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Research article

The provision of higher- and lower-skilled immigrant labour to the Canadian economy

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Abstract

This study assesses the skill level and occupations of recent immigrants in Canada by examining immigrants who landed in 2018 or 2019 and their occupational outcomes in May 2021. More recent results from the March 2024 Labour Force Survey are provided in some cases. The share of recent immigrants in lower-skilled or labourer jobs (35%) was almost as high as the share working in higher-skilled occupations (40%) in May 2021. However, recent immigrants and immigrants overall were much less likely than Canadian-born individuals to be in middle-skilled technical or trades jobs such as construction. Recent immigrants were more likely than their Canadian-born counterparts to be employed in higher-skilled occupations such as engineering and computer and information systems professions but less likely than Canadian-born individuals to be in nursing professions, partly because of the time it may take to become professional nurses.

Authors

Garnett Picot is with the Research and Knowledge Mobilization Division at Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada. Tahsin Mehdi is with the Social Analysis and Modelling Division, Analytical Studies and Modelling Branch, at Statistics Canada.

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Introduction

The Canadian immigration system has prioritized the selection of economic immigrants with specific skill sets and occupational profiles since introducing the points system in 1967. The rise in the Provincial Nominee Program (PNP) since the early 2000s—now the largest single source of economic immigrants—was driven to a considerable extent by the provinces' desire to use the program to meet their labour market needs (Picot, Hou and Crossman, 2023b).

One of the main goals of economic immigration is to "fill labour and skills shortages." However, there is a debate regarding the effectiveness of such an approach (see, e.g., Morissette, 2023; or Skuterud, 2023). The debate centres around issues such as the ability to accurately identify shortages; whether other labour market adjustments such as raising wages, training or increasing the use of technology can better respond to perceived challenges; and whether immigration policies are based on an appropriate understanding of how the labour market actually functions (see, e.g., Gross, 2014; Tani, 2014; Riddell, Worswick and Green, 2016; Sumption, 2022; Zhang, Banerjee and Amarshi, 2023; Meggs and Fortin, 2023; or Skuterud, 2023). Economists also note that labour demand is in large part a function of labour supply. As new immigrants enter Canada, they provide additional labour. But they also interact with the economy by working, spending money, and consuming goods and services, and this, among other things, may increase the demand for certain occupations, such as trades and health care workers. This process should be accounted for when analyzing perceived workforce recruitment difficulties (Meggs and Fortin, 2023). The use of the immigration system to address perceived labour challenges is seen by some as a means of achieving economic growth (Sommerfeld, 2023).

In spite of the interest in this topic, little is known regarding the actual occupations and skill levels of recent immigrants at entry and their pathways for getting there (e.g., immigration programs and source region). This study fills that information gap. A common perception is that the Canadian immigration system mainly supplies higher-skilled labour because of the nature of the selection system. However, as will be shown, the immigration system provides almost as much lower-skilled labour to the Canadian labour market as it does higher-skilled labour. In light of Canada's recent population surge, coupled with the high demand for housing and hence for trades workers, a notable finding from this study is that immigrants are less likely than Canadian-born individuals to be employed in the construction trades and related occupations. At the higher-skilled level, recent immigrants are more likely than people born in Canada to be working in engineering and computer and information systems professions but less likely to be employed in nursing professions, party because of the time it may take to become professional nurses.

The study uses the occupational distribution of Canadian-born individuals as a benchmark. Since economic immigrants are often selected to hold particular in-demand occupations, one would not expect economic immigrants to be concentrated in the same occupations as their Canadian-born counterparts. Ideally, the occupations held by immigrants would be complementary to, rather than substitutes for, those of people born in Canada.

The study identifies 45 occupations covering the entire economy but focuses on the extent to which recent immigrants hold jobs at five broad skill levels. A more in-depth analysis is provided for six occupations that have recently attracted considerable attention regarding recruitment difficulties: (1) industrial, electrical and construction trades; (2) computer and information systems professionals; (3) professional occupations in nursing; (4) nurse aides, orderlies and patient service associates; (5) engineers; and (6) transport truck drivers.

Most economic immigration programs in Canada today have a list of in-demand or eligible occupations. Many other criteria are used to select immigrants in the major economic programs. However, occupation plays a significant role in many entry streams. For example, the Express Entry program of the federal

government has a list of eligible occupations.[1] They include middle- and higher-skilled occupations such as

1. health care occupations (e.g., nurses, nurse practitioners and nurse aides, medical assistants, technical medical staff, and family physicians)
2. trade occupations (e.g., carpenters, plumbers, welders, millwrights, electricians and installers)
3. science, technology, engineering and math occupations (e.g., engineers, including software engineers; computer systems analysts; database analysts; and cybersecurity specialists)
4. transport occupations (e.g., transport truck drivers, aircraft mechanics and assemblers, air traffic controllers and pilots, and deck officers)
5. agriculture and agri-food occupations (e.g., butchers, landscapers, and landscaping contractors and supervisors).

Selecting in-demand occupations plays a major role in the PNP of virtually all provinces. These in-demand occupations typically include middle- to higher-skilled occupations such as those listed above. However, some provinces also seek immigrants in lower-skilled occupations, such as construction labourers, material handlers, restaurant and food servers, cooks, janitors, and caretakers and cleaners.

There is also the issue of whether the emphasis should be on selecting immigrants in higher- or lower-skilled occupations. Some analysts believe that selecting lower-skilled and higher-skilled immigrants results in superior economic growth, since lower-skilled immigrants may also mitigate perceived workforce recruitment difficulties (Sommerfeld, 2023). Some economists suggest that the focus should remain on middle- and higher-skilled immigration, since it is primarily middle- and higher-skilled immigration that promotes higher gross domestic product per capita, a major economic goal of immigration programs (Buera et al., 2022; Doyle, Skuterud and Worswick, 2023). They also note that lower-skilled immigrants are more susceptible to the negative effects of economic shocks such as unemployment (Lange, Skuterud and Worswick, 2022). Higher-educated immigrants tend to fare better economically in the longer run than lower-educated immigrants (Picot, Hou and Crossman, 2023a). Also, technological change may be increasing the demand for higher-skilled labour while reducing the demand for lower-skilled labour (Frank, Yang and Frenette, 2021; Picot and Hou, 2024).

This study does not directly address issues related to the use of the immigration system to fill in-demand occupations or respond to occupational labour challenges. Neither does it examine whether the system should concentrate on lower- or higher-skilled immigration. The aforementioned studies address these issues. Rather, this study aims to fill an information gap by focusing on the types of occupations and the skill levels that recent immigrants actually have and their pathways for getting there.

Data and methods

This study uses the 2021 Census of Population and takes advantage of its detailed occupational information. The first part of the analysis focuses on the extent to which immigrants entering Canada held jobs at five different 2016 National Occupational Classification (NOC) skill levels in May 2021. The focus of this study is on **permanent residents** who landed in Canada in 2018 or 2019 and were **employed full time in May 2021** and **aged 20 to 60** (henceforth referred to as recent immigrants).[2] Analysis is conducted for earlier landing cohorts to assess how stable the occupational employment patterns were across cohorts. The analysis is undertaken for various immigration groups, including economic principal applicants (PAs) in the Federal Skilled Worker Program (FSWP), PNP and Canadian Experience Class (CEC); spouses and dependants of economic PAs; the family class; and refugees. The 2021 Census of

1. See https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/immigrate-canada/express-entry/submit-profile/rounds-invitations/category-based-selection.html.
2. The sample is further restricted to employees living in private dwellings and off reserves in a province or territory, excluding the self-employed and full-time members of the Canadian Armed Forces.

