The Temporary Foreign Worker Program in Alberta: Exploring the Key Determinants of Public Opinion

by

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ABSTRACT

This research explores public opinion regarding the Temporary Foreign Worker (TFW) program in Canada. It is situated within an important moment in the program's history, in a province with particularly widespread reliance on it. Utilizing the 2013 Alberta Survey – a province-wide telephone survey – I explore Albertans' opinions regarding the TFW program. This analysis is framed with an overview of the expansion of the TFW program over the past several decades, a description of the extensive media coverage given to several prominent examples of misuse of the program in 2013, and the resulting changes to the program.

Compared to results from prior nation-wide surveys, the 2013 findings demonstrate that the majority of Albertans believe the TFW program is necessary. Furthermore, the vast majority of Albertans believe TFWs should have the same workplace rights as Canadians, and a majority believe that TFWs should be able to access permanent residency. These findings highlight points where TFW program policy was disconnected from public opinion, particularly with regard to allowing differential pay and permanent residency rights of TFWs. In addition, the 2013 survey findings illustrate some similarities with findings from the broader literature regarding the key determinants of attitudes towards immigration. In sum, this research makes a significant contribution to the limited literature exploring public opinion regarding the TFW program in Canada. It provides an in-depth analysis of Albertans' opinions regarding the TFW program

and the key factors that shape these opinions, and also insights into the connection between public opinion and public policy.

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For Emilie and Austin

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Chapter 1 – Introduction

For most of its history, the Temporary Foreign Worker (TFW) program in Canada was a relatively obscure migrant labour program available to employers in a select few occupational sectors. Following substantial policy changes in 2002, it quickly became a country-wide program available to any employer able to adequately demonstrate a problem in filling job openings with Canadians. As a result, the program experienced explosive growth, more than tripling in size from 2002 to 2012 (see CIC, 2012). Although the entire program ballooned over this time, much of the growth came from an expanded use of the program across 'lower-skilled' occupations that were increasingly reliant on migrants from the Global South.

Widespread adoption of the TFW program was particularly noticeable in the province of Alberta. Coinciding with a period of sustained economic growth throughout much of the 2000s, the conditions were perfect for widespread use of the TFW program. Growth of the program in Alberta was so rapid that it outpaced growth in every other province and territory in Canada. Alberta quickly became the third largest employer of TFWs in the country. Even more striking was how large the program became in proportion to the employed, unemployed, and total populations in the province – Alberta had the highest proportion of TFWs across all of these categories. Most notably, in 2012, for every 66 TFWs present in Alberta there were 100 unemployed Albertans (see Chapter 2).

In addition to the rapid and sustained growth the program experienced since 2002, there were a number of controversies involving use of the program that attracted criticism from migrant rights activists, labour groups, businesses, and individual citizens across the country. These stories were treated as scandals by the national media, and captured public attention for months on end. Ultimately these misuses of the program provided the catalyst for substantial changes to TFW policy in 2013 and 2014.

The impetus for this research grew out of one of these scandals. In April 2013, the Royal Bank of Canada (RBC) was caught replacing long-time Canadian IT staff with a firm employing TFWs. This story received more national media attention than any other issue or event in the history of the TFW program until that point – and not for any lack of prior program controversy. Unlike the numerous prior examples of how program policy failed to protect (and even facilitated the abuse of) the migrant workers employed within it, the RBC scandal highlighted an instance where Canadians were directly, and negatively, impacted by the program. Canadians had lost their jobs. This was an important distinction. Additionally, a few weeks later Human Resource and Skill Development Canada (HRSDC) (now Employment and Social Development Canada - ESDC) announced seven policy changes to the TFW program, six of which related directly to issues raised in the RBC incident. This was no longer just an example of TFW stories that resonated with Canadians. Instead, it was an example of program policy being particularly responsive to public opinion.

Public Opinion and Public Policy: Exploring the Link

In a representative democracy, those who create government policy and programs are ultimately accountable to citizens. Arguably, then, understanding the attitudes of the population towards a policy topic will provide important insight into the government's justification for the policies and structures that currently exist. This is not to say that public opinion alone shapes public policy, but rather that it is important to understand the extent to which policies and programs align with public opinion – or whether they are a result of other factors, and actually disconnected from public opinion.

While public opinion is recognized to be an "important driver of public policy," the existing literature fails to provide evidence for a definitive link between public opinion and public policy (Facchini and Mayda, 2008, p. 655). In fact, the extent to which public opinion should/does impact public policy is highly contested (see Petry, 1999; Burstein, 2003). It is generally accepted, however, that within a representative democracy, public policy should connect with (and be impacted by) public opinion on some level (Soroka and Wlezien, 2010). Furthermore, because representatives are motivated to be (re)elected, it would follow that public policy should reflect public opinion to a greater extent in periods leading up to an election – especially for policies that are perceived to be ballot-box issues for constituents (Burstein, 2003). With this in mind, the substantial policy reforms the TFW program underwent in 2013 and 2014 could easily be interpreted as a strategy by the federal Conservative government to quell

public outcry regarding abuse of the program leading up to the 2015 federal election. This is, however, a difficult argument to definitively substantiate – particularly when there is limited insight into Canadians' opinions beyond a demonstrable increase in interest in certain types of stories about the TFW program.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

Such TFW-related events sparked my interest in further examining what Canadians actually thought about the TFW program, and the degree to which their opinions were dis/connected with existing policy. The existing literature was extremely limited. In fact, prior to the 2013 RBC scandal, the only research that explored public opinion regarding the TFW program in Canada was a single question on a 2010 EKOS survey regarding immigration policy, a 2008-2009 research project that explored the opinions of construction workers in Vancouver (see Gross, 2011), and a 2012 online poll conducted by the CBC. Beyond offering a more detailed description of Canadians' opinions on the topic, I was keenly interested in exploring what factors – or key determinants – might shape public opinion regarding the TFW program.

Given its unique socio-economic characteristics and its particularly widespread use of the TFW program, Alberta provided an important context within which to explore public opinion regarding the program. I applied for and won the *Alberta Survey Graduate Student Award* in the spring of 2013. This

provided me the opportunity to design and include 10 closed-ended, multiple-choice questions in the 2013 Alberta Survey conducted by the Population Research Laboratory at the University of Alberta.

The 2013 Alberta Survey was conducted at a moment where a definite – albeit blurry – link between public opinion and public policy could be observed. As I explain in Chapter 2, the program controversies that arose in 2013 and 2014 effectively demonstrate the types of issues that resonate with Canadians (and in Alberta in particular), and to which program policy appears particularly responsive. Beyond focusing on the public opinion/public policy link, however, it is also important to explore the factors that shape public opinion regarding the TFW program. Therefore, within this study I asked the following questions:

1) What are Albertans' opinions about the Temporary Foreign Worker Program?
    a. Do they believe it is necessary?
    b. Are they concerned about the program's impact on the labour market and on Canadian workers?
    c. What workplace and permanent residency rights should TFWs have?
2) What are the key determinants of public opinion regarding the TFW program?

Recognizing that the existing literature on public opinion regarding the TFW program is limited, the analysis that follows utilizes a substantial and related body of literature to build the theoretical framework for interpreting the survey results. The attitudes towards immigration literature, outlined in depth in Chapter 3, provided the conceptual tools for thinking about Albertans' opinions regarding

the TFW program, particularly in determining an appropriate list of independent predictor variables to explore. The following primary hypotheses for this study grew out of this literature:

First, as was found in the attitudes towards immigration literature, it is expected that economic measures of *self-interest* will be:

a. Negatively correlated with opinions regarding the necessity of the TFW program, and
b. Negatively correlated with opinions regarding what rights should be afforded TFWs employed within the program.

In other words, increased economic competition (real or perceived) will be negatively correlated with opinions regarding the necessity of the TFW program and the rights that are afforded TFWs within it.

Second, it is anticipated that educational attainment will:

a. Not be a predictor (null hypothesis) for opinions regarding the necessity of the TFW program, and will
b. Be positively correlated with support for more rights for TFWs employed in the program.

Third, as found in the attitudes towards immigration literature, a conservative political orientation will be:

a. Negatively correlated with opinions regarding the *necessity,* and
b. Negatively correlated with opinions regarding more equitable access to *rights.*

In addition to these primary hypotheses, this study also explores the impact of age, gender, and immigrant status on Albertans' opinions regarding the TFW program.

Thesis Organization

This thesis is organized in a manner that provides the reader with the context and research rationale before discussing the research methods, presenting the findings, and exploring their implications. In Chapter 2, I outline the history of the TFW program and its use in Canada and Alberta. In addition, I utilize new web-based techniques to track public response to events within the TFW program, effectively demonstrating the instances which attracted increased attention from the public. Finally, I outline the political and economic context in which the 2013 Alberta Survey was conducted.

In Chapter 3, I review the existing literature on public opinion regarding the TFW program and, more broadly, immigration. The chapter begins with a review of the existing public opinion surveys on attitudes towards the TFW program. This provides a starting point for thinking about public opinion regarding the program, but also reveals that the majority of the existing research fails to offer more than a descriptive analysis. In an effort to develop a more comprehensive theoretical framework for analyzing the key determinants of Albertans' opinions regarding the TFW program, I turn to the related, and more extensive, body of literature exploring attitudes towards immigration. This

provides the basis for testing the primary and secondary hypotheses outlined at the end of the chapter.

In Chapter 4, I outline the method, design, and measurement used for data collection. In Chapters 5 and 6, I present the findings from the survey, offering a discussion of the opinions of Albertans regarding the TFW program/TFWs and an overview of the key determinants of these opinions. Chapter 5 outlines the descriptive survey findings to provide a preliminary schematic of the key determinants of attitudes towards the TFW program/TFWs. In Chapter 6, I explore these key determinants further by presenting two step-wise multiple regression analyses – one regarding the *necessity* of the TFW program, and the other regarding the *rights* that should be afforded TFWs employed within it. I conclude with Chapter 7, where I summarize the findings, outline the contributions and limitations of the research, and suggest areas of future research.

In short, this study provides a significant contribution to the dearth of existing literature exploring public opinion regarding the TFW program. It provides an in-depth analysis of Albertans opinions regarding the TFW program and the key determinants of opinion, and also insights into the degree to which public opinion connects with and impacts public policy.

Chapter 2 – Canada's Temporary Foreign Worker Program: History and Context

In this chapter, I begin by offering a brief history of Canada's Temporary Foreign Worker (TFW) program, discussing the political and economic context that facilitated use of the TFW program by Canadian employers, and ultimately, its rapid expansion. I present an overview of the program structure – nationally and provincially – leading up to the year I collected public opinion data regarding the program (June-July, 2013). I outline how the program has been presented to, and received by, the public through an examination of media coverage and online activity. Ultimately, this overview will demonstrate why public opinion matters for public policy, particularly in the case of the TFW program in Alberta.

The TFW program has grown out of a specific context with unique social, cultural, political and economic characteristics and a complex and contingent network of relationships that span the globe. In the Global South, growing numbers of unemployed and underemployed workers are looking outside of their national borders in search of employment. In the Global North the insatiable demand for an increasingly flexible, reliable, and 'affordable' labour force is paired with a growing aversion to the costs of 'integration' (both financial and cultural) of immigrants applying for permanent residency. It is within this context that programs like the TFW program provide both the source of, and destination for, international labour migration.

Over the past several decades there have been significant increases in international migration. Since 1970 alone, the number of international migrants

has increased from 82 million to well over 190 million (Lucas, 2008, p. 2). Many argue this is an inevitable result of economic globalization and "the mass accumulation of capital and concentration of productive resources in some countries and underdevelopment and dependence on those countries by others" (Calliste, 1991, p. 137). Others attribute mass migration and guest worker programs like the TFW program to decades of neoliberal restructuring which have developed the conditions for a relationship of increasing inter-dependence between countries in the Global South with "unambiguous labour surpluses", and countries in the Global North with "purported labour deficits" (Binford, 2013, p. 5). Regardless of the cause, it is clear that in a political climate in which immigration policy has become increasingly restrictive, there has been a resurgence of guest worker programs across the Global North.

Similar to many other guest-worker programs that exist across the Global North, the majority of workers currently employed in the Canadian TFW program are from the Global South. In countries like the Philippines – the source country of the single largest group of TFWs in Canada in 2012 (CIC, 2012) – whole economies are reliant on the emigration of a large proportion of the population (Rodrigeuz, 2010). In fact, in each of the last ten years personal remittances to the Philippines have equalled between 10-13% of the nation's GDP,[1] and are frequently comparable to the earnings from top export products in the country (Rodriguez, 2010). Dependence on remittances is so great in some regions that governments have created public policy that facilitates, and even encourages mass

[1] See http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/bx.trf.pwkr.dt.gd.zs

emigration. In her book *Migrants for Export* (2010), Rodriguez documents the history of exporting labour in the Philippines, essentially equating the state to an international labour brokerage. Calliste (1991) documents similar strategies used across the Caribbean in an effort to reduce "overpopulation and unemployment, [while] stimulating economic growth through remittances" (p. 138). With high rates of unemployment and underemployment across many of these countries, there is certainly no shortage of workers willing to answer the call.

In Canada, there is increasing employer demand for a highly flexible (contingent/temporary) workforce across the labour market. This is highlighted by the increasing prevalence of temporary, seasonal, and contract positions across industries and regions (see Vosko, 2010; Barnetson and Foster, 2014). In many ways, Canadian public policy has been complicit in these changes. This is illustrated well by the recent changes to Employment Insurance benefits and the Old Age supplement, which have acted to ensure the availability of more workers across the labour market (Barnetson and Foster, 2014). At the same time, the drastic increase in temporary migration, through programs like the TFW program, ensure that employees can be hired and fired with increased ease, more responsive to variable market conditions.

Immigration in Canada

Since confederation, Canada has relied on (im)migrants to provide a significant supply for its labour market needs. In recent years, demographic

changes – specifically, the aging population and decreasing fertility rates – have contributed to labour shortages in many occupational sectors. Although Canada remains dependent on immigration to maintain population goals, and has introduced more responsive 'needs-based' programs like the Provincial and Territorial Nominee Program (PTNP),[2] immigration has remained relatively consistent in relation to the total population over the past 25 years (ranging from .5% and .7% of the total population).[3]

At the same time, the categories that the majority of immigrants are accepted under have shifted. Overall, the number of economic class immigrants has risen, while both the family class and refugee class have decreased significantly (Figure 2.1).[4] This shift is representative of immigration policy changes introduced in the 1990s that changed the primary priority away from family reunification towards attracting more economic immigrants based on the

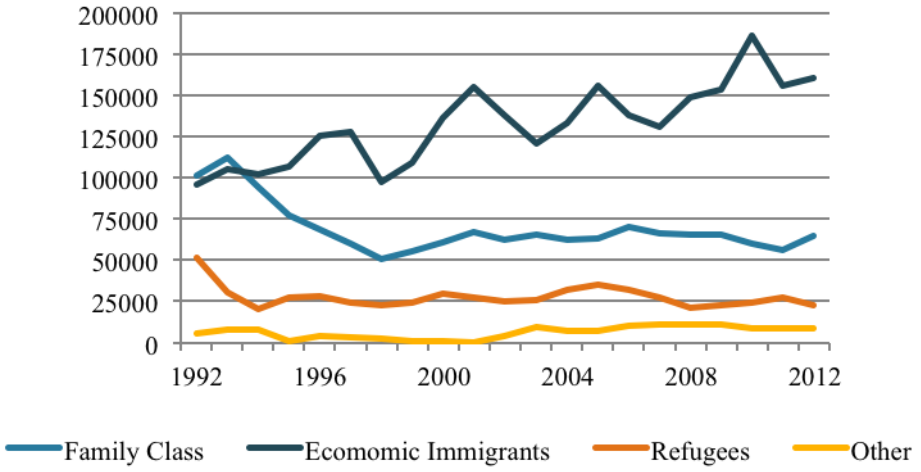
[2] Officially starting in 1998, the PTNPs represent a less centralized form of immigration policy, allowing for provinces and territories to make decisions on how to fill labour market shortages by recruiting immigrants with specific skills. Nominee programs are seen as an attempt to respond to the unique "demographic and economic challenges" provinces and territories face, which federal immigration policies seem inadequate to address (Nakache and D'Aoust, 2012, p. 160). Because federal immigration policy allows immigrants to self-select where they want to immigrate, it has become increasingly difficult for second- and third-tier cities, small towns, and rural communities to attract new immigrants. Indeed, the majority of new immigrants choose the three metropolises of Toronto, Montreal, and Vancouver - leaving smaller cities and towns with growing labour shortages. Since the introduction of the PTNPs, the popularity of the programs has grown both numerically, and geographically across Canada. More importantly, the programs seem to be working to better disperse new immigrants across the country. In 2002, the big three metropolises received 76% of new immigrants, while in 2011 this number was down to 60% (CIC, 2012).

[3] Calculated using CIC data on permanent resident entrants (CIC, 2012), and total population data from CANSIM Table 051-001(Statistics Canada, 2012).

