

Immigrants: Employment Rates by Level of Education

Highlights

- ◆ Immigrants constitute a higher share of residents with a university degree, as compared to their share within other educational cohorts.
- ◆ Following the pattern of the Canadian born, immigrants with a higher level of educational attainment are more likely to be employed.
- ◆ Notwithstanding this improvement, the employment gap rises for immigrants with higher education levels because, as education rises, the employment rate of the Canadian born rises faster than that of immigrants ... a pattern that is more pronounced among females than males.

Impact of Level of Education?

Having a job is the key route for “economic” integration into Canadian society. Unfortunately, immigrants have lower employment rates than the Canadian born¹. Canadian immigration policy has increasingly targeted immigrants with a higher level of educational attainment. Consequently, it is important to ask what the employment rate (i.e., the level of ‘economic’ integration) is for immigrants from this educational cohort.

Findings

In October, 2013, one-third of Canadian residents² with a university degree were immigrants (Table 1). In all other categories of educational attainment, immigrants represented 21% or less of Canadian residents. Immigrants who arrived within the previous 10 years show an even more pronounced pattern favouring higher levels of educational attainment. The share of residents with a university degree (8-9%) is roughly three times higher than the share for any

Period of Arrival of Immigrant	Highest Level of Educational Attainment					
	No diploma or certificate	High school diploma, no post-secondary	High school diploma, some post-secondary	Post-secondary diploma or certificate	University degree	All groups of educational attainment
	Population (,000) (25 to 54 years of age) (average for 36 months up to October, 2013)					
All immigrants	191	390	96	651	945	2,273
Immigrants who arrived within previous 5 years	28	56	15	102	239	440
Immigrants who arrived 5 to 10 years ago	26	63	14	102	225	430
Immigrants who arrived more than 10 years ago	137	271	67	447	481	1,403
Canadian born	764	1,410	407	2,895	1,722	7,197
Total population ¹	970	1,831	515	3,607	2,770	9,693
	Percent distribution (25 to 54 years of age) (average for 36 months up to October, 2013)					
All immigrants	20	21	19	18	34	23
Immigrants who arrived within previous 5 years	3	3	3	3	9	5
Immigrants who arrived 5 to 10 years ago	3	3	3	3	8	4
Immigrants who arrived more than 10 years ago	14	15	13	12	17	14
Canadian born	79	77	79	80	62	74
Total population ¹	100	100	100	100	100	100

¹ Includes temporary residents.
Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, CANSIM Table 282-0105.

¹ See the FactSheet in the March, 2013 eBulletin at <http://p2pcanada.ca/ebulletin/>

² In this FactSheet, we concentrate on the core-age workforce population (i.e., 25 to 54 years of age).

Table 2: Differences in Employment Rate Between Immigrants and the Canadian Born by Period of Arrival and Level of Educational Attainment

Period of Arrival of Immigrant	Highest Level of Educational Attainment					
	No diploma or certificate	High school diploma, no post-secondary	High school diploma, some post-secondary	Post-secondary diploma or certificate	University degree	All groups of educational attainment
	Percent employed (25 to 54 years of age) (average for 36 months up to October, 2013)					
All immigrants	60	72	71	79	79	76
Immigrants who arrived within previous 5 years	46	60	62	67	66	64
Immigrants who arrived 5 to 10 years ago	59	66	69	76	78	75
Immigrants who arrived more than 10 years ago	64	76	74	82	85	80
Canadian born	62	80	79	86	90	83
Percentage point gap in percent employed, compared to Canadian born (25 to 54 years of age) (average for 36 months up to October, 2013)						
All immigrants	-2	-8	-8	-7	-12	-7
Immigrants who arrived within previous 5 years	-16	-19	-18	-19	-24	-19
Immigrants who arrived 5 to 10 years ago	-4	-13	-10	-10	-12	-8
Immigrants who arrived more than 10 years ago	1	-4	-5	-4	-5	-3
Canadian born	0	0	0	0	0	0

Source: Statistics Canada. Labour Force Survey, CANSIM Table 282-0105.

other level of educational attainment (3%).

How do the employment patterns of immigrants with different educational levels compare to the Canadian born?

Overall, the percent of immigrants who are employed is about 7 percentage points lower than the Canadian born³ (Table 2).

This "gap" differs according to the number of years an immigrant has been in Canada. The gap is widest for recent immigrants (less than 5 years in Canada) who have an employment rate of 64%

as compared with 83% for the Canadian born (resulting in a gap of 19 percentage points). The gap is smaller for immigrants who have been in Canada for 5 to 10 years (8 percentage points) and smaller still for immigrants who have been in Canada for more than 10 years (only 3 percentage points). Evidently, economic integration improves with length of time in Canada; but, it does not do so in a consistent manner across different education groups.