Population data used in this study predate the recent population surge driven by immigration. However, the main results are supported by more recent data from the March 2024 Labour Force Survey (LFS). The LFS sample size does not allow detailed disaggregation of the data like the census, but it provides more timely comparisons of occupational distributions of Canadian-born individuals and immigrants.

This study uses the 2016 NOC, which classifies jobs according to five skill levels. These skill levels are determined by the education and training required for an occupation, as well as the tasks involved. The skill levels are referred to as 0, A, B, C and D. The five levels are listed below:

- **Skill level 0:** Management jobs (e.g., financial managers, engineering managers, and restaurant and food service managers). The first digit of the 2016 NOC code is "0."
- **Skill level A:** Professional jobs that usually require a university degree (e.g., doctors, nurses, engineers, and computer and information systems professionals). The second digit of the 2016 NOC code is "0" or "1." At times, skill levels 0 and A are combined and referred to as "higher skilled."
- **Skill level B:** Technical jobs and skilled trades that usually require a college diploma or apprenticeship training (e.g., health care technicians; and industrial, electrical and construction trades). The second digit of the 2016 NOC code is "2" or "3."
- **Skill level C:** Lower-skilled jobs that usually require a high school diploma or job-specific training (e.g., transport truck drivers; food and beverage servers; retail salespersons; and nurse aides, orderlies and patient service associates). The second digit of the 2016 NOC code is "4" or "5."
- **Skill level D:** Labourer jobs that have no educational requirements and usually provide on-the-job training (e.g., labourers in processing, manufacturing and utilities; and harvesting, landscaping and natural resources labourers). The second digit of the 2016 NOC code is "6" or "7."

Results

Immigrants who landed in 2018 or 2019

Economic immigrants to Canada have historically been highly educated, because Canada's immigration selection system is oriented toward selecting higher-skilled immigrants. However, not all highly educated immigrants work in higher-skilled jobs, and some immigrants enter through various other pathways, such as spouses and dependants of economic PAs, the family class, and refugees. Hence, immigrants work in jobs requiring a wide range of skill levels.

Immigration is often sought to complement rather than duplicate the skill distribution of Canadian-born workers. The skill distribution of recent immigrants was significantly different from that of their Canadian-born counterparts. Among immigrants who landed in 2018 or 2019 and were employed full time in May 2021, almost as many (35%) were in lower-skilled (skill level C) and labourer (skill level D) jobs as in higher-skilled (40%) management (skill level 0) and professional (skill level A) occupations (Table 1). Recent immigrants were more likely than people born in Canada to be employed in professional occupations and lower-skilled and labourer occupations. However, one significant difference was the lower immigrant employment in middle-skilled jobs such as the construction trades, relative to Canadian-born people. One-quarter of recent immigrants were in such jobs in May 2021, compared with 35% of people born in Canada. The occupational differences between Canadian-born people and recent immigrants are long-standing, dating back to at least the 2010 and 2011 landing cohort (Table 1).

Table 1

Employment distribution of full-time employees aged 20 to 60 across the five occupational skill levels, May 2021

	Employment	Total	Skill level 0: Management occupations	Skill level A: Professional occupations usually requiring a university degree	Skill level B: Technical and trades occupations usually requiring a college diploma or apprenticeship training	Skill level C: Lower-skilled occupations usually requiring a high school diploma or occupation-specific training	Skill level D: Labourer occupations for which on-the-job training is usually provided
	number				percent		
Total	10,513,000	100.0	12.8	23.4	33.0	23.1	7.7
Canadian-born individuals	7,552,200	100.0	13.3	22.2	34.9	22.4	7.2
Non-permanent residents	322,200	100.0	8.7	24.5	31.5	25.2	10.1
Permanent residents	2,638,600	100.0	11.7	26.7	27.7	24.9	9.0
Landing cohorts other than those shown below	1,741,400	100.0	12.5	27.1	28.3	24.1	8.0
Landed in 2010 or 2011	167,000	100.0	9.5	24.3	28.5	27.3	10.4
Landed in 2012 or 2013	157,800	100.0	10.0	24.6	28.2	26.5	10.7
Landed in 2014 or 2015	180,000	100.0	10.1	24.0	27.2	27.3	11.4
Landed in 2016 or 2017	185,900	100.0	10.5	25.9	25.8	26.1	11.7
Landed in 2018 or 2019	206,500	100.0	10.4	29.6	24.7	25.0	10.3
Immigration class							
Economic class	148,600	100.0	11.8	35.5	24.3	21.5	6.9
Principal applicants	108,100	100.0	12.7	38.6	24.6	19.4	4.7
Federal Skilled Worker Program	27,500	100.0	15.1	52.3	18.5	12.4	1.7
Provincial programs	47,700	100.0	11.0	29.7	29.4	23.6	6.3
Canadian Experience Class	26,400	100.0	16.1	49.0	24.2	9.6	1.1
Other	6,500	100.0	x	3.9	16.4	58.0	x
Spouses and dependants of principal applicants	40,500	100.0	9.2	27.2	23.5	27.1	13.0
Family class	43,000	100.0	8.0	16.9	26.2	32.6	16.3
Refugees	13,200	100.0	4.0	7.0	23.8	38.2	27.0
Other	1,700	100.0	x	x	27.3	36.2	36.5
Highest level of education							
High school or less	31,500	100.0	5.2	3.0	21.3	40.2	30.3
Some postsecondary education below a bachelor's degree	35,600	100.0	7.4	7.9	35.2	35.5	14.0
Bachelor's degree	68,900	100.0	11.1	31.9	25.9	23.9	7.2
Graduate degree	70,500	100.0	13.7	50.1	19.6	13.9	2.7
Region where the highest level of postsecondary education was completed							
Canada	42,100	100.0	11.0	40.5	26.6	18.2	3.7
India	42,300	100.0	9.6	37.7	20.9	25.4	6.4
Philippines	24,800	100.0	3.9	5.0	19.5	42.4	29.2
United States	9,900	100.0	17.7	52.8	17.0	10.2	2.3
East Asia	7,100	100.0	10.5	24.9	34.3	21.2	9.1
South and Southeast Asia (excluding India and Philippines)	7,100	100.0	8.8	22.4	23.6	30.3	14.9
West Asia	8,500	100.0	9.5	21.3	27.7	26.9	14.6
Developed English-speaking countries (excluding Canada and United States)	13,000	100.0	20.4	33.9	28.0	15.1	2.6
South and Central America	14,100	100.0	10.2	21.6	27.4	25.7	15.1
Africa	20,700	100.0	6.5	18.1	24.3	35.5	15.6
Northern and Western Europe	9,100	100.0	17.1	37.1	30.4	13.2	2.2
Southern and Eastern Europe	7,700	100.0	12.0	24.0	33.3	20.0	10.7
Work permit holder prior to becoming permanent resident							
No	104,200	100.0	8.4	26.8	22.1	28.7	14.0
Yes	102,300	100.0	12.5	32.4	27.3	21.2	6.6

x suppressed to meet the confidentiality requirements of the *Statistics Act*

Notes: The sample excludes full-time members of the Canadian Armed Forces, as well as individuals living on reserves or in collective dwellings. The region of birth was used for those without a postsecondary education.

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2021.

When compared with Canadian-born individuals in May 2021, recent immigrants were 1.3 times as likely to be in professional jobs, 1.4 times as likely to be labourers, and 0.7 times as likely to be in technical and trades jobs (Table 2).[3] These tendencies—where immigrants were more likely to be professionals or in lower-skilled occupations and less likely to be in technical and trades occupations—persisted across multiple landing cohorts (Table A.1).

