



## Impact of Race and Immigrants Status on Employment Opportunities and Outcomes in the Canadian Labour Market

By Cheryl Teelucksingh and Grace – Edward Galabuzi\*

### Issue

Impact of race and immigrant status on employment

### Introduction

The purpose of this report is to draw attention to the issue of racial discrimination in employment and its impact on the status of racialized group members in a changing Canadian labour market. We argue that the position of individuals in the Canadian labour market is determined not only by their productive capacity but also by their group affiliation and that it

\* For a more detailed analysis see: Teelucksingh and Galabuzi (2005).

varies from group to group. Labour market attachment is critical to the livelihood and identity formation of individuals and groups, but also their ability to claim a sense of belonging and full citizenship. This is especially true of historically socially excluded groups such as racialized groups.

The early twenty-first century shift towards flexible deployment of labour and flexible accumulation on a global scale has converged with the focus on the knowledge based economy and the growth of the racialized population to amplify the impact of racial discrimination in employment on the groups. The growth in the population of racialized groups far outpaced the growth in the rest of the Canadian population over the last decade of the twentieth century with a major source of that growth being increased racialized immigration.

While Canadian public policy has placed a premium on occupational skills and educational attainment, historical structures of discrimination in employment seem to have impeded the labour market success of the better educated and expanding proportion of the Canadian population that is racialized. Social indicators such as higher rates of poverty, sectoral, and occupational concentrations along racial lines, high unemployment and under-employment, a failure of educational attainment to translate into comparable occupational status and compensation suggest the need to revisit a concern that seems to have faded in the minds of mainstream observers of the Canadian labour market.

### SUMMARY

*The research draws attention to racial discrimination in employment in Canada, and discusses the impact on the status of racialized groups in the Canadian labour market. Racial discrimination occurs in Canada in at least two forms, economic discrimination, (when employers make generalized assumptions about the worth of racialized employees), and exclusionary discrimination (when members of a racialized group are not hired, paid equally or promoted regardless of their skills and experience). Recognizing the growth of the racialized population of Canada, the report emphasizes the concern about hierarchical structures affecting the distribution of opportunity in the labour market and argues that this growth in the racialized population makes the issue of racial discrimination one of great importance. If the racialized and immigrant population of Canada do not have equal access to the labour market, Canada will not reap the benefits of the potential of this growing proportion of its population.*

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The intensified racial stratification of Canada's labour market under neo-liberal restructuring has led some to observe that what was once described as an ethnic Canadian vertical mosaic is now colour coded.

These developments call renewed attention to the need for equity in employment since they have an adverse impact on the lives of racialized group members, their communities and ultimately, given their population growth rates, the productivity of the Canadian economy.

We present some evidence to show that in the early twentieth century, racial discrimination continues to deny racialized group members the attainment of their full potential in the Canadian labour market. As the data show, it is manifested in the patterns of differential access to employment, differential labour market mobility, income inequality for racialized groups and other highly racialized groups such as recent immigrants.

*... what was once described as an ethnic Canadian vertical mosaic is now colour coded. – Authors*

## Methodology

Using quantitative data on income and unemployment, occupational and sectoral segregation, and qualitative data on the differential labour market experiences of internationally trained skilled labour, we discuss the extent of racial discrimination in employment and its implications for the life chances of racialized

Canadians and for public policy. Comparative data is drawn from the 1996 and 2001 Canadian Census as well as Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics (SLID) and Human Resources and Skills Development (formerly HRDC) sectoral employment data by race, gender, immigration status and educational attainment. In this report, we consider five key aspects of the experience of racialized group members and recent immigrants in the Canadian labour market to determine the prevalence of racial discrimination in employment as a feature of the Canadian labour market in the early twenty-first century. These include:

- The employment income of racialized and non-racialized groups.
- The labour market participation of the groups based on employment and unemployment rates.
- The sectoral distribution of the group to establish whether there are patterns of concentration in particular sectors.
- The ability of racialized and non-racialized groups to convert their human capital investment in the form of education into occupational status and income.
- The experience of recent immigrants, 75% of whom are racialized, with access to professions and trades.

We conclude that racial discrimination is evident in the experience of racialized group members in the Canadian labour

market. Secondly that its significance has grown with the increase in the numbers of racialized group members in the Canadian population, a trend that seems only likely to escalate.