Immigrants with higher education levels enjoy higher employment rates than immigrants with lower education levels regardless of length of residency in Canada. That said, immigrant employment rates consistently fall below the employment rates of the Canadian born. For example, 79% of immigrants with a university degree are employed, as compared with 90% of the Canadian born (a 12 percentage point gap). The employment gap is lower among immigrants with lower levels of educational attainment but this is due to the fact that the employment rate of the Canadian born is also low, reducing the gap between the groups.

The patterns are similar for males (Table 3) and females (Table 4) but the levels are much different. Specifically, while employment rates are higher for males than females – both for immigrants and for the Canadian born – the gap between female immigrants and the female Canada born population is larger at all education levels and all residency periods. The same patterns hold for males but are smaller.

For immigrant males, the highest employment rate gap – 16 percentage points – occurs for persons with a university degree who have been in Canada for less than 5 years (Table 3). For females, the same category (i.e. university degree and residing in Canada for less than 5 years),

³ See the FactSheet in the March, 2013 eBulletin at <http://p2pcanada.ca/ebulletin/>

Table 3: Differences in Employment Rate Between Male Immigrants and Male Canadian Born Residents by Period of Arrival and Level of Educational Attainment

Period of Arrival of Immigrant	Highest Level of Educational Attainment					
	No diploma or certificate	High school diploma, no post-secondary	High school diploma, some post-secondary	Post-secondary diploma or certificate	University degree	All groups of educational attainment
	Percent employed, MALES (25 to 54 years of age) (average for 36 months up to October, 2013)					
All immigrants	74	82	77	85	85	83
Immigrants who arrived within previous 5 years	71	77	71	78	77	77
Immigrants who arrived 5 to 10 years ago	77	84	76	85	87	85
Immigrants who arrived more than 10 years ago	74	83	78	87	89	85
Canadian born	69	84	83	89	92	86
Percentage point gap in percent employed, MALES, compared to Canadian born (25 to 54 years of age) (average for 36 months up to October, 2013)						
All immigrants	6	-2	-6	-3	-7	-2
Immigrants who arrived within previous 5 years	2	-7	-12	-10	-16	-9
Immigrants who arrived 5 to 10 years ago	9	0	-7	-4	-6	-1
Immigrants who arrived more than 10 years ago	6	-1	-5	-2	-4	-1
Canadian born	0	0	0	0	0	0

Source: Statistics Canada. Labour Force Survey, CANSIM Table 282-0105.

Table 4: Differences in Employment Rate Between Female Immigrants and Female Canadian Born Residents by Period of Arrival and Level of Educational Attainment

Period of Arrival of Immigrant	Highest Level of Educational Attainment					
	No diploma or certificate	High school diploma, no post-secondary	High school diploma, some post-secondary	Post-secondary diploma or certificate	University degree	All groups of educational attainment
	Percent employed, FEMALES (25 to 54 years of age) (average for 36 months up to October, 2013)					
All immigrants	48	63	66	74	73	69
Immigrants who arrived within previous 5 years	26	44	53	58	57	53
Immigrants who arrived 5 to 10 years ago	45	53	64	70	70	66
Immigrants who arrived more than 10 years ago	53	69	70	78	82	75
Canadian born	52	75	76	84	89	80
Percentage point gap in percent employed, FEMALES, compared to Canadian born (25 to 54 years of age) (average for 36 months up to October, 2013)						
All immigrants	-5	-12	-10	-10	-16	-11
Immigrants who arrived within previous 5 years	-26	-31	-23	-26	-32	-27
Immigrants who arrived 5 to 10 years ago	-7	-22	-12	-13	-19	-15
Immigrants who arrived more than 10 years ago	1	-6	-6	-5	-7	-5
Canadian born	0	0	0	0	0	0

Source: Statistics Canada. Labour Force Survey, CANSIM Table 282-0105.

yields an employment rate gap that is twice as large, standing at 32 percentage points.

Note that male immigrants with no diploma or certificate are more likely to be employed (74%) compared to the Canadian born (69%). Female immigrants do not enjoy this advantage.

Summary

Immigrants constitute a higher share of residents with a university degree, compared to their share within other levels of educational attainment. This yields 'absolute' benefits, in terms of higher employment rates, but not relative gains as compared with the Canadian born.

Similar to the Canadian born, immigrants with higher levels of education are more likely to be employed. Notwithstanding this advantage, however, the gap in employment rates between immigrants and the Canadian born is greater at higher education levels because the employment rates of the Canadian born improve more with higher levels of education than do the employment rates of immigrants. This pattern holds for both males and females, though the employment rate gap for females is decidedly higher.