To determine whether these tendencies persisted in more recent years, the analysis turns to the full-time occupational distribution of people born in Canada and immigrants from the March 2024 LFS data (Table A.2 in the appendix). The occupational distribution of immigrants in March 2024 among those who landed in 2021 or 2022 was similar to that of immigrants in May 2021 among those who landed in 2018 or 2019. Immigrants were more likely than Canadian-born individuals to be employed full time in higher-skilled and lower-skilled or labourer occupations, but less likely to be employed in middle-skilled trades or technical jobs.

3. About 29.6% of immigrants who landed in 2018 or 2019 were in professional occupations (skill level A) in May 2021, compared with 22.2% of their Canadian-born counterparts. Thus, recent immigrants were 1.3 times (29.6 / 22.2) as likely as Canadian-born individuals to be employed full time in professional occupations. Similarly, 24.7% of recent immigrants were employed full time in technical and trades occupations, compared with 34.9% of their Canadian-born counterparts. Therefore, recent immigrants were 0.7 times (24.7 / 34.9) as likely as Canadian-born individuals to be employed full time in technical and trades jobs. Alternatively, people born in Canada were 1.4 times (34.9 / 24.7) as likely as recent immigrants to be in technical and trades occupations.

Table 2

Likelihood of permanent residents and non-permanent residents being employed full time relative to Canadian-born individuals, employees aged 20 to 60, May 2021

	Skill level 0: Management occupations	Skill level A: Professional occupations usually requiring a university degree	Skill level B: Technical and trades occupations usually requiring a college diploma or apprenticeship training	Skill level C: Lower-skilled occupations usually requiring a high school diploma or occupation-specific training	Skill level D: Labourer occupations for which on-the-job training is usually provided
			relative likelihood		
Non-permanent residents	0.7	1.1	0.9	1.1	1.4
Permanent residents	0.9	1.2	0.8	1.1	1.3
Landing cohorts other than those shown below	0.9	1.2	0.8	1.1	1.1
Landed in 2010 or 2011	0.7	1.1	0.8	1.2	1.4
Landed in 2012 or 2013	0.8	1.1	0.8	1.2	1.5
Landed in 2014 or 2015	0.8	1.1	0.8	1.2	1.6
Landed in 2016 or 2017	0.8	1.2	0.7	1.2	1.6
Landed in 2018 or 2019	0.8	1.3	0.7	1.1	1.4
Immigration class					
Economic class	0.9	1.6	0.7	1.0	1.0
Principal applicants	1.0	1.7	0.7	0.9	0.7
Federal Skilled Worker Program	1.1	2.4	0.5	0.6	0.2
Provincial programs	0.8	1.3	0.8	1.1	0.9
Canadian Experience Class	1.2	2.2	0.7	0.4	0.2
Other	x	0.2	0.5	2.6	x
Spouses and dependants of principal applicants	0.7	1.2	0.7	1.2	1.8
Family class	0.6	0.8	0.8	1.5	2.3
Refugees	0.3	0.3	0.7	1.7	3.8
Other	x	x	0.8	1.6	5.1
Highest level of education					
High school or less	0.4	0.1	0.6	1.8	4.2
Some postsecondary education below a bachelor's degree	0.6	0.4	1.0	1.6	1.9
Bachelor's degree	0.8	1.4	0.7	1.1	1.0
Graduate degree	1.0	2.3	0.6	0.6	0.4
Region where the highest level of postsecondary education was completed					
Canada	0.8	1.8	0.8	0.8	0.5
India	0.7	1.7	0.6	1.1	0.9
Philippines	0.3	0.2	0.6	1.9	4.1
United States	1.3	2.4	0.5	0.5	0.3
East Asia	0.8	1.1	1.0	0.9	1.3
South and Southeast Asia (excluding India and Philippines)	0.7	1.0	0.7	1.4	2.1
West Asia	0.7	1.0	0.8	1.2	2.0
Developed English-speaking countries (excluding Canada and United States)	1.5	1.5	0.8	0.7	0.4
South and Central America	0.8	1.0	0.8	1.1	2.1
Africa	0.5	0.8	0.7	1.6	2.2
Northern and Western Europe	1.3	1.7	0.9	0.6	0.3
Southern and Eastern Europe	0.9	1.1	1.0	0.9	1.5
Work permit holder prior to becoming permanent resident					
No	0.6	1.2	0.6	1.3	1.9
Yes	0.9	1.5	0.8	0.9	0.9

x suppressed to meet the confidentiality requirements of the *Statistics Act*

Notes: The sample excludes full-time members of the Canadian Armed Forces, as well as individuals living on reserves or in collective dwellings. The region of birth was used for those without a postsecondary education. The relative likelihood is the ratio of the share of permanent residents within an occupation among all permanent residents to the share of people born in Canada within that same occupation among all Canadian-born individuals. For example, the relative likelihood for permanents residents who landed in 2018 or 2019 of being employed full time in skill level A occupations in May 2021 was 1.3, which indicates that they were 1.3 times as likely as Canadian-born individuals to be employed full time in skill level A occupations. A ratio less than 1 indicates that permanent residents were less likely than people born in Canada to be employed full time in a given occupation.

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2021.

Differences by immigration class

Canada's immigrant selection system pertaining to economic PAs has traditionally been oriented toward higher-educated individuals. Economic PAs provide labour to the Canadian economy at a wide range of skill levels, including lower-skilled labour. Roughly one-quarter of economic PAs entering Canada in 2018 or 2019 were employed in lower-skilled jobs (skill level C) or as labourers (skill level D) in May 2021 (Table 1). Roughly another one-quarter were in technical and trades jobs (skill level B). About one-half were in management (skill level 0) or professional (skill level A) jobs. This wide dispersion across skill levels is not new, because similar numbers were observed for earlier landing cohorts.

The family class and—in particular—refugees were other sources of lower-skilled labour. About one-half of the 2018 and 2019 family class entrants and two-thirds of refugees worked in lower-skilled or labourer jobs in May 2021. The share of the economic class working in lower-skilled or labourer jobs was somewhat lower, but the economic class was by far the largest source of employed immigrants in May 2021 among all the immigration classes. Hence, it was the major source of lower-skilled and labourer jobs in the economy, accounting for nearly 60% of all 2018 and 2019 immigrant employment in such jobs.

Differences by region of education

There was significant variation in the skill distribution of recent immigrants depending on where they received their highest level of postsecondary education (or their region of birth for those without a postsecondary education).

The Philippines provided proportionately more lower-skilled labour than other regions. Around 72% of recent immigrants educated in or from the Philippines worked in lower-skilled or labourer jobs in May 2021 (Table 1). By contrast, 5% were in professional jobs. Other regions that provided large shares of labour at skill levels C and D included Africa (51%), South and Southeast Asia (excluding India and the Philippines) (45%), and South and Central America (41%).

Recent immigrants educated in Canada, India and the United States provided the largest share of employment in professional jobs among all recent immigrants employed. About 38% to 53% of these permanent residents were in such jobs in May 2021. As noted earlier, recent immigrants and immigrants as a whole were much less likely than their Canadian-born counterparts to work in technical and trades jobs. This finding generally persisted regardless of where they were educated or where they were from (Table 2).

The pathways for lower- and higher-skilled immigrant labour

There is no single pathway to a job for immigrants at any given skill level per se. They may have entered Canada through any immigration program and may have diverse educational backgrounds. They may have had a work permit prior to entry—that is, they have been temporary foreign workers (TFWs). However, at most skill levels, there were predominant pathways (Table 3).