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*Discrimination in employment has been defined as "practices or attitudes that have, whether by design or impact, the effect of limiting an individual or group's right to opportunities generally available because of attributed rather than actual characteristics." – Judge Rosalie Abella (1984)*

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## Background

Discrimination in employment has been documented for over a century, yet the study of racial discrimination in employment in Canada is a more recent enterprise. It was not until the 1984 Parliamentary Committee report *Equality Now* that racial discrimination in employment became a prominent part of contemporary scholarship.

In the Report of the Equality in Employment Commission (1984) which identified racial discrimination as part of the phenomenon of discrimination in employment in Canada, Judge Rosalie Abella defined discrimination in employment as "practices or attitudes that have, whether by design or impact, the effect of limiting an individual or group's right to opportunities generally available because of

attributed rather than actual characteristics.”

According to the Commission Report, discrimination represents an arbitrary barrier standing between a person’s ability and his or her opportunity to demonstrate it. While discrimination occurs in different ways at different times and in different places, the one constant is that the persistence of barriers that disproportionately affect certain groups is a signal that the practices that lead to this adverse impact are discriminatory.

All things being equal, in a market economy, the value of labour should derive from its marginal productivity and equally productive persons should both be compensated equally and have equal opportunities for mobility.

... in the Canadian labour market, there are widely documented differential outcomes that occur along racial and gender lines, suggesting a more complex, differentiated and even hierarchical labour market. – Authors

Yet the reality is that, in the Canadian labour market, there are widely documented differential outcomes that occur along racial and gender lines, suggesting a more complex, differentiated and even hierarchical labour market. Racial discrimination occurs in a variety of ways. To begin with, race acquires a social significance attached to certain biological features which become the basis for categorizing distinct groups of people. Then the social process of racialization imbues these

categories with value, leading to socio-economic practices that reflect and reinforce those values. It is these practices that are responsible for the differential treatment that privileges some and oppresses other members of society.

For the purposes of this report, racial discrimination in employment refers to two forms of practices that deny racialized group members equality of opportunity in the Canadian labour market and secure an advantage for non-racialized groups.

*Economic discrimination* is said to occur when employers, unable to assess the ability of members of a group make generalized assumptions about the worth of their human capital, as may be the case when the value of qualifications from a certain country or region is considered unclear.

*Exclusionary discrimination* occur when members of a group are not hired or paid commensurate wages, or once hired, not promoted regardless of their skills and experience. In both cases, it is the outcome, not the intent that is the standard as established by the Supreme Court of Canada. In *Andrews v. Law Society of British Columbia*, the Court clearly identified discrimination as the: "distinction which, whether intentional or not but based on grounds relating to personal characteristics of an individual or group, has an effect which imposes disadvantages not imposed upon others or which withholds or limits access to other members of society".

Evidence ... suggest strongly that the differential outcomes identified can be attributed to racially discriminatory systemic practices ... – Authors

In emphasizing the negative impact of discrimination, the Court seemed to depart from the then conventional approaches to labour market discrimination. In much of the human resource management discourse at the time, discrimination was considered a function of the free exchange of labour and wages, subject to competitive market forces, to the exclusion of influences from other institutions in society. This was especially true of what is known as the human capital approach, popular with neo-classical economists, who are more comfortable talking about statistical discrimination as opposed to systemic discrimination. Yet, these practices have never been innocuous or without consequence for individuals, communities and the Canadian nation.

For racialized groups, a survey of key indicators such as occupational status and sectoral participation, income levels, employment and unemployment rates and access to professions and trades, points to patterns of racially distinctive experiences.

Evidence contained in this paper suggest strongly that the differential outcomes identified can be attributed to racially discriminatory systemic practices such as:

- Differential treatment in recruitment, hiring and promotion;
- Extensive reliance on non-transparent forms of recruitment such as word of mouth which reproduce and reinforce existing networks;
- Differential valuation or effective devaluation of internationally obtained credentials; and
- Use of immigrant status as a proxy for lower quality of human capital.

*... racialized groups represent a key source of human resources for the Canadian labour market. – Authors*

As previously stated, we consider five key aspects of the experience of racialized group members and recent immigrants in the Canadian labour market to determine the prevalence of racial discrimination in employment.

1. The employment income of racialized and nonracialized groups.
2. The labour market participation of the groups based on employment and unemployment rates.
3. The sectoral distribution of the group to establish whether there are patterns of concentration in particular sectors.
4. The ability of racialized and non-racialized groups to convert their human capital investment in

the form of education into occupational status and income.

