

Immigration and labour shortages

Lessons from Canada, eh?



Canadian Labour Congress

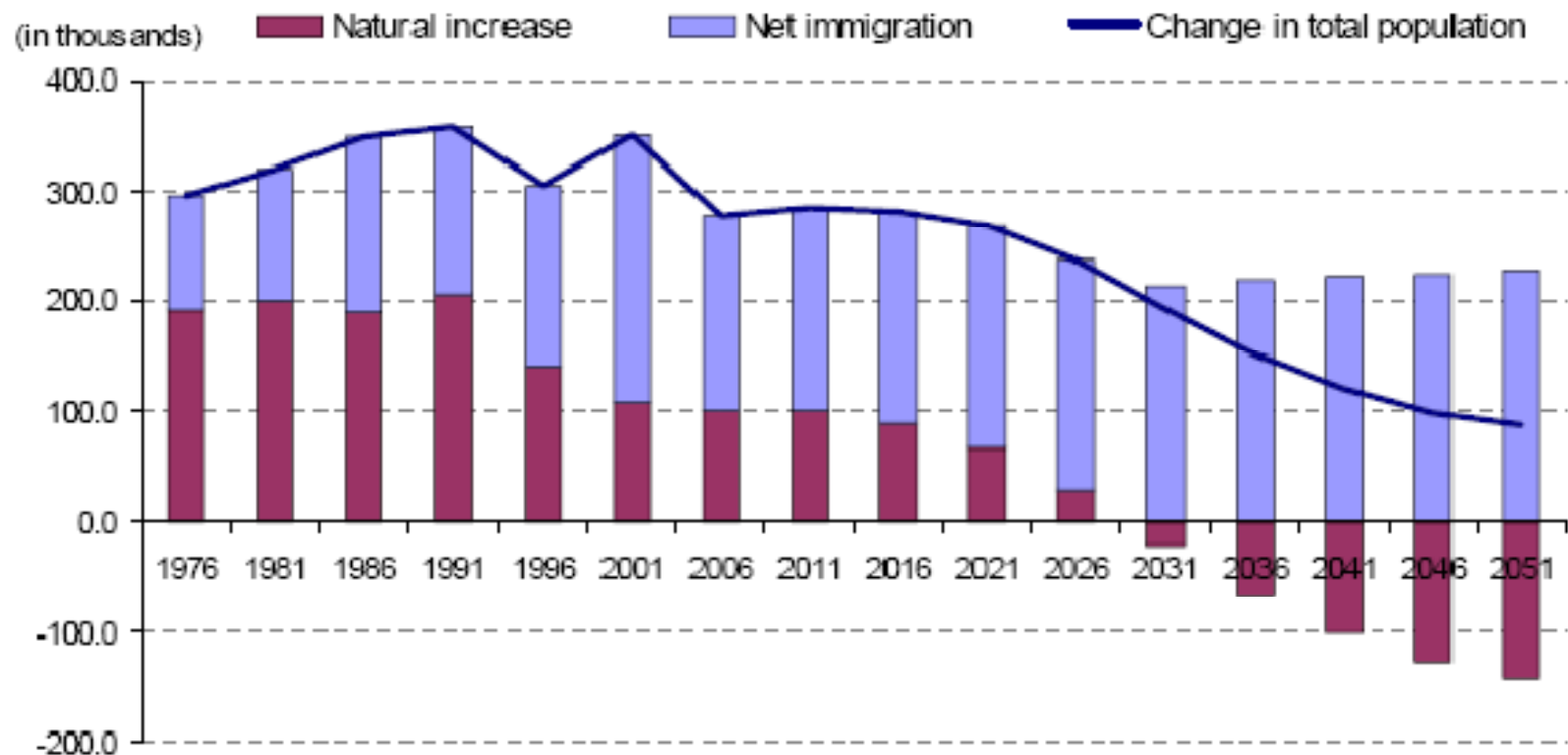
Congrès du travail du Canada

Canada's population clock

- One birth every one minute and 32 seconds.
- One death every two minutes and 14 seconds.
- A net migration gain of one person every 2 minutes and 24 seconds

Source: Statistics Canada

Change in Total Population in Canada, 1976-2051



Sources: (1976-2005) Statistics Canada, Annual Demographic Statistics
(2006-2051) HRSDC - SPRD, Labour Market and Skills Forecasting and Analysis Unit,
2006 Reference Scenario

How is the Canadian canvas changing?

More seniors, fewer children



- According to the 2006 Census, the 65-and-over population or wave #1, made up a record 13.7% (4.3 M) of the total population of Canada in 2006.
- The proportion of the under-15 population fell to 17.7%, its lowest level ever.
- Canada has a low birth rate and an aging population.

Aging workforce



- The number of people aged 55 to 64, (wave #2) many of whom are workers approaching retirement, has never been so high in Canada, at close to 3.7 million in 2006.

Going... going...