Management occupations (skill level 0)

Two-thirds of recent immigrants who were employed full time in management occupations in May 2021 landed as economic PAs, with roughly equal shares distributed among the FSWP, PNP and CEC. Roughly 80% had a university degree. Over one-half of recent immigrants working in management occupations obtained their highest level of education in Canada, the United States, other English-speaking developed nations or Europe. The next largest region of education was India, at 19%. Almost 60% were TFWs prior to landing.

Professional occupations (skill level A)

The economic PA stream was the main avenue of entry for those holding professional jobs, accounting for two-thirds of them. These PAs were roughly equally likely to have entered via the FSWP, PNP or CEC. Around 58% of recent immigrants with professional jobs held a graduate degree, and 36% held a bachelor's degree. Like those working in management occupations, a relatively high share of those working in professional occupations received their highest level of education in a developed nation, including Canada (28%) and the United States (9%). An additional 26% received their highest level of education in India. Slightly over one-half were TFWs prior to landing.

Technical and trades occupations (skill level B)

These recent immigrants entered via a broad range of immigration programs. Roughly one-half were economic PAs, with the PNP accounting for over one-half of these PAs. But other streams played an important role as well: 22% entered via the family class, 19% were an economic class spouse or dependant, and 6% were refugees. Although these occupations typically require a college diploma or apprenticeship training, 62% of recent immigrants had a university degree. About one-quarter had a postsecondary education below a bachelor's degree. Their highest level of education was obtained in a wide range of regions**.** Only Canada (22%) and India (17%) accounted for double-digit shares. Like those holding jobs at skill levels 0 and A, a little over one-half held a temporary work permit prior to landing.

Table 3
Composition of full-time employees aged 20 to 60 across the five occupational skill levels, immigrants who landed in 2018 or 2019, May 2021

	Employment	Skill level 0: Management occupations	Skill level A: Professional occupations usually requiring a university degree	Skill level B: Technical and trades occupations usually requiring a college diploma or apprenticeship training	Skill level C: Lower-skilled occupations usually requiring a high school diploma or occupation-specific training	Skill level D: Labourer occupations for which on-the-job training is usually provided
	number			percent		
Total	206,500	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Immigration class						
Economic class	148,600	81.2	86.4	70.8	61.9	48.5
Principal applicants	108,100	64.0	68.4	52.1	40.7	23.8
Federal Skilled Worker Program	27,500	19.3	23.6	10.0	6.6	2.2
Provincial programs	47,700	24.4	23.2	27.5	21.8	14.2
Canadian Experience Class	26,400	19.7	21.2	12.5	4.9	1.4
Other	6,500	0.6	0.4	2.1	7.4	6.0
Spouses and dependants of principal applicants	40,500	17.2	18.0	18.7	21.2	24.7
Family class	43,000	16.0	11.9	22.1	27.1	33.0
Refugees	13,200	2.5	1.5	6.2	9.8	16.7
Other	1,700	0.3	0.2	0.9	1.2	1.8
Highest level of education						
High school or less	31,500	7.6	1.6	13.2	24.5	44.7
Some postsecondary education below a bachelor's degree	35,600	12.2	4.6	24.6	24.5	23.4
Bachelor's degree	68,900	35.4	36.0	35.1	31.9	23.2
Graduate degree	70,500	44.8	57.8	27.1	19.1	8.7
Region where the highest level of postsecondary education was completed						
Canada	42,100	21.6	27.9	22.0	14.9	7.2
India	42,300	18.9	26.2	17.4	20.9	12.4
Philippines	24,800	4.5	2.0	9.5	20.4	33.9
United States	9,900	8.1	8.5	3.3	1.9	1.1
East Asia	7,100	3.5	2.9	4.8	2.9	3.0
South and Southeast Asia (excluding India and Philippines)	7,100	2.9	2.6	3.3	4.2	5.0
West Asia	8,500	3.7	3.0	4.6	4.4	5.8
Developed English-speaking countries (excluding Canada and United States)	13,000	12.3	7.2	7.1	3.8	1.6
South and Central America	14,100	6.7	5.0	7.6	7.0	9.9
Africa	20,700	6.2	6.1	9.9	14.2	15.2
Northern and Western Europe	9,100	7.2	5.6	5.5	2.3	1.0
Southern and Eastern Europe	7,700	4.4	3.0	5.0	3.1	3.9
Work permit holder prior to becoming permanent resident						
No	104,200	40.8	45.6	45.2	57.9	68.4
Yes	102,300	59.2	54.4	54.8	42.1	31.6

x suppressed to meet the confidentiality requirements of the *Statistics Act*
Notes: The sample excludes full-time members of the Canadian Armed Forces, as well as individuals living on reserves or in collective dwellings. The region of birth was used for those without a postsecondary education.
Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2021.

Lower-skilled occupations (skill level C)

The family class accounted for 27% of recent immigrants who were employed full time in lower-skilled occupations in May 2021. The other significant programs included PNP PAs (22%), spouses and dependants of economic PAs (21%), and refugees (10%). While these jobs typically require only a high school education, roughly one-half of recent immigrants had a university degree. One-quarter had a high school education or less**.** About 70% of recent immigrants received their highest level of education in one of four regions: India (21%), the Philippines (20%), Canada (15%) or Africa (14%). About 42% held a temporary work permit prior to landing.

Labourers (skill level D)

The family class (33%) and refugees (17%) combined accounted for one-half of recent immigrants who worked as full-time labourers in May 2021. Spouses and dependants of economic PAs accounted for another one-quarter, as did economic PAs. In these jobs, which have virtually no educational requirements, 45% of recent immigrants had a high school education or less, and one-third had a university degree. The Philippines stands out as the country from which a significant portion (34%) of labourers received their highest level of education. Compared with the other skill levels, relatively few of

these job holders were TFWs prior to landing (32%). This is not surprising, because one-half were from the family class or refugees.

Detailed results for selected occupations

Focusing on broad skill groupings provides a useful overview of the type of labour that the immigration system supplies to the Canadian labour market. However, knowledge of the immigration system's contribution to specific occupations is also important. Table A.1 in the appendix provides the likelihood of immigrants being employed full time in 45 different occupations relative to their Canadian-born counterparts. These occupations cover the entire economy.

It is not feasible to go through all 45 occupations, so 6 were selected for in-depth analysis. These occupations have recently attracted considerable attention regarding the role of immigration in providing labour. The results reported here refer to employment in May 2021. However, Table A.2 in the appendix confirms that the occupational differences between immigrants and Canadian-born people observed in May 2021 persisted in March 2024, including for the more recent 2021 and 2022 landing cohort.

Industrial, electrical and construction trades (National Occupation Classification code 72, skill level B)

The trades occupations have attracted considerable interest recently, in light of growing housing issues, coupled with record population growth (Statistics Canada, 2023).[4] In 2023, the long-term job vacancy rate for full-time trades occupations was 4.0%, compared with the national average of 2.5%.[5] However, immigrants were less likely than Canadian-born individuals to work in industrial, electrical and construction trades. About 2.5% of immigrants who landed in 2018 or 2019 worked in these occupations. They were 0.4 times as likely to work in these trades in May 2021 as their Canadian-born counterparts (Chart 1). Moreover, the relative likelihood remained the same five to six years later in March 2024, including for the more recent cohort that landed in 2021 and 2022 (Table A.2). A similar situation has existed since at least the 2010 and 2011 landing cohort, which was 0.6 times as likely as Canadian-born individuals to work in the trades in May 2021. Even among all immigrants working full time in May 2021, the relative likelihood of working in these trades was 0.5.