5. The experience of recent immigrants (75% of whom are racialized) with access to professions and trades.

We conclude that racial discrimination is evident in the experience of racialized group members in the Canadian labour market. Secondly that its significance has grown with the increase in the numbers of racialized group members in the Canadian population, a trend that seems only likely to escalate.

### *Changes in demographics*

In the early twenty-first century, racialized groups represent a key source of human resources for the Canadian labour market. Already, 70% of net new entrants into the labour force are immigrants, 75% of who are racialized. By 2011, 100% net new entrants will come from this group, making the issue of racial discrimination critical to their integration into the Canadian labour market and to the success of the Canadian economy (HRDC, 2002). The percentage of racialized groups in the Canadian population, which was under 4 % in 1971, grew to 9.4 % by 1991, and reached 13.4 % by 2001. In the last census period, 1996-2001, racialized group population growth outpaced Canadian population, 24.6% versus 3.9%.

Racialized group population is projected to rise to 20% by 2016 partly based on its current rate of growth. Between 1996 and 2001, the working age racialized population rose by 24.6% while

the racialized male proportion of the labour market grew by 28.7% and racialized female racialized proportion by 32.3%.

*Racialized group population is projected to rise to 20% by 2016 ... – Authors*

According to the 2001 Census, the racialized group working age population growth was highest in Ontario (28%) and significant in British Columbia (26.6%), Alberta (22.5%), New Brunswick (18.0%), Quebec (14.7%) and only declining in Prince Edward Island (-22.6%). This compares to the general percentage change of working age population of 3.9% for Canada, 6% for Ontario, 10.2% for British Columbia, -1.4% for Alberta, -1.4% for New Brunswick, and -1.1% for Quebec.

Much of that growth can be attributed to immigration, with significant increases from Asia and the Middle East. Given Canada's continued reliance on immigration for population growth and labour market needs, and the escalating process of globalization, these trends are likely to persist. Canada's racialized population is mainly concentrated in urban centres, with nearly three quarters (73%) living in Canada's three largest cities in 2001 and accounting for significant proportions of the populations of those municipalities - Toronto (43%), Vancouver (49%), and Montreal (23%).

In 2001, racialized group members made up 19% of the population of Ontario, Canada's largest province. That share is projected to

rise to 25% by 2015. In 2001, British Columbia had the highest proportion of racialized group members in its population at 22%. While 68% of Canada's racialized group members are immigrants, a significant proportion (32%) are Canadian-born. It is significant to note that the growth of the racialized population far outpaced that of the Canadian population in general over the last census period (1996-2001) and especially in the urban areas and the provinces of Alberta (23%), British Columbia (27%), Ontario (28%), and Quebec (15%). The size of the racialized population will continue to be an important consideration for the labour market and other public policy developments because it is concentrated in urban Canada, which is the engine of Canada's economy.

*In a liberal democratic society such as Canada, racial discrimination is an affront to the aspirations of equality. – Authors*

### ***Some Implications of Canada's Changing Racial Profile***

Canada's changing demographics have far reaching implications for how the Canadian economy is organized and whether it can maintain its position as one of the world's strongest economies. The growth of the racialized population puts the issue of racial discrimination in employment front and centre in the early twenty-first century labour market policy debates.

In a liberal democratic society such as Canada, racial

discrimination is an affront to the aspirations of equality. But it also represents an inefficient way to allocate scarce human resources and imposes an economic cost both the racialized groups and the Canadian economy as a whole. Not only does it rob the economy of a valuable resource in a global environment, it undermines the competitiveness of Canadian business at home and abroad, while the skills of those who are improperly deployed degrade along with their self-esteem.

Along with this scenario, it imposes lives of poverty on the victims of discrimination and increases the budgetary costs associated with dealing with poverty and its impacts on health and social well-being.

With the racialized proportion of the Canadian labour force continuing to grow as projected, concerns about the hierarchical structures that affect the distribution of opportunity in the labour market can only become more prominent.

As this report shows, by denying racialized men, women and immigrants full access to Canadian labour markets, racial discrimination in employment denies Canada the full benefit of the potential of a growing proportion of Canadians. Left to its devices, racial discrimination in employment will continue to impair the ability of Canada to make the best of its human resources.