- The 2nd wave is the 55-64 years old cohort. @ 3.7 million.
- In total we are looking at @ 8 million retirees or 1:5 persons
- The impact in the next few years will be dramatic.

Where will the new workers come from?

- Aboriginal communities
- Immigrants and newcomer community
- Cohort of young Canadians (Gen X and Gen Y)



Source #2: Immigrants



- In March of 2007, the *Globe & Mail* front page headline read – “All immigration by 2030”
- Statistics Canada projects that by 2030 immigrants will be the singular source of our population increases.

Globe & Mail, March 14, 2007

Immigration & Refugee Protection Act (IRPA) 2002

<http://laws.justice.gc.ca/en/showtdm/cs/I-2.5>
http://laws.justice.gc.ca/en/showdoc/cr/SOR-2002-227/bo-ga:I_6/en#anchorbo-ga:I_6

Three pathways to residency status:

Refugee Class

- face persecution in home country

Family Class

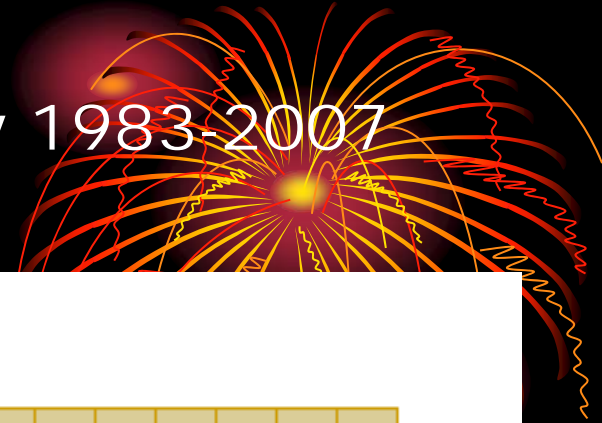
- close relatives or family members sponsor applicant.
- provide integration and fiscal assurance

Economic Class

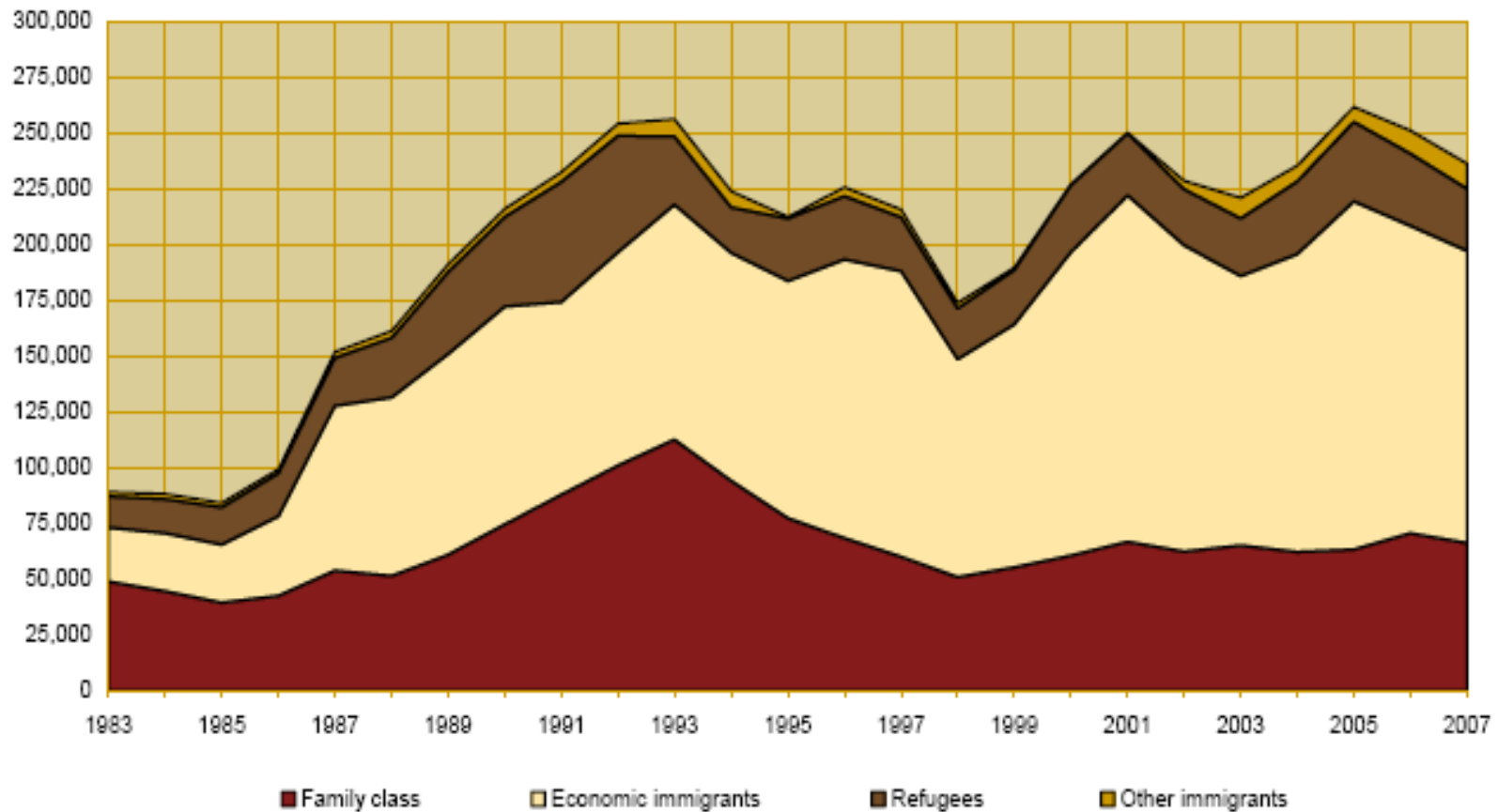
- skilled worker, business immigrant, provincial/territorial nominee,
- new channel since 08 Canadian Experience Class



