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ADULT-ED

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THE ACTION PLAN
OF THE GOVERNMENT POLICY
ON ADULT EDUCATION AND
CONTINUING EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Vol. 2 TAKE 1 – September 2004

FEATURE PRESENTATION

THIS ISSUE CONTAINS:

- conclusions of the *Report on Lifelong Learning*
- an interview on the General Educational Development (GED) tests
- follow-up on the curriculum reform in basic general education
- a local experiment on access to education for people with handicaps
- more on European trends in employer-financed continuing education and training
- "group photos"
- Web sites
- a calendar of activities
- reference materials

CLOSE-UP

Yes, fall is already here! Our heads are still filled with memories of summer vacation as we present our third issue of *INFO ADULT-ED*.

At the start of the school year, the words *education* and *training* are especially meaningful and important. However, according to the *Report on Lifelong Learning* published in June, there is less participation in continuing education and training in Canada, including Québec, than in the other countries of the OECD, which are our main economic competitors. The committee of experts that wrote the report made recommendations to remedy the situation. Don't miss our article presenting the highlights of the report.

In Europe the situation is different; continuing education and training are doing very well. We can learn from experiences there. See the column "International Panorama."

Happy reading! We'll be back in November with a special issue.

ALAIN MERCIER
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Formation générale des adultes
Ministère de l'Éducation

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Director, Mesures d'emploi
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REPORT

ON LIFELONG LEARNING

"Lifelong learning is an undeniable and growing need that requires additional financial resources and the reorganization of existing resources. The government cannot assume this responsibility alone." [Translation] This is what Claude Pagé, president of the committee of experts on the funding of continuing education and training, said on June 23 when he made the report public.

The following are some of the conclusions of the report.

- In Québec, large sums of money are spent on continuing education and training.
- The resources allocated by the government of Québec compare favourably with those allocated by the other Canadian provinces.
- There is less participation in continuing education and training in Canada, including Québec, than in the other countries of the OECD, which are our main economic competitors.
- The economic and social actors that benefit most from continuing education and training should contribute more to its funding.

The report defines the issues to be considered, examines Québec's participation rates in continuing education and training and identifies the strengths and weaknesses of the supply of education and training activities for adults. It also describes the main advantages of continuing education and training for society, citizens and employers, and the costs involved.

On February 18, 2005, date of the most recent cabinet shuffle of the Government of Québec, the Ministère de l'Éducation (MEQ), which is mentioned in this document, changed its name to the Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport (MELS).

The authors of the report analyze the current organization of funding of continuing education and training from the perspective of equity and efficiency and compare the existing situation and practices in Québec with those in the other Canadian provinces and the member countries of the OECD.

The authors conclude with 18 recommendations aimed at:

- adapting the training supply to adults' needs and the needs of local and regional economies
- increasing participation in continuing education and training
- increasing investment in continuing education and training while providing for a more equitable sharing of the financial burden between government, employers, citizens, trade unions, community organizations, municipalities and educational institutions.

In January 2003, the Québec government announced the establishment of this committee of experts from outside the government and gave it a mandate to "analyze the various aspects of the funding of continuing education and training, and formulate recommendations for action to be undertaken to significantly increase the number of adults who take steps toward developing their competencies."

For further information, the report may be consulted at either of the following Web sites:
<<http://www.messf.gouv.qc.ca>> or
<<http://www.meq.gouv.qc.ca>>.



FLASH BACK

THE GENERAL EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT (GED) TESTS

Interview with Marc Leduc
Direction de la formation générale
des adults (DFGA)

WHAT ARE THE GED TESTS?

They are tests created by the General Educational Development Testing Service (GEDTS) of the American Council on Education for adults who have not finished secondary school but who, through work, training, travel, reading and other experiences, have acquired competencies, skills and knowledge that can be exploited. Every year, nearly 800 000 adults in North America take the GED tests. These tests, which have been administered in the United States and the other Canadian provinces, are now gradually being introduced in Québec as well. They are now being administered at the following points of service:

- Commission scolaire des Navigateurs, Centre d'éducation des adults des Bateliers
- Commission scolaire de Montréal, Centre d'éducation des adults Champagnat
- Commission scolaire de la Région-de-Sherbrooke, Centre Saint-Michel
- Commission scolaire de la Seigneurie-des-Mille-Îles, Centre de formation continue des Patriotes
- Commission scolaire des Portages-de-l'Outaouais
- Eastern Townships School Board, New Horizons Adult Education Centre
- English-Montréal School Board

WHAT DO THE GED TESTS COVER?

