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IMDB 2008 Immigration Category Profiles

Government-assisted Refugees

Findings from the Longitudinal Immigration Database (IMDB)

March 2012

IMDB 2008 Research Series

IMDB Core Report

The *IMDB Core Report* is an annual update of previous research that focuses on incidence of employment earnings, average entry employment earnings, and growth in average employment earnings during immigrants' first five years in Canada. The *IMDB 2008 Core Report* provides outcomes for those landed in the period 2001 to 2008.

The *IMDB Core Report* consists of two volumes:

- 1) *National Portrait*, provides:
 - A detailed look at skilled worker principal applicant employment outcomes by age and gender; and
 - Immigration category highlights for provincial nominee principal applicants, family class immigrants, refugees, and economic spouses/dependants.
- 2) *Provincial Portrait*, provides:
 - Information about the mix of immigrant classes at landing by province and immigration category and highlights for skilled worker principal applicants and provincial nominee principal applicants by province.

Each volume is accompanied by an appendix containing a full set of supporting tables and the *IMDB Research Series – Technical Notes* providing information about data sources, a glossary of terms and concepts as well as additional notes.

The *IMDB 2009 Core Report* will be available in fall, 2012.

IMDB Immigration Category Profiles

The *IMDB 2008 Immigration Category Profiles* consist of the following twelve reports:

- Economic class: Skilled Workers (SW), Provincial Nominees (PN), Live-in Caregivers (LC), and Business immigrants – Entrepreneurs (ENT), Investors (INV) and Self-employed (SEI)
- Family class: Parents and Grandparents (P&G) and Spouses and Partners (S&P)
- Refugees: Government-assisted Refugees (GAR), Privately Sponsored Refugees (PSR) and Refugees Landed in Canada (RLC)
- Other immigrants: Humanitarian and Compassionate/Public Policy Considerations (HC)

Each *IMDB Immigration Category Profile* consists of two main sections:

- 1) Background characteristics: Provides demographic landings information for the target category by province, country of last permanent residence, family status, age, and gender; and
- 2) Economic outcomes: Provides information on the economic performance of the target category compared to other selected immigrant categories and all Canadians including, average employment earnings, income distributions as well as incidence of employment earnings, social assistance and employment insurance.

The profiles are graphical presentations of the demographic and economic trends observed over time with corresponding text focusing on category specific highlights. Each profile is accompanied by an appendix containing a full set of supporting tables and the *IMDB Research Series – Technical Notes* providing information about data sources, a glossary of terms and concepts as well as additional notes.

The *IMDB 2009 Immigration Category Profiles* will be available in fall, 2012.

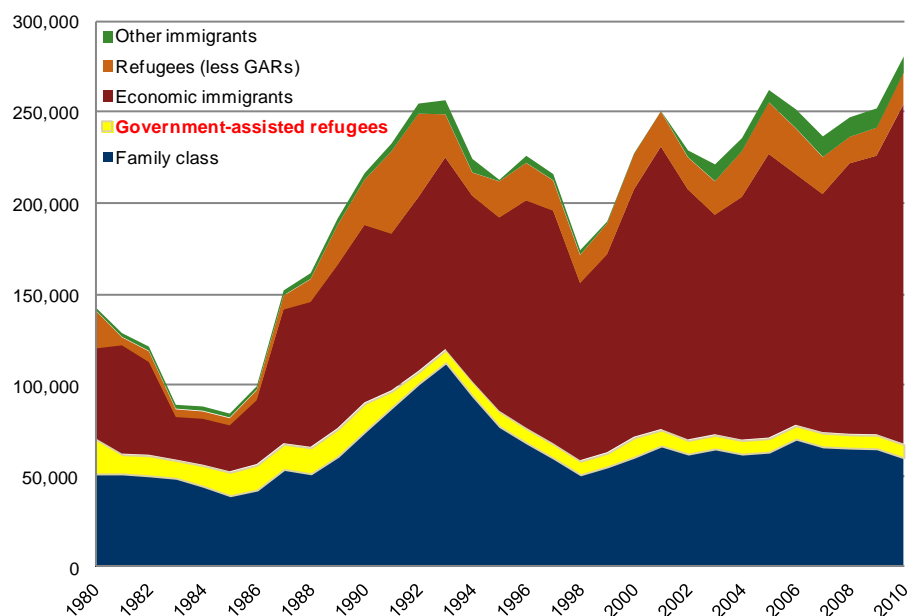
IMDB Research Series - Technical Notes

The *IMDB 2008 Research Series – Technical Notes* provide information about data sources, a glossary of terms and concepts as well as additional notes. The notes will be updated as required with the release of the *IMDB 2009 Core Report* and the *IMDB 2009 Immigration Category Profiles*.

Background characteristics

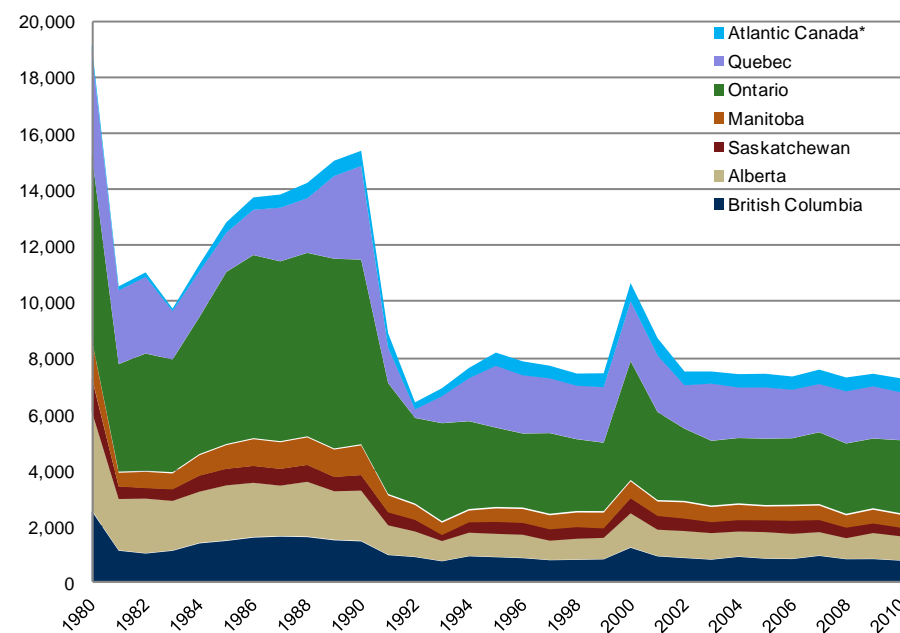
Figure 1: Immigrants by landing year, 1980-2010