Permanent residents by category 1983-2007



Canada – Permanent Residents by Category, 1983 to 2007



Point system factors



- 1. Age (10 points)
- 2. Education (25 points)
- 3. Work experience (21 points)
- 4. Language skills (English & French) (24 points)
- 5. Arranged employment (10 points)
- 6. Adaptability (10 points)

Problems with points system

- Only 7 years old
- Accounts for @25% of all immigrants
- Nearly a million in the queue
- Over half are skilled workers
- Long wait times for 80% of skilled worker applicants (i. e. 5 years)



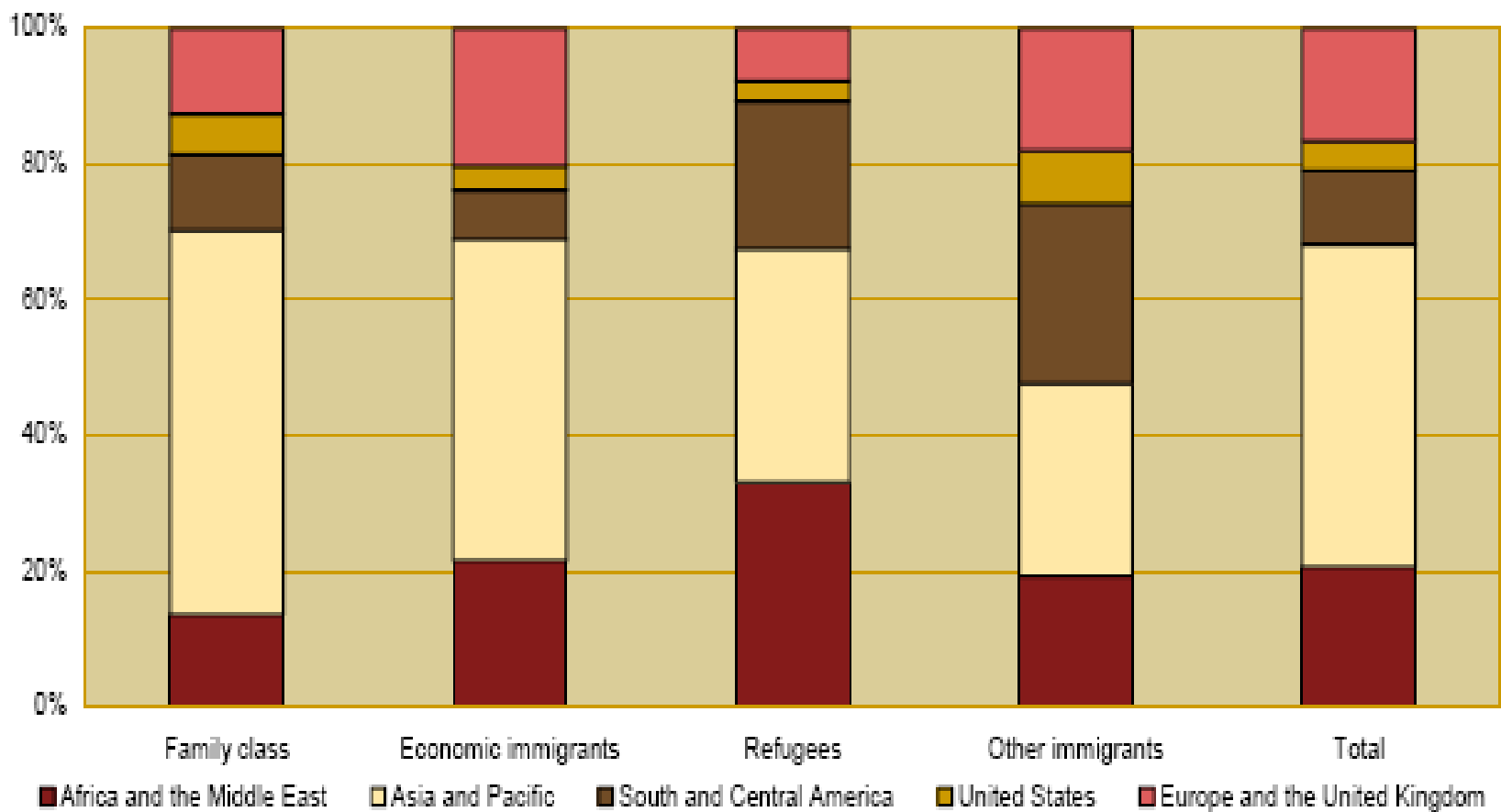
Problems with points con't

- Fails to account for persistence of systemic racism
- Overemphasis on higher education vs. trades certification
- International work experience not valued