The five GED tests correspond to course codes in Secondary IV and V in the following subjects:

- GEN-5005-8 GED Test d'écriture
- GEN-5006-7 GED Test de lecture
- GEN-5007-7 GED Test de mathématiques
- GEN-5008-7 GED Test de sciences
- GEN-5009-7 GED Test de sciences humaines

- GST-5005-8 GED Language Arts Writing Test
- GST-5006-7 GED Language Arts Reading Test
- GST-5007-7 GED Mathematics Test
- GST-5008-7 GED Science Test
- GST-5009-7 GED Social Studies Test

To pass these tests, adults must use their ability to analyze and their ability to synthesize. There are only a few questions that require facts, details or definitions.

WHAT IS THE TARGET POPULATION?

Any adult who does not have a Secondary School Diploma (SSD) may be interested in the GED tests. They are designed specifically for those who:

- want to obtain credits toward an SSD
- want to obtain equivalencies for secondary school studies
- want to meet conditions for employment
- want to be promoted to higher positions
- want to apply for admission to certain vocational training programs
- want to apply for admission to certain college-level technical training programs
- have been referred by Emploi-Québec
- are in the armed forces
- are immigrants referred by the Ministère de l'Immigration
- belong to aboriginal communities
- are inmates in federal detention centres
- are young mothers
- want to take part out of personal interest

It should be noted that arrangements can be made for people with particular needs or physical handicaps.

WHAT ARE THE CONDITIONS FOR ADMISSION TO THE GED TESTS?

Applicants must:

- lack a Secondary School Diploma (SSD)
- be aged 16 years or older
- have been accepted to adult education
- meet the requirements concerning citizenship and place of residence

IN WHAT LANGUAGES ARE THE GED TESTS GIVEN?

They are given in English, Spanish and French, but they must all be taken in the same language. The tests used in Canada have been designed for people in Canada.

HOW ARE THE TESTS ADMINISTERED?

The GED tests are administered differently from the usual examinations in school boards. They are subject to special security procedures to ensure maximum control and to allow the Ministère de l'Éducation (MEQ) to intervene without any ambiguity in the lines of authority. The GED tests do not belong to the MEQ, and their use is governed by a contract between the MEQ and the GEDTS.

The GED tests are administered in adult education centres by personnel directly responsible to the MEQ. The special conditions and procedures are supervised by the MEQ, which:

- ensures that the administration and organization of the testing sessions are in compliance with the rules
- advertises and provides information for the public
- ensures the security, control and management of the tests
- provides testing sessions according to agreements with the school boards

HOW LONG DO THE GED TESTS TAKE?

The five tests normally take two days, and their actual duration is 7 hours, 35 minutes.

HOW CAN ONE PREPARE FOR THE GED TESTS?

Any work, training, reading or other experiences leading to the acquisition of learning is preparation for the GED tests. It is possible to prepare further by:

- enrolling for training given by a school board
- enrolling for training provided by a private institution
- buying special books published for this purpose
- doing training on line

It should be noted that there are textbooks and Web sites to help prepare for the tests.

WHAT IS THE CERTIFICATE OF EQUIVALENCE OF SECONDARY STUDIES (CESS)?

The MEQ issues the CESS to adults who pass the GED tests.

These tests assess the competencies and skills people should normally have acquired at the end of secondary school studies, such as the ability to reason, the ability to organize information and the ability to draw conclusions.

However, the tests do not cover the compulsory content of the MEQ programs of study or that of the Secondary V examinations for the SSD. In order to encourage adults to seek the SSD, the MEQ has decided that the CESS corresponds to 36 credits in elective subjects applicable toward the SSD. In a practical context, the CESS will be useful for an adult without an SSD who is urgently seeking employment or admission to training.

WHAT IS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE CESS AND THE SECONDARY SCHOOL EQUIVALENCY TESTS (SSETS)?

It is expected that in coming years the popularity of the GED tests will make the secondary school equivalency tests (SSETs) obsolete and the CESS will replace the Attestation of Equivalence of Secondary Studies (AESS). It should, however, be noted that the level of difficulty of the GED tests is higher than that of the SSETs.

WHO ACCEPTS THE CESS?

Vocational and technical training centres accept the CESS for purposes of admission into most fields of training, as they currently do the AESS.

The MEQ cannot guarantee that all employers will automatically accept the CESS.

