



# **Occupational Status Trajectories for Highly-Skilled Immigrants: An Investigation of Ethno-Racial Differences**

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October 12, 2010



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- II. Possible explanations
- III. Study overview
- IV. Lived experiences
- V. Modeling group differences
- VI. Case #1: Engineers
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- VIII. Conclusions



# Trends



## Falling economic returns

1970-1985

Evidence of weakening  
returns to foreign  
human capital

In 15 years time will  
make 13% less than  
Canadian-born  
counterparts

1975-1979

In 15 years time will  
make 15-24% less than  
Canadian-born  
counterparts

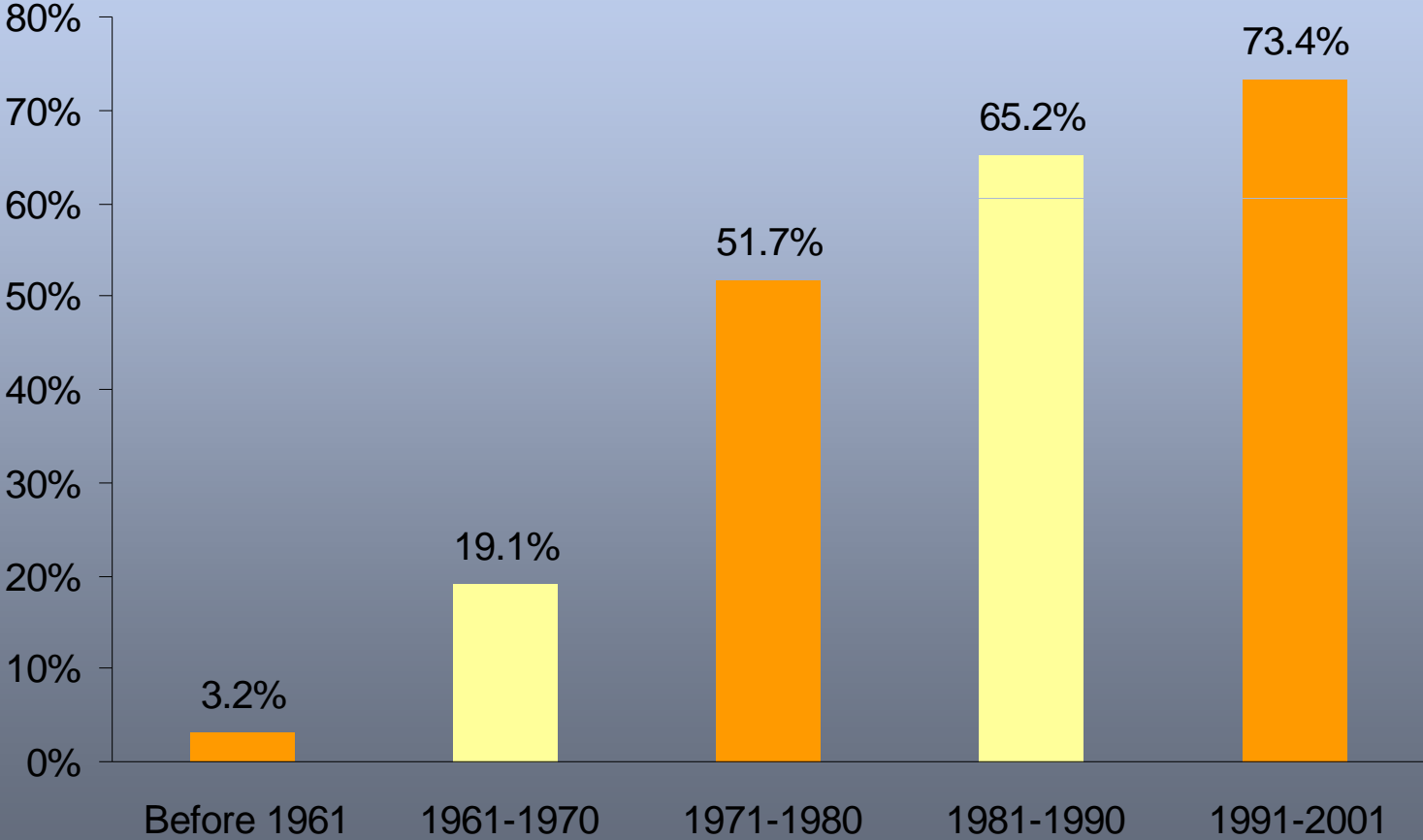
1985-1989

Unlikely ever to  
converge with  
Canadian-born  
counterparts

1990s



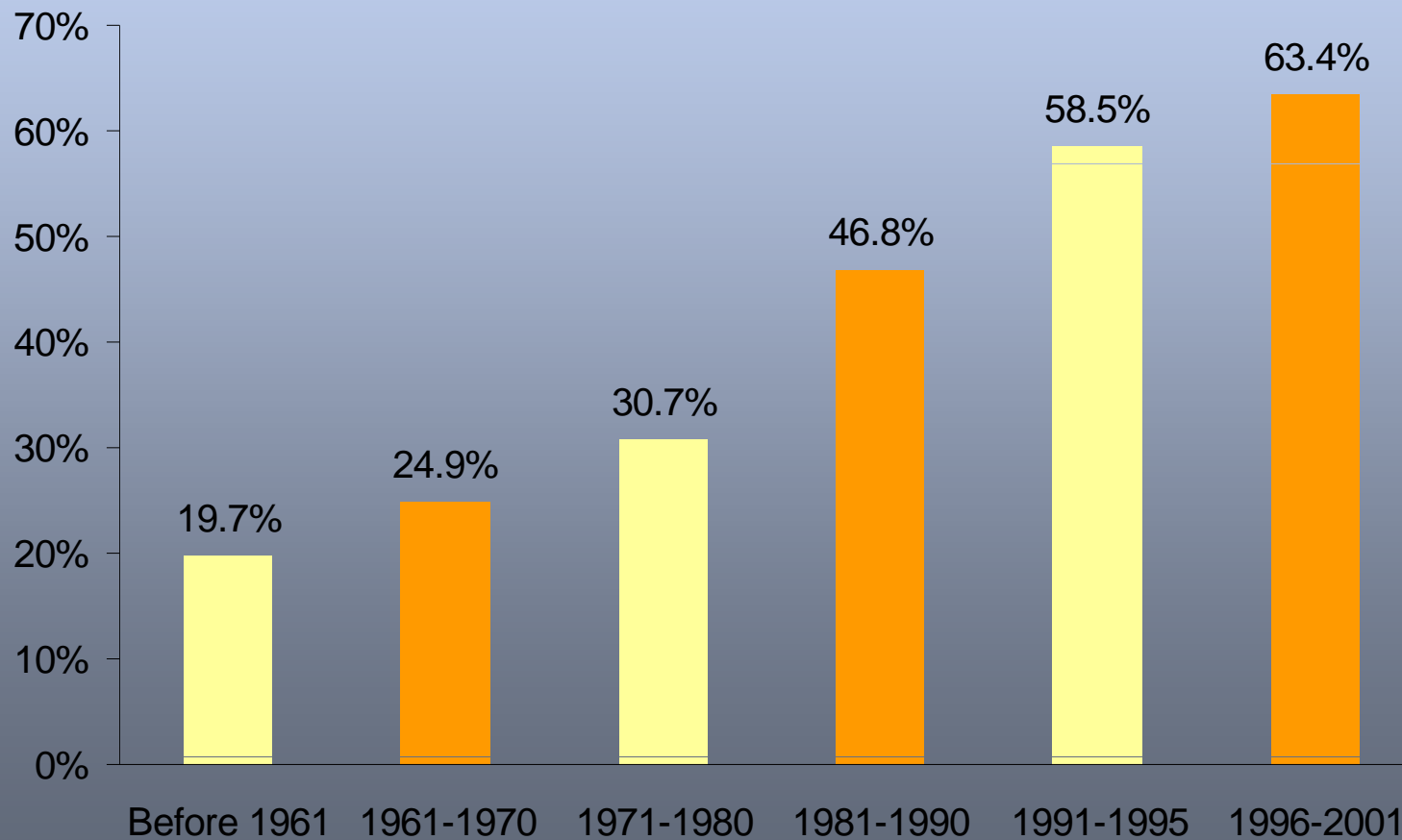
## Recent immigrants are more likely to be visible minorities