Source country data

Canada – Permanent Residents by Category and Source Area, 2007 (Showing Percentage Distribution)



Immigrant community: A changing face



- Currently 80% of immigrants come from the Middle East, Africa, Asia and the Pacific region.
- Translated – the vast majority of immigrants are people of colour and they are a principal source of our labour force growth.

How are they faring?

- Census data shows that 34% of immigrants who arrived in Canada from 1995 to 1999 lived in low income situations.
- Compared with just 11% of non-immigrants living in low income situations accentuates a dark injustice.



Kids of colour = educated

- 25-44 year old Canadian-born workers of colour with a BA = 37.5 %
- International-born workers of colour with BA or higher, = 31.5 %
- White workers with BA or higher = 19.1 %.



Race and unemployment

- Canadian-born workers of colour have the 2nd highest unemployment rate.
- Immigrants of colour are next
- Lowest rate of unemployment is with white workers.



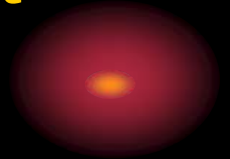
Unemployment rates for 15-24yrs old by race

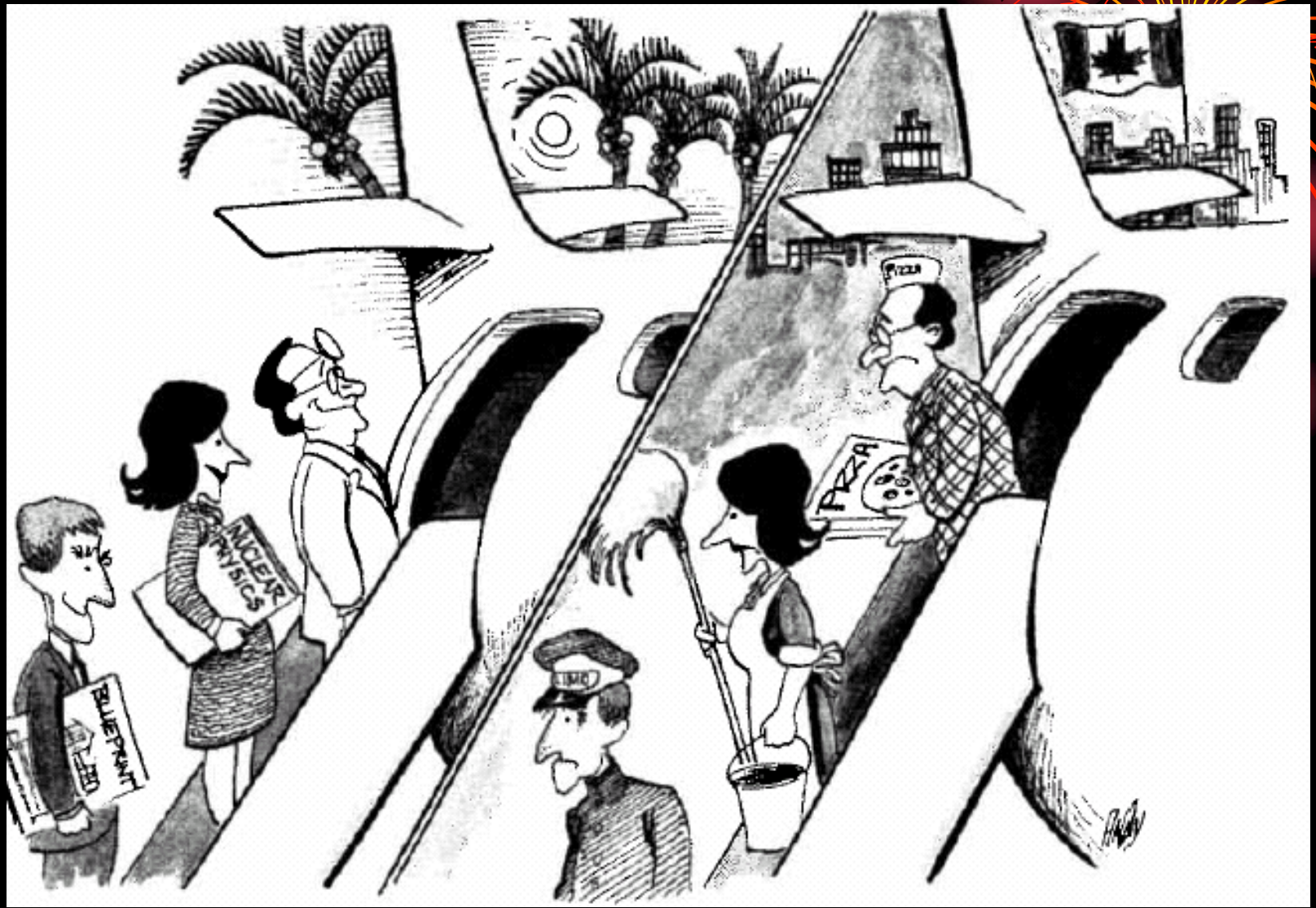


- 14.8% = racialized immigrant youth
- 15.5% = Cdn racialized youth
- 13.3% = white youth

Dr. Grace Edward Galabuzi

- " workers of colour cohort will generate nearly 80 billion dollars in real GDP growth between 1992 and 2017 despite being underpaid by nearly 15%"





Immigrant contributions?

- *2005: Strategic Counsel conducts revealing survey. The issue: what is the public perception of the contribution immigrants make to Canada?*