The CESS does not replace the SSD for purposes of admission to CEGEPs or the granting of the Diploma of College Studies (DCS). However, it does make possible admission to CEGEP for obtaining an Attestation of College Studies (ACS), as do the SSETs.

Institutions in all Canadian provinces and all states of the US accept the GED tests.

The CESS is being promoted by the MEQ to the Ministère de l'Emploi, de la Solidarité sociale et de la Famille and the Ministère des Relations avec les citoyens et de l'Immigration.

HOW MUCH DOES IT COST?

The service is free.

QUÉBEC IS
RENEWING THE
CURRICULUM IN
BASIC GENERAL
EDUCATION
FOR ADULTS



ZOOM

THE FORMAT OF THE PROGRAMS OF STUDY IN BASIC GENERAL EDUCATION

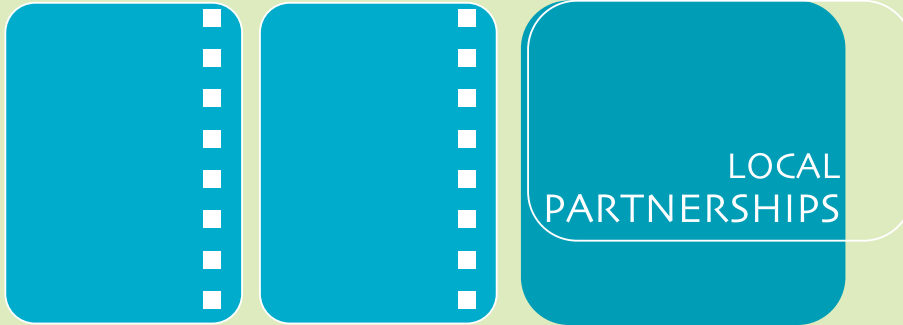
The format of the programs of study in basic general education will be presented in two versions: the first one for education professionals and the second for the general public and adult learners.

The first version will consist of two documents. One document will describe the program and all the courses in it and provide details on the goals, the target population, the competencies, and the structure of the program and the expected outcomes at the end of each course. The other document will contain integrated diagrams showing the competencies of the program and the courses, tables of resources, integrating tasks for the courses, and the methods used for the evaluation of learning.

The second version of the program of study will contain specific information such as the competencies to be developed, the duration, the objectives to be met with regard to the adult learner's personal plan, and the program's advantages in terms of personal life and employment.

VALIDATION OF THE PROGRAMS OF STUDY IN COMMON-CORE BASIC EDUCATION

In the fall of 2004, the MEQ will begin the validation of the programs of study in common-core basic education. This involves gathering the views of the school boards and partners in the field of education on the quality of the programs of study in terms of their relevance, consistency and conformity to the MEQ orientations and rules of presentation.



ACCESS TO EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOR PEOPLE WITH HANDICAPS

This month sees the launch of a music therapy project for adults between the ages of 21 and 35 with multiple handicaps, at the École secondaire Joseph-Charbonneau.

For four sessions of 13 weeks, 25 people will take part in a variety of learning activities aimed at increasing their self-esteem, self-confidence and ability to interact with others.

A music therapist and a team of attendants for students with handicaps will take part in each session of the project and in the periodic evaluation of its effects on the adult learners. It has already been agreed that the results of the project will be shared with organizations working to meet the education needs of people with multiple handicaps.

The music therapy project came about as a result of a partnership between the adult general education sector of the Commission scolaire de Montréal and the organization Solidarité de parents de personnes handicapées inc.

For further information, contact André Pelletier, Direction de la formation générale des adultes: (418) 658-8211 or <andre.pelletier@meq.gouv.qc.ca>

EMPLOYER-INITIATED CONTINUING EDUCATION IN EUROPE (continued from the previous issue)

INTERNATIONAL PANORAMA

Training in the course of working life is an individual responsibility in all countries, but to different degrees. Continuing education and training has many objectives, but it increasingly aims to prevent unemployment. Individual initiatives are also part of lifelong learning.

The Scandinavian countries have a strong tradition of continuing education and training and a broad variety of programs. Equal opportunity for education and moral and civic development are essential values in these societies. Most programs for young people are also accessible to adults under conditions that allow them to study in their free time.

In Germany, Austria and Luxemburg, personal development (*Bildung*) is also important, and it is often separate from occupational objectives, but the rise in unemployment (particularly in Germany) leads people toward training that improves their employability. The supply of programs in these countries is also relatively open and varied.