Recent immigrants who worked in these trades entered through a range of immigration programs. A little over one-half (52%) were economic class immigrants, with three-quarters of these immigrants entering through the PNP (Table 5). The family class accounted for one-third of these immigrants, and 13% were refugees. The Federal Skilled Trades Program played a very small role, accounting for well under 1% of recent immigrants in the skilled trades.

The majority of recent immigrant trades workers had either a high school diploma, presumably combined with work experience or an apprenticeship (33%), or some postsecondary education below a bachelor's degree (40%). Most recent immigrants working in the trades received their highest level of education in one of five regions: Canada (17%), India (10%), the Philippines (10%), South and Central America (13%), and Southern and Eastern Europe (11%). Roughly one-half of these immigrants in the trades had a work permit prior to landing.

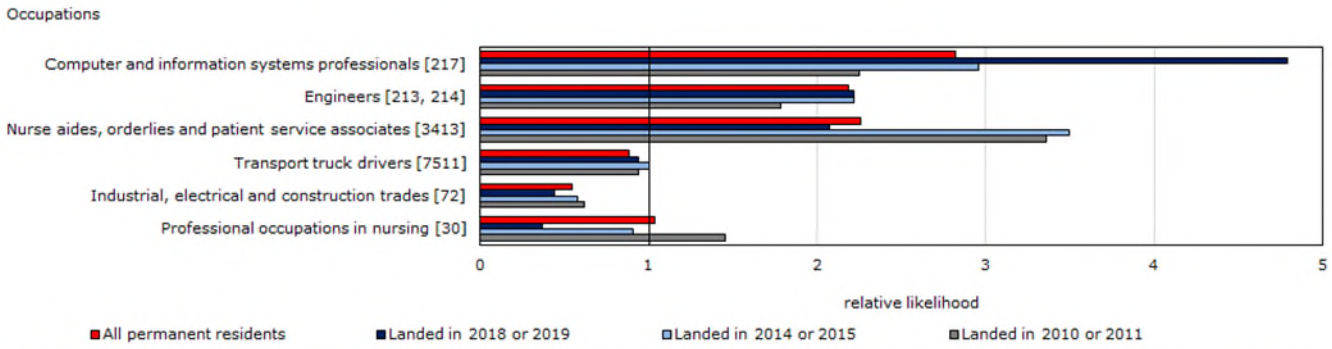
4. Industrial, electrical and construction trades accounted for 5% of the Canadian labour force in May 2021.
5. The long-term job vacancy rate for full-time jobs in a given occupation was calculated as the number of full-time permanent job vacancies lasting 30 or more days divided by the number of full-time permanent job vacancies lasting 30 or more days plus full-time employment in that occupation.

Computer and information systems professionals (National Occupational Classification code 217, skill level A)

Technological change has driven much of the demand for computer and information systems professionals.[6] Of the 45 occupations covered, this one was the most prevalent among employed recent immigrants. Roughly 11.5% of all employed immigrants in May 2021 who landed in 2018 or 2019 worked as computer and information systems professionals (Table 4). They were almost five times as likely as Canadian-born individuals to work in this occupation. The concentration of immigrants working in this occupation increased across cohorts (Chart 1). In May 2021, economic PAs were 6.4 times as likely to be employed in this occupation as their Canadian-born counterparts (Table A.1).

Three-quarters of recent immigrants working in this occupation were economic PAs. However, spouses and dependants of PAs played a significant role, accounting for 20% of the workers. The three major economic programs (the FSWP, PNP and CEC) provided roughly equal shares of the PAs in this occupation. Immigrants working in this occupation were highly educated, with 54% having a graduate degree and 40% having a bachelor's degree (Table 5). The majority of these recent immigrants were educated in India (37%) or Canada (23%). About one-half of these computer and information systems professionals were TFWs prior to landing.

Chart 1
Likelihood of immigrants being employed full time in selected occupations relative to Canadian-born individuals by landing cohort, employees aged 20 to 60, May 2021



Notes: The sample excludes full-time members of the Canadian Armed Forces, as well as individuals living on reserves or in collective dwellings. The numbers in brackets beside each occupation indicate the 2016 National Occupational Classification codes. The relative likelihood is the ratio of the share of permanent residents within an occupation among all permanent residents to the share of Canadian-born individuals within that same occupation among the Canadian-born population. For example, permanent residents who landed in Canada in 2018 or 2019 were almost five times more likely than Canadian-born individuals to be employed full time as computer and information systems professionals in May 2021. A ratio less than 1 indicates that permanent residents were less likely than people born in Canada to be employed full time in a given occupation. The relative likelihoods for other occupations are provided in Table A.1 in the appendix.
Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2021.

Professional occupations in nursing (National Occupational Classification code 30, skill level A)

An aging population, combined with rapid population growth via international migration, could increase the demand for health care workers, in particular professional nurses. In 2023, the long-term job vacancy rate for full-time jobs in professional nursing occupations was above the average of 2.5%, at 4.5%. Relatively few immigrants landing in 2018 or 2019 filled these roles (less than 1%) in May 2021. Recent immigrants were 0.4 times as likely to work in professional nursing occupations as people born in Canada (Table A.1).

Earlier landing cohorts, notably those arriving in 2010 and 2011 and in 2014 and 2015, were more likely to be employed full time as professional nurses in May 2021 than the more recent 2018 and 2019 cohort (Chart 1). This result may reflect the fact that it takes some time for new immigrants to become professional nurses given schooling and credential requirements. Results from the 2016 Census of

6. This occupation accounted for 3.7% of the Canadian labour force in May 2021.

Population support this theory. Immigrants who landed in 2013 or 2014 were 0.4 times as likely as Canadian-born individuals to be in professional nursing occupations in May 2016. However, those who entered in the 2005 and 2006 cohort were 1.1 times as likely. This same pattern was observed in the 2021 Census of Population. Relatively few immigrants were employed full time as professional nurses two to three years after entry, but after five years or so, their likelihood of employment in professional nursing occupations was roughly the same as their Canadian-born counterparts.

Of the immigrants who landed in 2018 or 2019 and were employed full time in professional nursing occupations in May 2021, 77% were from the economic class and 80% had a university degree. The majority received their highest level of education in Canada (23.4%), India (22.3%) or the Philippines (21.0%). Two-thirds were TFWs prior to landing.

Nurse aides, orderlies and patient service associates (National Occupational Classification code 3413, skill level C)

The recent unmet demand for nurse aides, orderlies and patient service associates was slightly above average. In 2023, the long-term job vacancy rate for these full-time jobs was 2.9%. Immigrants entering in 2018 or 2019 were twice as likely as Canadian-born individuals to be employed full time in these occupations in May 2021; roughly 2.9% of all employed recent immigrants were nurse aides, orderlies and patient service associates (Table 4). Immigrants who entered in 2010 and 2011 and in 2014 and 2015 were about 3.5 times as likely as people born in Canada to be employed in this occupation (Chart 1).

Nurse aides, orderlies and patient service associates entered through various programs. One-half were economic PAs, 60% of whom entered via the caregiver program. The spouses and dependants of economic PAs accounted for about one-fifth of recent immigrants who worked as nurse aides or orderlies, as did the family class. One-half of those working in this occupation had a university degree, and another one-third had some other form of postsecondary education. Proportionately more nurse aides, orderlies and patient service associates were educated in the Philippines (41%) than in any other region. In addition, a large number received their highest level of education in Africa (22%), followed by Canada (18%) and India (10%). As with many other occupations, about one-half of those employed full time in May 2021 were TFWs prior to landing.