Source: 2001 Canada Census



## Recent immigrants more likely to use a non-official language in the home



Source: 2001 Canada Census



## **Possible explanations**



## Possible explanations

### Human Capital Characteristics (Pre-migration)

- Age
- Language Fluency
- Level of Education/Work experience

### Pre-migration activities

- Arranging employment/contact with Canadian employers

### Institutional Factors

- Regulated/ Unregulated
- Credential Recognition
- Canadian work experience

### Discrimination

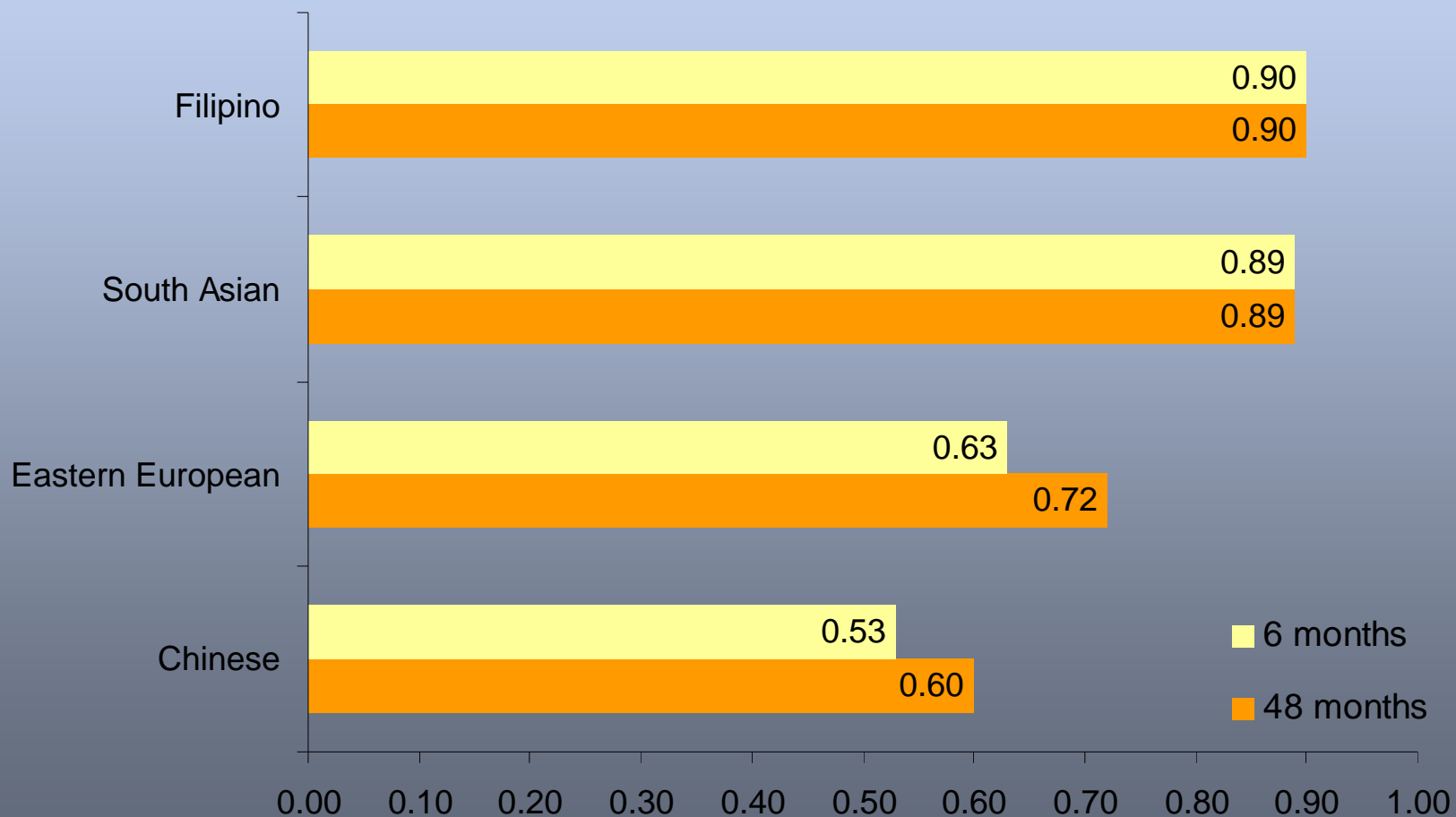
- Ethnicity
- Visible minority status
- Country of origin
- Accent