Immigration category



Source: CIC, Facts and Figures, RDM, 2010

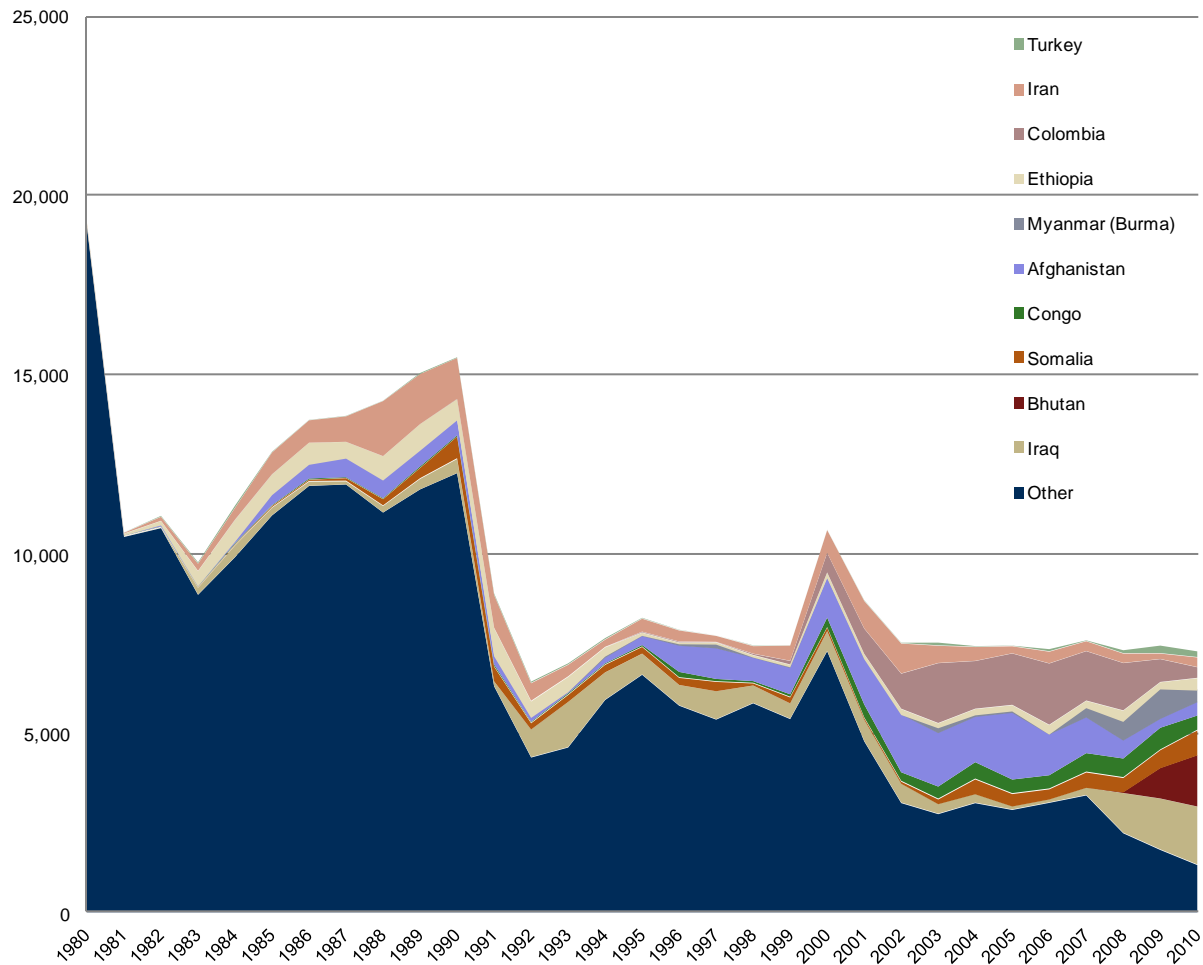
Government-assisted refugees by province of destination



*Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick
Source: CIC, Facts and Figures, RDM, 2010

- Data from Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) permanent resident records indicate that landings of government-assisted refugees (GARs) have been fairly stable since the early 1990s - averaging about 7,700 per year or about 3%-4% of total landings. The number of landings from 1980-1989 was more volatile from year to year with as many as 19,200 GARs arriving and accounting for 15% of overall landings.
- Throughout the entire 1980-2010 period Ontario was the top intended destination of GARs with an average of 40% going to the province. However, the data indicate two distinct periods are evident during this timeframe. During the late-1980s and early 1990s, roughly 50% of GARs were destined to Ontario. However since the mid-1990s, the share of GARs destined to Ontario has dropped to the 30%-40% range and the share destined to Quebec and Atlantic Canada has increased.

Figure 2: Number of government-assisted refugees, by country of last permanent residence, by landing year, 1980-2010

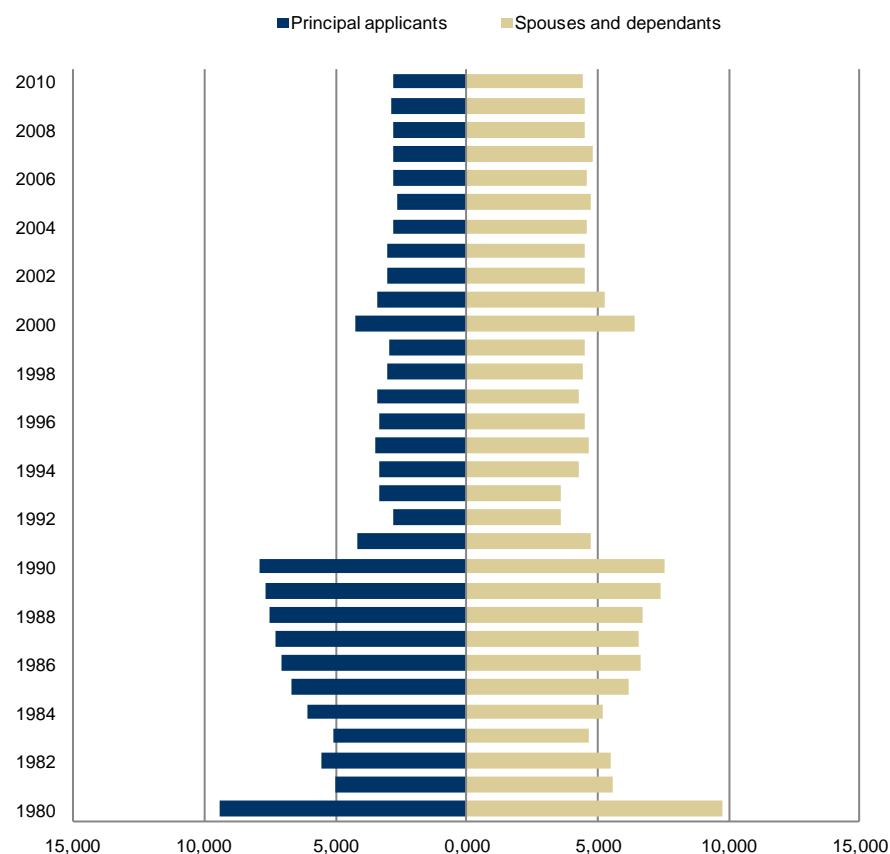


Source: CIC, Facts and Figures, RDM, 2010

- Landings of GARs by source country can be very diverse reflecting international events which displace people and the changing geopolitical situation in various regions of the world.
- In 2010, the top ten source countries of GARs accounted for 82% of landings in this category.
- During the 1980s, the majority of landings originated from Vietnam, Laos and Poland. During the 1990s and into the 2000s the majority of landings originated from the former Yugoslavia and more recently, a greater share of landings have originated from Africa (Sudan, Ethiopia, Somalia, Congo) and Middle Eastern countries (Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan).