[4] The economic class includes skilled workers, business owners, provincial and territorial nominees, and live-in caregivers. Individuals entering Canada under the family class must be sponsored by close relatives or family members already in Canada, and include: spouses and partners, dependent children, parents and grandparents (CIC, 2012). Refugees can be government-assisted, privately sponsored, or individuals landed in Canada and their dependents (CIC, 2012).

increasingly selective, credential-based points system (Beach, Green, and Worswick, 2006).

Figure 2.1 – Immigration to Canada by entrance category



Source: Citizenship and Immigration, Facts and Figures (CIC, 2012; 2003).

Within the same decade the expressed mandate of immigration policy in Canada began to change. Instead of continuing to use immigration policy to meet both short-term and long-term occupational needs, in the mid-1990s the federal government determined that using immigration to meet short-term goals was no longer an effective strategy in meeting the long-term needs of the nation (Lopez, 2007).[5] This expressed shift in purpose would be followed a few years later by an unprecedented expansion of the TFW program.

[5] While historically, the federal government has used immigration policy explicitly for the purpose of meeting both short-term and long-term population goals to support a process of nation-building, in 1995 the Liberal government document, "Into the 21st Century: A Strategy for Immigration and Citizenship", indicated that meeting short-term occupational gaps was no longer a worthwhile goal (Alboim & McIsaac, 2007 cited in Lopez, 2007, p. 19).

A Brief History of the TFW Program

Canada has made use of temporary migrant workers since the late 19th century in a variety of sectors including agriculture, construction (ie. major infrastructure projects like railroads), and caregiving (see Preibisch and Hennebry, 2012; Lanthier and Wong, 2002; Mann, 1982; Trumper and Wong, 2010). However, most would agree that the current Temporary Foreign Worker program has evolved from the "first formalized migrant worker program" in Canada, the 1973 Non-Immigrant Employment Authorization Program (NIEAP) (Foster, 2012, p. 24; Trumper and Wong, 2010; Sharma, 2007). Introduced in an attempt to create "stricter legal control and management" around the entry and movement of temporary workers in the wake of an economic crisis (Trumper and Wong, 2010, p. 84), the NIEAP effectively formalized a new class of resident within Canada: the Temporary Foreign Worker.

Introduced as a way for employers to fill shortages primarily in 'high-skilled' occupations (Carter, 2012, p. 182-3), the program operated alongside immigration policies for permanent residents - which increasingly sought 'high-skilled' workers as well. The Live-in Caregiver Program (LCP) and the Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program (SAWP) - both evolving from programs originating in the 50s and 60s respectively - came under the umbrella of the NIEAP, continuing to provide the caregiving and agricultural industries access to TFWs. The program would remain relatively small right through the 1990s, when it became known as the Temporary Foreign Worker program.

Historically, employers have successfully lobbied the federal government to establish these programs as a solution to acute labour shortages in select industries, regions, or specialized professions (Barnetson and Foster, 2014).[6] More recently, a significant backlog of permanent resident applications has been paired with pressure from employers for alternatives to meeting purported market-wide labour shortages to justify an unprecedented expansion of the TFW program, across industries and entire regions (Gross, 2011; Barnetson and Foster, 2014). Widely recognized as the policy response to these demands, the Stream for Lower-skilled Occupations (SLSO) highlights this expansion (Preibisch and Hennebry, 2012), experiencing unprecedented growth in its 12-year history (see Figure 2.3 below). While the TFW program started as a specialized program for select occupational sectors (Carter, 2012), it soon became an available option for employers in all types of businesses who were able to adequately demonstrate an inability to fill job vacancies with Canadian citizens and permanent residents.

Structure of the TFW Program

Although the TFW program changed substantially during the first half of 2014, the mandate of the program remains the same. Since the introduction of the program in 1973, the mandate of the TFW program has been to provide employers temporary access to foreign workers when suitable Canadian citizens and permanent residents are not readily available. While critics might question the

[6] For examples see, http://www.ctvnews.ca/politics/canada-s-meat-industry-says-it-needs-temporary-foreign-workers-to-fill-jobs-1.1862204; and http://www.ctvnews.ca/politics/ottawa-should-end-moratorium-on-temporary-foreign-workers-restaurateurs-say-1.1840700.

ability of the existing policy to regulate employers' use of the program to remain within the scope of this mandate, it is explicitly intended to meet temporary labour shortages only, and increasingly committed to giving Canadians the "first chance at available jobs".[7]

At the time the public opinion survey data analyzed in this thesis were collected, the TFW program included four streams that required a Labour Market Opinion (LMO),[8] and several occupations that qualified for LMO exemption under various trade agreements.[9] Three governmental offices jointly governed different aspects of each of these streams: Employment and Services Development Canada (ESDC); Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC); and Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA). The ESDC handled employer applications requesting temporary foreign workers, including the issuance of LMOs. Unless the occupation in question was exempt from this process,[10] employers were to apply for and obtain a positive LMO, by demonstrating that:

1. Efforts made to recruit and/or train willing and available Canadians/permanent residents;
2. Wages offered were consistent with the prevailing wage rate paid to Canadians in the same occupation in the region;

[7] http://www.actionplan.gc.ca/en/initiative/temporary-foreign-worker-program

[8] Including the Live-in Caregiver Program, the Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program, the Stream for Higher-skilled Occupations (including IT workers), and the Stream for Lower- skilled Occupations (also known as the Low-skilled Pilot Project). The LMO essentially designates that the ESDC has positively evaluated the labour marked impact of an employer's application for a TFW in one of these streams.

[9] A few examples include: visiting academic researchers or professors, religious workers, and spouses of students or skilled foreign workers. As of June 20, 2014, these exemptions would fall under the newly formed International Mobility Programs (IMPs) which include occupations which employ workers under the North American Free Trade Agreement, the General Agreement on Trade in Services, and other trade agreements.

[10] While these exemptions were often portrayed as exception to the rule the reality is, over half of TFWs in Canada in 2012 did not require a LMO (CIC, 2012).

3. Working conditions for the occupation met the current provincial labour market standards; and that
4. Any potential benefits that the hiring of the foreign worker would have for the Canadian labour market (e.g., creation of new jobs, transfer of skills and knowledge).[11]

Once the ESDC determined that hiring a foreign worker for the proposed job would not have a negative impact on the Canadian labour market, the employer would receive a positive LMO and could begin the process of recruiting an available foreign worker qualified for the work. Workers could apply for a work permit through Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC),[12] the length of which varied depending on the program stream. This work permit essentially tied the worker to one employer, occupation, and location for the duration specified therein. Successful applicants could then proceed to the appropriate port of entry and, barring a failure to meet the CBSA entry criteria, would be admitted to Canada for the duration of their work permit.

While the length of time specified in the work permit varied depending on the program stream and occupation in question (generally between 1-2 years), work permits could often be renewed. However, as of April 1, 2011, each worker is limited to a cumulative total of four years working in Canada with temporary status, upon which time those workers without permanent resident status would have to leave Canada for four years.[13] For many TFWs, the primary purpose of

[11] See http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/resources/publications/tfw-guide.asp
[12] There are a limited number of occupations exempt from the work permit application process, the vast majority of which represent short-term work visits (e.g., athletes and coaches competing in Canada).
[13] See http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/resources/manuals/bulletins/2011/ob275C.asp#duration.

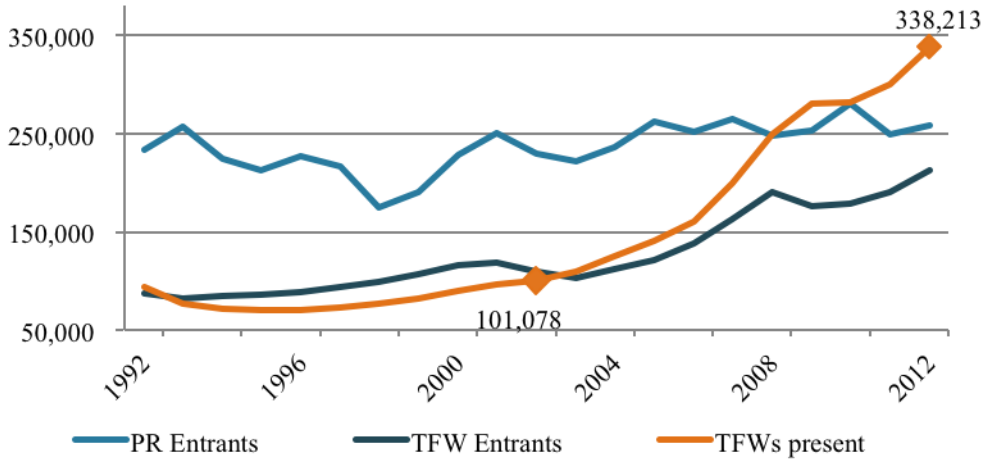
travelling to Canada to work is to obtain permanent residency here. However, for the vast majority this goal never becomes a reality, particularly under the post-2011 rules. Access to permanent residency is largely limited to individuals in 'higher-skilled' occupations, and a select number of provincial nominees and live-in caregivers (see Figures 2.4 and 2.5 below).

Growth of the TFW Program

A review of Citizenship and Immigration Canada's (CIC) annual *Facts and Figures* highlights just how significant an increase the program has seen in recent years. In fact, the TFW program had remained relatively small until about a decade ago when, in 2002, it was opened up to include access to 'low-skilled' occupations. The introduction of the SLSO (initially called the Low-skilled Pilot Project) brought with it a drastic increase in overall program size. Since 2002, the annual number of TFWs in Canada has more than tripled, from 101,078 to 338,213 in 2012 (CIC, 2012).[14] As Figure 2.2 outlines, this rapid growth is contrasted by the relative stability in the annual number of permanent resident arrivals over the same period – increasing only 13%, from 229,048 in 2002 to 257,887 in 2012. This illustrates a marked shift in immigration policy towards an increasing reliance on temporary forms of migration to supplement the supply of native-born Canadians in the labour force.

[14] In light of recent reforms to the TFW program, including the introduction of the International Mobility Program, these numbers will be calculated differently in the future.

Figure 2.2 – Permanent resident entrants compared with TFW entrants and TFWs present in Canada on December 1st of each year



Source: Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Facts and Figures (CIC 2012; 2003).

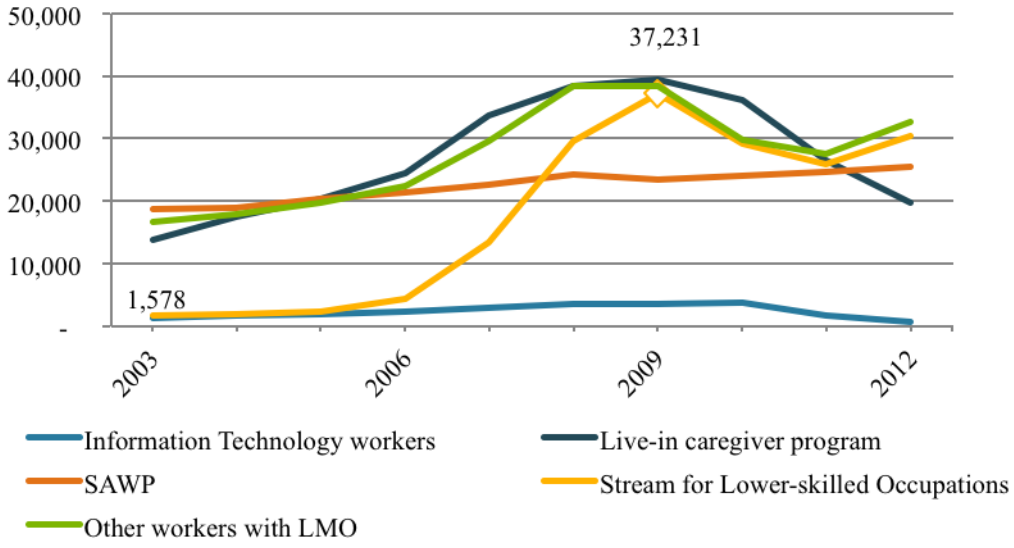
This increased reliance was made possible in part by policy changes in the mid 2000's. For example, in 2006 the HRSDC and CIC developed regional lists of occupations under pressure,[15] which greatly reduced the requirements for obtaining a Labour Market Opinion (LMO) (Barnetson and Foster, 2014).[16] This initiative had the expressed purpose of cutting "recruitment wait time for employers", allowing employers in regions that faced "critical labour shortages"

[15] See http://news.gc.ca/web/article-en.do?crtr.sj1D=&crtr.mnthndVl=5&mthd=advSrch&crtr.dpt1D=420&nid=261419&crtr.lc1D=&crtr.tp1D=&crtr.yrStrtVl=2002&crtr.kw=temporary+foreign+worker&crtr.dyStrtVl=1&crtr.aud1D=&crtr.mnthStrtVl=1&crtr.page=3&crtr.yrndVl=2014&crtr.dyndVl=8.

[16] Although exemptions exist, the LMO is necessary to confirm the need for hiring a TFW to fill a job and "that there is no Canadian worker available to do the job" (Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC). 2013b. "Labour Market Opinion Basics." Retrieved December 9, 2013 (http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/work/employers/lmo-basics.asp).

the ability to meet "shorter, simpler and less costly" requirements to attract the workers they needed.[17]

Figure 2.3 - TFWs present in Canada by type of LMO issued



Source: Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Facts and Figures (CIC, 2012).

The practical implications of this policy are demonstrated well by Figure 2.3. It illustrates the astronomical increase in number of TFWs present under the Stream for Lower-skilled Occupations (SLSO) – which spiked 2200% from 1,578 in 2003 to 37,231 in 2009. The growth of the SLSO was so great that, by 2008,

[17] See http://news.gc.ca/web/article-en.do?crtr.sj1D=&crtr.mnthndVl=5&mthd=advSrch&crtr.dpt1D=6664&nid=256049&crtr.lc1D=&crtr.tp1D=&crtr.yrStrtVl=2002&crtr.kw=temporary+foreign+worker&crtr.dyStrtVl=1&crtr.aud1D=&crtr.mnthStrtVl=1&crtr.page=2&crtr.yrndVl=2014&crtr.dyndVl=8.

'lower-skilled' occupations had become the largest recipient of LMO's issued (Foster, 2012).[18]

The change in proportions of TFWs skill level was accompanied by a shift in migrant source countries. In the early 2000s, the U.S., Australia, U.K., and Japan made up 43.5% of TFWs in Canada (Foster, 2012). By 2009 however, this number would drop to 26.2%, while Global South countries would make up 53.7% of TFWs in Canada - with the Philippines, Mexico, China, and India making up 34.3% of this number (Foster, 2012). Shifting from a program that primarily provided access to migrant workers for the agriculture, caregiving, and select 'high-skilled' occupations, the program was opened up to a plethora of entry-level positions requiring little or no prior training. By the late 2000s the largest category of TFWs in Canada were from countries in the Global South, and were classified as 'lower-skilled'.

Restricted Access to Permanent Residency

Despite being criticized for providing a 'back-door' to permanent residency or an opportunity for 'queue-jumping', a very small proportion of TFWs are actually able to make the transition to permanent resident status. In fact, access to permanent residency has largely been limited to individuals within

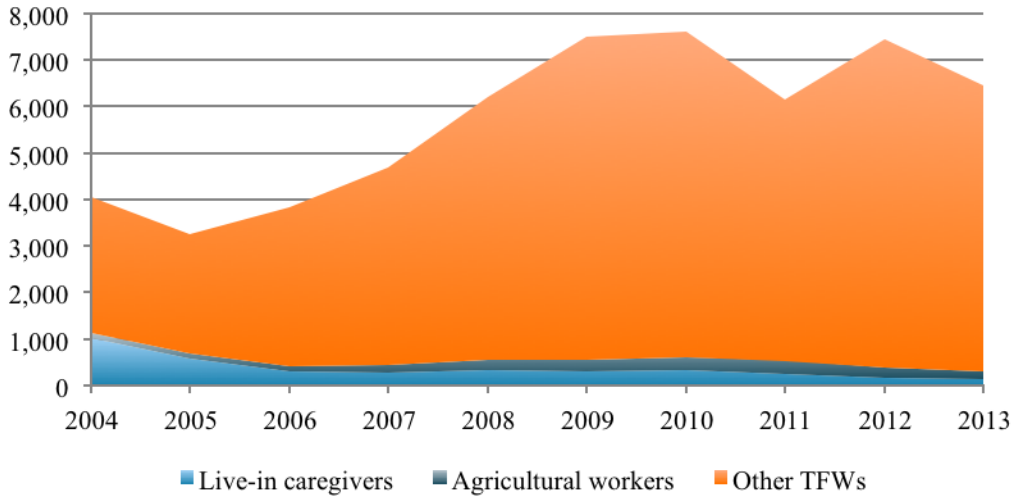
[18] It is also important to recognize that the number of "occupation not-stated" entrants grew from 17.6% in 200 to 36% in 2010 (Foster, 2012, p. 28). Although this ambiguity complicates our ability to recognize the extent to which the TFW program has shifted towards filling 'lower-skilled' occupational categories, as Foster points out, "the rise in not-stated parallels the growth in the lower-skilled occupations […], suggesting a greater portion of the unstated category would also be working in lower-skill occupations" (2012, p. 28).

the Live-in Caregiver program, and those in occupations deemed ‘high-skilled’. There have also been some examples of wider access under various Provincial and Territorial Nominee Programs - particularly in Manitoba (see Nakache and D’Aoust, 2012; Carter, 2012) - but for the vast majority of TFWs their stay in Canada truly is temporary.

