

## 5 Results–Graduation

### 5.5 Graduation From Secondary School in OECD Countries

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In 2001, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) published *Education at a Glance*, which contains indicators on graduation from secondary school in OECD countries in 1999.

***In 1999, the probability of obtaining a secondary school diploma<sup>1</sup> in Québec was 83%, 4 percentage points higher than the OECD average.***

Table 5.5 compares the situation in Québec with that in a number of industrialized OECD nations with respect to graduation from secondary school. In 1999, the secondary school graduation rate in Québec (83%) was higher than the average for the OECD countries.

Twelve OECD countries out of 20 had higher secondary school graduation rates than Québec. Québec's rate was lower than that of Japan, Hungary, Germany, the Netherlands, Korea, Denmark, Finland, Ireland, France, Switzerland and the Belgian Flemish community, but higher than that of Iceland, the United States, Sweden, Italy, Spain, Greece and the Czech Republic.

In most OECD countries, female students were more likely to graduate than male students. In Québec, there was a difference of 14 percentage points between the graduation rates of these two groups. A significant disparity in favour of female students was also observed in Greece (18 percentage points), Ireland and the Czech Republic (15 percentage points), Finland and Italy (10 percentage points), and the Netherlands and Sweden (7 percentage points). A higher graduation rate for male students was observed in only two OECD countries, Switzerland and the United States. The rate for male students in Québec was 77%, 1 percentage point above the OECD average, while the rate for female students in Québec was 90%, or 8 percentage points above the OECD average.

There are far more students in general education in Québec than there are in vocational education, and this holds true for both male and female students. With a probability of obtaining a diploma in general education of 77%, Québec ranks second among the OECD countries, after Ireland (78%), but before Japan (69%) and the other OECD countries.

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1. For Québec, this rate was obtained by dividing the number of "first diplomas" awarded in 1999 by the number of 17-year-olds in Québec (the age at which a secondary school diploma is generally awarded in Québec).

The reverse is true in vocational education. Québec's graduation rate is 25%, while the average for the OECD countries is 45%. A number of countries obtained very high results in vocational education, that is, Hungary (71%), Finland and France (67%), Italy (65%), the Belgian Flemish community (64%), Germany and Denmark (59%), and the Netherlands (56%). The results in vocational education are better than those in general education in half of the OECD countries.<sup>2</sup>

The probability of obtaining a diploma in vocational education in Québec is barely higher for male students than for female students. It is the sector of activity that differs for female and male students.

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2. The differences between the education systems in the various OECD countries explain the fluctuations observed in the probability of obtaining diplomas in secondary school general and vocational education.

Table 5.5

## Probability of obtaining a secondary school diploma, by gender and type of program: OECD countries, 1999 (%)

	Total (without double counting)			General education		Vocational education	
	M + F	Male	Female	M + F	Female	M + F	Female
Japan	95	92	97	69	73	27	26
Hungary	92	91	93	24	30	71	65
Germany (1998)	92	90	94	33	36	59	58
Netherlands	92	88	95	35	39	56	56
Korea	91	91	91	56	53	36	38
Denmark	90	82	98	54	66	59	63
Finland	89	84	94	53	64	67	71
Ireland (1998)	86	79	94	78	85	15	16
France	85	84	86	33	39	67	61
Switzerland	83	86	81	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Belgium (Flemish)	83	82	85	33	38	63	64
<b>Québec</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>23</b>
Iceland	82	79	84	54	65	43	32
United States	78	79	77	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Sweden	74	71	78	41	45	33	31
Italy	73	69	79	28	37	65	63
Spain	73	67	79	47	53	29	31
Greece	67	58	76	59	62	20	16
Czech Republic	52	44	59	13	15	43	49
<b>Average</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>43</b>

N/A: Data not available

Graph 5.5

Probability of obtaining a secondary school diploma, general and vocational education: Québec and OECD countries, 1999