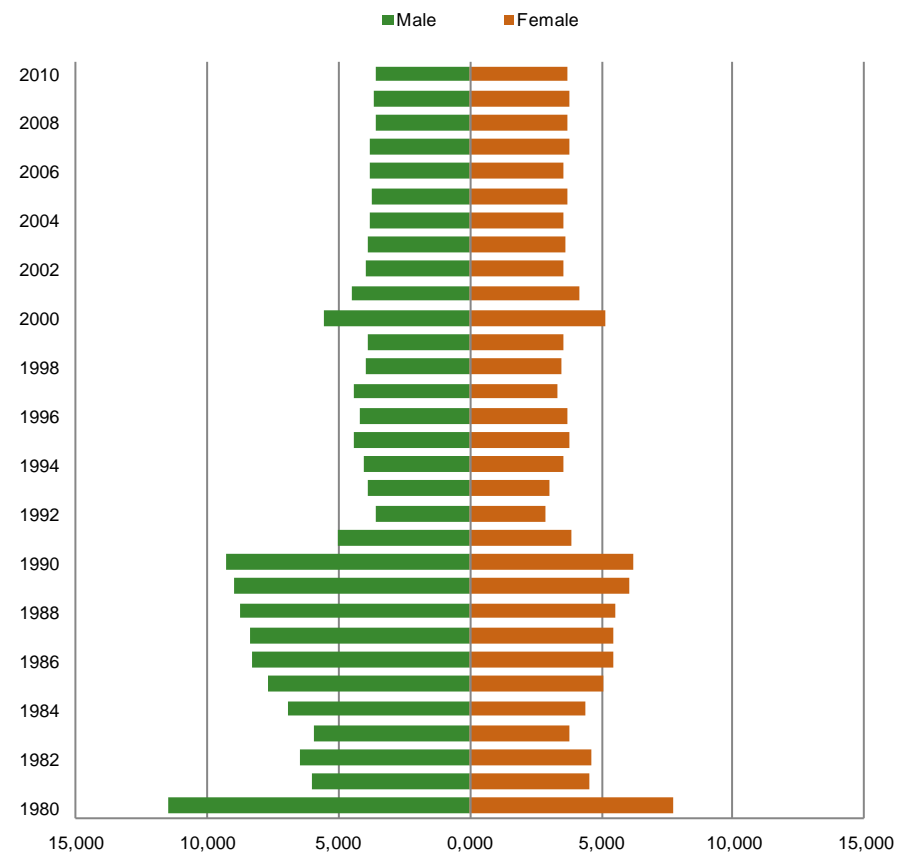
Figure 3: Number of government-assisted refugees, by landing year, 1980-2010

Family status



Source: CIC, Facts and Figures, RDM, 2010

Gender

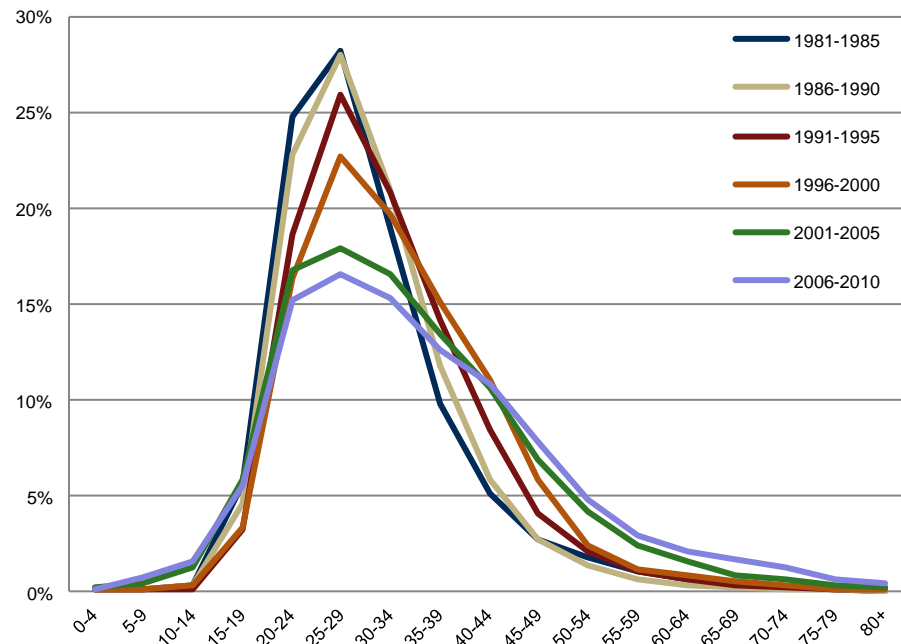


Source: CIC, Facts and Figures, RDM, 2010

- In terms of family status, administrative data show roughly equal numbers of principal applicants and spouses and dependants (a ratio of 1:1) were arriving during the 1980s. However, there was a gradual shift in the numbers during the 1990s and recent trends (since 2000) show that relatively greater numbers of spouses and dependants are arriving (a ratio of 1:1.6).
- The gender mix has transformed during the timeframe examined. Roughly 60% of GARs were males during the 1980s, but since the early-1990s, the share of males has decreased gradually and the most recent trends (since the mid-2000s) point toward equal shares of males and females arriving as GARs.

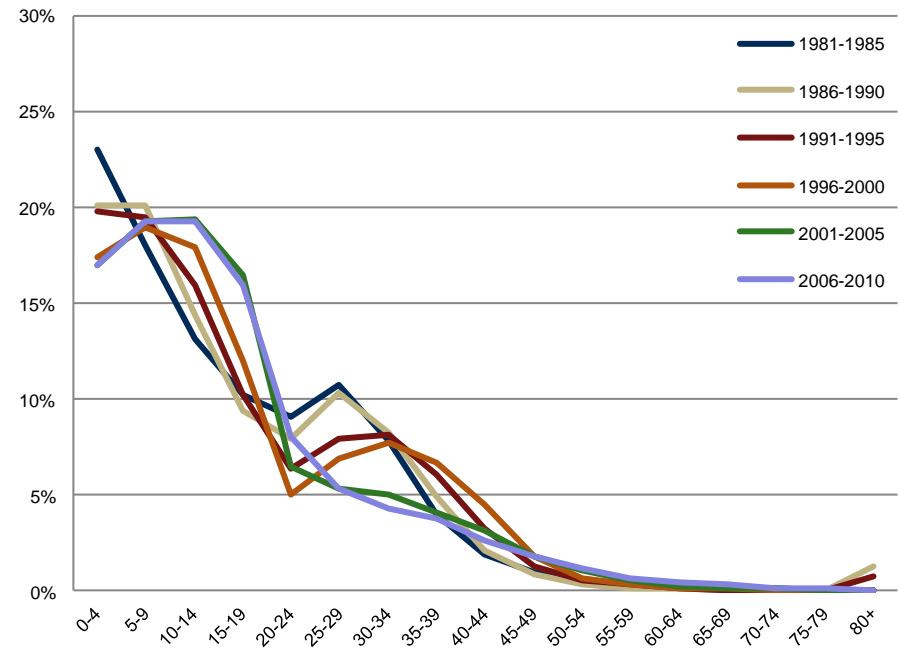
Figure 4: Age distribution of government-assisted refugees, by landing year, 1980-2010