- *40% of those surveyed expressed the view that immigrants from some countries "make a bigger and better contribution than others."*



Colour coded perceptions



- *The breakdown is disturbing – almost 80% claim that European immigrants make a positive contribution, the number falling to 59% for Asians; 40% for East Indians; and plummeting to 33% for those from the Caribbean.*

Pass mark (67 out of 100) too low?

Problems with points system con'td



Factor

Max points

My score

Education	25	20
Language	24	16
Work Exp	21	21
Age	10	10
Arranged employment	10	0
Adaptability	10	10
Total score	100	77

Gender implications & points

- Women are a 1/3rd as likely as men to be granted status.
- Only 10% of economic class immigrants are women while 37% of all immigrants women are classed as "spouses or dependents"
- Of all immigrant women, 36% are family class sponsored by family in economic class
- 10% of all immigrant women are refugees

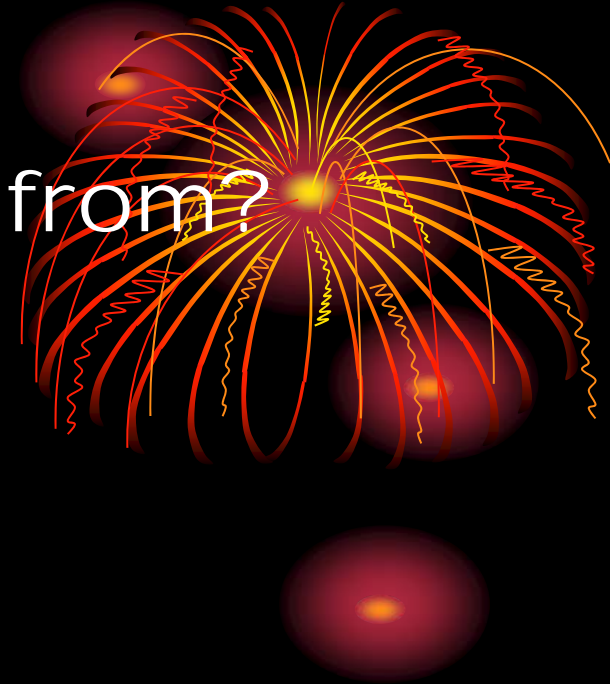


Migrant workers –where from?

Top 10 Source Countries for Canadian Temporary Foreign Workers (2006):

1. United States 15.0%
2. Mexico 12.4%
3. France 7.7%
4. Philippines 7.6%
5. Australia 6.6%
6. United Kingdom 6.4%
7. Jamaica 5.6%
8. Japan 5.0%
9. Germany 3.6%
10. India 3.4%

Source: Canadian government figures



Global context

- UN estimates nearly 200 million migrants
- Nearly 90 million are economically active
- About half are women
- World Bank estimates \$305.3 billion in remittances from migrant labour in 2008.



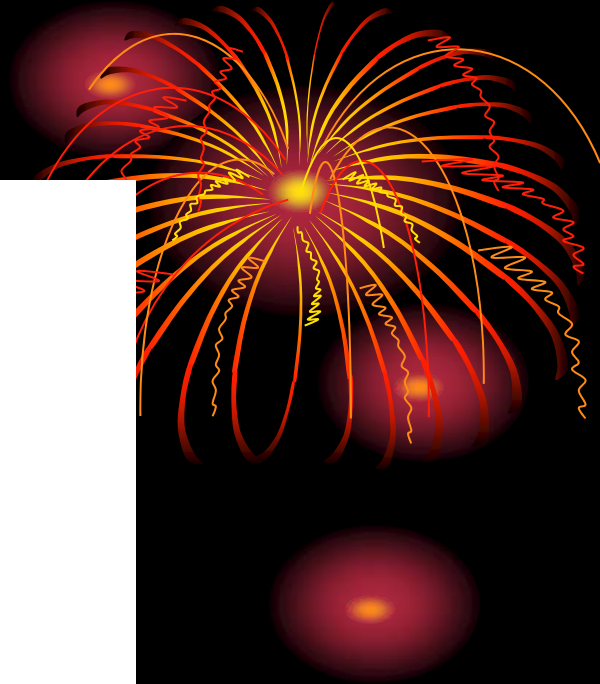
2006 UN High level meeting re migration and labour policy