In fact, of the 338, 213 TFWs present in 2012 (Figure 2.2), fewer than two percent (6,457) transitioned to permanent residency in 2013 (Figure 2.4) Of those that did, 132 (2%) were Live-in caregivers, 173 (3%) were Agricultural workers, and the remaining 6,152 (95%) were classified as ‘other TFWs’ (Figure 2.4). As Figure 2.5 illustrates 68% of these ‘other TFWs’ were in ‘higher-skilled’ occupations, 10% were in ‘lower-skilled’ occupations, and the remaining 17% held a permit without a stated occupation (Figure 2.4).

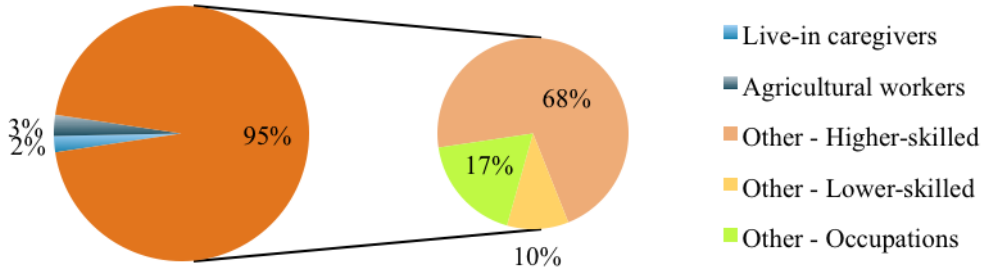
These statistics, which were unavailable until recently, substantiate what the scholarship has claimed for years. Access to permanent residency is available to a small minority of TFWs, the majority of whom are in ‘higher-skilled’ occupations.

Figure 2.4 – Total number of TFWs transitioning to permanent residency



Source: Citizenship and Immigration, Facts and Figures (CIC, 2013).[19]

Figure 2.5 - Proportion of TFWs transitioning to permanent residency in 2013 by occupational category.



Source: Citizenship and Immigration, Facts and Figures (CIC, 2013).

Temporary Foreign Workers in Alberta

Amidst changes to the TFW program, Alberta has quickly become one of the highest recipients of temporary foreign workers. With its national share of

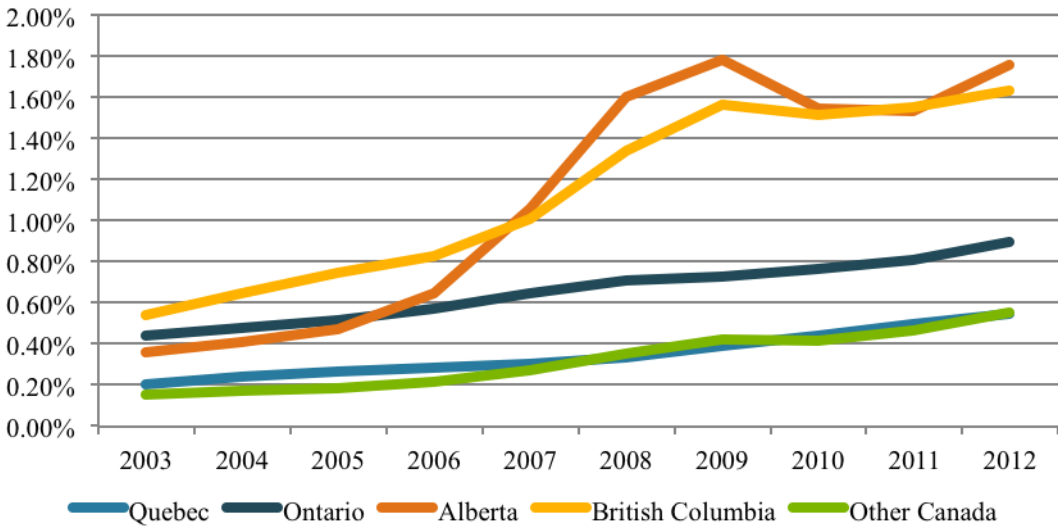
[19] See http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/resources/statistics/facts2013/temporary/9-1.asp#fn29.

TFWs jumping from 11% to 21% in 10 years (Figure 2.6), it is clear that Alberta has played a significant role in the program's unprecedented expansion.

Figure 2.6 – Proportion of TFWs present by province

Source: Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Facts and Figures (CIC, 2012).

Figure 2.7 – TFWs present as percentage of provincial population



Source: Data adapted from Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Facts and Figures (CIC, 2012).

And while Alberta was only the 3rd highest recipient of TFWs in Canada in 2012, its use of the program grew upwards of 500% in ten years, far surpassing

the growth experienced in the two provinces (Ontario and British Columbia) with higher total numbers of TFWs (Table 2.1).

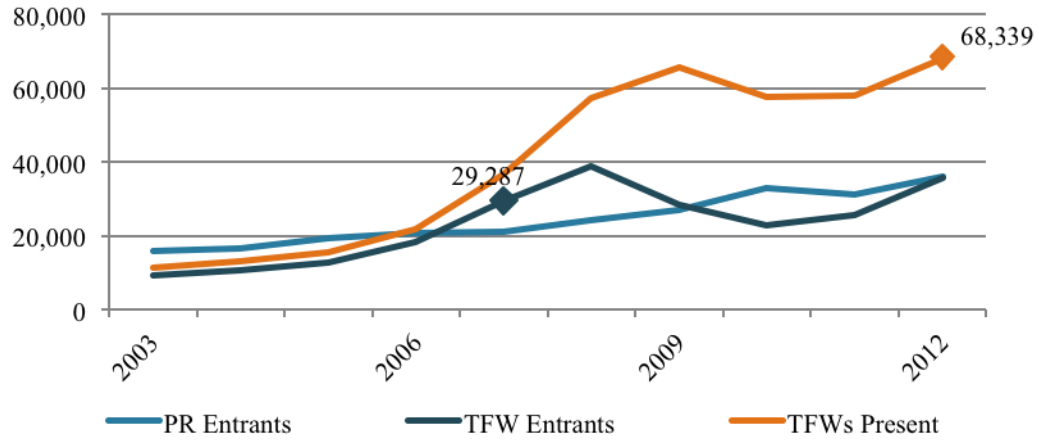
Table 2.1 – Temporary foreign workers present in 2003 and 2012, and overall program growth by top four receiving provinces

	TFWs Present 2003	*TFWs Present 2012*	*Growth over 10 years*
Quebec	15,333	44,125	188%
Ontario	**53,369**	**119,903**	125%
Alberta	11,376	68,339	**501%**
British Columbia	22,204	74,219	234%
Canada	109,667	338,221	208%

Source: Data adapted from Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Facts and Figures (CIC, 2012).

Several other indicators provide further insight into the degree to which Alberta has utilized the TFW program. First, Alberta is one of few provinces where TFW entrants have outpaced permanent resident arrivals – and has done so several times (first in 2007, see Figure 2.8). Second, Alberta has the highest number of TFWs per capita in the country, with levels reaching nearly 2% of the total provincial population in 2012 (Figure 2.7 and Table 2.2). Even more striking is a comparison of TFW populations with the total employed and unemployed populations. Alberta tops both categories with 3% and 66% respectively (Table 2.2). That means that for every 100 employed Albertans, there are 3 temporary foreign workers, and for every 100 unemployed Albertans, there are 66 temporary foreign workers.

Figure 2.8 - Permanent resident entrants compared with temporary foreign worker entrants and TFWs present in Alberta



Source: Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Facts and Figures (CIC, 2012).

Following the national trends, Alberta has also received a higher number (and proportion) of 'lower-skilled' TFWs over recent years. The only real measure of this trend on the provincial level is to examine the number of LMOs approved, though it is by no means a precise measure.[20] LMOs issued for 'lower-skilled' occupations (i.e., National occupational classification C & D) have increased in number and share in recent years. In fact, the number of LMOs issued for occupations categorized with a national occupational classification (NOC) of C or D, grew nearly 1000% over three years from 4,570 in 2005 to 50,005 in 2008 (Figure 2.9). And while the number of LMOs issued across all

[20] The CIC reports annually on the number of LMO applications it approves, and breaks these numbers down by province and occupational category (using the National Occupational Classification system). However, the receipt of an LMO does not ensure that an employer will hire a TFW. It simply gives them the authority to do so. It is also important to note that there are a significant number of TFWs admitted to Canada without an LMO. LMO exemptions are often granted under several international free-trade agreements and represent approximately half of all TFWs currently in Canada (CIC, 2012).

categories dropped significantly in response to the 2008-2009 financial crisis, by 2012 LMOs issued for NOC C & D occupations had rebounded to 42,815. In contrast to the growth of LMOs issued for 'lower-skilled' (NOC C & D) and professional occupations (NOC B), LMOs for 'high-skilled' occupations (NOC 0 & A) stagnated. As a result, the proportion of LMO applications for 'high-skilled' occupations in Alberta dropped from 21% in 2005 to just 6% in 2012 (Figure 2.9).

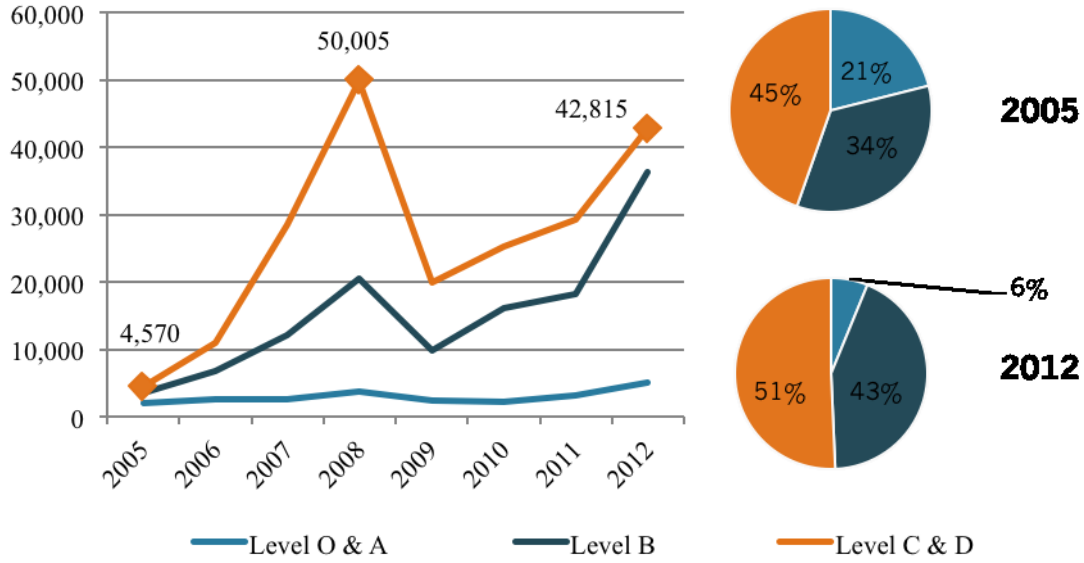
Examining the number of LMOs issued in each industry reveals further insight into the programs use in Alberta. Between 2005 and 2012, the number of LMOs issued for occupations in the Accommodation and Food Services industry grew by nearly 3000%, from 1,060 to 31,775 (Figure 2.10). During this time the proportion of LMOs issued for this industry grew from 10% in 2005 to 38% in 2012.

Table 2.2 – Temporary foreign workers present as percentage of provincial and national employed, unemployed, and total populations

	TFWs Present 2012	*As % of Population 2012*	*As % of Employed Population 2012*	*As % of Unemployed Population 2012*
Quebec	44,125	0.6%	1.1%	13.2%
Ontario	**119,903**	0.9%	1.8%	20.8%
Alberta	68,339	**1.8%**	**3.2%**	**65.6%**
British Columbia	74,219	1.6%	**3.2%**	44.2%
Canada	338,221	1.0%	1.9%	24.6%

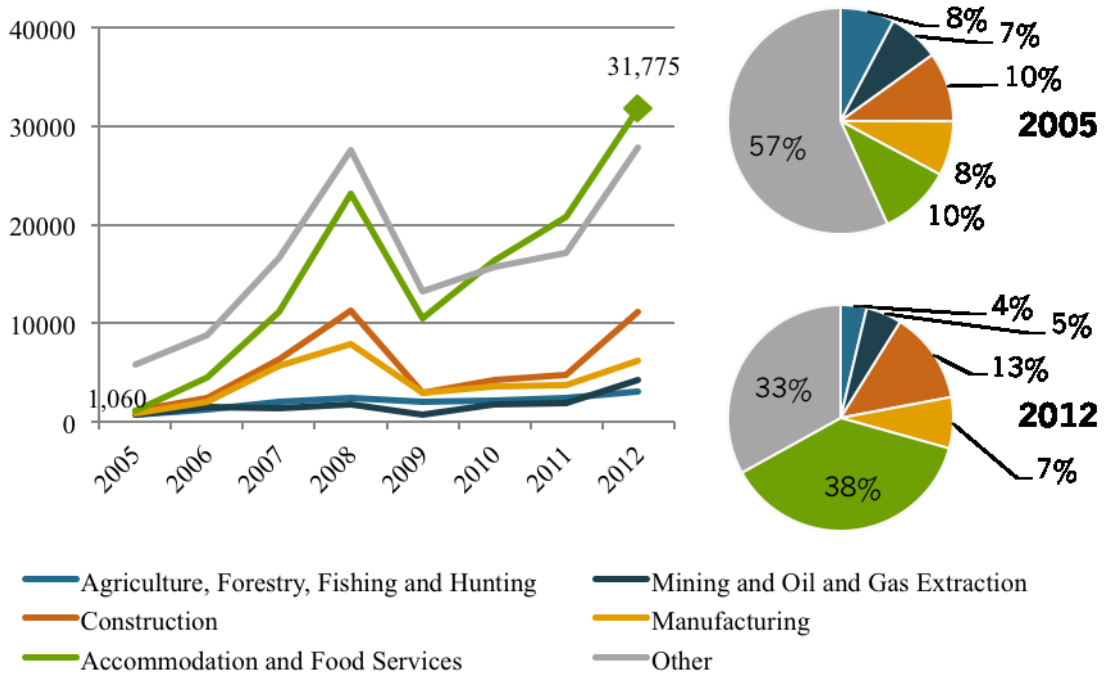
Source: TFW statistics from Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Facts and Figures (CIC, 2012); Population stats from Statistics Canada Annual Population Estimates (Statistics Canada, 2012); Labour force statistics from CANSIM Table: 282-0087 (Statistics Canada, 2015).

Figure 2.9 – LMOs issued in Alberta, categorized by the national occupational codes for skill level.



Source: Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Facts and Figures (CIC, 2012).

Figure 2.10 – LMOs in Alberta by selected industry sector



Source: Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Facts and Figures (CIC, 2012).

It is important to recognize that the impact of this change is not limited to employers and workers within the Accommodation and Food Services sector. Due to the nature of the work within this sector, TFWs come in contact with a larger number of customers and clients than ever before. Before 2002, the majority of TFWs were employed in occupations with limited public visibility. For example, seasonal agricultural workers typically worked and lived on their employer's farm. Live-in caregivers worked and lived within their employer's home. TFWs working in construction, manufacturing, or mining were largely isolated to their specific workplace, their interactions generally limited to the people working within it. This is not to say that these workers could/did not participate in the wider community. But the bulk of their time was spent with individuals directly associated with the operation of the business they worked for. In contrast, many of the workers in the Accommodation and Food Services sector in Alberta come in contact with hundreds of customers/clients in a given day. Whether working at a fast food restaurant in Edmonton or a hotel in Banff, TFWs in this sector are highly visible to the wider public. This is important when considering how individuals develop opinions about the program. It is far easier to develop an opinion about something that you have experienced than something you have to think about abstractly.

Summarizing recent changes to the program in Alberta, there are several important points to highlight. First, like the rest of Canada, over the last decade or so use of the TFW program has grown substantially in Alberta (500% between 2003 and 2012). In fact, Alberta has outpaced the growth experienced in every

other province and is now host to the third most TFWs in the country (68,339 in 2012). Second, when compared with the size of the employed, unemployed, and total population, Alberta has the highest proportion of TFWs in Canada (3%, 66%, and 2% respectively). It is particularly notable that for every 100 Albertans unemployed in 2012, there were 66 TFWs employed in Alberta. Third, while in 2005 the distribution of LMOs across NOC categories was relatively even, by 2012 over half of the LMOs issued in Alberta were for 'lower-skilled' occupations. And, finally, the significant increase in LMOs issued for the Accommodation and Food Services sector in Alberta has inevitably led to an increase in the visibility of TFWs. With coinciding increased attention from the media, labour groups, academics, and advocates, it is likely that conversations around the impact of the TFW program are increasingly taking place in the homes of everyday Albertans.