Table 4
Employment distribution of full-time employees aged 20 to 60 across selected occupations, May 2021

	Employment	Total	Industrial, electrical & construction trades [72]	Computer and information systems professionals [217]	Professional occupations in nursing [30]	Nurse aides, orderlies and patient service associates [3413]	Engineers [213, 214]	Transport truck drivers [7511]	All other occupations
	number				percent				
Total	10,513,000	100.0	5.0	3.7	2.2	1.9	1.8	1.7	83.7
Canadian-born individuals	7,552,200	100.0	5.7	2.4	2.2	1.4	1.4	1.7	85.2
Non-permanent residents	322,200	100.0	4.0	9.4	0.6	3.2	2.3	2.3	78.2
Permanent residents	2,638,600	100.0	3.1	6.7	2.3	3.1	3.0	1.5	80.3
Landing cohorts other than those shown below	1,741,400	100.0	3.1	6.0	2.5	2.6	3.1	1.5	81.2
Landed in 2010 or 2011	167,000	100.0	3.5	5.4	3.2	4.7	2.5	1.6	79.1
Landed in 2012 or 2013	157,800	100.0	3.4	5.9	2.8	4.3	2.7	1.6	79.3
Landed in 2014 or 2015	180,000	100.0	3.3	7.1	2.0	4.9	3.1	1.7	77.9
Landed in 2016 or 2017	185,900	100.0	3.1	8.9	1.4	4.0	2.7	1.7	78.2
Landed in 2018 or 2019	206,500	100.0	2.5	11.5	0.8	2.9	3.1	1.6	77.6
Immigration class									
Economic class	148,600	100.0	1.8	14.4	0.8	2.8	3.9	1.5	74.8
Principal applicants	108,100	100.0	1.9	15.4	0.9	2.8	4.5	1.7	72.8
Federal Skilled Worker Program	27,500	100.0	x	21.4	x	x	4.6	x	x
Provincial programs	47,700	100.0	3.2	11.2	1.1	2.4	4.1	3.3	74.7
Canadian Experience Class	26,400	100.0	1.1	20.4	0.9	x	6.2	x	x
Other	6,500	100.0	x	x	x	26.1	x	x	x
Spouses and dependants of principal applicants	40,500	100.0	1.7	11.8	x	2.7	2.1	1.0	x
Family class	43,000	100.0	4.0	4.8	0.7	2.9	1.3	1.9	84.4
Refugees	13,200	100.0	4.9	1.5	x	3.8	x	1.7	x
Other	1,700	100.0	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Highest level of education									
High school or less	31,500	100.0	5.5	1.2	x	2.6	x	3.8	x
Some postsecondary education below a bachelor's degree	35,600	100.0	5.8	3.0	0.8	5.8	x	3.3	x
Bachelor's degree	68,900	100.0	1.3	13.8	1.3	3.7	3.3	1.0	75.6
Graduate degree	70,500	100.0	0.6	18.0	0.4	0.8	5.6	0.4	74.2
Region where the highest level of postsecondary education was completed									
Canada	42,100	100.0	2.1	13.1	0.9	2.5	6.1	1.5	73.8
India	42,300	100.0	1.3	20.8	0.8	1.5	3.0	3.4	69.2
Philippines	24,800	100.0	2.1	1.0	1.3	10.0	x	x	x
United States	9,900	100.0	x	21.6	x	x	4.4	x	x
East Asia	7,100	100.0	3.1	11.2	x	x	x	x	x
South and Southeast Asia (excluding India and Philippines)	7,100	100.0	x	7.5	x	x	x	x	x
West Asia	8,500	100.0	4.4	7.5	x	x	3.3	x	x
Developed English-speaking countries (excluding Canada and United States)	13,000	100.0	3.0	7.1	x	x	2.8	x	x
South and Central America	14,100	100.0	4.6	8.3	x	x	2.4	1.6	x
Africa	20,700	100.0	2.4	5.3	x	6.3	1.4	x	x
Northern and Western Europe	9,100	100.0	3.6	11.1	x	x	2.6	x	x
Southern and Eastern Europe	7,700	100.0	7.4	10.2	x	x	x	3.3	x
Work permit holder prior to becoming permanent resident									
No	104,200	100.0	2.3	11.0	0.5	3.1	2.4	1.3	79.4
Yes	102,300	100.0	2.7	11.9	1.0	2.7	3.8	2.0	75.9

x suppressed to meet the confidentiality requirements of the *Statistics Act*

Notes: The sample excludes full-time members of the Canadian Armed Forces, as well as individuals living on reserves or in collective dwellings. The region of birth was used for those without a postsecondary education. The numbers in brackets beside each occupation indicate the 2016 National Occupational Classification codes.

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2021.

Engineers (National Occupational Classification codes 213 and 214, skill level A)

The unmet demand for engineers in 2023 was about average, with a 2.3% long-term full-time vacancy rate. As with computer and information systems professionals, immigrants played a major role in filling engineering jobs. Immigrants who landed in 2018 or 2019 were twice as likely as their Canadian-born counterparts to work full time as engineers in May 2021. A similar tendency to work in this occupation was observed among the 2010 and 2011 and the 2014 and 2015 landing cohorts.

Roughly three-quarters of recent immigrants working as engineers entered as economic PAs through either the PNP, FSWP or CEC. Spouses and dependants of economic PAs accounted for another 13%. These immigrants were highly educated, with 61% holding graduate degrees and 35% holding bachelor's degrees. They were more likely to be educated in developed nations, with 40% receiving their highest level of education in Canada (Table 5). Another 20% were educated in India. The majority (61%) held a work permit in Canada prior to landing.

Table 5
Composition of full-time employees aged 20 to 60 across selected occupations, immigrants who landed in 2018 or 2019, May 2021

	Industrial, electrical and construction trades [72]	Computer and information systems professionals [217]	Professional occupations in nursing [30]	Nurse aides, orderlies and patient service associates [3413]	Engineers [213, 214]	Transport truck drivers [7511]
			percent			
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Immigration class						
Economic class	52.0	90.3	77.0	68.7	89.6	67.0
Principal applicants	39.0	70.2	64.2	50.3	76.3	55.2
Federal Skilled Worker Program	x	24.8	x	x	19.8	x
Provincial programs	29.7	22.5	33.0	18.7	30.8	47.4
Canadian Experience Class	5.7	22.8	16.0	x	25.7	x
Other	x	0.1	x	28.4	0.0	x
Spouses and dependants of principal applicants	13.0	20.1	x	18.4	13.2	11.8
Family class	33.3	8.8	19.6	21.0	8.7	24.3
Refugees	12.7	0.8	x	8.4	x	6.8
Other	x	x	x	x	x	x
Highest level of education						
High school or less	33.3	1.6	x	13.8	x	36.3
Some postsecondary education below a bachelor's degree	40.4	4.5	18.8	34.2	x	35.1
Bachelor's degree	17.8	40.1	59.4	42.2	35.5	20.4
Graduate degree	8.5	53.8	19.1	9.8	61.3	8.2
Region where the highest level of postsecondary education was completed						
Canada	17.1	23.4	23.4	17.7	40.5	19.6
India	10.5	37.1	22.8	10.4	19.6	42.8
Philippines	10.0	1.1	21.0	41.1	x	x
United States	x	9.0	x	x	6.7	x
East Asia	4.4	3.4	x	x	x	x
South and Southeast Asia (excluding India and Philippines)	x	2.3	x	x	x	x
West Asia	7.3	2.7	x	x	4.4	x
Developed English-speaking countries (excluding Canada and United States)	7.7	3.9	x	x	5.7	x
South and Central America	12.5	4.9	x	x	5.4	6.9
Africa	9.5	4.7	x	21.6	4.5	x
Northern and Western Europe	6.3	4.3	x	x	3.8	x
Southern and Eastern Europe	11.1	3.3	x	x	x	7.7
Work permit holder prior to becoming permanent resident						
No	46.3	48.4	33.9	53.9	39.1	39.5
Yes	53.7	51.6	66.1	46.1	60.9	60.5

x suppressed to meet the confidentiality requirements of the *Statistics Act*
Notes: The sample excludes full-time members of the Canadian Armed Forces, as well as individuals living on reserves or in collective dwellings. The region of birth was used for those without a postsecondary education. The numbers in brackets beside each occupation indicate the 2016 National Occupational Classification codes.
Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2021.