- Advocates countries reform their immigration policies.
- Favour temp vs permanent migration to enhance labour flexibility.
- France, Hungary, Romania, UK, Canada, Finland, Japan, Norway, Poland, Portugal take heed by 2007.



“‘Help Wanted’ signs are everywhere, When it starts to affect our ability to go to Tim Hortons and get a double-double, it ceases to be a laughing matter.”

—MONTE SOLBERG, MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCES AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT



TFW program has few rules



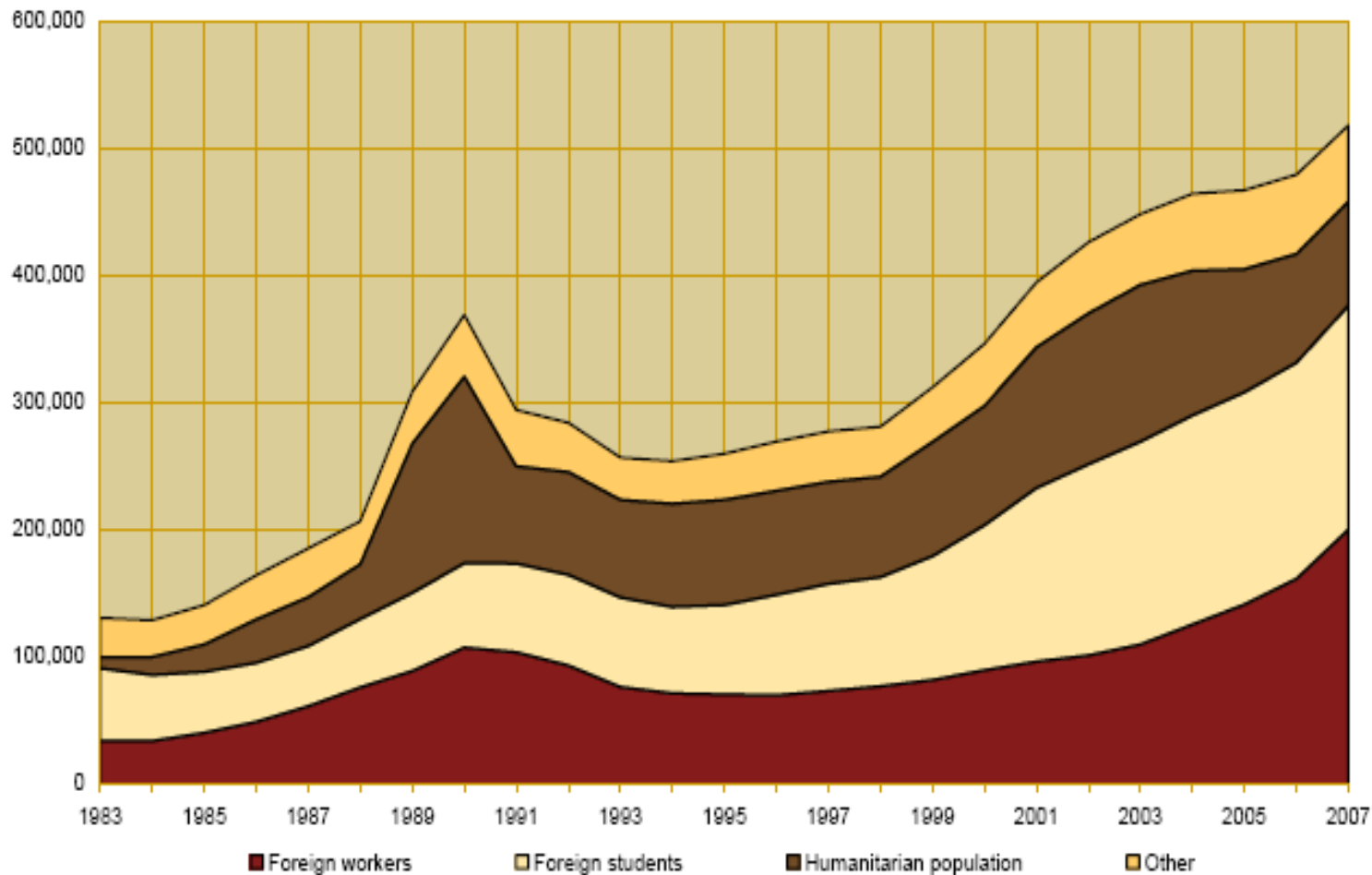
- Employer has to say they have attempted to hire within Canada. Proof not req'd.
- Say no labour dispute will result. No proof req'd.
- Migrant workers must be filling a 'proven' shortage. Methodology weak.
- Will directly create new jobs for Canadians
- Skills transfer will occur

“Employer driven program”



TFW stock 1983-2007

Canada – December 1st Stock of Temporary Residents by Yearly Status, 1983 to 2007

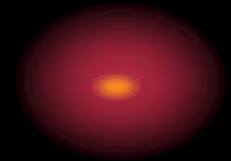


Number of permanent residents
admitted in 2008 = 242,202

meanwhile...