Perhaps as disturbing is the impact, both on their lives and the Canadian economy, of the

*The growth of the racialized population puts the issue of racial discrimination in employment front and centre in the early twenty-first century labour market policy debates. – Authors*

devaluation of the human capital of thousands of highly qualified newcomers to Canada, many of them qualified professionals and trades people. These skilled immigrants are attracted from their home countries by an aggressive immigration policy which promises the potential to improve their lives and be successful contributors to a modern economy and multicultural society. Many then find themselves relegated to precarious employment in low wage sectors and low end occupations because barriers in the Canadian economy deny them the opportunity to attain employment and compensation commensurate with their training and experience (Brouwer, 1999; Reitz, 2001; Li, 2003; interviews, 2004).

### **Key Research Findings**

#### ***Employment Income Attainment of Racialized and Non-racialized Groups***

Income inequalities have historically been a reliable measure of racial discrimination in the labour market. The impact of racial discrimination on income distribution can be tracked using employment income data. Our analysis of that data for the period between the two census years 1996 and 2001 reveals a persistent double-digit income disparity

between racialized and non-racialized individual earners.

During this period, racialized group members and new immigrants experienced a median after tax income gap of 13.3% and an average after tax income gap of 12.2%. The gap is highest among male youth (average after tax income gap 42.3% and median after tax income gap 38.7%), as well as those with less than high school education (median after tax income gap 20.6%) and those over 65 years (average income gap 28% and median income gap 21%).

This gap is evident among the university educated (median gap 14.6%) as well as those without post-secondary education (20.6%) suggesting a cross social class factor. But the size of the gap varies among sub-groups and disappears within the family income category – likely because racialized groups have more income earners per average family.

This suggests that while the income gap between racialized and non-racialized individual earners over this period seems to be changing, it remains a significant indicator of racial inequality in the Canadian labour market.

*During this period [1996-2001], racialized group members and new immigrants experienced a median after tax income gap of 13.3% ...*  
– Authors

### ***Labour Market Participation of Racialized and Recent Immigrants***

*Metropolis*

Labour market participation rates and rates of unemployment show a continuing gap between the experience of racialized and non-racialized workers. In 2001, while the participation rates for the total population were 80.3%, those for racialized group members were as low as 66% and 75% for immigrants. Racialized groups and immigrants also experienced unequal unemployment rates with the total population rate being 6.7% while the racialized group rate was as high as 12.6%.

### ***Sectoral Distribution for Racialized and Non-racialized Groups***

The labour market is segmented along racial lines, with racialized group members over represented in many low paying occupations, with high levels of precariousness while they are under represented in the better paying, more secure jobs. Racialized groups were over-represented in the textile, light manufacturing and service sectors occupations such as sewing machine operators (46%), electronic assemblers (42%), plastics processing (36.8%), labourers in textile processing (40%), taxi and limo drivers (36.6%), weavers and knitters (37.5%), fabrics, fur and leather cutters (40.1%), iron and pressing (40.6%).

They were under-represented in senior management (8.2%), professionals (13.8%), supervisors (12%), fire-fighters (2.0%), legislators (2.2%), oil and gas drilling (1.5%), farmers and farm managers (1.2%). One area where they fared better is in the

information technology industry, with software engineers (36.3%), computer engineers (30.1%) and computer programmers (27.8%).

### ***Converting Human Capital Investment into Occupational Status and Compensation***

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Yet another key indicator of racial inequality is the ability of racialized group members to translate their investment in human capital in terms of educational attainment into comparable occupational status and compensation. The shift towards more immigrants from the South has led to a noticeable lag in economic attainment among members of the immigrant groups. This has occurred despite the 1990s emphasis on skilled immigrants in immigration policy. Ironically, as the selection process has become more stringent in response to charges that immigrant quality has declined, a majority of immigrants from the South now come through the independent (skilled) class – over 60% in recent years (Citizenship & Immigration Canada, 2002).

For many racialized group members, educational attainment has not translated into comparable labour market access, or workplace mobility. In 2001, racialized group

members were over represented among highly educated categories such as holders of bachelor's, masters and doctorate degrees. However, they were underrepresented under the trades and colleges graduates ranks, as well as among those with less than a grade 12-13 education.

*... in monetary terms, over the period 1992 to 2016, racialized groups will contribute 80.9 Billion in real GDP growth ... – Conference Board of Canada (2004)*

According to a Conference Board of Canada (2004) study, while racialized groups averaged less than 11 % of the labour force between 1992 and 2000, they accounted for 0.3% of real gross domestic product growth (GDP). That contrasts with the remaining 89% of the labour force that contributed 0.6%. This disproportionately larger contribution to GDP growth is likely to grow over the 2002-2016 period as the contribution of the rest of the population falls.