### Labour Market

- Business cycle
- Occupational demand
- Local labour markets



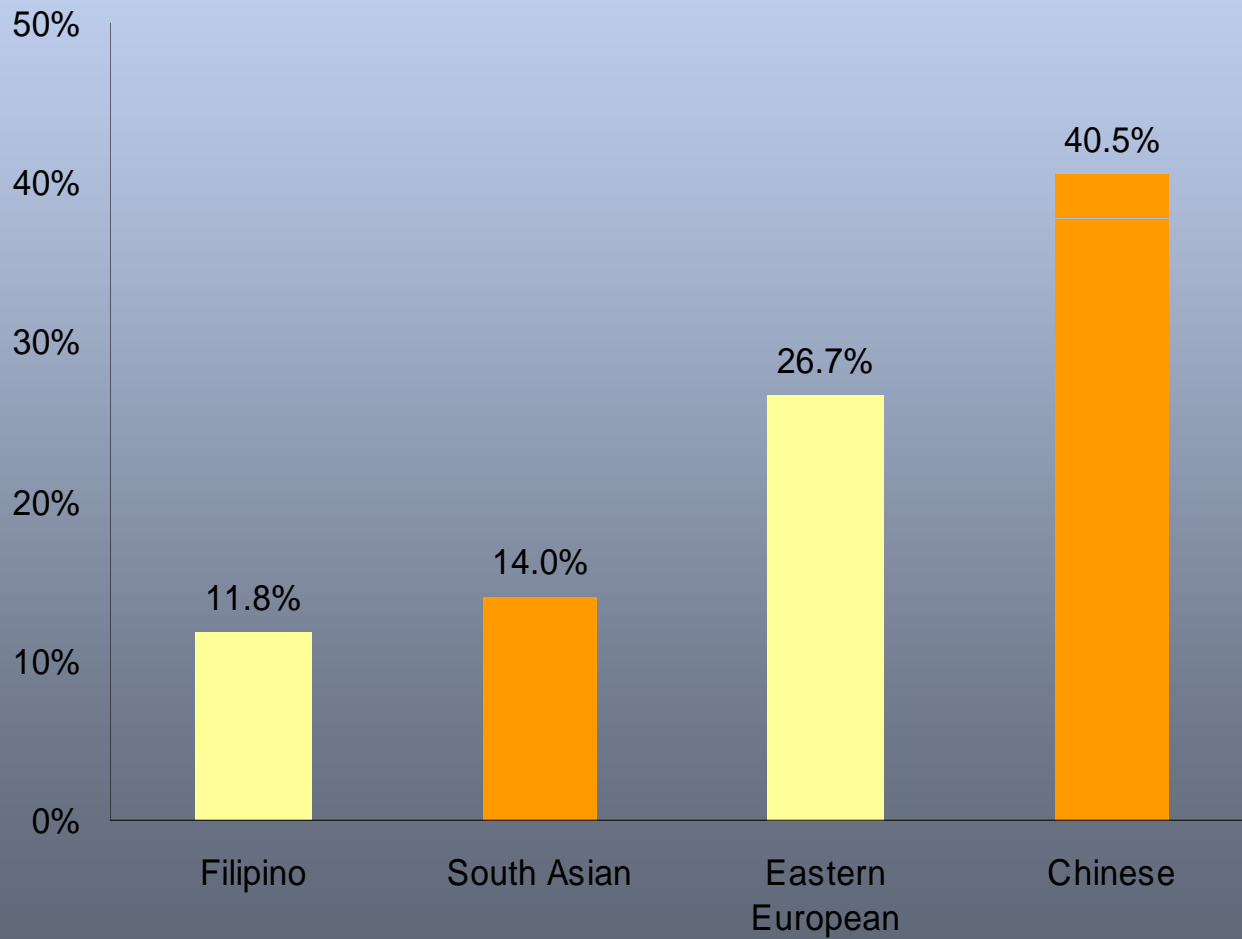
## Language Proficiency by Immigrant Group



Source: Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Canada, 2005



## Proportion of engineers within each group



Source: Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Canada, 2005



## Racialization and credential recognition

“Contrary to human capital theory ... skills, experience, and education are not assessed outside of the broader context of processes of racialization ... This fact helps to explain why a degree from a British university will be accepted at face value, while a commonwealth degree from an English-language university in a Commonwealth country, such as India or Uganda (both of whose systems are modeled on the British educational system), will not be accepted by Canadian employers or professional associations”

*(Creese, 2009, p.214)*



## Limitations to a labour market discrimination argument

Labour market discrimination is inferred  
*"unexplained differences"*

“... [R]acial characteristics of holders of credentials  
cannot be separated from the credentials  
themselves”

*(Li, 2001, p.33)*



## Assumptions

When matched in terms of human capital, pre-migration occupation, city of residence and other demographic characteristics ...

1. Immigrants with western credentials should outperform immigrants with non-western credentials
2. Immigrants with non-western credentials should perform similarly to one another



## **Study overview**



## Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Canada (LSIC)



+ 6 mo

Wave 1

+24 mo

Wave 2

+ 48 mo

Wave 3

*Oct 2000 - Sept 2001*



- 18 – 65 years
- Labour market participation (pre and post)
- Foreign educational content only
- Principal applicant or university-educated
- Did not report ethnicity



## Sample Size

12,000 interviewed  
(Wave 1)



36% attrition rate

7,700 interviewed  
(Wave 3)



103,782 person/months

Sample restrictions  
Inflation (waves to months)



## Occupational status (Boyd-NP Scale)

Developed by Monica Boyd (University of Toronto)

Ranks 520 occupations (NOC)

Range: 0 - 100

100:	Doctor/Surgeon	71:	Electrician
93-96:	Engineer	42:	Hotel front desk clerk
96:	Software engineer	32:	Security guard
89:	Elementary teacher	30:	Retail salesperson
85:	Database analyst	30:	Oil and gas labourer
82:	Financial auditor/ accountant	24:	Food/beverage server
82:	Registered nurse	19:	Cashier
		9:	Babysitter/Nanny