TFW Program: In the Public Eye

Over the last several years, the TFW program has received increased attention from the media, labour groups, academics, and advocates, largely born out of a series of scandal-worthy stories highlighting a wide range of employer abuses. There has been no shortage of ammunition for those opposed to the program. And in the wake of these stories the program has undergone significant changes on multiple occasions.

My interest in surveying public opinion regarding the TFW program grew out of one of these stories. In April of 2013, the RBC received a lot of negative attention in the news for what appeared to be the bank's flagrant disregard for TFW program policy and disloyalty to its Canadian staff. It was reported that the bank had replaced Canadian IT staff with TFWs from an offshore employment agency called iGate.[21] One of the laid off IT workers blew the whistle on his employer, and broke the story to the CBC. In his interview, Dave Moreau reported that in spite of decades of service and being close to retirement, he was let go, and was even asked to train his replacement. This story interested me not just because it highlighted abuse of the TFW program (that was nothing new), but because of the amount of traction the story gained with the Canadian public.[22]

Never before had a story about the TFW program gained so much national attention from the media,[23] and it wasn't immediately apparent why. There certainly had been stories that highlighted employer abuse in the past. There have been multiple workplace incidents that highlighted dangerous workplace

[21] See http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/rbc-replaces-canadian-staff-with-foreign-workers-1.1315008.

[22] I make this assertion for two reasons. First, I am operating on the assumption that media content is largely consumer driven, and therefore, the fact that the RBC story gained so much coverage demonstrated the level of interest Canadians had in the story. Second, as I will demonstrate in the section on *Tracking Public Response* below, the stories I use as examples correspond with significant increases in web activity related to the TFW program.

[23] The largest story prior to this was arguably the one surrounding HD Mining's approved application for 200 TFWs, which surfaced in November 2012. The decision was ultimately overturned due to public opposition, which successfully exposed bogus job requirements (e.g., Mandarin language proficiency), and highlighted the negative impact it would have on the Canadian labour market (see http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/mandarin-required-in-worker-permits-for-b-c-mine-project-1.1152527).

conditions across the Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program,[24] the frequency and severity of abuses in the Live-in Caregiver program,[25] and the commonplace practice of wage-theft and illegal recruitment fees amongst employers within the Stream for Lower-skilled Occupations[26] – to just name a few.[27] But there was something different about the RBC story.

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[24] In 2002, a migrant worker was crushed to death on an Ontario tobacco farm – after over a decade of questions, the incident was taken to the Ontario human rights tribunal in 2013 (see http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/jamaican-farm-worker-s-death-gets-human-rights-hearing-1.1302232). In 2007, an over-capacity van, carrying migrant agricultural workers, was involved in a Car accident in BC, killing 3 (see http://www2.worksafebc.com/Topics/AccidentInvestigations/IR-Transportation.asp?ReportID=34877). In 2008, Fairey et al. released an in-depth report exposing several farms of serious abuses, including, overcrowded and dangerous living conditions, the use of threats of deportation to ensure workplace compliance (Fairey et al., 2008). In 2010, two Jamaican migrant workers were killed on a rural Ontario farm. Four individuals associated with the farm were charged under the occupational health and safety act (see http://www.justicia4migrantworkers.org/campaigns.htm).

[25] Comparisons to human trafficking, and unfree labour (Bakan and Stasiulis, 2012).

[26] Fernie Tim Horton's wage theft allegations (see http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/tim-hortons-breaks-with-franchisee-expands-foreign-worker-oversight-after-wage-theft-claims-1.2620672). Alberta Federation of Labour reports (Byl and Foster, 2007; 2009); BC film company (see http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/film-company-accused-of-foreign-worker-fraud-extortion-1.2645557); BC construction firms paying latin-american migrant workers less than European migrant workers (see http://www.cope378.ca/sites/all/files/436_CSWU_Local_1611_v_SELI_Canada_and_others_(No_8)_2008_BCHRT_436.pdf).

[27] There is also a significant amount of academic research that highlights even more issues across the TFW program. *Regarding the Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program*: Workers afraid to speak out re: substandard working conditions for fear of not being hired back the following year (Mueller, 2005), employers using threat of deportation as tool for compliance, and consequence of dismissal (Preibisch and Hennebry, 2012), accounts of unsafe and unprotected work, social exclusion, racism, unsafe transportation, and inadequate housing (Hennebry and McLaughlin, 2012), and debt incurred in the process to get to Canada, leads to increased precarity and vulnerability of the worker (Martin, Abella, and Kuptsch, 2006). *Regarding the Live-in Caregiver Program*: Live-in requirement of the program creates a population of unfree workers, confined to the home of their employer (Bakan and Stasiulis, 2012). Within this space there have been many documented cases of abuse, and countless others left undocumented (CCR, 2010). Expectation of 24-hour availability, unpaid overtime, not being allowed to leave employers home (Torres et al., 2012; Dorow, Cassiano and Doerksen, 2015). *Regarding the Stream for Lower-skilled Occupations*: unscrupulous recruitment agencies charging high fees and making false promises of access to permanent residency (Preibisch and Hennebry, 2012). Employers breaching the conditions of their employment contract (House of Commons, 2009), paying wages lower than promised, not paying overtime, and charging illegal deducations (Preibisch and Hennebry, 2012).

From the day the story broke on April 6, it was clear that RBC had explicitly broken program regulations. This was quickly confirmed by RBC's public apology and a commitment to rehire each of the 45 employees laid off.[28] In addition to RBC breaking program regulations, it appeared as though they weren't the only guilty party in the industry, with stories of CIBC and BMO engaging in similar strategies surfacing shortly after. Recognizing the scope of the problem, as well as the increasing public uproar, the federal government responded by implementing widespread policy reform to the TFW program within weeks,[29] in an effort to clarify regulations and decrease misuse of the program.

This story wasn't different because it highlighted an employer abusing the TFW program. It was different because it unequivocally highlighted a case where 45 Canadians lost their jobs to TFWs. Before this point, evidence regarding the negative impact of the TFW program on the Canadian labour market had been largely based on anecdotal and inconclusive evidence. But this story caught an employer red-handed, explicitly hiring TFWs to replace Canadian workers.

Exactly one year later, on April 6, 2014, another story surfaced which further illustrated the types of stories that spur widespread public reaction, quickly surpassing the RBC story and garnering the most media coverage of the TFW program to date. The story started with one McDonald's franchise owner misusing the program at three restaurants in Victoria, but quickly spiralled into a

[28] See http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/rbc-chief-listening-after-foreign-worker-controversy-1.1333415.
[29] See http://news.gc.ca/web/article-en.do?crtr.sj1D=&crtr.mnthndVl=5&mthd=advSrch&crtr.dpt1D=420&nid=736729&crtr.lc1D=&crtr.tp1D=&crtr.yrStrtVl=2002&crtr.kw=temporary+foreign+worker&crtr.dyStrtVl=1&crtr.aud1D=&crtr.mnthStrtVl=1&crtr.page=1&crtr.yrndVl=2014&crtr.dyndVl=8.

multi-story exposé of industry-wide abuse across multiple locations in Canada. Similar to the RBC scandal, the focus of the majority media attention was on the negative impact of the program on Canadians – relegating the mistreatment of TFWs to the subheading yet again. Despite allegations of TFWs getting paid less, or working in "slave-like" conditions,[30] the focus of the media, and much of the public scrutiny elsewhere (e.g., in social media), was on the fact that employers within the food services industry were showing preferential treatment to TFWs. The focus was on several examples which highlighted instances where Canadians were allegedly let go,[31] or had their hours cut back,[32] in order to make room for TFWs. In the face of heightened public scrutiny, ESDC took unprecedented action, announcing a temporary moratorium on the use of the TFW program in the Food Services Sector, and ultimately, sweeping reforms to the entire program.

Tracking Public Response

Definitively demonstrating increased public response to media coverage is difficult. One can assume that media content is largely consumer driven, and therefore conclude that stories that get more time in the media are also stories that resonate with the public. But this assumption is anecdotal at best, and naïve at worst. To add some weight to my claims that the public responded more to these

[30] See http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/edmonton/mcdonald-s-foreign-workers-call-it-slavery-1.2612659?cmp=fbtl.
[31] See http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/mcdonald-s-foreign-worker-practices-face-growing-investigation-1.2607365), and http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/saskatchewan/waitresses-in-saskatchewan-lose-jobs-to-foreign-workers-1.2615157.
[32] See http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/mcdonald-s-accused-of-favouring-foreign-workers-1.2598684.

stories than others, I will demonstrate changes in Canadians' online behaviour that illustrates increased interest in the TFW program at each of the significant moments in the stories discussed (Figure 2.13 in particular). Recognizing that this could be a research project in its own right – which would require significantly more attention – I limit my analysis to demonstrating that during each of the stories discussed, there was an increase in attention from Canadians. Evidence of the degree, nature and tone of this attention remains much more anecdotal.

The first method I use to corroborate claims of increased public attention is fairly simple. I used the Google 'trends' tool to track Canadians' use of specific search terms over a period of five years (January 2010 – December 2014).[33] Recognizing that Google is arguably the primary way people search for information in the 21st century, tracking the frequency of a search term offers a rudimentary measure of public interest in topics over time. In this case, I used the term "temporary foreign worker program."[34] Figure 2.11 highlights two spikes across an otherwise (relatively) flat line, but before I interpret the results, allow me to first explain how Google tracks trends.

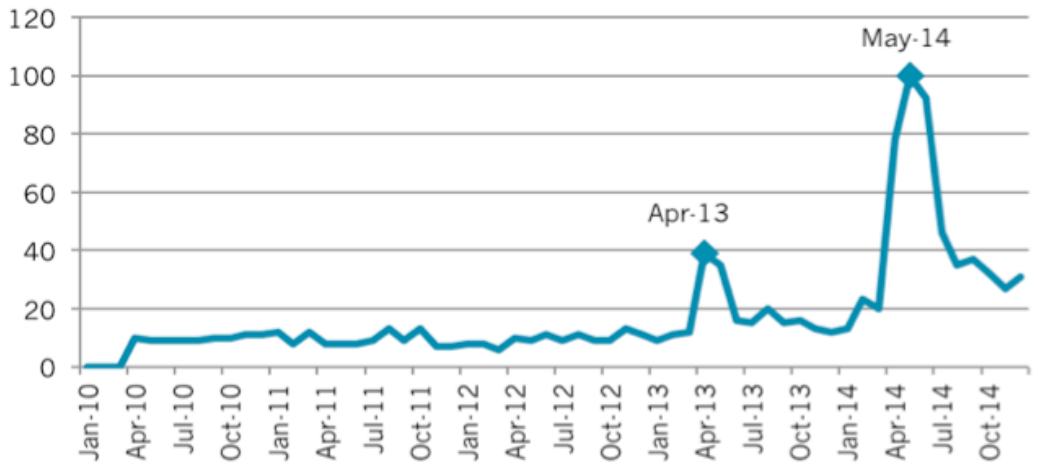
Unfortunately, Google does not provide the aggregate number of searches for queried terms (at least not for free). Rather, the numbers on the graph reflect how many times a particular term has been searched, relative to the total number of searches for that term in a specific time period. The data is "normalized and

[33] See http://www.google.ca/trends.
[34] Similar trends can be found using terms, 'TFW' and 'foreign worker program.'

presented on a scale from 0-100".[35] Therefore, the unit of measure (in this case a month) with the most searches of the term in question will display a value of 100. Every other point on the graph will be in ranked order compared to that high point.

Returning to Figure 2.11, we see that the highest value, representing the month with the most searches of the term 'temporary foreign worker program' occurs in May 2014. The second highest peak occurs in April 2013, with a relative score of 39. There are also relatively high numbers surrounding each of these spikes; 35 in May 2013, 78 in April 2014, 92 in June 2014, and 46 and 35 in July and August 2014, respectively.

Figure 2.11 – Google search trends in Canada



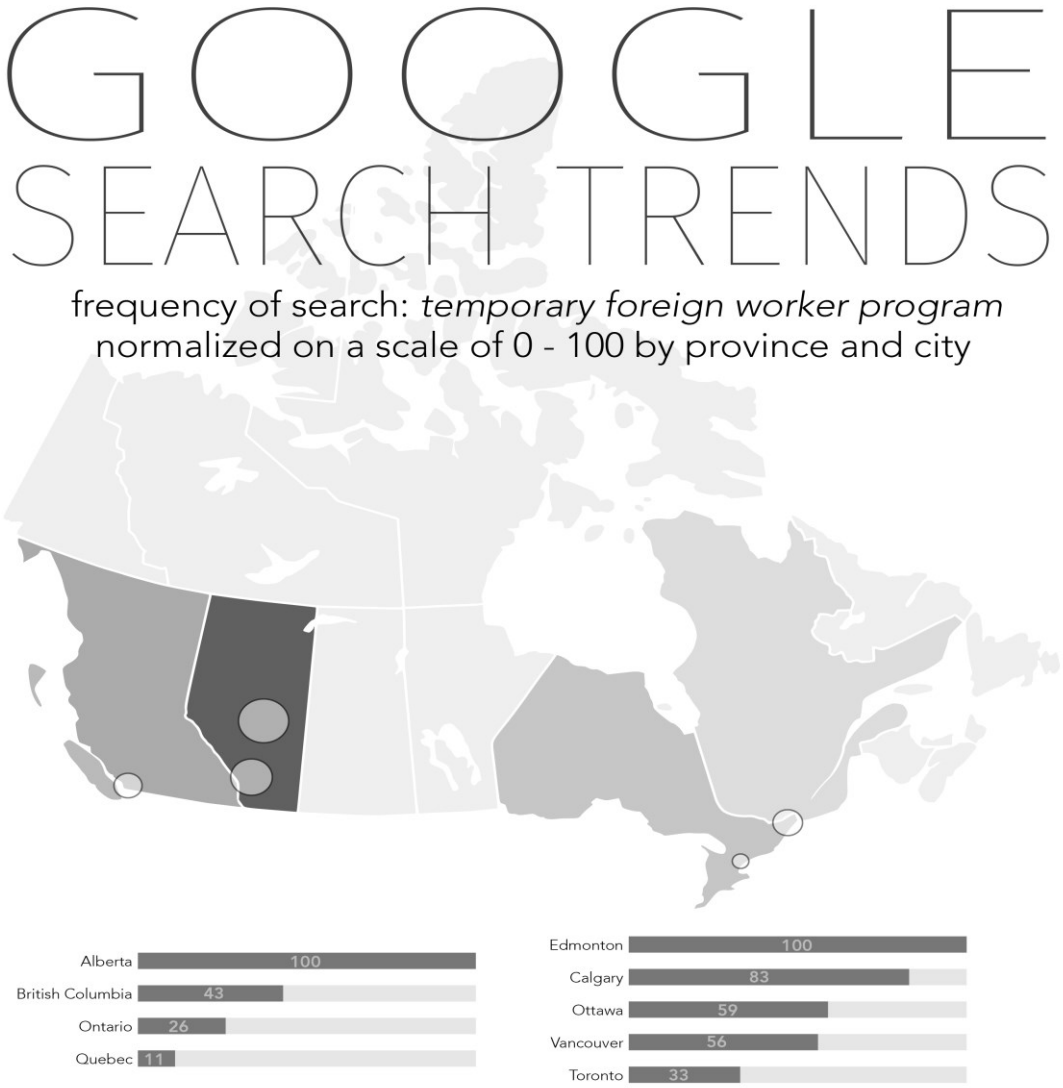
Source: Google.ca/trends was used on December 12, 2014 to produce the resulting data. Google search trends in Canada for the search term, 'Temporary Foreign Worker Program'. Date range: January 2010 through December 2014.

These points are important because they correspond with the key moments in the stories I mentioned earlier. The RBC story broke on CBC on April 6, 2013,

[35] See https://support.google.com/trends/answer/4355164?hl=en&rd=1.

and resulted in fairly significant program reforms announced on April 29, 2013. The McDonald's story broke on April 6, 2014, and spiralled into a multi-site national exposé on rampant misuse of the program across the Food Services industry culminating in sweeping changes to the program in June 2014.

Figure 2.12 - Google search trends by province and city in Canada



Source: Data obtained from using google.ca/trends on April 14, 2015. Search term: 'Temporary Foreign Worker Program.' Date range: between January 2012 and December 2014.

In addition to insight into the moments in which Canadians are particularly engaged, Google Trends offers regional data illustrating the provinces and cities with the highest interest. Like the timeline outlining search frequency, this data is normalized on a scale of 0-100. Therefore, the province and city with the highest frequency of searches for the term, "Temporary Foreign Worker program" are given a score of 100. The rest of the provinces and cities are given a relative score based on this high point. As Figure 2.12 illustrates, Alberta was the province with the highest search frequency between January 2012 and December 2014. British Columbia had the second highest frequency with 43% of the total number of searches tracked in Alberta. Unsurprisingly then, the cities with the highest search frequency were Edmonton and Calgary, with normalized scores of 100 and 83 respectively. While not central to the analysis offered below, this is one way to demonstrate Alberta's interest in the TFW program.