Stock of TFW in Canada has soared



1996	2005	2008
70,000	99,000	252,196

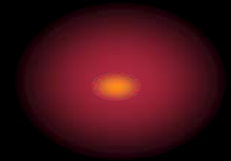
TFW program changes made since 06

- Employer-friendly "how to get your own TWF guide book"
- Dedicated more staff and money -- \$84 million. This is 12 x investment made to improve int'l credential recognition program.
- Every job category in the country now eligible for TFW import
- No compliance, monitoring or enforcement tools -ZERO



Sectors using guest workers

- Live-in-care giver Program
- Seasonal Agricultural Program
- Low skilled Pilot project (retail, services, warehousing)
- Entry to trucking sector
- E.L.M.O. (Construction, Hospitality, Service industry sectors)
- Soon coming to every job...



Are labour shortages for real?



- "Canadian labour market is currently quite healthy and is expected to remain buoyant over next decade."
- "no widespread labour shortages are expected to emerge over the next ten years"

Source: HRSDC . October, 2006.
Looking Ahead: A 10 Year Outlook for the
Canadian Labour Market

Source: HRSDC . October
2006.



"the strong rise in demand within high-skilled occupations has been adequately met by a rising supply of qualified workers. Real wages by broad skill level relative to the economy-wide average have been fairly constant since 1997 (suggesting) the absence of significant imbalances between the skills demanded by employers and the availability of qualified labour."

Source: HRSDC . October
2006.



"An increasing proportion of individuals with post secondary education can be found in low-skilled occupations ... the proportion of university-educated individuals in low skilled occupations (rose) from 12% in 1990 to about 17% in 2005, providing some evidence that there may be an over-supply of university graduates."

Impacts of TFW ramp up



Alberta Federation of Labour (AFL) : Advocate project:



- April to Oct 2007 the AFL contracted a special advocate to assist temporary workers in Alberta.
- In just 6 months, nearly 1500 temporary workers requested help and over 120 case files were opened.

Wages and working conditions.

- Bulk of cases dealt with working conditions: wages lower than promised, jobs radically different than promised; jobs disappear upon arrival, demands to perform inappropriate personal services, racist behavior and threats of deportation and imprisonment



Brokers



- Nearly 100 complaint cases involved brokers. Complaints included charging illegal fees (\$3-10K); misleading claims about the jobs, inaccurate promises of access to citizenship.

Housing:



- A third of workers seeking assistance had housing problems. Employers are to provide housing to low skilled workers. Typical problems: poor quality housing and excessive rents (4k-6K/month per residence)

Trades certification



- Temporary workers in trades experienced inadequate assistance from employers to pass their Red Seal exam needed to continue working.

Can-Mex Contractors:

- Employer demonstrates violent temper including threatening workers at knife point.
- Workers taken to a remote work location, housed in two room bunkhouse, (overcrowded) with no bathroom, no laundry facilities, given only 2 meals a day and told on days when there is no work-no pay.



Advocare: taking care of elders or business?



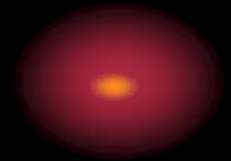
- 2006, Park Place Seniors Living Ltd. laid-off seventy long-serving unionized care aides earning a just over \$20/hour.
- Mgmt hired a private labour contractor, AdvoCare, to provide care services for the 149 residents of the facility. AdvoCare and reduced wages to \$14-\$15/hour.
- AdvoCare also a significantly reduced benefits package, eliminating the sick leave, long term disability, paid vacation and pension benefits previously held by unionized workers.

Advocare: taking care of elders or business?

- Union members refused to accept the reduced wage/benefits offer
- AdvoCare cited a 'labour shortage' in its application to hire temporary migrant workers under the governments TFWP.
- HRSDC issued a positive LMO and AdvoCare proceeded to hire temporary migrant workers to fill the care aide positions.



TFW programs: A recipe for exploitation and disadvantage?



- 2006-- @ 40 skilled foreign trades people, working on Vancouver's new rapid transit line, filed a complaint with BC Labour relations Board citing they were brought to Canada with offers of employment that were never honoured.