Principal applicants



Source: CIC, Facts and Figures, RDM, 2010

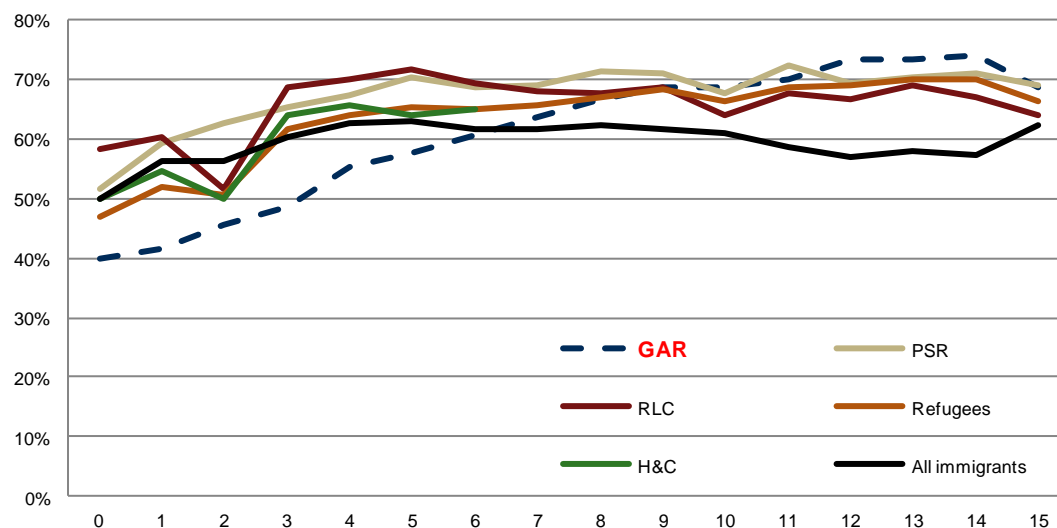
Spouses and dependants



Source: CIC, Facts and Figures, RDM, 2010

- As shown in the graphic above, the majority (roughly 70%) of GAR principal applicants arrive at core working ages (25-54 years). Of note, the age distribution of principal applicants has been more evenly distributed for the cohorts who arrived in the 2000s as compared to those who arrived in the 1980s and 1990s.
- There exists a noticeable difference in the age structure of spouses and dependants (as compared to principal applicants) with greater shares of landings coming from younger individuals.

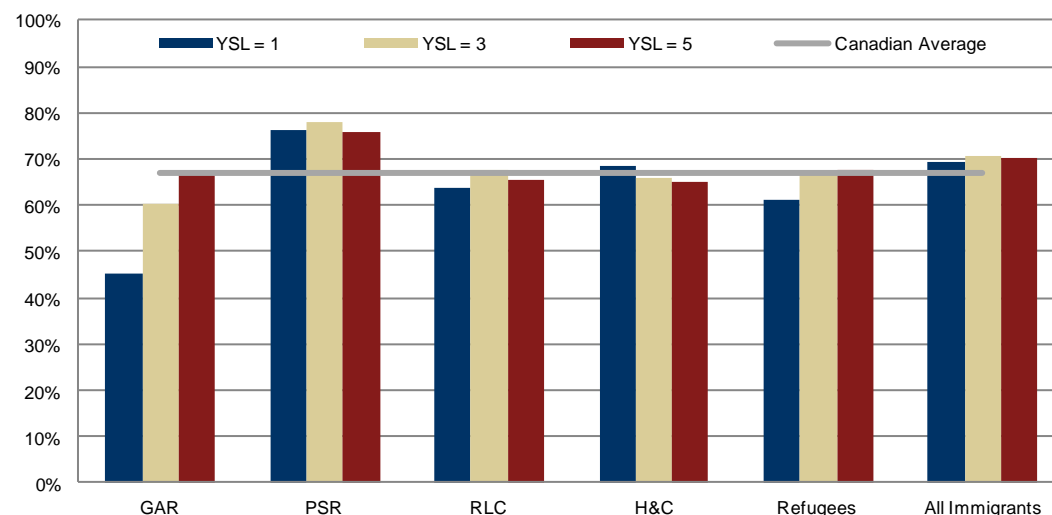
Figure 5: IMDB capture rate for selected immigrant categories, by years since landing (YSL), in tax year 2008



Source: CIC, Facts and Figures, RDM, 2010 and IMDB, 2008

- The IMDB capture rate for GARs increases steadily in the years following landing in Canada. The initial linkage rate is around 40%, well below the all immigrants' average and other comparable categories. However, the linkage rate exceeds 70% by the 11th year after landing and is above other comparable categories.
- The upward trend in the IMDB capture rate reflects an increase in the number of GARs filing taxes which is driven predominantly by an increase in their labour market activity (i.e increase in the number of GARS reporting employment earnings).

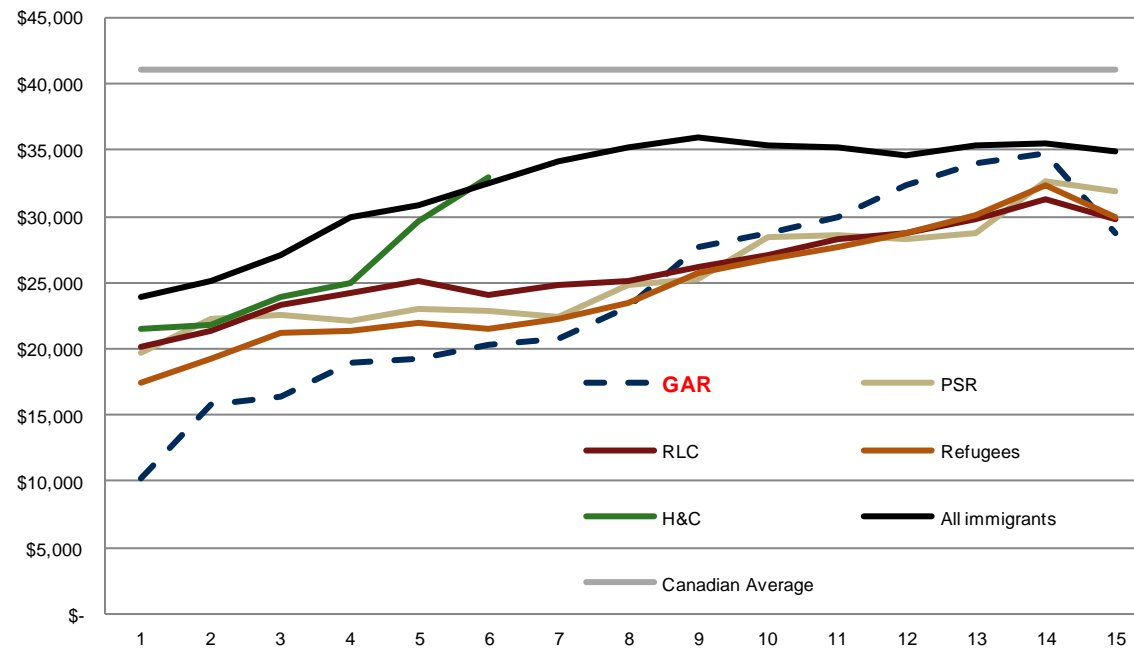
Figure 6: Incidence of employment earnings for selected immigrant categories, by years since landing (YSL), in tax year 2008



Source: IMDB, 2008 and CRA, 2008

- The findings from the IMDB show that initial economic outcomes of GARs are among the poorest of all immigration categories and this is reflected in the incidence of employment earnings.
- During the 1st year after landing, 45% of GARs captured in the IMDB report employment earnings - this is well below the Canadian average of 67% and is among the weakest of all immigration categories.
- GARs show steady improvements in the share reporting employment earnings and by the 5th year after landing are on par with the Canadian average.