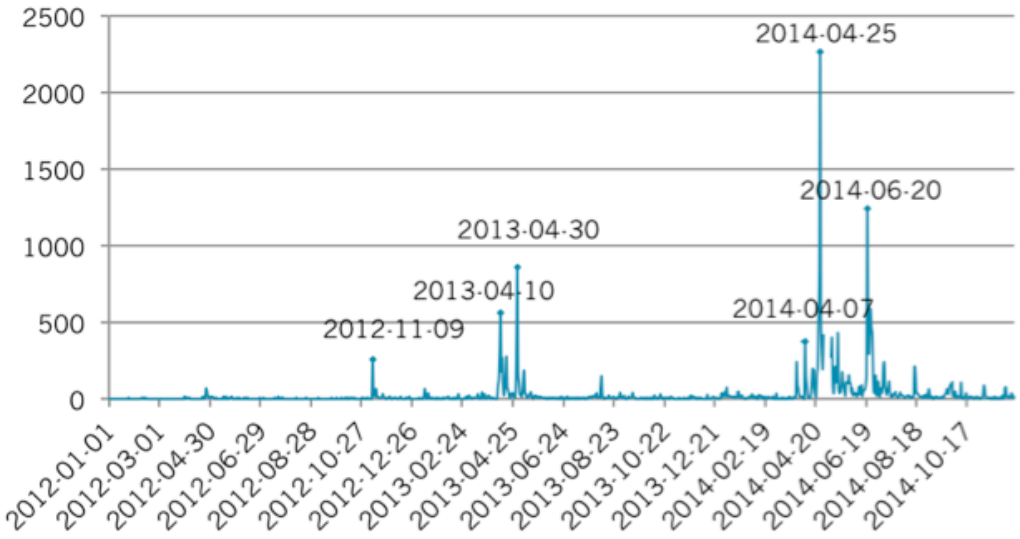
Another way to track public response to a topic or issue in the post-2004 era,[36] is to keep an eye on social media. Using a similar technique, I collected data – via an application called Hootsuite Pro[37] – on the frequency-specific keyword terms used on Twitter. The results were even more detailed than those provided by the Google Trends tool. In this case I used the keyword term, "foreign worker

[36] In reference to the explosive growth of social media following the launch of Facebook in 2004, and Twitter in 2006.

[37] Through an agreement with Twitter, Hootsuite (and other sites that offer a variety of 'analytics' tools) accesses an archived history of Tweets that is not openly available to the public. This database includes the date, region, and content of the Tweet. Users of Hootsuite Pro can then search keyword terms, to track the use (or popularity) of a term.

program".[38] Due to some restrictions on accessing archived Tweets, it was necessary to collect data over a number of points between May and December 2014. The resulting data are displayed in Figure 2.13.

Figure 2.13 – Twitter keywords search



Source: Twitter keywords search for the term, 'foreign worker program'. Hootsuite Pro analytics was used between May and December, 2014 to obtain the resulting data.

At first glance there are a number of points over the three-year history presented that jump out. I have highlighted six points to illustrate my case. On April 10, 2013 we see a spike reaching well over 500 mentions. Then on April 30, 2013 there are nearly 1000 mentions. Again, on April 7, 25, and June 20 of 2014 we see significant spikes in the number of times the keyword term 'foreign worker program' is mentioned – with the highest count reaching 2,266 on April 25, 2014. As Table 2.3 illustrates, each of the points highlighted in Figure 2.12 correspond to significant moments in reported stories about the TFW program.

[38] Keyword terms 'Temporary Foreign Worker program' and 'TFW' produced corresponding results, but fewer in total number.

Table 2.3 – Timeline of TFW related news and policy changes

Nov 8, 2012	Information surfaces about the bogus hiring requirements used by HD Mining to gain an LMO for 200 TFWs – negatively impacting the Canadian labour market.
April 6, 2013	Story breaks about RBC Scandal.
April 29, 2013	ESDC announces seven changes to TFW program policy.
April 6, 2014	McDonald's story surfaces, leading to a multi-story exposé of the Food Services industry over the next several weeks.
April 24, 2014	Jason Kenney imposes an indefinite moratorium on applications for TFWs in the food services industry.
June 20, 2014	ESDC and CIC announce a complete overhaul of the TFW program.

Over the same time period, several Facebook groups/pages related to the TFW program were launched. Several of these - "Boycott Royal Bank of Canada", "Canadians Against the Temporary Foreign Worker Program", "Canadian's Boycotting Businesses that are abusing the TFW program", "Boycott Anti-Canadian Enterprises", and "Support Canadian Businesses employing Canadian workers" – were opposed to the program.[39] Others – "Temporary Foreign Workers Support Coalition", "PINOY Temporary Foreign Worker Canada", "Migrante Alberta", and "Temporary Foreign Workers-Canada" – acted as support groups for TFWs within the program. There have been several change.org campaigns to petition policy changes,[40] and even a kickstarter

[39] Discriminatory comments are frequently made on these pages, emboldened by the promise of anonymity. Some contributors have even gone as far as to call for an "open season" on TFWs, making note of Canadians' interest in hunting (Canadians Against the Temporary Foreign Worker Program, Facebook, April 28, 2014).

[40] One campaign petitioned to ban TFW truckers from being approved (see https://www.change.org/p/honourable-chris-alexander-stop-the-temporary-foreign-worker-program-from-bringing-in-truck-drivers). Another campaigned for a vote of non-confidence with a goal of dissolving the entire parliament (see https://www.change.org/p/dissolve-parliament-via-a-

campaign trying to raise funds for a website that promised to expose TFW employers.[41]

As the examples above illustrate, the kind of story that gained traction with Canadians was one in which it was clear that everyday Canadians were being negatively affected by the TFW program. Stories about the abuse of TFWs in the agricultural, caregiving, and food services industries have surfaced and quickly faded away. In contrast, the stories cited above stuck around, and have arguably spurred the rise of multiple groups opposed to the program. This is important to recognize, because it points to the instances that are particularly poignant in shaping public opinion around an issue.

In short, Canadians appear to react more strongly towards instances where they, or someone they could more easily relate to, lost their jobs, than to the multitude of reports of mistreatment of TFWs. With the cases presented above it was explicit. Canadians had lost their jobs, and TFWs were hired to replace them. In addition to piquing the interest of Canadians, these cases also provide us with examples of the kind of issues in which public policy appears particularly responsive to public opinion.

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vote-of-non-confidence). A third petitioned Minister Jason Kenney to allow TFWs already in Canada to be unaffected by the food services moratorium (see https://www.change.org/p/minister-jason-kenney-don-t-include-tfws-already-working-in-canada-in-your-moratorium-let-them-stay).

[41] The campaign was launched on April 28, 2014 along with the website (http://www.ntfw.ca). Although the Kickstarter campaign shut down early the website is still active, using Google maps to highlight businesses that use the TFW program, and "Patriotic Employers" that employ Canadian workers only. Businesses can be "certified" as a "patriotic employer" for a fee ranging from $20-1000, though it is not clear what the different fees provide. For those employers labeled "bad guys", they remain on the list whether they are currently employing TFWs or not.

Public Policy Developed in Response

The RBC story - which surfaced on CBC's *GoPublic* on April 6, 2013 – was followed a short time later by several substantial changes to TFW program policy. On April 29, 2013 the HRSDC (now ESDC) announced seven changes to the program's policy, including:

1. Removal of the existing wage flexibility program, requiring employers to now pay TFWs at the prevailing wage;
2. Temporary suspension of the Accelerated Labour Market Opinion (ALMO) process;
3. Increased authority to suspend and revoke work permits for misuse of the program;
4. Addition of a question on LMO applications to prevent the TFW program from being used to outsource Canadian jobs;
5. Requirement that employers have a plan to transition to a Canadian workforce over time;
6. Introduction of fees for LMO applications; and
7. Mandate that English and French are the only languages that can be used as a job requirement.

The first six of the changes can be seen as responding directly to issues that arose out of the RBC story, while the seventh appears to respond to the HD mining controversy (where Mandarin was used as a job requirement), which was still before the courts at the end of April, 2013.

The McDonald's Canada story surfaced on April 6, 2014, with Federal Employment Minister Jason Kenney's announcement that they had found a Victoria franchisee owner to be in breach of TFW program policy. After suspending the franchisee's LMO, Kenney added the company to a public blacklist, along with two other restaurants in different parts of the country. It is important to recognize that, while this blacklist was touted as new, it had in fact

existed for years, sitting empty on ESDC's (then HRSDC) website. On the same day, ESDC also introduced reforms that gave them the authority to inspect businesses unannounced, and without a warrant, allowing for closer monitoring of employers' use of the program. As other stories surfaced across the country outlining instances where Canadians were being displaced by TFWs, Kenney made an unprecedented move, instituting a sector-wide moratorium on the use of TFWs. As of April 24, 2014, Kenney imposed an indefinite moratorium on processing any new applications for TFWs in the entire food service industry.

Then on June 20, 2014, Jason Kenney and Christopher Alexander announced the largest overhaul the program had seen since 2002. The most significant change was the decision to split the program into two. All of the streams and occupations that required an LMO prior to June 2014 have remained part of the TFW program. The occupations that were exempt from the LMO process under various trade agreements will now form the new International Mobility Program (IMP). This change had the expressed aim of clarifying the difference between the LMO and LMO-exempt program streams in order to offer a better account for who is in Canada and in what capacity.

The program reforms also changed how and when TFWs would be approved, what category they would come under, and how long they could remain in Canada. This included changes to the LMO process, now called the Labour Market Impact Assessment (LMIA). Along with a more stringent application process, the fee for each application increased from $275 (which was itself a new

policy as of July 2013) to $1000.[42] The categories under which TFWs would be approved have also changed substantially. Instead of categorizing workers according to the skill-based National Occupational Classification (NOC), the program now categorizes them by wage level. Using provincial median wage as a guide, occupations will be categorized as either high-wage or low-wage. For occupations deemed low-wage, new caps will be imposed on how many TFWs can be hired, ultimately restricting employers with 10 or more employees to no more than a 10% TFW workforce. In addition, ESDC promised to monitor unemployment rates regionally and refuse approval of LMIAs in the Accommodation, Food Services and Retail Trade sectors if regional unemployment was above 6%.

Further reforms also included changes to permit length and options for renewal. The maximum length of the work permit is now one year instead of two. Jason Kenney also promised a further reduction in the total length of time a TFW could remain in Canada (essentially, how many times they could renew their permit), but has yet to specify this. Employers hiring high-skilled TFWs will now also have to outline a plan to reduce reliance on the TFW program.

In addition to changes to how, when, and in what capacity TFWs can enter Canada, the ESDC also introduced several strategies to increase enforcement of program regulations. This included increasing the number of random workplace inspections (with no warrant required), opening of a national anonymous tip-line for the reporting of program infractions, improving inter-governmental

[42] See http://www.esdc.gc.ca/eng/jobs/foreign_workers/reform//index.shtml.

information sharing, and increasing the penalties for employers who break the rules. Employers are now liable to face criminal investigation for the mistreatment of workers or fraud, in addition to facing monetary fines up to $100,000. The ESDC also formalized their 'public-blacklist', which lists employers under investigation or with suspended/revoked LMOs.[43]

These program changes have significant implications for both employers and TFWs. The most significant change for employers is the substantial increase in LMIA fees, and the frequency in which those applications have to be made. Overall, this should work to make the program less appealing for employers, particularly for entry-level positions that require little or no prior training. For foreign workers unfortunate enough to not qualify under the International Mobility Program, the changes equate to a reduction in opportunities for employment, for shorter periods of time, with even fewer opportunities to access permanent residency. While these changes bring the program closer in line with its mandate, they simultaneously formalize the multi-tiered hierarchy of im/migrants in Canada.

Conclusion

In recent years the Temporary Foreign Worker program has changed significantly. First, in 2002 it was opened up to include the Stream for Lower-skilled Occupations. Bolstered by policy changes that allowed for expedited application processes in 2006 and 2010, the stream grew at an unprecedented rate.

[43] See http://www.esdc.gc.ca/eng/jobs/foreign_workers/employers_revoked.shtml.

This had a drastic impact on the TFW program as a whole, which was increasingly becoming a program that recruited employees from the Global South, for 'lower-skilled' occupations.

At the same time, there has been increasing concern regarding the ability of the program to protect TFWs from abuse, and more generally, the Canadian labour market from being negatively affected. This was highlighted by a number of cases that surfaced in the news and in academic research. Two cases in particular captured public attention like never before. These cases illustrated that Canadians appeared to react more strongly towards instances where they, or someone they could more easily relate to, lost their job. Following the increased public scrutiny, ESDC and CIC announced several changes in 2013, and 2014 that responded directly to the cases that received so much negative attention. While it may be difficult to determine the direct impact public opinion has had on TFW program policy, it is clear that public policy has responded to increases in public scrutiny.

In Alberta, the program has experienced the fastest growth in Canada. In addition to overall size, the proportion of TFWs to Canadians currently in the province (particularly when compared with the unemployed population) is far larger than any other region in Canada. At the forefront of the trend towards the controversial 'lower-skilled' occupations, particularly across the Accommodations and Food Services industry, Alberta highlights an important region for closer examination of public opinion regarding the TFW program.

Recognizing the role that public opinion has had in the case of the TFW program, it is important to gain a better understanding of the factors that shape Canadians' opinions regarding the program. Various forms of immigration have always been essential to Canada. By better understanding how public opinion is formed, Canadian policy makers can be better informed while making policy decisions in the future.

In the next Chapter, I will explore the existing literature on Canadians' attitudes towards TFWs and the TFW program, and utilize the broader 'attitudes towards immigration literature to form the conceptual framework for my analysis of the 2013 Alberta Survey data on public opinion about temporary foreign workers.

Chapter 3 – Conceptual Framework for Survey Analysis

The recent controversies surrounding the Temporary Foreign Worker Program have highlighted the cases for and against various aspects of the program's policy. This has included the positions of policy makers, labour groups, business coalitions, and Canadian and migrant workers. However, there is still limited empirical evidence regarding public levels of support for (or against) the program, and the factors that contribute to these positions. The public opinion polls that do exist are either limited in scope and reliability, or they stop short of examining the factors that shape public opinions regarding the TFW program – particularly in the Alberta context.

Public Opinion Surveys regarding the TFW Program

Prior to the 2013 Alberta Survey, there were only a handful of public opinion surveys that included questions exploring attitudes towards the TFW program. These polls were focused largely on gauging general support for the TFW program in Canada, while a few focused more specifically on the opinions of British Columbians.[44] Although the existing work is limited in its ability to inform a framework for understanding the key determinants of public opinion,

[44] There is also a 2010 Angus Reid survey that polled participants regarding potential strategies for dealing with 'illegal immigrants' in Canada. The survey found that only 14% of British Columbians supported offering illegal immigrants temporary migrant status (Angus Reid Public Opinion, 2010). Although related to attitudes towards the TFW program, this survey does not directly provide insight into participants' attitudes towards the program itself, but rather on solutions for dealing with illegal immigrants.

each survey offers some insight into public opinion regarding the program in Canada.

Between 2008 and 2009, Dominique Gross conducted an on-site survey across several Metro Vancouver construction sites. Gross was interested in gaining insight into the perceptions of individuals directly affected by the rapid growth of the program in recent years. Overall, 42% of the 128 participants "wished there were fewer TFWs"; over half believed that the presence of TFWs decreased their wages; and a majority of unskilled workers believed that it was harder to find a job because of the utilization of TFWs (Gross, 2011). In addition, Gross explored the effects of age, education, and economic outlook on participants' attitudes towards the TFW program.

In 2010, the EKOS Annual Tracking Survey explored Canadians' attitudes regarding "a range of key issues for Citizenship and Immigration Canada" (EKOS, 2010, p. iii). The random sample telephone survey included one question related to Temporary Foreign Workers. It asked the 1,530 participants about their preferred approach for addressing labour shortages when Canadians were not available. Fifty percent of participants thought labour shortages should be addressed using a mix of permanent and temporary residents. Thirty-nine percent preferred using permanent residents, 6% preferred people coming to Canada temporarily, and the remaining 3% opposed both options, asserting that Canadians should be hired to fill all labour shortages (EKOS, 2010).

In 2012, CBC teamed up with Nanos Research to conduct an online survey of 1,000 adult Canadians. Sixty-eight percent of respondents reported that

they "oppose" or "somewhat oppose" allowing TFWs into Canada if there are qualified Canadians looking for work.[45] And, finally, just before the 2013 Alberta Survey was conducted, Forum Research was contracted by Canadian Business to conduct an online survey of a random sample of 1,385 adult Canadians. Overall, the survey found a fairly even split between Canadians who generally supported or opposed the program, with 45% agreeing that employers should be able to hire TFWs, and 51% disagreeing.[46] Opposition was highest in BC and Alberta, with 60% and 57% opposing respectively. Further, those in favour of the program qualified their support, stipulating that it should only be used if the required skills were not available in Canada (31%), if no Canadians were displaced in the process (21%), or if it was for jobs that Canadians refused to do (18%). Eighty-two percent stressed the importance of language proficiency in either English or French. When asked their opinions on existing or proposed program policy, 66% of respondents opposed program policy that allowed employers to pay TFWs less than Canadians in the same position; and responses regarding a potential policy that allowed TFWs to access citizenship were split, with 45% in favour and 46% opposed. Finally, the survey found that 6% of participants reported being displaced by a TFW, and 26% reporting knowing someone who had.