## Measuring occupational status mobility

Post-migration status – Pre-migration status

Positive score: Upward mobility

Zero: No change in status

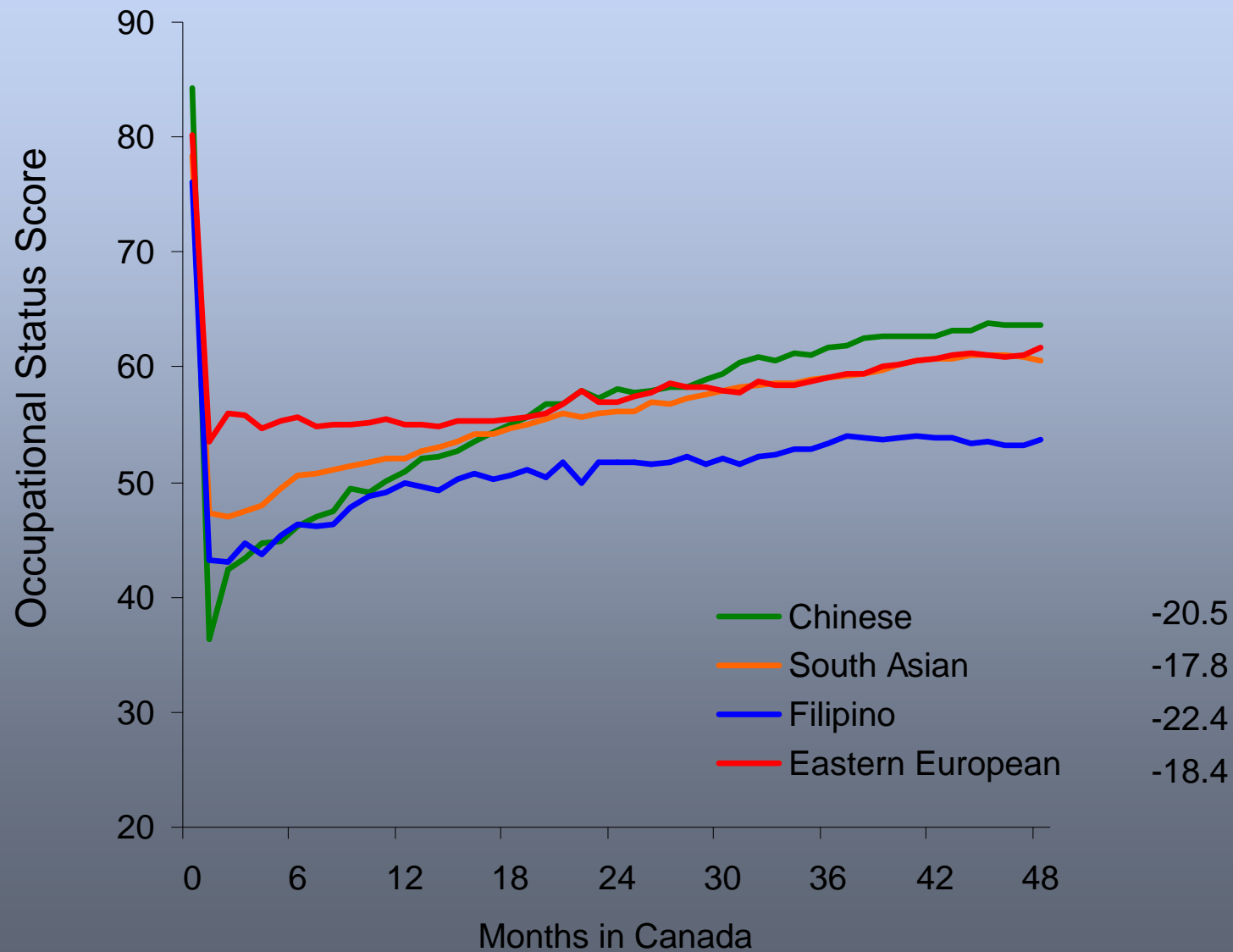
Negative score: Downward mobility

Largest possible change = +/-100



## **Lived experiences**

# Lived Experiences of Highly-Skilled Immigrants in Canada





## **Modeling group differences**



# Control variables

<b>Human Capital</b>	<b>Demographic Variables</b>
Age (4) Language fluency Level of education (4) Arranged employment (yes/no) Principal applicant (yes/no)	Gender (2) CMA of residence (4) Ethno-racial background (8)
<b>Pre-migration occupation group</b>	
Engineer IT Professional Sciences Finance (university level and other) Health (university level and other) Teacher Professor Social Sciences	Arts Sales or Service Industry Trades Manufacturing



## Time of entry: Occupational status recovery

<i>Comparison: White/Western</i>	
Chinese	Non-significant differences
South Asian	<b>46% lower odds (<math>p \leq 0.001</math>)</b>
Filipino	<b>54% lower odds (<math>p \leq 0.001</math>)</b>
Eastern European	Non-significant differences
White/Non-western	Non-significant differences
Non-white/Western	Non-significant differences
Non-white/Non-western	<b>38% lower odds (<math>p \leq 0.001</math>)</b>