There is also a great deal of concern with continuing education and training in the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. In the former,

the objectives are related to culture as much as to employment. There is real concern on the part of the public authorities to open up all areas of the education system to both young people and adults. In the United Kingdom, people undertaking continuing education and training usually do so for occupational reasons.

In France, the supply of public and private adult education programs based on republican values seems to be less developed than in the nordic countries, as a result of the rapid development of initial training. Moreover, the initial training institutions' lack of openness to adults and their specific needs has impeded individual initiatives.

THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION LEAVE

In two thirds of European countries, there are provisions allowing employees to take education leave. There are two approaches used to guarantee access to employee-initiated training: legislative and contractual.

Legislative approaches: In Sweden, employees have a right to unpaid leave; in Finland, to leave combined with a government bursary; and in Denmark, to a negotiated

leave (lasting four months on average). In France and Belgium, the right to remunerated training leave is established through legislation, but its impact on individual initiatives is limited.

In France, less than 5 per cent of employees in companies with at least 10 employees exercise the right to education leave. In Germany, this individual right is based on the legislation of the specific state; in 10 of the 16 states, there are laws giving all employees the right to training leave remunerated by the employer (average of 5 days a year). Portugal recently passed legislation establishing a system of unremunerated training leave.

Contractual approaches: In the Netherlands, 40 per cent of collective agreements provide for training leave for periods ranging from one to ten days. In Italy, a training leave of 150 hours every three years was established in metallurgy in 1973. Although it has gradually been extended to most sectors of activity, it is little used. In Spain, an individual training permit established in many fields in 1992 provides for 150 remunerated hours a year to obtain official qualifications.

PUBLIC ASSISTANCE

Public assistance may involve either funding the supply of continuing education and training oriented toward the demand by individuals or providing direct financial aid for individual initiatives. Subsidies for the supply of training exist everywhere, but at different levels; they are highest in the Scandinavian countries. However, direct assistance for individual initiatives is less widespread. Assistance may take the form of funding of individual training leaves (France and Belgium) or allocations paid to individuals (Finland and Denmark). It may also consist of allowing the deduction of the cost of training from taxable income (the United Kingdom, Germany, Austria and Luxemburg) or providing aid to specific groups (aid to unskilled employees, in Denmark, or to people preparing for a supervisory certificate, in Germany; training allocations, in Austria; a system of guaranteed loans for career development, more recently in France).

CERTIFICATION OF CONTINUING EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Individual training initiatives are often undertaken to obtain qualifications in order to improve an employee's prospects for mobility (within or outside a company). This objective is more common in systems in which there is a high level of recognition of qualifications and in countries that encourage adults to seek diplomas. This is the case for the nordic countries, particularly Denmark, where vocational diplomas are widely recognized by employers. It is also the case, but to a lesser extent, in the Netherlands. In countries with a German tradition (Germany, Austria and part of Luxemburg), the existence of possibilities for promotion to middle-level jobs (technical or supervisory) based on qualifications that are available only through continuing education and training encourages employees to take these types of programs. In France, as well, there are qualifications based specifically on continuing education and training (CNAM; AFPA; local chambers of commerce, trade or industry; and, more recently, certificates of qualifications) as well as new ways for adults to obtain diplomas from the national education authorities (e.g. validation of prior occupational learning). But these possibilities are

still underused because there is less flexibility in the supply there than in the nordic countries. In the United Kingdom, the new system of occupational qualifications (NVQ), which involves both initial and continuing training, aims to promote certificates of competence. However, their recognition is not subject to centralized negotiations and depends on agreements reached in individual companies.

Based on this overview, it seems reasonable to suggest various avenues:

- open up adult education programs, diplomas and institutions in order to better respond to the aspirations and occupational or family-related constraints of this population
- design financial aid measures for medium- or long-term individual training plans that would help unemployed people enter the work force and would be more closely negotiated with employers
- take inventory of the occupational and other competencies acquired by adults through continuing education and training or experience, the validation of which goes beyond the usual framework of diplomas and the recognition of which will help them build their career plans



group photo

In the fall of 2004, the MEQ will set up two new working groups. The mandate of the first group will be to review the terms and conditions of the Joint Federal-Provincial Literacy Training Initiatives as well as the content of the agreement. The mandate of the second group has been defined as follows:

- to determine which goals of the Action Plan for Adult Education and Continuing Education and Training require modifications in the level of funding in order to make recommendations to the MEQ-school boards funding committee
- to identify organizational and financial obstacles to the optimal application of the Government Policy on Adult Education and Continuing Education and Training and propose solutions for removing these obstacles that are consistent with the new *Basic Adult General Education Regulation*.