There were also three public opinion polls conducted in the year following the 2013 Alberta Survey. Closely following the recent controversy in the food

[45] See http://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/most-canadians-cool-to-temporary-foreign-workers-poll-says-1.1263820
[46] See http://www.canadianbusiness.com/economy/were-still-not-sold-on-temporary-foreign-workers/.

services sector, Angus Reid Global (2014), Insights West,[47] and Harris-Decima each conducted public opinion surveys in May 2014. Angus Reid and Insights West both relied on online surveys, the first exploring the attitudes of British Columbians and the second of Canadians, 18 and older. Both asked questions regarding general knowledge of the program, and whether or not participants were supportive of the program. The Insights West survey found that 68% of the 824 British Columbians surveyed were either "very familiar" or "somewhat familiar" with the TFW program. The Angus Reid Global survey found a slightly smaller proportion of the 1,503 Canadians surveyed (52%) were either "quite familiar" or "somewhat familiar" with the program, while 17% had never heard of the program. Both surveys found considerable opposition to the program, Insights West finding that 53% of British Columbians polled were in opposition, and Angus Reid finding that 38% of Canadians polled were in opposition. The Insights West survey provides some additional findings regarding the impact of age, and provincial political preference, while the Angus Reid focused more on the impact of region, age, federal political preference, and employment status.[48] However, the analysis of both surveys stopped short of offering anything beyond descriptive findings.

[47] See http://www.insightswest.com/news/british-columbians-dislike-temporary-foreign-worker-program/.

[48] Some of these findings will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 5 to facilitate tentative comparisons with the findings from the 2013 Alberta survey.

Commissioned by the federal government, Harris-Decima conducted a telephone survey of 1,984 Canadians.[49] The survey was considered accurate within +/- 2.2 percentage points, 19 times out of 20. Forty percent of respondents indicated that they were "somewhat" or "very" familiar with the program, while approximately 33% weren't familiar with it at all.[50] Generally, 57% of respondents supported the use of the program for "jobs that qualified Canadians don't apply for".[49] Of those opposed, 58% preferred the program be reformed, while approximately 33% wanted to see it abolished.[50] Further, 30% of respondents believed that there was no reason for the program to be used for low-wage jobs. The survey also asked for participants' opinions regarding the characteristics of the program. Respondents overestimated the proportion of TFWs in the labour force, with a mean percentage of 12%, instead of the actual 2%.[49] Nearly seven in ten participants believed that employers regularly abused the program, and 68% asserted that not enough was being done to recruit Canadians.[50] To stem abuse of the program, 81% of respondents believed that stiffer monetary penalties should be used.[49] Interestingly, the federal government also included a question polling support for TFWs' ability access to citizenship, to which, 46% of respondents were in support, and 31% were opposed.[49] The findings presented by the Associated Press did not offer anything beyond these basic descriptive findings.

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[49] See http://www.ctvnews.ca/politics/canadians-support-fines-for-foreign-worker-program-abuses-poll-suggests-1.1873343.
[50] See http://ottawacitizen.com/news/national/canadians-think-employers-abuse-temporary-foreign-worker-program-survey.

In general, while opinions are fairly split in the polls reviewed above, a large proportion of Canadians surveyed react negatively towards the TFW program, particularly if qualified Canadians are available for the work. The majority of respondents in the Forum Research poll (2013) and Insights West poll (2014) were in opposition to the TFW program, and in the Angus Reid Global survey (2014) 38% were opposed, compared to 30% in favour. The CBC/Nanos survey found that 68% were opposed to the program if there were qualified Canadians for the job. Forty-two percent of Gross' (2011) participants wished there were fewer TFWs, and more than half believed that TFWs decreased their wages. Opposition to the program was particularly high among unemployed, low-wage, and younger participants (Angus Reid Global, 2014). In addition, the nation-wide surveys revealed differences in support between provinces. Angus Reid Global (2014) reports that Quebec and Alberta residents were most supportive of the program, and Ontario and BC residents were least supportive. Similar results are reported from the Forum Research poll (2013), with more opposition to the program existing in BC than Alberta (though the difference is much less).

Limitations of Existing Public Opinion Surveys

Although insightful, many of these surveys have significant limitations for comparison with the findings from the 2013 Alberta Survey. For instance, Gross' (2011) survey was limited to workers within the construction industry within BC.

While it will be interesting to offer a basic comparison of the results – particularly regarding the impact of age, education, and economic outlook on attitudes towards the TFW program – the drastic differences in sample design limits my ability to make any significant claims. There are also issues with comparison found in the surveys conducted online. The existing examples either offer extremely limited information regarding their methods, sample design, and measurement,[45, 46] or present problematic details about their design as if they were unproblematic. For instance, the Angus Reid Global survey (2014) uses a randomly selected sample of "Angus Reid Forum panellists", but gives no further details of the selection process. They also fail to offer any cautions regarding the limitations of online survey design, or the use of semi-random samples. Similarly, the Insights West poll assumes the "same margin of error [will] apply as if it were a true unweighted random probability sample," despite their sample consisting of "Your Insights" panel members only (with no mention of any form of random selection). Therefore, although each of these surveys can offer some insight into Canadians' attitudes towards the TFW program, one should exercise caution when making claims about how representative the findings are to the general public.

It is for this reason that I limit the degree to which I compare these findings from the 2013 Alberta survey. I did use the question from the EKOS (2010) survey, to offer a comparison between the attitudes of Albertans and the broader Canadian public. This was done cautiously, recognizing that the question design is somewhat problematic, and may not include sufficient choices for

respondents. Despite these limitations, I decided it was worth including a version of the question on the 2013 Alberta Survey considering the opportunity for comparison between populations, and the consistencies in methodology between the two. I also compare the findings presented in the Harris-Decima survey conducted approximately one year after the 2013 Alberta Survey. I believe it offers some interesting insights into the impact of region, time, and familiarity with the program. These two surveys also offer the closest match for the design and measurement utilized in the 2013 Alberta Survey.

Beyond survey design, it is also important to note that none of the survey reports – with the exception of Gross' (2011) survey – offer an analysis of what might be considered the key determinants of attitudes towards TFWs and the TWF program. While they each provide some descriptive statistics of individuals' attitudes towards the program, the analysis generally stops there. Understanding that, 1) the TFW program remains an important program for the federal government (and employers) – often touted as a necessary supplement to the Canadian labour force – and 2) it is a program where public opinion appears to play an active role in the formation of program policy – it is imperative to better understand the factors that shape individual attitudes towards TFWs and the TFW program. How might we think about individuals' attitudes towards TFWs and the TFW program? Are attitudes shaped by individual characteristics and/or are they a result of the larger context? Since the research that explores attitudes towards the TFW program is limited in its analysis, I look to the closely related body of

literature examining attitudes towards immigration in order to build the conceptual framework for my analysis.

Previous Research on Attitudes towards Immigration

For many nations, increased immigration (and migration in general) over the past several decades has been the source of much social and political tension (Fetzer, 2000; Lahav, 2004; Rustenback, 2010). This is particularly true for the US and many European countries. While Canada has generally been regarded as fairly receptive to immigration – particularly from the 1990s forward (Harell, 2009; Hiebert, 2006) – there are still significant pockets of the population opposed. Although it contradicts our oft-promoted multicultural identity, the presence of anti-immigration sentiment is impossible to ignore. It proliferates in spaces of relative anonymity, surfacing in the anti-immigrant flyers spread around Brampton, Ontario for example,[51] and filling the comment feeds of online news articles regarding immigration issues and across all forms of social media.

This opposition is problematic for Canadian policy makers, who generally believe immigration is good for the nation, and constantly work to minimize potential conflict with Canadians (Wilkes, Guppy, and Farris, 2008; Simmons and Keohane, 1992). As I outlined in Chapter 2, Canada has long been dependent on various forms of immigration for maintaining a population that can meet the increasing pressure that results from an aging population and below-replacement

[51] See http://globalnews.ca/news/1498130/brampton-hit-with-another-string-of-anti-immigration-flyers/.

birth rates. After all, if the population were left unsupplemented by immigration, the ratio of older dependents to labour force participants would greatly increase the tax burden on working age Canadians. In this way, immigration has long served as "an instrument of population management" (Sorensen and Krahn, 1996, p. 4). As a result, Canada has largely embraced immigration, and policies of multiculturalism, and in many ways has tried to build a national identity around it. It is for this reason that understanding and explaining individuals' attitudes towards immigration has long been an aim of policy makers and scholars alike.

Theoretical Perspectives

Whether an individual is anti-immigration, pro-immigration, or has more nuanced attitudes, the existing literature provides a range of theoretical frameworks for understanding the key determinants of individual attitudes. These frameworks outline the degree to which various economic and non-economic factors, at both the individual- and contextual-level, affect people's attitudes towards immigration. For some, these categories can be boiled down to a simple binary, into factors of "[self]-interest" or "ideology" (see Wilkes et al., 2008; O'Rourke and Sinnott, 2006).

Arguments based on self-interest are largely focused on the connection between the labour market and attitudes towards immigration (Wilkes et al., 2008). This includes factors at the contextual-level like national and regional *unemployment rates*, perceptions regarding the *national economy*, and individual-

level factors like *employment status, income, occupational skill level*, and *economic outlook*. Largely informed by *scarce resources* and *realistic group conflict* theories, these arguments posit that negative attitudes towards immigration arise as a result of increased competition (real or perceived) over limited resources (Sorensen and Krahn, 1996; Wilkes et al., 2008).

Indeed, immigrant groups can be perceived as a direct threat to the economic wellbeing of Canadian-born residents (Mulder and Krahn, 2005), particularly among those individuals in precarious economic situations (Sorensen and Krahn, 1996). Although there are various permutations of this approach - scarce resource theory (Mulder and Krahn, 2005), realistic group conflict theory (Oliver and Wong, 2003; Ha, 2010; Sorensen and Krahn, 1996), competing hypothesis (Sobczak, 2007), economic threat (Harell, Soroka and Andrew, 2011), job threat (Citren et al., 1997), economic self-interest (Fetzer, 2000), and labour market competition (Hainmueller and Hiscox, 2010) – each is essentially interested in testing the basic hypothesis: increased competition for employment (i.e., a larger workforce or fewer available jobs, real or perceived), will bring increased conflict/prejudice between groups.

It is important to recognize however, that substantial variation may exist between, and within, countries. Mayda (2006) contends that the skill composition of immigrant groups is imperative to understanding the 'native' population's attitudes towards immigration. If immigrants are largely lower-skilled they will face greater opposition from the lower-skilled 'native' population. Higher-skilled workers are actually more likely to favour increases in low-skill immigration,

since this should reduce the "supply of skilled relative to unskilled [labour and raise] the skilled wage" (Mayda, 2006, 510). It is therefore important to understand as many contextual- and individual-level determinants of attitudes as possible.

Beyond arguments based on self-interest, the remaining explanations can be split into two non-economic categories – those that seek to explain attitudes towards immigration based on individual- or group-contact, and those that see ideology as a key determinant of attitudes. *Contact theory* explores how personal experiences can affect attitudes. Within this perspective, individuals who have more contact with immigrants will come to know them better, and in turn, feel less threatened by them (Mulder and Krahn, 2005).

> "Thus, while *scarce resources theory* hypothesizes that greater (perceived) competition over limited resources makes the 'other' more threatening, *contact theory* proposes that increased interaction makes the 'other' more familiar and, hence, less threatening" (Mulder and Krahn, 2005, p. 423).

To put it in terms of *social categorization theory,* which utilizes the "us/them" dichotomy, while individuals are more likely to ascribe positive qualities to individuals similar to themselves (the "us"), increased contact allows individuals to shift the boundaries of "us" and "them", leading to more inclusive group interactions (Mulder and Krahn, 2005; Malkki, 1996).

Amir (1969) expanded on the basic tenets of *contact theory*, proposing that contact is not an isolated factor, but rather, one linked closely to the wider context and factors that affect individuals' economic wellbeing, arguing that

contact reduces prejudice amid "favourable" social and economic conditions, while the adverse is true amid "unfavourable" conditions (Amir, 1969). This approach has been adapted by several researchers in recent years (see McLaren, 2003; Oliver and Wong, 2003; Ha, 2010), many of whom have increasingly focused on the ways perceived economic and cultural threats are actually determinants of whether individual/group *contact* will increase or decrease intergroup prejudice. While *contact* – direct or indirect – undoubtedly impacts individuals' attitudes towards immigration and immigration, it is important to determine the effect it has in relation to other key determinants. It is also important to note that the 2013 Alberta Survey did not include any appropriate measures of individual/group contact with immigrants. It is for this reason that *contact theory* will not be overly useful for the analysis of Albertans' attitudes towards the TFW program.

Turning to the ideology-based explanations of attitudes towards immigration, there are two primary perspectives. The first explores the degree to which opposition to immigration are correlated with racist or xenophobic attitudes (Wilkes et al., 2008), which is closely linked to arguments of perceived *cultural threats*. This approach focuses on the "cultural, ethnic and religious differences between the host society and immigrant communities" (Harell, Soroka, Andrew, 2011, p. 5), and tests the hypothesis that when immigrant groups are seen as more culturally similar, existing residents are more likely to be accepting of the group (Harell, Soroka, Andrew, 2011). While this approach appears to be increasingly relevant in the post-9/11 global landscape, where a heightened paranoia of the

'other' all-too-often translates into xenophobic representations of other cultures, it is not the only ideology-based perspective.

The second asserts that ideological opposition to immigration does not presuppose racist and xenophobic attitudes, but could rather "represent an isolationist political view that has little association with any sense of superiority toward immigrants per se" (Wilkes et al., 2008, p. 304). This perspective does not disregard the impact of racist or xenophobic attitudes on an individual's attitude toward immigration, but rather makes the distinction that it is not the only ideology-based factor at play. Whichever the case, ideology-based explanations rely on broad indicators of personal belief, which, for the most part, focus on an "individual's 'political' orientation" (Wilkes et al., 2008, p. 304). Findings from this literature generally assert that individuals with a conservative political orientation are more likely to want less immigration (Wilkes et al., 2008; Espenshade and Hempstead, 1996; Citrin et al., 1997; Chandler and Tsai, 2001; Scheve and Slaughter, 2001), while people with more liberal leanings are more likely to want more immigration (Wilkes et al., 2008; Fortin and Loewen, 2004). In addition to an individual's political orientation, various authors have explored the liberalizing effect of education, through variations of the *educational progressivism* perspective.

Within this approach researchers explore the extent to which education has a liberalizing affect on individuals (see Chandler and Tsai, 2001; Schissel, Wanner and Frideres, 1989; Sorensen and Krahn, 1996; Mulder and Krahn, 2005). Within this body of research, the authors are generally testing the

hypothesis that the more education an individual obtains, the more likely s/he will adopt an increasingly positive attitude towards immigrants. However, it is also important to remember that increased education is also often associated with higher income, and increased job opportunities, and may thereby produce confounding effects as a measure of *self-interest* on attitudes towards immigration. Therefore, measures of educational attainment must be explored with caution, as it may prove problematic to determine which (*educational progressivism* or *self-interest*) is having the effect on individual attitudes. For this reason it is imperative to use multivariate analysis examing both educational attainment and additional measures of *self-interest* to help identify any instances where education and income have opposing effects on respondents' attitudes.

Several authors also explore the impact of *age* and *gender* on attitudes towards immigration. These individual characteristics are often correlated with other measures, including *educational progressivism* and *political orientation*, but also offer insight as stand alone variables. Findings show that gender and age are correlated to attitudes towards immigration (Mulder and Krahn, 2005). These findings assert that females and young people are more likely to have positive attitudes (Chandler and Tsai, 2001; Mulder and Krahn, 2005).

Limitations of the "Attitudes towards Immigration" Literature

There are undoubtedly limitations to using the theoretical approaches within the attitudes towards immigration literature to shape the theoretical

framework required to explore public opinion about TFWs and the TFW program. Most importantly, opposition to immigration does not presuppose opposition to the TFW program. The fact that the TFW program promises to be 'temporary' (whether it is or not, is another question) may reduce the level of opposition it receives from individuals who would be opposed to immigration for reasons of *self-interest* or *cultural threat.* Additionally, educational attainment may also prove to be problematic as a determinant for attitudes towards the TFW program/TFWs as increased education is also likely to lead to increased knowledge about the TFW program. And while the *educational progressivism* approach generally asserts that attitudes towards immigration will become increasingly empathetic towards the rights of immigrants, increased education may actually increase opposition to the TFW program because of the proliferation of instances of exploitation that have arisen from it. It is for this reason that it will be interesting to determine the extent to which the theoretical approaches within the attitudes towards immigration literature can speak to the attitudes towards the TFW program/TFWs.

Despite the potential limitations, this literature promises to offer valuable insights for developing a theoretical framework analyzing public opinion regarding the TFW program/TFWs. It is especially important to recognize that some key determinants of attitudes are correlated. Therefore, to determine their unique effects on public opinion, it is imperative to explore the data utilizing multivariate analyses.