*Source: Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Canada (2005)*

*Controls: gender; ethno-racial group; age; language proficiency; level of education; principal applicant status; whether employment was arranged prior to migration; whether a credential was earned in a western country; CMA of residence; and pre-migration occupation*



## Time of entry: Occupational status recovery

Fluency	<b>5.8 times more likely (<math>p \leq 0.001</math>)</b>
Arranged employment	<b>3.9 times more likely (<math>p \leq 0.001</math>)</b>
Women	<b>26% lower odds (<math>p \leq 0.001</math>)</b>
<i>Reference: IT Professional</i>	
Engineer	<b>75% lower odds (<math>p \leq 0.001</math>)</b>
Teacher (primary/secondary)	<b>69% lower odds (<math>p \leq 0.001</math>)</b>

*Source: Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Canada (2005)*

*Controls: gender; ethno-racial group; age; language proficiency; level of education; principal applicant status; whether employment was arranged prior to migration; whether a credential was earned in a western country; CMA of residence; and pre-migration occupation*



## Probability of Occupational Status Recovery (48<sup>th</sup> month)

Men	
White/Western	63.1%
Non-White/Western	52.1%
Eastern European	51.2%
White/Non-Western	49.5%
Non-White/Non-Western	41.4%
South Asian	40.8%
Filipino	40.5%
Chinese	40.4%

*Source: Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Canada (2005)*

*Controls: gender; ethno-racial group; age; language proficiency; level of education; principal applicant status; whether employment was arranged prior to migration; whether a credential was earned in a western country; CMA of residence; and pre-migration occupation*



## Probability of Occupational Status Recovery (48<sup>th</sup> month)

<b>Women</b>	
White/Western	55.3%
Non-White/Western	44.0%
Eastern European	43.1%
White/Non-Western	41.4%
Non-White/Non-Western	33.8%
South Asian	33.2%
Filipino	32.9%
Chinese	32.8%

*Source: Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Canada (2005)*

*Controls:* gender; ethno-racial group; age; language proficiency; level of education; principal applicant status; whether employment was arranged prior to migration; whether a credential was earned in a western country; CMA of residence; and pre-migration occupation



## Probability of Occupational Status Recovery (48<sup>th</sup> month)

White/Western: Men	63.1%
White/Western: Women	55.3%
Non-White/Western: Men	52.1%
Eastern European:	51.2%
White/Non-Western: Men	49.5%
Non-White/Western: Women	44.0%
Eastern European: Women	43.1%
White/Non-Western: Women	41.4%
Non-White/Non-Western: Men	41.4%
South Asian: Men	40.8%
Filipino: Men	40.5%
Chinese: Men	40.4%



## Probability of Occupational Status Recovery (48<sup>th</sup> month)

Non-White/Non-Western	33.8%
South Asian	33.2%
Filipino	32.9%
Chinese	32.8%

*Source: Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Canada (2005)*

*Controls: gender; ethno-racial group; age; language proficiency; level of education; principal applicant status; whether employment was arranged prior to migration; whether a credential was earned in a western country; CMA of residence; and pre-migration occupation*



## **Case #1: Engineers**



## Engineers: Likelihood of Occupational Status Recovery

<i>Comparison: White/Western</i>	
Chinese	Non-significant differences
South Asian	Non-significant differences
Filipino	Non-significant differences
Eastern European	Non-significant differences
White/Non-western	Non-significant differences
Non-white/Western	Non-significant differences
Non-white/Non-western	Non-significant differences

*Source: Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Canada (2005)*

*Controls:* gender; ethno-racial group; age; language proficiency; level of education; principal applicant status; whether employment was arranged prior to migration; whether a credential was earned in a western country; and CMA of residence



## **Case #2: IT Professionals**



## IT Professional: Likelihood of Occupational Status Recovery

<i>Comparison: White/Western</i>	
Chinese	<b>66% lower odds (<math>p \leq 0.001</math>)</b>
South Asian	<b>79% lower odds (<math>p \leq 0.001</math>)</b>
Filipino	<b>78% lower odds (<math>p \leq 0.001</math>)</b>
Eastern European	Non-significant differences
White/Non-western	Non-significant differences
Non-white/Western	<b>77% lower odds (<math>p \leq 0.001</math>)</b>
Non-white/Non-western	<b>65% lower odds (<math>p \leq 0.001</math>)</b>

*Source: Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Canada (2005)*

*Controls: gender; ethno-racial group; age; language proficiency; level of education; principal applicant status; whether employment was arranged prior to migration; whether a credential was earned in a western country; and CMA of residence*