However, this productivity was not rewarded as the average wages for racialized groups over that period remained 14.5% lower than that of other Canadians. The Board report concludes that in monetary terms, over the period 1992 to 2016, racialized groups will contribute \$80.9 Billion in real GDP growth.

***Differential Access to Professions and Trades***

In the early twenty-first century, an important aspect of the experience of racialized groups in the Canadian labour market is the experience of those whose education is obtained abroad. This category, here referred to as Internationally Educated Professionals and Trades People (IEPs), has been growing as Canada's immigration system has moved towards more stringent selection criteria, with emphasis on higher education and market oriented skills. In the first 3 years of the new millennium, over 60% of the newcomers have university degrees.

Because of their increasingly significant numbers as a proportion of racialized cohort, their experience, while specific, in part explains the failure of racialized group members to translate the educational attainment and experience into higher occupational status, intra and inter-sectoral mobility and compensation.

It also speaks directly to the failure of the major players – governments, licensing bodies and other regulators, employers, educational institutions, trade unions (and perhaps the IEPs themselves), to devise appropriate policy and program responses to the problem of inequitable access to professions and trades and to ensure a smooth transition for internationally trained professionals and trades people into their fields of expertise.

A successful integration strategy would require a focus on evaluating the competencies of

trained immigrants rather than demands for undefined Canadian experience, approximating the value of their human capital based on what source country they are from and proposing to send them without supports to non-urban environments as a condition of their residence. It would mean state supported efforts to match immigrant skills with the labour market shortages that exist in Canada's regions, provinces and cities, towns and communities.

The Canadian government has a history of supporting past immigration with such resources such as land for settlement. In this case however, it has embarked on the selection of highly talented immigrants but assumed no accountability for their successful integration or even bothered to track their progress. Instead, even as it pursues a *laissez – faire* approach to their integration, it continues to compete for immigrants bearing similar skills, raising troubling questions about the logic of this aggressive immigration policy.

*Ironically, in terms of sheer numbers, Canada receives four skilled immigrants to every one that migrates to the USA. – Authors*

Surprisingly, in the case of the debate on the brain drain to the USA, the federal and provincial governments have responded by implementing taxation and other policy measures aimed at discouraging skilled immigration to the United States. However, despite demands for similar action

by IEPs, communities and increasingly employers, equitable access to professions and trades in Canada has remained on the policy backburner. Ironically, in terms of sheer numbers, Canada receives four skilled immigrants to every one that migrates to the USA. Moreover, they are as or even more highly skilled than the ones leaving (Canada attracts more Masters and Doctoral graduates than it loses), and have chosen to live and work in Canada. Yet, the issue of the *brain waste* has not prompted policy action adequate to the problem.

### *The nature of the problem*

Internationally educated immigrants are supposed to be the future of Canada's increasingly labour strapped economy. With massive baby boom retirements on the horizon, someone has to pay their pensions and keep the tax dollars flowing for the social programs they will need in their old age.

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Canada also promises the IEPs an opportunity to improve their lives and those of their families. It seems like a win-win proposition. This proposition however, depends on the relatively seamless integration of IEPs into their fields of expertise. Yet, unlike the preceding waves of immigrants, this group of largely racialized

immigrants confront a Canadian labour market with racial hierarchies, with structures of discrimination that defy the logic articulated above.

Governments in a neo-liberal era are committed to deregulating the labour market rather than intervening in failed labour markets to ensure the optimal allocation of human resources. The racial composition of the immigration group began to change in the 1960s and by 1980s that process was in full stride. It seemed to coincide with a period during which the state and self-regulating professional and occupational bodies imposed strict administration of rules and regulations in the name of ensuring the public interest, a process that has had the effect of erecting new barriers to entry for many recently immigrated IEPs. While the labour market conditions that precipitated the defensive actions have changed, the regulators have been slow to respond to the growing demands for licensing newcomers.

Not all occupations or trades are regulated, and some are more regulated than others, which leads to varied experiences and leaves decisions at the behest of the employers.

Employer's attitudes towards internationally obtained skills and their bearers have been identified as particularly problematic because of the subjective decision making power they possess.