Figure 7: Average employment earnings for selected immigrant categories, by years since landing (YSL), in tax year 2008

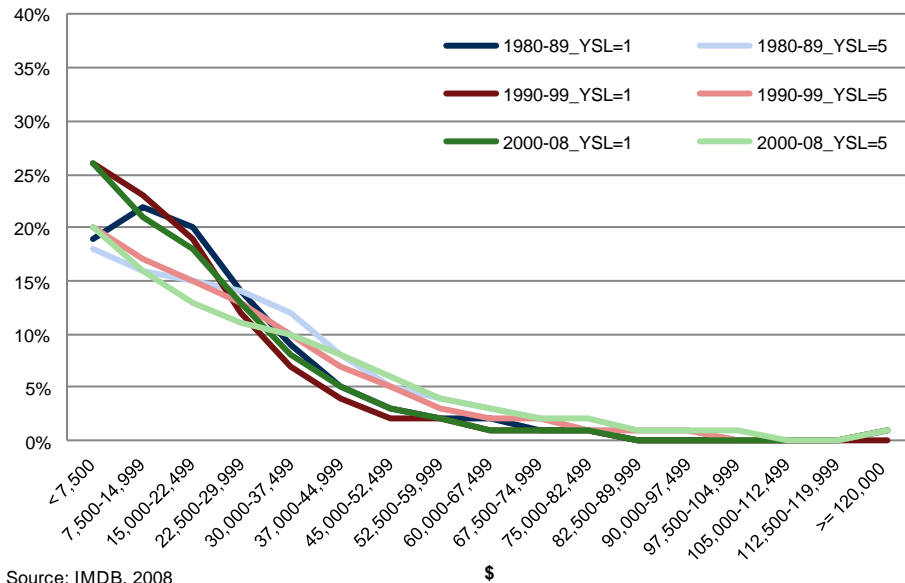


Source: IMDB, 2008 and CRA, 2008

- For all refugee categories and H&C cases, average employment earnings are lower than the all immigrants' average. Employment earnings increase with years since landing and congregate in the \$30,000 range for cohorts who have been in the country for the longest period of time.
- For specific refugee categories, initial entry level earnings are lowest for GARs, but this category shows better growth in subsequent years after landing and surpasses other comparable categories.
- In Figure 7 there is a decline in average earnings for all categories during the 15th year after landing. This particularly poor performance is unique to cohorts who land during or shortly after recessions and is typically known in research as "scarring". Note that in this analysis the 15th year after landing corresponds to the 1993 landing cohort or those who arrived just after the 1990-92 recession.

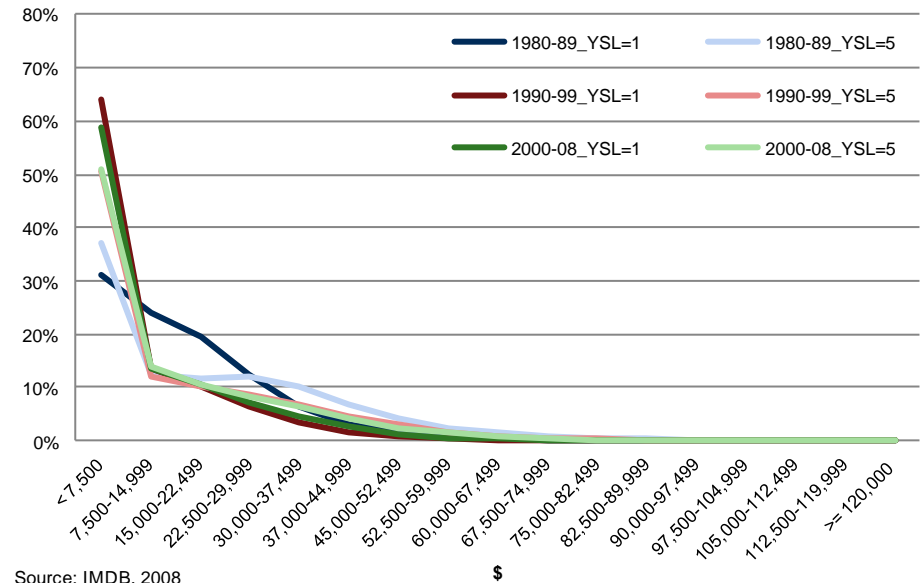
Figure 8: Distribution of employment earnings (\$2008) by cohort for selected immigrant categories, by years since landing (YSL), in tax year 2008

