provinces.

(18) Vocational schools build on a uniform level of knowledge gained in primary school, in mathematics, German, English.

(19) Math (area, volume, weight, basic algebra), science (physics, chemistry, biology) and economics are essential for further training in vocational schools.

(20) Five to 10% of students fail initial schooling; there are special schools for disadvantaged students.

(21) Exams after four years of elementary school and after an additional five years of high school ensure literacy.

(22) Teacher-training regulations are strict; teachers are well paid and much prestige is associated with the profession.

(23) Ninety per cent of teachers have tenure and civil servant status. Salary grades offer incentives for upgrading.

Interview with Michèle Jean

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(1) The various provincial ministries and departments of Education and of Manpower are working together on division of responsibilities and diffusion of information.

(2) The private sector must be responsible for the development of its human resources. Many companies have made progress in this area over the past five years, even among small and medium-sized businesses.

(3) For the past two and a half years, the province of Quebec has been assisting private sector in-house training programs by paying out grants to cover 50% of training costs and 60% of salaries. The government also helps companies to formulate training plans.

(4) A few years ago, employers did not believe workers needed basic training in statistics, mathematics or languages. Now, this type of training is essential because of the requirements imposed by productivity and competitiveness.

(5) Training must increase our productivity by giving employees the versatility to move from one company to the next.