We will provide the names of the organizations that will take part in these working groups.

ON THE BOOKSHELF

BOOKS

PATRICK RIVARD.
La gestion de la formation en entreprise – Pour préserver et accroître le capital compétence de votre organisation. Québec: Presses de l'Université du Québec, 2000. 276 p.

In the past ten years, on-the-job training practices have gradually been changing. This book is intended as a partial response to changes in the role of departments of human resources and reductions in advisory personnel. The author provides various tools and procedures for analyzing needs and planning and organizing training activities. The approach focuses on adult education from the perspective of organizational development.

Available in bookstores or at the following Web site:
<http://www.portail-rhri.com/transaction/publications/produit.asp?idFicDoc=19208>

GÉRARD PUIMATTO.
Multimédia, enseignement, formation, téléformation : évolution des technologies de l'information et perspectives d'applications dans la formation initiale et continue. Sainte-Foy: Publications du Québec, 1995. 168 p.

ON THE WEB

WWW.

L'APPRENTISSAGE VIRTUEL AU QUÉBEC

Emploi-Québec

http://emploiquebec.net/publications/7_formation/apprentissage_virtuel.pdf

Businesses are facing new challenges in a rapidly changing market: ongoing employee training needs are more difficult to foresee, the complexity of goods and services is increasing, training must be provided very quickly and employee mobility is increasing. In this context, the market for virtual learning for workers has mushroomed in recent years.

QUEBEC ENGLISH LITERACY ALLIANCE (QELA)

<http://www.qela.qc.ca/>

QELA, a partnership of anglophone literacy-training providers in Québec, is dedicated to networking, training, information-sharing and advocacy for the advancement of literacy in the province.

The QELA Web site provides information on literacy training activities in Québec, teaching and learning resources and newsletters produced by the various member groups.

LMI ONLINE

Labor Market Information (LMI)

http://imt.emploiquebec.net/mtg/inter/noncache/contenu/asp/mtg941_accueil_angl_01.asp

LMI presents various information that is useful for people looking for work, making career choices or seeking to improve their employment situation. LMI is also for employers interested in the labour market situation or seeking employees. LMI Online provides information that is easy to interpret, making it possible to make informed decisions.

FORMAGUIDE

<http://www.formaguide.com/>

In the section of this Web site entitled "Actualité," there are French-language articles on continuing education and training in other countries. It's always interesting to find out what's happening elsewhere.

With the advent of multimedia, information and communications technologies are raising many questions. This book is mainly addressed to francophones working in education and training and electronic publishing. It discusses the use of multimedia in education and training.

Available in bookstores or at the following Web site:
<http://publicationsduquebec.gouv.qc.ca/home.php>

CHRISTIAN DEPOVER AND
LOUISE MARCHAND.

E-learning et formation des adultes en contexte professionnel. 1st ed.
Brussels: De Boeck
Université, ©2002. 260 p.
(Perspectives en éducation et
formation, ISBN 2804141063)
(HD 5715 D466e 2002)

To some people, the term "e-learning" means any use of technology in learning, while to others, its meaning is limited to the use of the Internet. The authors of this book take a broad view of e-learning, emphasizing the pedagogical problems involved in the use of technology in learning and their management in adult education.

ADULT EDUCATION

AND CONTINUING EDUCATION AND TRAINING



1-888-488-3888

ADULT EDUCATION AND CONTINUING EDUCATION AND TRAINING *Just a phone call away!*

The *Adult Learn Line* is a confidential toll-free telephone service that provides assistance and referrals for anyone seeking access to training, from basic education to a college diploma or university degree.

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The *Adult Learn Line* refers individuals and businesses to service providers in the following areas:

Basic education ■ Reception, guidance and referral services ■ Support services ■ College education ■ University education ■ Student financial assistance ■ Development of work-related skills ■ Employment assistance ■ Distance education ■ Independent community action literacy training

This publication is available on the Web site of the Direction de la formation générale des adults: <http://www.meq.gouv.qc.ca/dfga/portail.html>.

Québec

Produced by the MELS and Emploi-Québec

SNAPSHOT

The Minister of Education, Pierre Reid, launched the second phase of the provincial campaign to promote literacy on September 7 in Montréal. Nearly a hundred people were present at the event. A new poster will be sent to the literacy network and promotional materials will be distributed throughout the year.



"The only true wealth comes from knowledge."

Émile Zola
Vérité, 1902, Christian Piro, 1993