Transport truck drivers (National Occupational Classification code 7511, skill level C)

There has been concern regarding the difficulty in finding transport truck drivers. The long-term job vacancy rate for these jobs was above average, at 6.9% in 2023. Recent immigrants contributed to filling job vacancies in this occupation at about the same rate as their Canadian-born counterparts. They were approximately as likely to work as transport truck drivers as people born in Canada. There was little change in this tendency from the 2010 and 2011 landing cohort to the 2018 and 2019 cohort (Chart 1).

Two-thirds of recent immigrants working as transport truck drivers entered through the economic class, with the vast majority (86%) entering through the PNP. However, the family class also contributed significantly, accounting for one-quarter of recent immigrant transport truck drivers in May 2021. Recent immigrant transport truck drivers had varied educational backgrounds. Roughly one-third had a high school education or less, one-third had some postsecondary education below a bachelor's degree and roughly one-third had a university degree. India (43%) accounted for by far the largest proportion of recent immigrant transport truck drivers. Well over one-half (60%) were TFWs prior to landing.

Concluding remarks

This study assessed the skill level and occupations of immigrants in the Canadian labour market using data from the 2021 Census of Population. In spite of the interest in using immigration to address perceived labour market needs in particular occupations, little is known regarding the actual occupations in which recent immigrants work. This study attempted to fill that knowledge gap. It focused on permanent residents who landed in 2018 or 2019 (referred to as “recent immigrants” in this study) and the full-time occupations they held two or three years later, in May 2021.

Because of the nature of the immigration system in Canada, a common belief is that the system supplies primarily highly skilled workers to the labour market. However, the share of permanent residents entering in 2018 or 2019 who worked in lower-skilled or labourer jobs (35%) was almost as high as the share working in higher-skilled occupations (40%) in May 2021. One significant finding is that immigrants are less likely to work in technical and trades jobs than their Canadian-born counterparts. About one-quarter did so, compared with 35% of Canadian-born people.

More specifically, relatively few immigrants who entered in 2018 or 2019 were employed in industrial, electrical and construction trades or professional occupations in nursing in May 2021—two occupations of considerable interest because of perceived labour challenges driven in part by the recent population surge. This pattern persisted across landing cohorts for industrial, electrical and construction trades. However, earlier landing cohorts were more likely to be employed as professional nurses in May 2021. This is likely because of the time it may take for new immigrants to become professional nurses. Given that the arrival of immigrants may increase the demand for certain occupations, such as trades workers and professional nurses, it is hard to say with any degree of certainty whether recent immigrants contributed to reducing perceived labour market challenges in these occupations.

By contrast, recent immigrants were relatively more concentrated in computer and information systems professions (almost five times as likely to work in these jobs as their Canadian-born counterparts); in engineering (twice as likely); and as nurse aides, orderlies and patient service associates (twice as likely). Of the 45 occupations analyzed in this study covering the entire economy, computer and information systems professions were the most prevalent among recent immigrants. Recent immigrants were about as likely as people born in Canada to work as transport truck drivers, another occupation of considerable interest for the Canadian economy.

This study mainly used the 2021 Census of Population, but its main conclusions are supported by the more recent March 2024 LFS data, which allowed for the analysis of the more recent 2021 and 2022 immigrant landing cohort. The occupation and skill distribution differences between immigrants and Canadian-born individuals identified in this study persisted in the more recent data.

Given the recent growth in the number of non-permanent residents, future research could focus on their role in the Canadian labour market.

Appendix

Table A.1
Full-time employment distributions and the likelihood of immigrants being employed relative to Canadian-born individuals, employees aged 20 to 60, May 2021