All immigrants



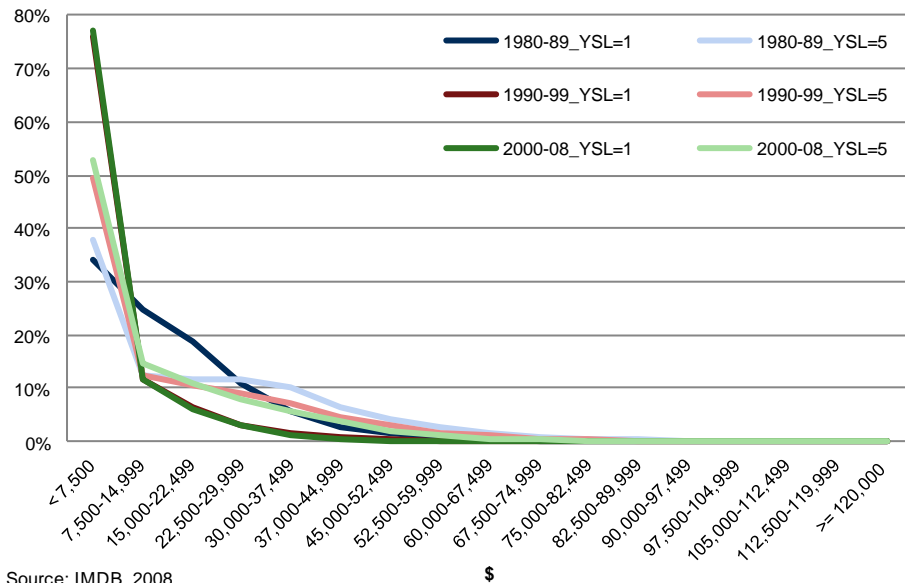
Source: IMDB, 2008

All refugees



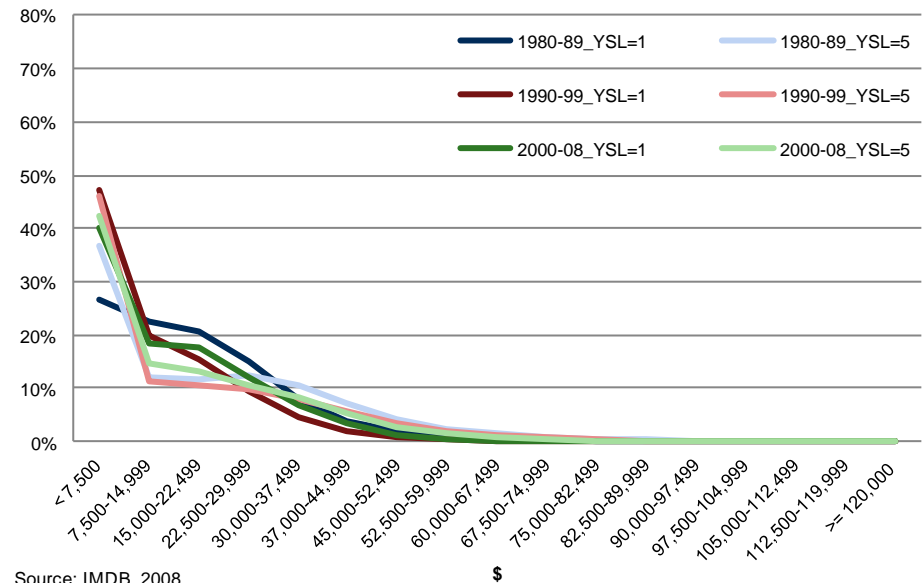
Source: IMDB, 2008

Government-assisted refugees



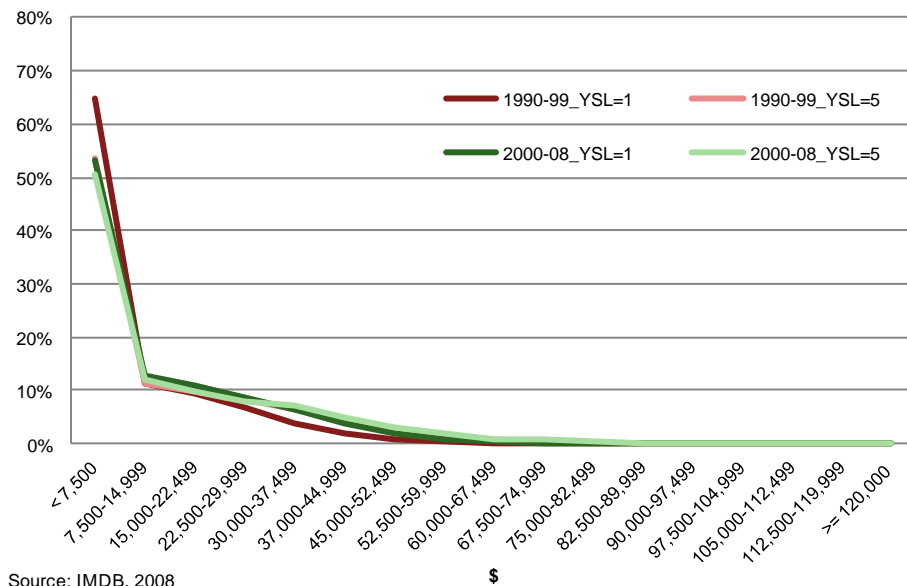
Source: IMDB, 2008

Privately sponsored refugees

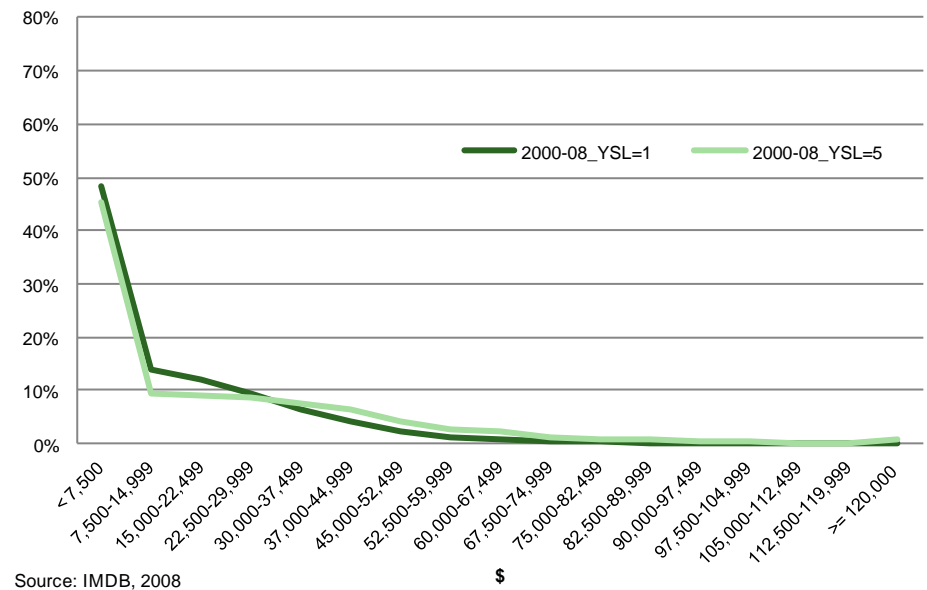


Source: IMDB, 2008

Refugees landed in Canada



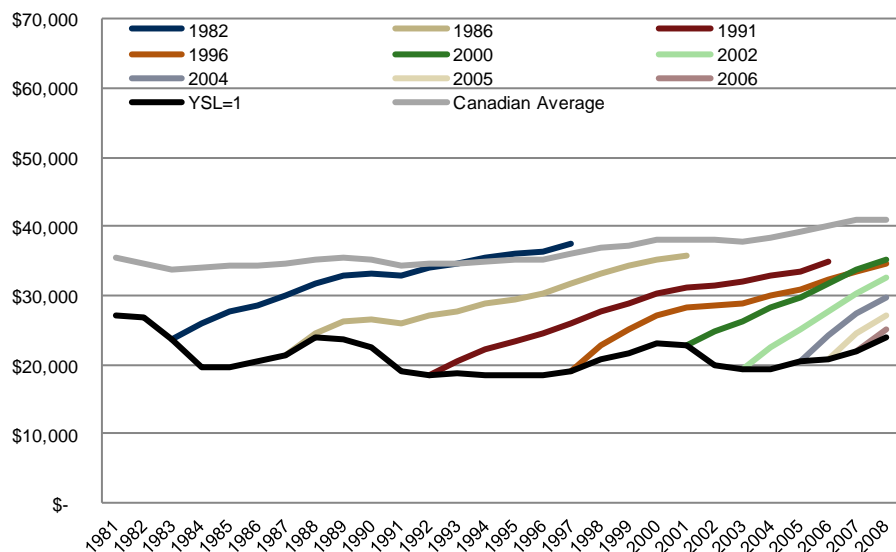
Humanitarian and compassionate cases



- Figure 8 displays the distribution of employment earnings for grouped cohorts in the first, third and fifth year after landing. For the refugee categories there is a notable concentration in the left (lower) end of the distribution, reflecting a larger share of immigrants falling into the lower employment earnings bracket. This is even more pronounced for GARs as opposed to other refugees and H&C cases.
- There are differences in the relative earnings distributions by cohort groups.
 - For all immigrants landing in the 1990s the share reporting earnings lower than \$22,500 in the first year (69%) was higher than that seen for those landing in the 1980s (61%) and 2000s (65%). The comparable shares for the 1990s cohort of immigrants remained higher at the third and fifth years following landing as well.
 - For GARs landing in the 1990s and the 2000s, the share reporting earnings lower than \$22,500 in the first year (94%, 95%) was higher than that seen for those landing in the 1980s (78%). These high shares are not surprising given the primary motivation of refugees for coming to Canada.
- There are also differences in the relative earnings distributions by immigration category.
 - For all immigrants landing in 2000 and onward, 65% had earnings less than \$22,500 in the first year following landing. This share decreased to 55% and 48% in the third and fifth year following landing.
 - For all refugees, respective shares were notably higher at 83%, 77%, and 76% in the first, third and fifth years following landing.
 - For GARs, the shares were even higher than that of all refugees at 95%, 83%, and 79% in the first, third and fifth years following landing.