The Alberta Context

Alberta offers a unique context within the national landscape for exploring public opinion regarding the TFW program. In addition to receiving record levels of TFWs in recent years (as outlined in Chapter 2), the political and economic climate in Alberta is unlike any other in Canada. Understanding the key determinants of attitudes towards immigration (as outlined above), there are several context-specific factors related to the political and economic climate that make Alberta a unique case.

Economy

In relation to the economic context, there are several indicators that demonstrate Alberta's unique place within the Canadian landscape. First, Alberta has the highest labour market participation rate, and one of the lowest unemployment rates in Canada. In fact, over 69% of working age Albertans hold jobs.[52] This is well over the Canadian average of 61%, and over 15% higher than Newfoundland and Labrador. This high level of employment is paired with the second lowest unemployment rate in Canada. Over the past decade, Alberta has averaged a 4.7% unemployment rate, well below the national average of 7%. Only Saskatchewan had a marginally lower (4.6%) average unemployment rate.[53] Second, Albertans earn higher incomes than the majority of Canadians. While the provincial GDP is only third to Ontario and Quebec, when you take into account

[52] See https://work.alberta.ca/documents/labour-force-stats-Dec14-public-package.pdf.
[53] Adapted from http://economicdashboard.albertacanada.com/.

the size of the population, Alberta's per capita GDP is over 50% larger than that of both Ontario and Quebec. This is further illustrated by strong measures of productivity and median household income.

According to the latest Statistics Canada data on productivity, Alberta ranks first in the nation in the ratio of output (GDP) to the number of hours worked.[54] As of 2013, Alberta's labour productivity was $70.40 per hour, 45% "higher than the Canadian average of $48.70 per hour".[55] Alberta also ranks high in measures of median household income. Second only to the Northwest Territories, the median household income in Alberta is just shy of $95,000, over $20,000 above the national median (Statistics Canada, 2015b). With the promise of employment in a strong economy, with a high income, it is no surprise that Alberta has also attracted high levels of interprovincial and international migrants over recent years.

Migration

With a high demand for labour over the past several years, Alberta has become a destination for migrant workers – intra-/inter-provincially, as well as internationally. As the table below illustrates, Alberta is second only to Ontario in total net migration numbers (2012/2013). Receiving a net increase of 38,717 and 42,478, interprovincial and international migrants respectively, the Alberta population is expanding at a rapid pace. Measured in terms of existing residents, Alberta's population is growing at a rate of 28.17 per 1,000 residents. That's over

[54] See http://economicdashboard.albertacanada.com/ProductivityGrowth.

150% higher than the national population growth rate of 10.92. This is in stark contrast to several Maritime Provinces that are currently experiencing a decline in population size. This is also without TFWs taken into account, which, as I outlined in Chapter 2, added another 68,339 workers on the ground in Alberta in 2012.

Table 3.1 – Net migration by province

	Population at beginning of period	Natural increase	Net inter-provincial migration	Net inter-national migration	Total net migration	Total growth	Population growth rate (per 1,000)
CAN	35,154,279	129,216	0	256,924	256,924	386,140	10.92
NL	528,194	-400	-2,205	1,388	-817	-1,217	-2.31
PE	145,505	117	-957	1,618	661	778	5.33
NS	942,930	-383	-2,172	2,293	121	-262	-0.28
NB	755,636	-9	-4,077	2,365	-1,712	-1,721	-2.28
QC	8,153,971	27,450	-13,339	46,590	33,251	60,701	7.42
ON	13,550,929	45,583	-13,980	96,208	82,228	127,811	9.39
MB	1,265,405	5,683	-4,827	15,782	10,955	16,638	13.06
SK	1,106,247	5,670	1,222	12,271	13,493	19,163	17.17
AB	4,007,199	33,298	**38,717**	**42,478**	**81,195**	114,493	**28.17**
BC	4,582,625	10,771	2,267	35,639	37,906	48,677	10.57
YT	36,364	225	-308	229	-79	146	4.01
NT	43,841	501	-781	62	-719	-218	-4.98
NU	35,434	710	440	1	441	1,151	31.96

Source: Adapted from Catalogue no. 91-215-X "Annual Demographic Estimates Canada, Provinces and Territories 2014" (Statistics Canada, 2014)

Politics

Alberta is also distinct in terms of its political preference. Oft posited as the Texas of Canada, Alberta has been a conservative stronghold for decades. At the time of the 2013 Alberta Survey, Conservative members held twenty-six of

the twenty-eight of Alberta's seats in Parliament.[55] Similarly, Progressive Conservatives held seventy out of the eighty-five seats in the provincial legislature in 2013.[56]

Age, Gender, and Education

Alberta is also distinct from the rest of Canada on the basis of a number of other demographic characteristics. The median age in Alberta is four years younger (36 years) than the national median (Statistics Canada, 2012). There is also a slightly higher proportion of men to women in Alberta, 50.5% to 49.5%, while nation-wide the proportions are reversed (Statistics Canada, 2012). In terms of education however, Alberta is almost on par with national averages. In particular, 52% of Albertans have at least a postsecondary certificate or diploma, the same as the national average.

Other Factors

Lastly, I would be remiss if I didn't also comment on Alberta's recent economic plight. Largely the result of a growing demand for crude oil (at high prices), and significant technological advances in extraction methods (reducing costs), Alberta had been enjoying favourable market conditions for its primary exports for years. However, as the recent, and significant, drop in oil prices

[55] See http://www.parl.gc.ca/Parliamentarians/en/constituencies.
[56] See http://www.assembly.ab.ca/net/index.aspx?p=mla_home. Alberta has since had a provincial election and undergone a massive shift in political representation, with the NDP winning a majority government. This represents the first time in over forty years that a party other than the Progressive Conservatives have held a majority government in Alberta.

illustrates, things can change quickly. Understanding that Alberta's economic strength is so closely tied to the price of oil, it is also among the provinces most vulnerable to the extreme variability of external market forces, which, in turn, may affect residents' economic outlook. As already noted, however, the data analyzed in this thesis were collected in 2013, well before rapid drop in oil prices beginning in late 2014.

Attitudes towards the TFW Program

What then, are the expected effects of the Alberta context on its residents' attitudes towards the TFW program? As the literature on attitudes towards immigration demonstrates, strong/stable economic conditions, high levels of education, and a liberal political perspective are often associated with more receptive attitudes towards immigration. As I outlined above, while Alberta has arguably had the strongest economy in the country over recent years, and levels of education on par with the rest of the country, one could anticipate relatively favourable views towards immigrants, and in turn towards the TFW program. However, at least as indicated by voting patterns until very recently, Albertans also appear to have the most conservative political attitudes in the nation, which would suggest lower levels of support for immigration. However, as the recent changes to the political landscape in 2015 illustrate, this may not be the best indicator of opinions in the case of Alberta. There are also the unknown effects of high rates of intra/inter-provincial and international migration, and the potential

for perceptions of economic insecurity (given market volatility), both of which could impact attitudes towards the TFW program.

As I outlined in Chapter 1, I am interested in exploring a range of research questions to better understand individuals' attitudes towards the TFW program/TFWs. The project's primary questions set out to first describe public opinion, and second, to outline the key determinants of public opinion.

1) What are Albertans' opinions about the Temporary Foreign Worker Program?
    a. Do they believe it is necessary?
    b. Are they concerned about the program's impact on the labour market and on Canadian workers?
    c. What workplace and permanent residency rights should TFWs have?
2) What are the key determinants of public opinion regarding the TFW program?

Preliminary Hypotheses

Utilizing the attitudes towards immigration literature as a guide, three primary sets of hypotheses emerge. First, it is anticipated that measures of *self-interest* (economic factors) will impact opinions/perceptions regarding the TFW program similarly to how they are believed to impact attitudes towards immigration. Therefore, the first set of hypotheses assert that:

1) Measures of *self-interest* will be:
    a. negatively correlated with opinions regarding the necessity of the TFW program, and
    b. negatively correlated with opinions regarding what rights should be afforded TFWs employed within the program.

Second, educational attainment (as a measure of *educational progressivism*) will impact opinions/perceptions regarding the TFW program in different ways than found in the attitudes towards immigration literature. As mentioned above, the level of educational attainment may increase the level of knowledge individuals will have about the program, creating the potential for opinions about its necessity to be polarized. However, in terms of opinions regarding the rights that should be afforded TFWs, the tenets of *educational progressivism* should hold. Therefore, the second set of hypotheses assert that,

2) Educational attainment will:
    a. Not be a predictor (null hypothesis) for opinions regarding the necessity of the TFW program, and will
    b. Be positively correlated with support for more rights for TFWs employed in the program.

Third, participants' provincial political preferences (as a measure of ideological orientation) are expected to impact individuals' opinions similarly to those found in the attitudes towards immigration literature. It is expected that,

3) A conservative political orientation will be
    a. negatively correlated with opinions regarding the *necessity,* and
    b. negatively correlated with opinions regarding more equitable access to *rights.*

In addition to the hypotheses derived from the main theoretical frameworks within the attitudes towards immigration literature, I will explore several secondary hypotheses. First, I am interested in testing the extent to which *age* and *gender* effect opinions towards the TFW program. Based on the attitudes towards immigration literature, I would expect that opinions that TFWs should

have access to more equitable *rights* would be found among women and among younger survey respondents. The extent to which individuals believe the program is necessary or not, may be influenced to a larger degree by their *educational attainment* or measures of *self-interest*, again, demonstrating the need for multivariate analysis.

Finally, I am interested in exploring the extent to which immigration status will impact opinions regarding the TFW program. First, compared to Canadian-born participants, I anticipate that participants who have immigrated to Canada will be more sympathetic regarding rights that should be afforded to TFWs. Second, I anticipate that because of the unknown impact of other variables, there will be no correlation between immigrant status and opinions regarding the necessity of the TFW program.

In the next chapter I outline the research method, sample design, and measurement used for the 2013 Alberta Survey and the analysis of Albertans' opinions about the TFW program.

Chapter 4 – Method, Sample Design, and Measurement

To explore Albertans' attitudes towards the TFW program, I utilized data obtained from the 2013 Alberta Survey – an annual province-wide omnibus telephone survey administered by the Population Research Laboratory (PRL) at the University of Alberta in which a number of different researchers collect data via a single survey. Employing a random-digit dialing approach,[57] the PRL surveyed a total of 1207 Albertan residents, aged 18 and above, over the course of June and July 2013. In addition to controlling for minimum age, the sampling design used quota sampling to achieve a proportionate regional distribution, and an equal representation of women and men among participants. To this end, the sample was representatively constructed across the metropolitan areas of Edmonton (n = 404) and Calgary (n = 402), and "other Alberta" (n = 401), as well as between males (n = 595) and females (n = 612) (Table 4.1). The response rate for the 2013 Alberta Survey was 21%.

Table 4.1 – Gender of respondent by region

Gender of Respondent	Metro Edmonton	Metro Calgary	Other Alberta	All Alberta
Male	202	202	191	595
Female	202	200	210	612
Total Sample	404	402	401	1207

[57] The PRL utilizes a computer generated, random-digit dialing approach to create the database of households to call. This ensures respondents can be randomly selected, whether or not their household is listed in a telephone directory.

Table 4.2 – Survey Data Compared to Census Data on Selected Demographic Characteristics

		Sample	Alberta	Index of Dissimilarity
Age[58]	*18-24*	5%	13%	**19.5**
	25-34	11%	20%	
	35-44	15%	18%	
	45-54	21%	20%	
	55-64	23%	15%	
	65+	24%	14%	
Gender	*Male*	49%	50%	**1**
	Female	51%	50%	
Region[59]	*Metro Edmonton*	34%	32%	**2**
	Metro Calgary	33%	34%	
	Other Alberta	33%	34%	
Immigrant Status[60]	*Canadian Born*	80%	83%	**3**
	Not Canadian Born	20%	17%	
Education[61] (highest completed)	*Incomplete High School*	6%	15%	**19.5**
	High School	28%	28%	
	College/Technical School	24%	35%	
	University degree	41%	22%	
Employment Status[62]	*Unemployed*	5%	5%	**0**
	Employed	95%	95%	
Income[63]	*Median Household Income*	$95,000	$83,800	**n/a**

Calculation of Weights

After comparing the sample and the population on selected demographic characteristics (Table 4.2), it became apparent that the sample did not represent the population across all categories. In fact, calculating an Index of Dissimilarity

[58] Alberta statistics on Age and Gender (18 years+) accessed from, (Statsistics Canada, 2011).
[59] Regional population statistics accessed from, Statistics Canada. Table 051-0001 & Table 051-0046
[60] Alberta statistics on Immigrant Status accessed from, (Statistics Canada, 2006a).
[61] Alberta statistics on Highest Level of Education Completed accessed from, (Statistics Canada, 2006b).
[62] Alberta statistics on Employment (based on total labour force) accessed from, (Government of Alberta, 2012).
[63] Alberta statistics on Median Household Income accessed from,(HRSDC, 2011).

highlights a substantial disparity between the sample and the population across *age* and *educational attainment.* Across the remaining characteristics featured in Table 4.2, the sample is representative of the population within an acceptable degree of variance (an Index of Dissimilarity of less than 10). This should come as no surprise for variables measuring *gender* and *region*, given the quota sampling implemented by the PRL. Therefore, I decided to discard the set of weights provided by the PRL (which accounted for the slight variation in regional distribution), and weight the data for *age* and *education* instead.[64]

The weights were calculated using 2011 Statistics Canada data (National Household Survey) on educational attainment of Albertans by age (18 and older). For each age by education category (nine in total), weights were calculated by dividing the proportion of the population in that category by the proportion of the sample in that category (Table 4.3).

Table 4.3 – Calculation of Survey Weights

	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
High school or less	8.74% / *4.02%* = **2.18**	7.06% / *3.50%* = **2.01**	5.95% / *3.59%* = **1.66**	7.82% / *5.90%* = **1.33**	5.93% / *6.92%* = **0.86**	7.21% / *10.85%* = **0.66**
College/ Technical School	2.72% / *0.60%* = **4.54**	7.30% / *2.14%* = **3.42**	7.27% / *4.44%* = **1.64**	8.02% / *5.56%* = **1.44**	5.79% / *6.67%* = **0.87**	4.24% / *5.04%* = **0.84**
University Degree	1.23% / *0.60%* = **2.05**	5.94% / *5.04%* = **1.18**	5.47% / *7.18%* = **0.76**	4.35% / *9.74%* = **0.45**	3.19% / *9.74%* = **0.33**	1.77% / *8.46%* = **0.21**

(POP/*SAMP*=weighting factor)

[64] Teresa Bladon (2010) has noted the age and education sampling bias in the Alberta Survey methodology before.

For example, if a participant was between the ages of 18-24 and had a University degree, their responses for each question on the survey would be counted as if **2.05** participants had responded in that way. If a participant were over the age of 65 with a University degree, their responses would be counted as if **0.21** participants had responded in that way. Participants who had missing values for *Age* and/or *Education* were given a stock weight of 1.

Measurement

After a general introduction in which the purpose of the survey was explained, along with ethical issues, Alberta Survey participants were given a brief introduction to the set of ten questions exploring their opinions of the TFW program (see Appendix 1). After completing these questions - and those of the additional six researchers included on the 2013 Alberta Survey - participants were asked a final set of demographic questions. The total telephone interview lasted twenty-seven minutes, on average.

Within the TFW program section of the survey, participants were given a brief introduction to the topic, including a basic description of the program for those who were not familiar with it. The introduction read:

> *The following questions are about Temporary Foreign Workers. We are only looking for your personal opinion about Temporary Foreign Workers, and there are no right or wrong answers. The term Temporary Foreign Worker refers to an individual from another country employed in Canada on a temporary work permit. This permit is tied to a specific job for a specific employer. Temporary worker status may not exceed 4 years.*

Dependent Variables

Of the dependent variables described below, eight are ordinal and two are nominal in measurement. The variables can be separated into two main primary conceptual groups (which will be the basis for two indices later) and two stand-alone variables. The first grouping explores beliefs about the *necessity* of the TFW program. The second grouping explores opinions about the kinds of *rights* that should be afforded TFWs within the program. The remaining variables explores respondents' self-assessed *knowledge* of the program, as well as their *perceptions of the racial characteristics* of TFWs within the program.

The first question in the section asks survey respondents to state how much they believe they know about the program. While it is not an issue I intended to explore in any depth analytically on its own, it was included to allow a more in-depth analysis of the remaining nine questions.

1. "Not everyone necessarily knows about this program, which is fine. In your opinion, how much do you know about the Temporary Foreign Worker Program?"
    - Nothing
    - Very little
    - Some
    - Quite a bit
    - A lot

Study participants were asked a series of four questions to explore various aspects of their opinions regarding the *necessity* of the TFW program. The first two questions (with nominal responses) asked respondents to choose from a limited selection of proposed options for addressing labour shortages in Canada

and Alberta. The first was designed to allow comparison with the 2010 EKOS national public opinion survey (n=1530) that asked a similar question.

