

5.9 Graduation From University in OECD Countries

In 2000, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) published its *Education at a Glance*, containing indicators on graduation from university in OECD countries in 1998.

In 1998, the probability of obtaining a first bachelor's degree in Québec was 26.6%, and the average observed for the OECD countries¹ was 23.2%.

Table 5.9 compares the situation in Québec with that in a number of industrialized OECD nations with respect to graduation from university. In 1998, the probability of obtaining a bachelor's degree was 26.6% in Québec, that is, 3.4 percentage points above the OECD average, down from 5 percentage points two years earlier. Meanwhile, Québec lost 2 percentage points while the OECD average decreased by only 1 percentage point.

In 1998, 9 of the 29 OECD countries had a higher probability of obtaining a first university degree (bachelor's) than Québec, that is, Norway (38.3%), the United Kingdom (35.2%), the Netherlands (34.6%), New Zealand (33.0%), the United States (32.9%), Finland (30.0%), Canada as a whole (29.4%), Spain (27.9%) and Japan (27.7%). In most countries, however, the probability of obtaining a first degree equivalent to Québec's bachelor's degree was lower than in Québec. Québec awarded 59% of its bachelor's degrees to women, while the comparable percentages were 61% for Sweden, 59% for Canada as a whole, 57% for France and 56% for Italy. Conversely, Japan awarded only 35% of such degrees to women, while the comparable percentages were 40% for Turkey, 41% for Korea and Switzerland and 43% for Germany. Graph 5.9 gives the percentages of bachelor's degrees awarded to women in Québec and some OECD countries in 1998.

For master's degrees, the rate observed in Québec was 6.4%, ranking it fifth after the United States (14.6%), New Zealand (14.1%), the United Kingdom (12.3%) and Ireland (11.9%). Québec, however, awarded more master's degrees than France, the Flemish community in Belgium, Canada as a whole, Norway and Italy. Québec awarded 52%

1. For further information on this comparison with the OECD countries, refer to the following *Education Statistics Bulletin*, published by the Direction des statistiques et des études quantitatives of the Ministère de l'Éducation du Québec: Foucault, Diane. *Graduation Rates in Québec and the OECD Countries*, No. 21, January 2000. This document is available on the Internet at <<http://www.meq.gouv.qc.ca>>.

of its master's degrees to women, while the comparable percentages were 94% for Sweden, 65% for Italy, 63% for the Netherlands and 57% for Finland. Japan, however, awarded only 22% of its master's degrees to women, Korea, 30%, and Turkey, 37%.

The probability of obtaining a doctorate remained stable in Québec at 1.0%, a rate equivalent to the OECD average. Switzerland (2.5%), Finland (2.3%), Sweden (2.2%) and Germany (1.8%) posted the highest university graduation rates from postgraduate research programs. Québec awarded 37% of its doctorates to women, while the comparable percentages were 39% for France, 41% for the United States, 40% for Finland and 36% for Canada as a whole. The highest percentages of doctorates awarded to women were observed in Portugal (49%), Italy (45%), Spain (42%) and Mexico (42%). The lowest percentages were observed in Japan (17%) and Korea (20%).

Table 5.9

Probability of obtaining a university degree in Québec and OECD countries, 1998 (%)

	Bachelor's degree	Master's degree	Doctorate
Norway	38.3	5.2	1.1
United Kingdom	35.2	12.3	1.2
Netherlands	34.6	2.2	N/A
New Zealand	33.0	14.1	0.7
United States	32.9	14.6	1.3
Finland	30.0	0.7	2.3
Canada (including Québec)	29.4	4.5	0.8
Spain	27.9	N/A	0.9
Japan	27.7	2.5	0.5
Québec	26.6	6.4	1.0
Korea	25.5	2.5	0.6
Ireland	25.2	11.9	0.8
Sweden	25.1	0.4	2.2
France	24.0	6.3	1.2
Portugal	17.5	N/A	1.4
Belgium (Flemish)	17.4	4.9	0.7
Germany	16.0	N/A	1.8
Italy	14.5	3.1	0.4
Czech Republic	11.2	1.7	0.5
Average	23.2	4.4	1.0

N/A: Data not available

Graph 5.9

Percentage of university degrees awarded to women: Québec and OECD countries, 1998