S.E.L.I. & the Vancouver RAV line case

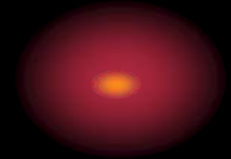


- 2006: The workers also had their visas confiscated by their employers upon entering Canada, and were being paid much less than the standard wage.
- Temporary migrant workers were being paid less than \$5 per hour on the tunnel excavation for the new \$1.7 billion Canada Line rapid transit project.

RAV line case ...next stop



- 2008: The BC Human Rights Tribunal, confirmed the employer was subsequently guilty of coercion and intimidation of temporary migrant workers who demanded justice and fairness.



Agricultural workers



- Death of two migrant farm wkers in March 07.
- Both quite young 39 & 37 years old worked on a mushroom farm in Chatham, Ontario.
- 7 wkers shared a 4 bed-room house.
- Community came together and organized a traditional Buddhist ceremony.

Filipino 11 case:



- 2007 Burlington based labour broker imports skilled trades workers from the Philippines (plumbers & welders) to work in Ontario for \$23/hr.
- Broker admits the jobs did not really exist but was still able to obtain a positive LMO and visas for the workers.
- Filipino 11 each charged \$10K USD in fees

Filipino 11 case

- 11 workers sub contracted to do menial labour in a bottled water plant in Barrie.
- Told they would be paid \$14/hour, but paid nothing for over 2 months.
- Starving and desperate, employer gave them \$800/each for two months work and threatened deportation if they complained further.



Red Deer -Olymel plant

- Quebec operation puts 500 workers on the street.
- Mgmt informs unions they are bringing 400 migrant workers.
- Union leadership says, 'things will have to done differently'.
- Union gets CA language for access to citizenship, ESL and workplace training programs that are employer funded.





CLC position re TFW program



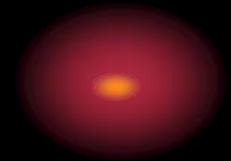
- No program expansion
- Raise wages/benefits
- Involve labour in assessing reality of skills/labour shortages
- 1st put in place comprehensive compliance, monitoring and enforcement systems.
- Allow worker mobility
- Immigration/settlement integration services
- Appeals process needed for workplace disputes with employer
- Graduated penalty system for abusive employers
- Involve aggressive Racism free workplace strategy
- Regulate and monitor brokers
- Access to citizenship rights

How to get there?

- Raise profile of issue – abuses, exploitation, racism and program flaws
- Parliamentary engagement strategy
- Expose abusive employers
- International solidarity actions
- Collaborate with migrant justice allies



Taking on the problem



- Raise public awareness
- Engage with governments
- Challenge corporate players
- Build solidarity with sending countries



Target key players



- Expose some of the corporate abusers and exploitative labour brokers causing faceless problems.

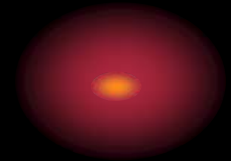
Canadian Experience Class



- Limited to some TFW (managers, professionals, high skilled trades) and international students with Cdn degree.
- Must also have Canadian work experience

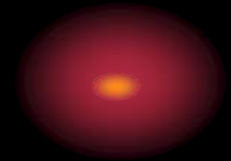
Skilled workers on fast track

- Financial Managers
Computer and Information Systems
Managers
Managers in Health Care
Restaurant and Food Service
Managers
Accommodation Service Managers
Construction Managers
Financial Auditors and Accountants
Geologists, Geochemists and
Geophysicists
Mining Engineers
Geological Engineers
Petroleum Engineers



Skilled workers on fast track

- Specialist Physicians
General Practitioners and
Family Physicians
Audiologists and Speech
Language Pathologists
Occupational Therapists
Physiotherapists
Head Nurses and Supervisors
Registered Nurses



Skilled workers on fast track

- Medical Radiation Technologists
Licensed Practical Nurses
University Professors
College and Other Vocational
Instructors
Chefs
Cooks
Contractors and Supervisors,
Pipefitting Trades
Contractors and Supervisors,
Carpentry Trades
Contractors and Supervisors,
Heavy Construction Equipment
Crews



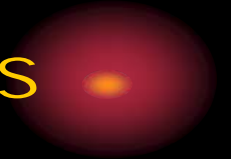
Skilled workers on fast track

- Contractors and Supervisors,
Pipefitting Trades
Contractors and Supervisors,
Carpentry Trades
Contractors and Supervisors,
Heavy Construction Equipment
Crews
Electricians (Except Industrial and
Power System)
Industrial Electricians
Plumbers
Steamfitters, Pipe fitters and
Sprinkler System Installers



Skilled workers on fast track

- Welders and Related Machine Operators
Heavy-Duty Equipment Mechanics
Crane Operators
Drillers and Blasters – Surface
Mining, Quarrying and Construction
Supervisors, Mining and Quarrying
Supervisors, Oil and Gas Drilling and
Service
Supervisors, Petroleum, Gas and
Chemical Processing and Utilities



CLC Anti-Racism & Human Rights Dept



Canadian Labour Congress

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