## **Conclusions**



## Conclusion

### **Inequalities manifest upon migration to Canada**

Inspect differences *within* regulated and unregulated professions

### **First 6 months are important**

- \* Gains slow with time
- \* Timely settlement services

### **Determinants of economic success**

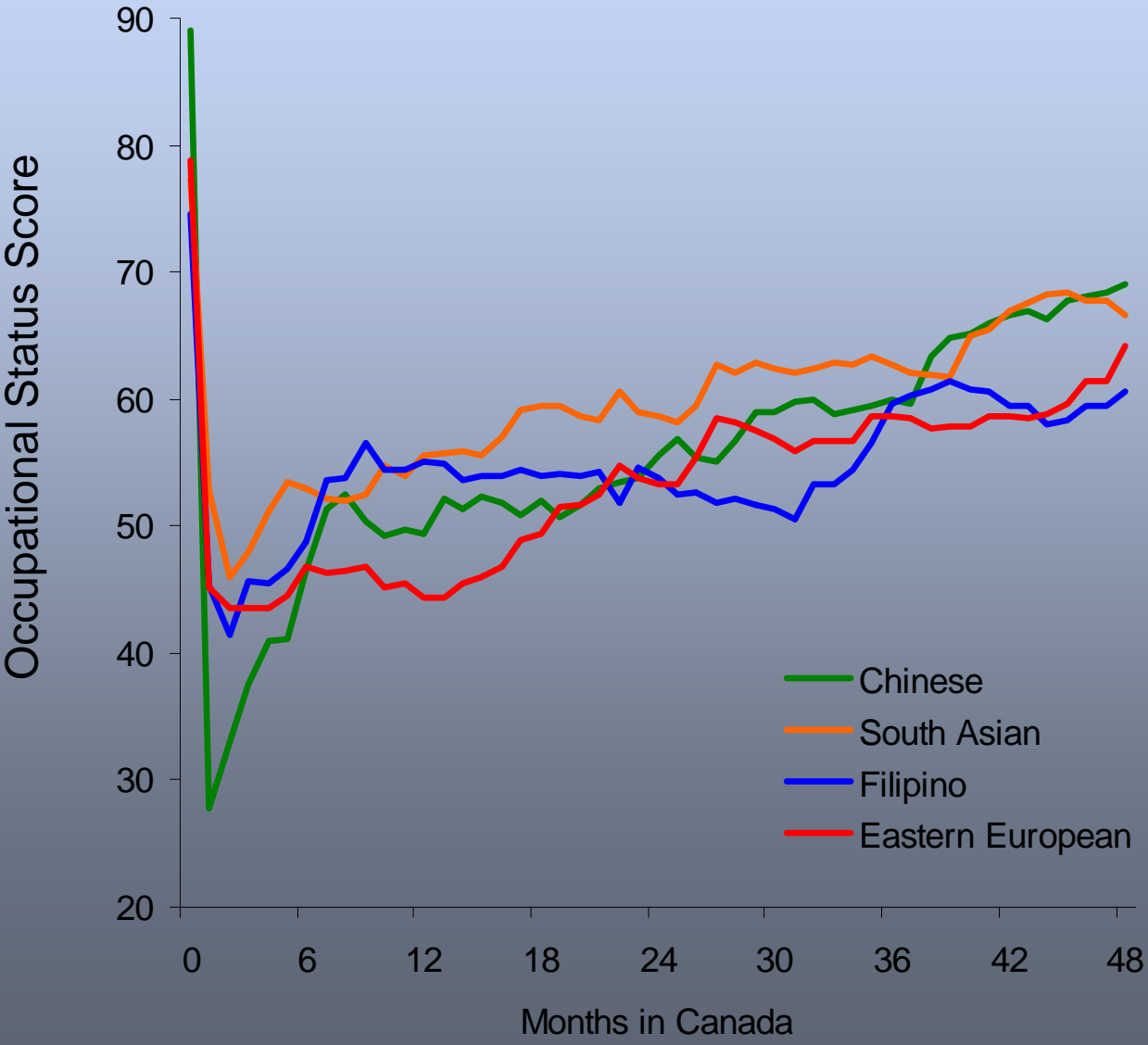
Language skills

Pre-arrangement of employment

### **Study limitation**

Four years

# Lived Experiences of Highly-Skilled Immigrants in Alberta





## ALBERTA: Likelihood of Occupational Status Recovery

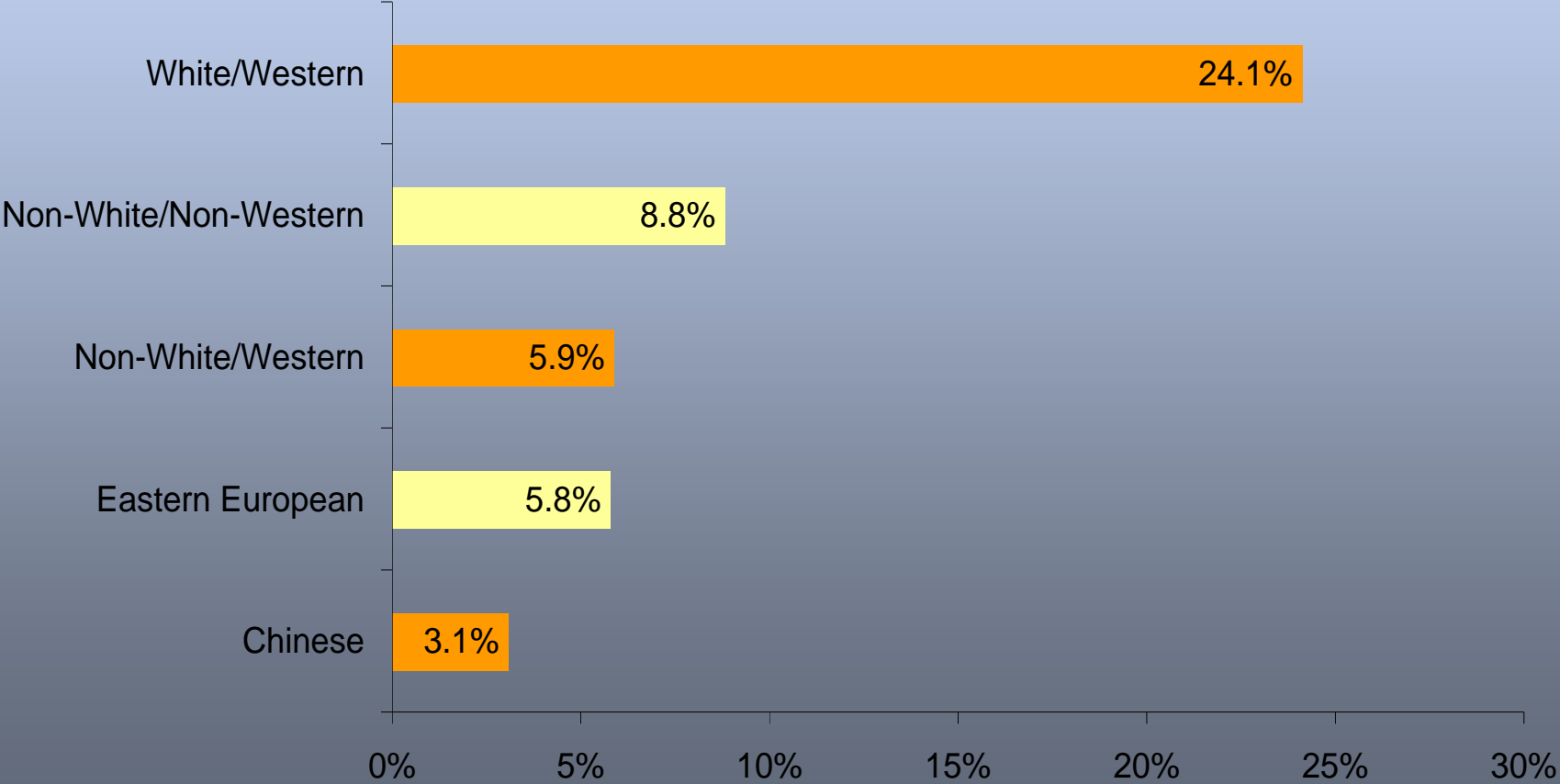
<i>Comparison: White/Western</i>	
Chinese	<b>68% lower odds (<math>p \leq 0.001</math>)</b>
South Asian	<b>74% lower odds (<math>p \leq 0.001</math>)</b>
Filipino	<b>78% lower odds (<math>p \leq 0.001</math>)</b>
Eastern European	Non-significant differences
White/Non-western	Non-significant differences
Non-white/Western	<b>76% lower odds (<math>p \leq 0.001</math>)</b>
Non-white/Non-western	<b>79% lower odds (<math>p \leq 0.001</math>)</b>

*Source: Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Canada (2005)*

*Controls: gender; ethno-racial group; age; language proficiency; level of education; principal applicant status; whether a credential was earned in a western country; CMA of residence; and pre-migration occupation*



# ALBERTA: Arranged employment



<1%: South Asian, Filipino, White/Non-Western



## ALBERTA: Likelihood of Occupational Status Recovery

<i>Comparison: White/Western</i>	
Chinese	Non-significant differences
South Asian	Non-significant differences
Filipino	Non-significant differences
Eastern European	Non-significant differences
White/Non-western	Non-significant differences
Non-white/Western	Non-significant differences
Non-white/Non-western	Non-significant differences

*Source: Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Canada (2005)*

*Controls: gender; ethno-racial group; age; language proficiency; level of education; principal applicant status; whether employment was arranged prior to migration; whether a credential was earned in a western country; and CMA of residence*



*The research and analysis are based on data from  
Statistics Canada and the opinions expressed do  
not represent the views of Statistics Canada*