There is some general agreement around some of the issues that need to be addressed:

- Lack of adequate information about licensing process, pre and post arrival;
- Paucity of reliable tools for assessing credentials and other prior learning;
- Lack of competency based licensing evaluation and sector specific language testing;
- Inadequate bridging and supplementary training and internship opportunities;
- Limited transparency in the licensing process and lack of feedback or appeal process; and
- Limited co-ordination between stakeholders

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While these issues are generally acknowledged, there has been no comprehensive, cross-jurisdictional policy response. Hence, the failure to translate internationally obtained human capital and higher immigrant educational attainment into better labour market performance is partly explained by the existence of systemic barriers to the recognition of international qualifications and prior learning assessment by regulators and employers. In fact, that is the conclusion of a number of important Canadian studies dealing with the situation of internationally trained professionals and trades people in the Canadian labour market.

While some argue that skilled immigrants require soft skills, employment related language

training, sector specific orientation and labour market information in order to be competitive in the labour market, others acknowledge that immigrants face barriers to access to relevant information about licensing procedures both before and after arrival, barriers to obtaining equivalence, recognition and certification of internationally acquired credentials and in obtaining employment in their fields of expertise because of employer attitudes. While there are some common features across the country, the experiences vary from profession and trade as well as province and community.

## Policy Responses

*There is a need to define the public interest as including a focus on equity and economic efficiency. – Authors*

Most of the issues identified herein are within the purview of public policy and can be addressed by governments, in partnership with regulators, educational institutions, assessment agencies, trade unions, employers, community and IEP advocacy groups, and service providers.

There is a need to define the public interest as including a focus on equity and economic efficiency. This need has never been greater than it is in this globalized labour market environment. The systemic failure to properly evaluate and accredit prior learning by employers and regulators casts them not as defenders of the public interest but gatekeepers in a system lacking transparency and

merit based principles that define Canadians' expectations of the labour market processes. Along with the existence of closed trade union shops, these factors make it difficult to review the exercise of discretion to eliminate the barriers. The effect is the devaluation and degrading of the skills of vulnerable IEPs, which contributes to documented occupational and wage inequality. Although IEPs, immigrants, and racialized communities are organizing to challenge this exercise of power, they are often powerless to stop their victimization and require governments to take the responsibility of enforcing a broader definition of the public interest.

## Conclusion

While far outpacing the general Canadian population growth, and contributing a majority of new entrants into the labour market, racialized groups and immigrants have not fared well in the labour market in the last census period (1996-2001).

A review of employment income data and labour market participation patterns of racialized groups and recent immigrants, during the last census periods (1996-2001) shows both a double digit income gap between racialized and non-racialized populations in the Canadian labour market, higher unemployment and lower participation rates, and occupational concentrations in the low income occupations.

These patterns are evident even when educational attainment is taken into account, suggesting that racialized group members and recent immigrants are not able to translate their educational attainment (indeed advantage) into comparable occupational status and compensation. This is partly explained by the experience of internationally educated professionals who face barriers to converting their skills into skilled occupations. There are variations in the size of the gap among sub-groups and it seems to disappear when you consider family income – with racialized groups having more income earners per family. There is a noticeable gap between racialized men and women, suggesting a gendered dimension to the inequality identified.

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This analysis is confirmed by the findings from interviews with key informants from among settlement sector officials in Vancouver, Calgary, Toronto, Montreal and Halifax, where over 80% of the racialized and recent immigrant population lives. Read together with the unequal unemployment rates; the inability of racialized group members to convert their educational attainment advantage into commensurate occupational status and income; the differential

experience of internationally trained racialized group members; and the sectoral concentrations, the findings confirm the racialized groups experience of racial inequality in the Canadian labour market and the persistence of racial discrimination in employment.

The impact of racial discrimination in employment in the early twentieth century is amplified because of the size of the racialized population but also because the population's contribution to the Canadian economy has grown exponentially over the last two decades. The stakes are high because race continues to be a major factor in the distribution of opportunities in the Canadian labour market and by extension in determining the life chances of racialized peoples and immigrants in Canada. The major difference is that this disadvantage will now translate into a drag on the Canadian economy and the Canadian population as a whole.

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**\* Note: This *Policy Matters* paper is a condensed version of the paper: Cheryle Teeluckingh and Grace-Edward Galabuzi, "Working Precariously: The impact of race and immigrant's status on employment opportunities and outcomes in Canada", *Directions*, Vol. 2, No. 1, 2005: 15-52.**

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