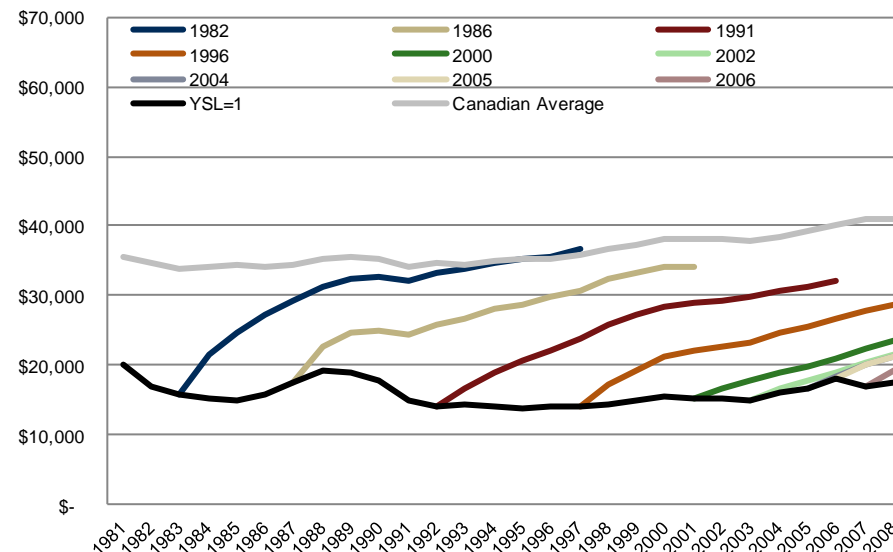
Figure 9: Average employment earnings (\$2008), by landing year and tax year, 1980-2008