			Immigrants							
			Landed in 2010 or 2011		Landed in 2014 or 2015		Landed in 2018 or 2019		All permanent residents	
	Share of total employment in Canada	Share of employment among Canadian-born individuals	All permanent residents	Economic principal applicants	All permanent residents	Economic principal applicants	All permanent residents	Economic principal applicants	All permanent residents	Economic principal applicants
	percent		relative likelihood							
Total	100.0	100.0	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Skill level 0: Management occupations	**12.8**	**13.3**	**0.7**	**0.9**	**0.8**	**0.9**	**0.8**	**1.0**	**0.9**	**1.0**
Specialized middle management occupations [01-05]	5.7	5.8	0.8	1.0	0.8	1.1	0.9	1.1	1.0	1.2
Middle management occupations in retail and wholesale trade and customer services [06]	3.6	3.7	0.8	0.7	0.9	1.0	0.9	1.1	0.9	0.9
Middle management occupations in trades, transportation, production and utilities [07-09]	2.2	2.4	0.7	0.8	0.7	0.8	0.6	0.7	0.8	0.8
Senior management occupations [00]	1.3	1.4	0.4	0.6	0.4	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.6	0.7
Skill level A: Professional occupations usually requiring a university degree	**23.4**	**22.2**	**1.1**	**1.5**	**1.1**	**1.4**	**1.3**	**1.7**	**1.2**	**1.6**
Professional occupations in education services [40]	5.0	5.6	0.5	0.7	0.4	0.5	0.4	0.5	0.6	0.7
Professional occupations in business and finance [11]	4.6	4.2	1.3	1.5	1.1	1.3	1.6	2.0	1.4	1.6
Computer and information systems professionals [217]	3.7	2.4	2.3	3.1	3.0	4.1	4.8	6.4	2.8	4.7
Professional occupations in law and social, community and government services [41]	3.4	3.6	0.7	0.8	0.6	0.7	0.8	1.0	0.8	0.8
Professional occupations in nursing [30]	2.2	2.2	1.5	2.1	0.9	1.1	0.4	0.4	1.0	1.1
Engineers [213, 214]	1.8	1.4	1.8	2.7	2.2	3.6	2.2	3.2	2.1	3.9
Professional occupations in health (except nursing) [31]	1.2	1.2	1.1	1.4	0.9	1.2	0.6	0.7	1.0	1.0
Professional occupations in art and culture [51]	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.7	0.5	0.7	0.8	1.2	0.7	0.8
Physical and life science professionals [211, 212]	0.5	0.5	1.2	1.8	1.4	2.0	1.4	1.8	1.4	2.2
Architects and statisticians [215, 216]	0.4	0.5	1.3	1.5	1.3	1.8	1.3	1.8	1.3	1.8
Skill level B: Technical and trades occupations usually requiring a college diploma or apprenticeship training	**33.0**	**34.9**	**0.8**	**0.8**	**0.8**	**0.8**	**0.7**	**0.7**	**0.8**	**0.7**
Administrative and financial supervisors and administrative occupations [12]	6.4	6.7	0.8	0.7	0.7	0.6	0.7	0.7	0.8	0.7
Industrial, electrical and construction trades [72]	5.0	5.7	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.5	0.4	0.3	0.5	0.5
Technical occupations related to natural and applied sciences [22]	4.0	4.0	1.0	1.1	1.0	1.2	1.0	1.2	1.0	1.3
Maintenance and equipment operation trades [73]	3.4	4.0	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.3	0.3	0.5	0.5
Paraprofessional occupations in legal, social, community and education services [42]	2.8	2.9	1.1	0.8	0.9	0.8	0.7	0.6	0.9	0.7
Service supervisors and specialized service occupations [63]	2.2	1.9	1.6	1.3	1.8	1.6	1.6	1.4	1.4	1.2
Technical occupations in health [32]	2.2	2.3	1.2	1.2	0.9	1.0	0.5	0.4	0.9	0.8
Retail sales supervisors and specialized sales occupations [62]	2.1	2.0	1.0	0.9	1.0	1.0	1.3	1.3	1.1	1.0
Technical occupations in art, culture, recreation and sport [52]	1.4	1.4	0.8	0.6	0.8	0.9	1.3	1.5	0.9	0.9
Finance, insurance and related business administrative occupations [13]	1.0	1.1	1.1	1.0	0.9	0.9	0.8	0.9	1.1	1.0
Processing, manufacturing and utilities supervisors and central control operators [92]	1.0	1.1	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.7	0.5	0.5	0.7	0.7
Occupations in front-line public protection services [43]	1.0	1.2	0.2	x	x	x	x	x	0.3	0.1
Supervisors and technical occupations in natural resources, agriculture and related production [82]	0.5	0.6	0.3	x	0.3	x	0.3	x	0.3	0.2
Skill level C: Lower-skilled occupations usually requiring a high school diploma or occupation-specific training	**23.1**	**22.4**	**1.2**	**1.0**	**1.2**	**1.0**	**1.1**	**0.9**	**1.1**	**0.9**
Office support occupations [14]	3.6	3.6	1.1	0.9	0.9	0.7	0.8	0.7	1.0	0.8
Service representatives and other customer and personal services occupations [65]	3.1	2.9	1.1	0.8	1.2	0.9	1.6	1.3	1.2	0.9
Sales representatives and salespersons - wholesale and retail trade [64]	2.5	2.7	0.7	0.4	0.7	0.6	0.9	0.7	0.8	0.6
Distribution, tracking and scheduling co-ordination occupations [15]	2.2	2.2	1.0	0.7	1.0	0.7	0.9	0.5	1.0	0.7
Nurse aides, orderlies and patient service associates [3413]	1.9	1.4	3.4	3.7	3.5	4.1	2.1	2.0	2.2	2.6
Transport and heavy equipment operation and related occupations (except [7511]) [75]	1.7	1.9	0.7	0.6	0.6	0.5	0.5	0.4	0.7	0.5
Transport truck drivers [7511]	1.7	1.7	0.9	0.7	1.0	0.7	0.9	1.0	0.9	0.7
Other installers, repairers and servicers and material handlers [74]	1.7	1.6	1.3	0.8	1.4	0.8	1.5	0.8	1.2	0.7
Processing and manufacturing machine operators and related production workers [94]	1.4	1.2	2.1	1.8	2.1	1.4	1.8	1.0	1.8	1.3
Care providers and educational, legal and public protection support occupations [44]	1.3	1.4	0.9	1.1	1.0	1.4	0.8	0.9	0.8	0.9
Assemblers in manufacturing [95]	1.1	0.9	1.9	1.4	2.0	1.2	1.6	0.7	1.9	1.2
Workers in natural resources, agriculture and related production [84]	0.5	0.5	0.5	x	0.5	x	0.7	0.5	0.5	0.3
Assisting occupations in support of health services (except [3413]) [34]	0.4	0.4	1.5	1.3	1.5	1.0	1.0	0.8	1.3	1.0
Skill level D: Labourer occupations for which on-the-job training is usually provided	**7.7**	**7.2**	**1.4**	**0.9**	**1.6**	**1.0**	**1.4**	**0.7**	**1.3**	**0.8**
Service support and other service occupations, n.e.c. [67]	3.0	2.6	1.9	1.3	2.2	1.5	1.7	0.8	1.5	1.0
Sales support occupations [66]	1.5	1.4	1.2	0.7	1.4	0.9	1.4	0.9	1.1	0.8
Labourers in processing, manufacturing and utilities [96]	1.4	1.1	2.4	1.5	2.4	1.3	2.4	0.8	2.0	1.0
Trades helpers, construction labourers and related occupations [76]	1.3	1.5	0.7	0.3	0.6	0.3	0.7	0.3	0.6	0.3
Harvesting, landscaping and natural resources labourers [86]	0.5	0.6	0.3	x	0.5	x	0.3	x	0.3	0.2

... not applicable

x suppressed to meet the confidentiality requirements of the *Statistics Act*

Notes: n.e.c. = not elsewhere classified. The sample excludes the territories and full-time members of the Canadian Armed Forces, as well as individuals living on reserves or in collective dwellings. The numbers in brackets beside each occupation indicate the 2016 National Occupational Classification codes. The relative likelihood is the ratio of the share of permanent residents within an occupation among all permanent residents to the share of people born in Canada within that same occupation among all Canadian-born individuals. For example, permanent residents who landed in Canada in 2018 or 2019 were almost five times more likely than Canadian-born individuals to be employed full time as computer and information systems professionals in May 2021. A ratio less than 1 indicates that permanent residents were less likely than people born in Canada to be employed full time in a given occupation.

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2021.

Table A.2
Employment distribution of full-time employees aged 20 to 60 across the five occupational skill levels and selected occupations, March 2024

	Total	Canadian-born individuals	Immigrants who landed in 2018 or 2019	Immigrants who landed in 2021 or 2022	All permanent and non-permanent residents
			percent		
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Occupational skill levels					
Skill level 0: Management occupations	9.7	10.4	9.7	8.9	8.3
Skill level A: Professional occupations	25.0	23.8	28.4	27.8	27.5
Skill level B: Technical and trades occupations	34.8	37.6	26.5	26.9	28.9
Skill level C: Lower-skilled occupations	24.3	22.8	28.5	26.2	27.4
Skill level D: Labourers	6.2	5.4	6.9	10.2	7.9
Selected occupations					
Industrial, electrical and construction trades [72]	5.3	6.4	2.4[E]	3.0[E]	3.2
Computer and information systems professionals [217]	4.7	3.0	9.8	11.3	8.2
Professional occupations in nursing [30]	2.4	2.4	1.5[E]	1.5[E]	2.3
Nurse aides, orderlies and patient service associates [3413]	1.6	1.1	2.5[E]	2.1[E]	2.6
Engineers [213, 214]	1.9	1.6	2.2[E]	1.2[E]	2.7
Transport truck drivers [7511]	1.4	1.6	x	x	1.1
All other occupations	82.7	83.9	x	x	79.9

x suppressed to meet the confidentiality requirements of the *Statistics Act*

[E] use with caution

Notes: The sample excludes the territories and full-time members of the Canadian Armed Forces, as well as individuals living on reserves or in collective dwellings. The skill levels are based on the 2016 National Occupational Classification (NOC). Skill level 0 occupations are those where the first digit of the NOC is "0." Skill level A occupations are those where the second digit is either "0" or "1." Skill level B occupations are those where the second digit is either "2" or "3." Skill level C occupations are those where the second digit is either "4" or "5." Skill level D occupations are those where the second digit is either "6" or "7." The numbers in brackets beside each occupation indicate the NOC codes.

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, March 2024.

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