All immigrants



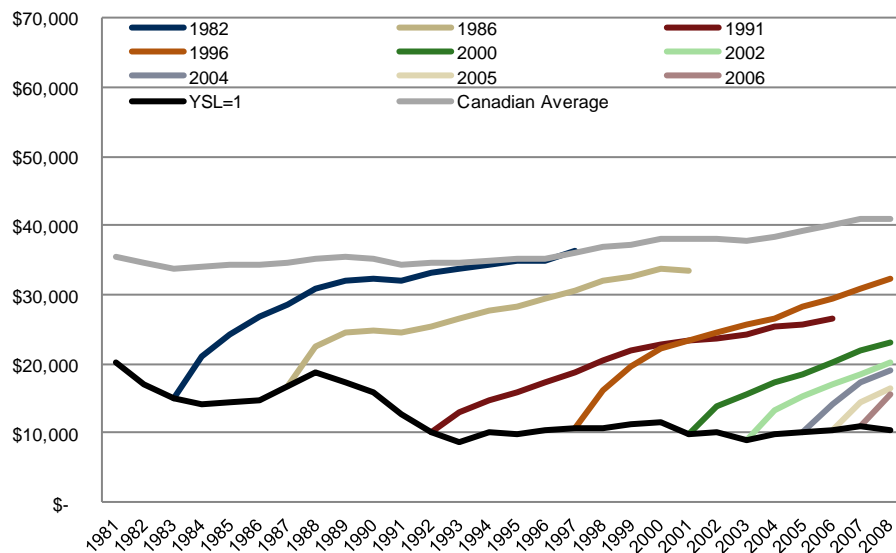
Source: IMDB, 2008 and CRA, 2008

All refugees



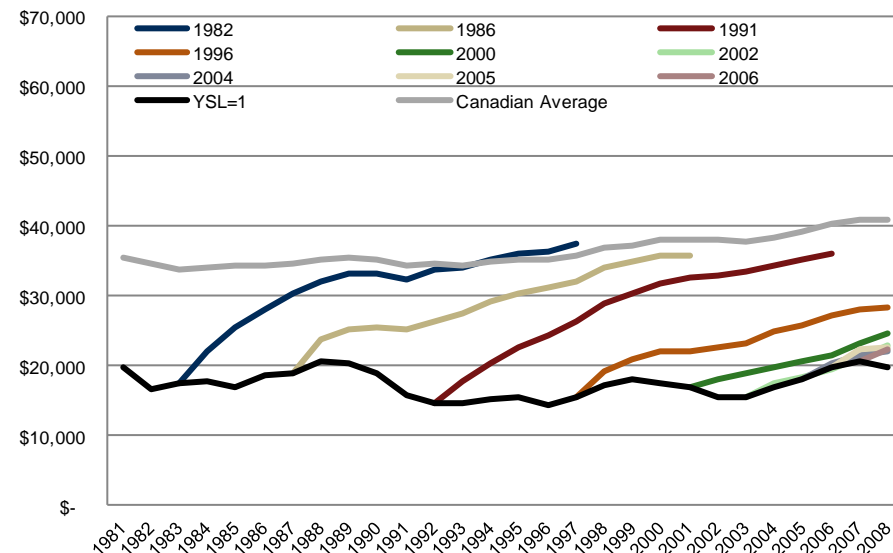
Source: IMDB, 2008 and CRA, 2008

Government-assisted refugees



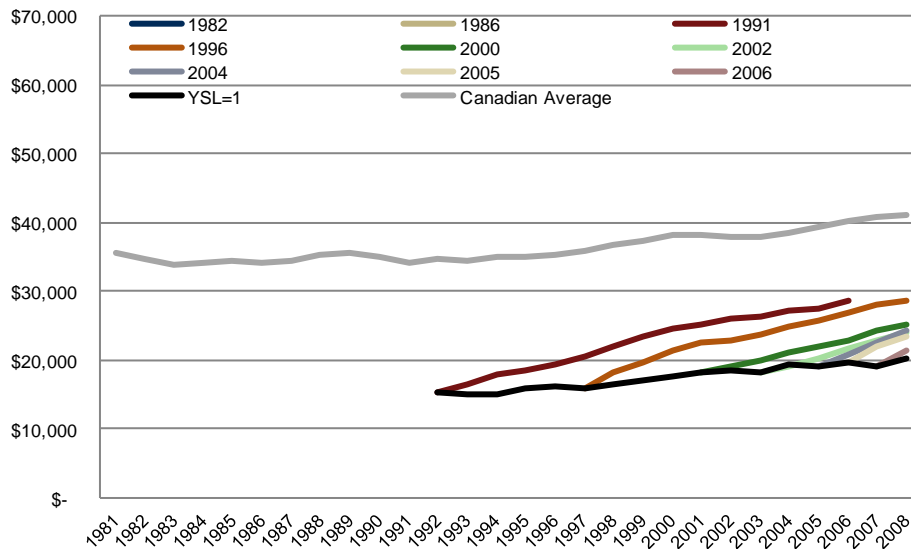
Source: IMDB, 2008 and CRA, 2008

Privately sponsored refugees



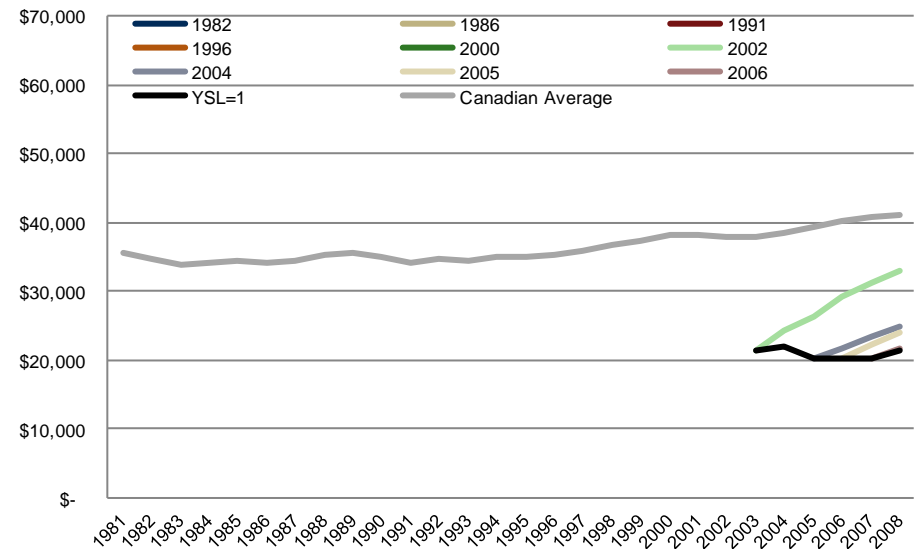
Source: IMDB, 2008 and CRA, 2008

Refugees landed in Canada



Source: IMDB, 2008 and CRA, 2008

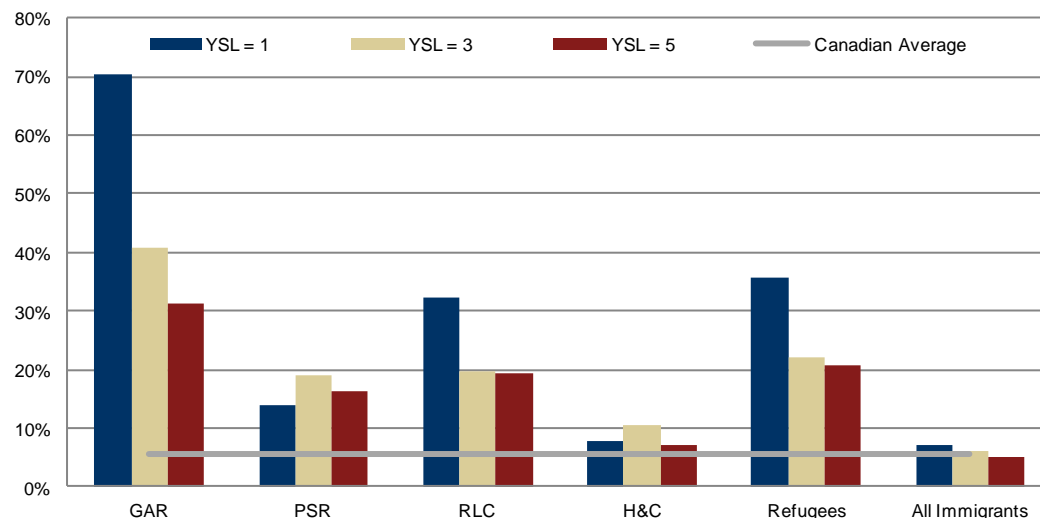
Humanitarian and compassionate cases



Source: IMDB, 2008 and CRA, 2008

- Data from the IMDB show that entry employment earnings (1 year after landing) of GARs range from a high of \$20,300 for the 1980 landing cohort to a low of \$8,800 for the 1992 landing cohort.
- GARs consistently have a low initial earnings profile and are among the poorest of all immigrant categories—significantly weaker than the Canadian average.
- Employment earnings for GARs increase considerably over time in Canada and show stronger earnings growth in subsequent years after landing as compared to all immigrants and other refugees.

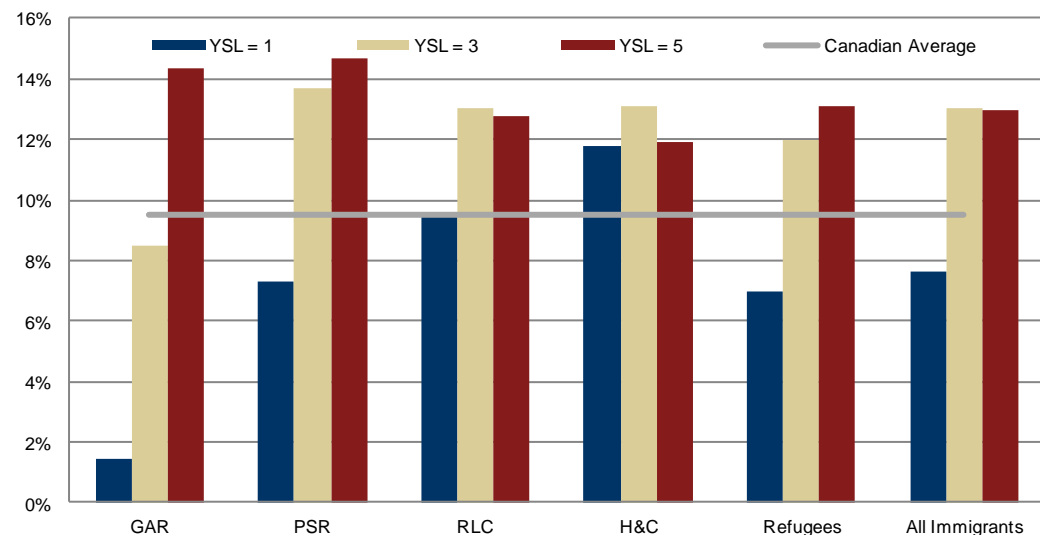
Figure 10: Incidence of social assistance for selected immigrant categories, by years since landing (YSL), in tax year 2008



Source: IMDB, 2008 and CRA, 2008

- GARs exhibit the highest rate of social assistance (SA) among all immigration categories. SA rates do fall in subsequent years after landing; however the rates remain well above the average of all immigrants and other comparable categories.
- The high initial SA rates recorded are due to the presence of the Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP) - which is captured in the IMDB as a social assistance payment usually during the initial 12 months after landing for GARs.

Figure 11: Incidence of employment insurance for selected immigrant categories, by years since landing (YSL), in tax year 2008



Source: IMDB, 2008 and CRA, 2008

- Immigrants, on average, are expected to have a lower incidence of employment insurance (often below the Canadian average) in their first year following landing. With time spent in the Canadian labour market, the incidence increases, and then gradually declines as employment becomes more stable.
- The share of GARs reporting employment insurance in the initial years after landing is well below the Canadian average, the average for all immigrants, and other comparable immigration categories.
- By the 5th year after landing, GARs incidence of employment insurance is well above the Canadian average and on par with other refugee categories.