2. "Which of the following best reflects your point of view? Skill and labour shortages in Canada should be met by…"
    - A mix of people coming to Canada on a permanent and temporary basis
    - People coming to Canada permanently
    - People coming to Canada temporarily
    - Canadians should be filling these shortages

The second question more specifically explored participants' opinions regarding the use of TFWs in the Alberta context.

3. "Sometimes employers report having difficulty finding the people they need to fill labour shortages in Alberta. If this is the case, employers in Alberta should be able to hire Temporary Foreign Workers for:"
    - High-skilled occupations (occupations that require a degree or specialized training)
    - Lower-skilled occupations (occupations that require minimal training prior to employment)
    - Neither
    - Both

The remaining two 'necessity' questions utilized a 5-point Likert response scale allowing participants to state the degree to which they agreed or disagreed with a particular statement.[65] The first statement was framed positively, while the second was framed negatively. I was interested in the differences between responses to these two questions as, increasingly, and most notably since the 2013 RBC scandal, the discourse from labour advocate groups and the media has

[65] Responses were ordinal categories including: Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, Strongly Agree.

focused on the degree to which TFWs are taking jobs from Canadians/Albertans rather than on exposing instances of abuse or exploitation of TFWs.

4. "Temporary Foreign Workers are needed to fill jobs in the Alberta labour market."
5. "Temporary Foreign Workers are taking jobs away from Albertans."

Study participants were then asked to agree or disagree with a question regarding their perception of the racial characteristics of TFWs. This question was included to explore the extent to which TFWs were perceived by Albertans to be members of visible minority groups. While I do not intend to (and cannot) compare this with the actual population of TFWs in Alberta (to determine whether the perception matches reality), responses to this question do provide interesting insights into who participants are picturing when they are forming opinions around the necessity/utility of the program and the rights that should be afforded TFWs.

6. "Most Temporary Foreign Workers are members of visible minority groups (non-white in race or colour)."

The final section of four questions, which continued with the same format (asking participants to agree or disagree with a statement), explored participants' opinions regarding various aspects of TFW rights in the workplace and Canada. The first set of two questions approaches a similar sentiment in two ways. The first statement provides a (admittedly problematic) 'rationale' for reduced-rights being acceptable, and the second more directly compares the rights of TFWs with Canadians. The first statement was included to determine the degree to which

participants' opinions are shaped by their perceptions of the existing conditions in the TFWs' country of origin.

7. "It is OK for Alberta Workplace laws and standards – which are meant to protect workers' rights – to be less strict for Temporary Foreign Workers because they are likely used to lower standards."

8. "Temporary Foreign Workers should be given the exact same workplace rights as Canadian workers."

The next question asks participants to offer their opinion regarding a particularly controversial policy that existed at the time the survey was being developed (the policy has since been removed). At the time, the TFW program allowed employers to pay TFWs between 5-15% less than the average market rate (what Canadians would expect to get).[66] This question intended to explore, in a very tangible way, the points of dis/connection between public opinion and public policy.

9. "It is OK if Temporary Foreign Workers are paid less than Canadian workers performing the same job (*if necessary, alternate wording: Temporary Foreign Workers do not need to be paid the same as Canadian workers performing the same job*)."

The final question asked study participants to offer their opinion regarding Temporary Foreign Workers' right to access permanent residency. It provided an opportunity to directly explore the extent to which Albertans' opinions were dis/connected with current policies that severely restrict TFWs' access to permanent residency.

[66] Up to 5% for TFWs in 'lower-skilled' occupational categories NOC C&D, and up to 15% for TFWs in 'high-skilled' occupational categories NOC 0, A, & B.

10. "All Temporary Foreign Workers should have the opportunity to obtain permanent residency in Canada."

As Table 4.4 illustrates, among the 'TFW program survey questions', all but one of the questions has a rate of missing responses ("don't know" or "no response") falling between 0% and 4% ($n \leq 45$), which is typical for opinion questions such as these. The one exception, Q6, has missing responses of 8% (n=98) – which is likely a result of the nature of the question, which asks respondents to report their opinion on a potentially sensitive or difficult to measure topic, perceptions of race.

Independent Variables

The data analyses reported in Chapter 5 employ several independent variables taken from the list of socio-demographic variables for which data were collected in the 2013 Alberta Survey. In addition, one of the questions I designed for the Alberta survey, regarding participants' self-assessed *knowledge* of the program, was also employed as an independent variable in later stages of the analysis. Variables were chosen based on the conceptual framework established within the 'attitudes towards immigration section in Chapter 3. They included: *knowledge, age, gender, region of the province, employment status, household income, home ownership, economic outlook, immigrant status, education,* and *political preference*.

Among the 'socio-economic variables' used in cross-tabulations to explore variation in responses across groups (Chapter 5), all but three have between 0%

and 3% (n≤ 37) missing responses. As for the remaining three variables, both *employment status* and *provincial political party* legitimately exclude a large number of responses due to recoding of variable categories (in an effort to simplify the number of categories explored). For example, the *employment status* variable is a derived variable including only those respondents within the 'labour force' (as defined by Statistics Canada: individuals 'employed', or 'unemployed and looking for work'). This, in turn, excludes 40% of respondents (n=477), who range from 'retired' to 'on maternity leave'. Of the remaining participants (n=730), 95% (n=693) were *employed*, while the remaining 5% (n=37) were *unemployed.*[67] The rate of 'missing' responses before this derived variable was created was 0.1% (n=2). Similarly, the *provincial party preference variable* used in the cross-tabulations in Chapter 5 is a derived version of the original variable, including only responses that identified one of the top four provincial political parties in Alberta (Liberal, NDP, PC/Tory, Wildrose). This derived variable excludes 38% of responses (n=453), compared to the original version, which excluded 22% (n=270) of the respondents who were uncertain about which party they would support or unwilling to answer. The only other variable with a relatively high-rate of missing responses is *household income* (18%; n=223), which includes 6% (n = 72) who said they 'don't know' and 13% who did not respond to the question (n= 151).

[67] While this rate aligns with provincial (population) rates of unemployment, it increases the chance that there will be issues with tests of significance if the cell count for individual responses is below five – which with n=37 is likely to happen.

Table 4.4 - Valid and missing responses

TFW Program Survey Question	*Valid*	*Missing*	*Socio-Economic Variable*	*Valid*	*Missing*
Q1	1207	0	*Age*	1176	31
Q2	1172	35	*Gender*	1207	0
Q3	1162	45	*Region*	1207	0
Q4	1176	31	*Employment Status*	730	477
Q5	1172	35	*Household income*	984	223
Q6	1109	98	*Home owner*	1195	12
Q7	1175	32	*Financial Anxiety*	1198	9
Q8	1187	20	*Immigrant status*	1202	5
Q9	1195	12	*Education*	1197	10
Q10	1178	29	*Political Party*	754	453

In Chapter 5 I outline the descriptive findings (and crosstabs) of the 2013 Alberta Survey. This will provide the necessary basis for answering the first primary research question: whether Albertans believe the program is *necessary* and what *rights* they believe should be afforded the TFWs working in it. These findings will also provide preliminary insights into the second primary research question: what are the key determinants of attitudes towards the TFW program/TFWs. Overall, Chapter 5 will build into the Chapter 6, which outlines the results from two step-wise multiple regression analyses and final discussion.

Chapter 5 – Descriptive Findings

Turning to the results of the 2013 Alberta Survey, I begin by providing a broad overview of Albertans' opinions about the TFW program. This will allow for a brief comparison with the existing public opinion surveys discussed in Chapter 3. From there, I move to a more detailed examination of each relevant survey question, outlining a preliminary schema of key determinants of the opinions surveyed. I close the chapter by reviewing the descriptive findings and setting the stage for the step-wise multiple regression analyses and discussion in Chapter 6.

2013 Alberta Survey: At a Glance

A preliminary review of the survey results reveals several general findings regarding Albertan's opinions towards the TFW program. The majority of the questions on the survey provided respondents with a choice within a 5-point Likert scale. Illustrating the proportion of 'agree' and 'strongly agree' responses for each provides a broad first-look at Albertan's opinions towards the program (Figure 5.1). Generally speaking, the *majority* of Albertans surveyed believe that,

- TFWs are necessary in the Alberta market,
- and, in fact, are not taking jobs away from Albertans.
- Most Temporary Foreign Workers are members of visible minority groups.
- Workplace laws and standards should not be lower for TFWs,
- and, in fact, should be equal to the standards afforded to Canadians.
- TFWs should be paid the same as Canadians in the same job.
- All TFWs should be able to obtain permanent residency.

It is worth noting that the last grouping of three questions about workplace rights and wages appear to elicit the most divided opinions from the sample, with the fewest proportion of "*neutral"* responses of any of the survey questions about the TFW program (see below for more detail). It is also important to note that at the time of the survey in 2013 there was still a large proportion of Albertans who knew *"very little"* or "nothing" about the TFW program (see below).

Figure 5.1 – Summary of Likert-scale questions

Overall, the results from the 2013 Alberta Survey highlight more support for the *necessity* of the TFW program than shown in most previous public opinion surveys. A majority of Albertans who participated in the 2013 Alberta Survey believed that the TFW program was necessary. This contrasts the results from Dominique Gross' research (2011), the CBC/Nanos Survey (2012), the Forum

Research Poll (2013), the Insights West Poll (2014), and the Angus Reid Survey (2014), where opposition to the program was the largest response category. It is not immediately apparent why this difference exists. Perhaps, on average, Albertans have a heightened perception of labour shortages (real or perceived), compared to residents of other provinces.

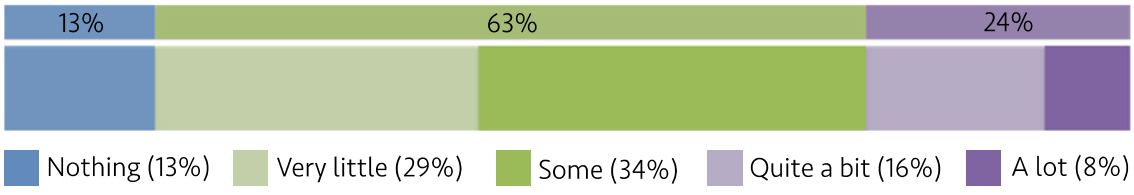
Overview of Findings

In the following section I give a more detailed question-by-question review of the findings from the 2013 Alberta Survey. This will provide a preliminary schema for understanding the key determinants of attitudes towards the TFW program/TFWs, and will set the stage for the multiple regression analysis and discussion in Chapter 6.

Knowledge of the Program

Question 1 - Not everyone necessarily knows about this program, which is fine. In your opinion, how much do you know about the Temporary Foreign Worker Program?

Figure 5.2 – Question 1 – Overview [68]



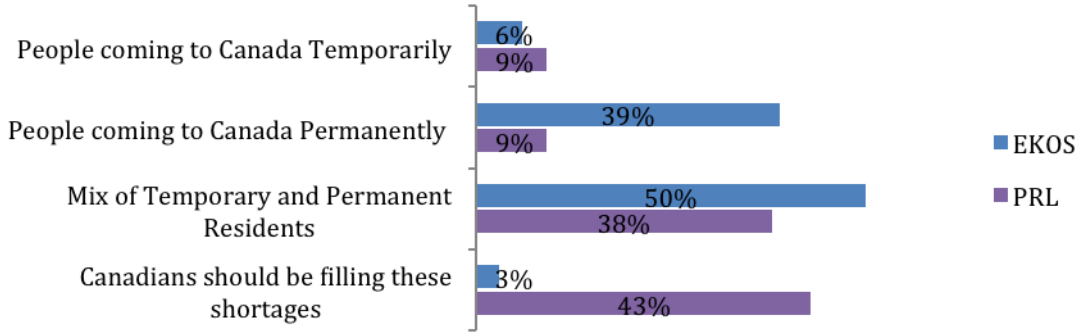
[68] For the remainder of this thesis, the categories are simplified, merging "very little" with "some", and "quite a bit" with "a lot". This is done for two reasons. First, cross-tabulation tables become difficult to read with a high number of categories. Second, by combining categories, it is less likely to have a cell contain less than five responses (which is the minimum recommended amount for running tests of significance).

As Figure 5.2 illustrates, at the time of the survey there was still a large proportion of Albertans who knew *"very little"* or "*nothing*" about the TFW program. In fact, 13% of respondents reported that they knew "*nothing*" about the program. This is important to remember as we explore the remaining survey results, assuming then, that the introduction to the TFW section of the survey is the first, and only, information on which this subset of participants is basing its opinions. Of the remaining responses, 63% reported knowing "*very little"* or "*some"*, and 24% reported knowing "*quite a bit"* or "*a lot."* Therefore, while the majority of respondents (87%) reported knowing at least something about the program, fewer than a quarter reported knowing "*quite a bit*" or more. Since familiarity with a topic will undoubtedly effect opinions, this is an important variable to be included in later stages of analysis.

Necessity of the TFW Program

Question 2 - Which of the following best reflects your point of view? Skill and labour shortages in Canada should be met by…

Figure 5.3 – Question 2 – PRL and EKOS compared



As Figure 5.3 illustrates, a small majority of 2013 Alberta Survey participants (56%) were of the opinion that skill and labour shortages in Canada should be filled by migrants. Thirty-eight percent of these respondents believed that a "mix of temporary and permanent residents*"* would be the best solution, while 9% chose "people coming to Canada temporarily" as their preferred answer and the same proportion chose "people coming to Canada permanently". The single largest response by participants (43%) was that "Canadians" should be the ones filling these positions. In short, Albertans are quite polarized in how they believe labour shortages in Canada should be met – 56% are of the opinion that migrants are necessary, while the other 43% believe that there are enough Canadians to meet labour shortages.

These findings are vastly different from those of the nation-wide public opinion survey conducted by EKOS in 2010 (Figure 5.3). While trying to understand this difference, I realized that it was likely due to an error on my part, which went unnoticed until after the survey was completed. While the EKOS survey included an introductory declarative sentence: "Sometimes employers can't find the people they need to fill jobs here in Canada...", the Alberta Survey question jumped directly to the second sentence: "Which of the following best reflects your point of view? Skill and labour shortages in Canada should be met by…". While it is unclear how much of a difference this omission will have made, it greatly reduces the value of any resulting comparison between findings.

Consequently, I will not spend further time exploring the extreme differences found between responses in the 2010 EKOS survey and the 2013 Alberta survey.

Table 5.1 – Question 2 – Statistically significant variables

		Mix of permanent and temporary	*People coming to Canada permanently*	*People coming to Canada temporarily*	*Canadians should be filling these shortages*	***Total***
Age*	*18 to 24*	41%	10%	13%	36%	**100%**
	25 to 39	42%	7%	5%	46%	**100%**
	40 to 54	40%	10%	6%	44%	**100%**
	55 +	36%	9%	12%	43%	**100%**
Region**	*Metro Edmonton*	43%	8%	7%	42%	**100%**
	Metro Calgary	41%	10%	10%	39%	**100%**
	Other Alberta	31%	9%	11%	49%	**100%**
Immigrant Status**	*Canadian Born*	40%	7%	8%	45%	**100%**
	Caucasian Immigrant	36%	14%	11%	39%	**100%**
	Other Immigrant	31%	20%	13%	36%	**100%**
Education** *(highest completed)*	*Less than high school*	18%	8%	11%	63%	**100%**
	High school complete	38%	6%	12%	44%	**100%**
	Post-secondary	41%	10%	8%	41%	**100%**

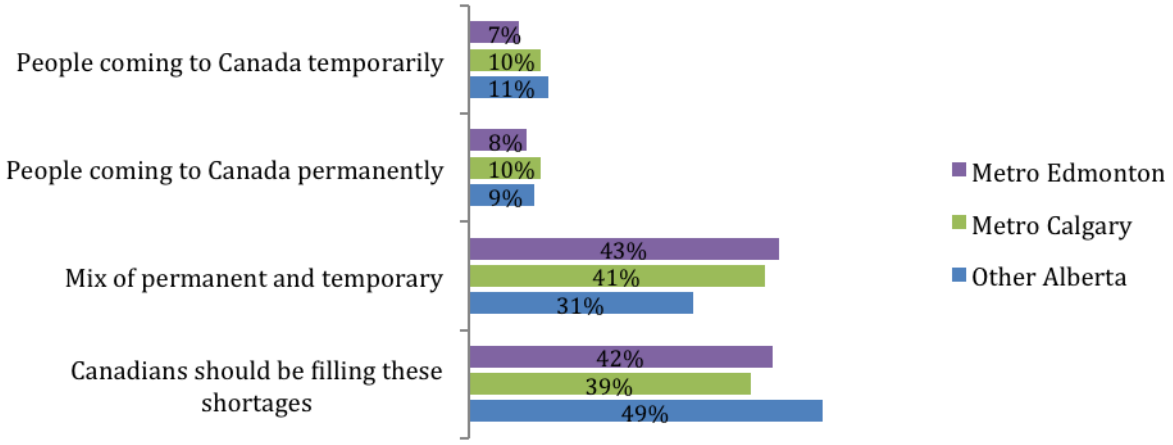
* Chi-square test, p<.05 ** Chi-square test, p<.01

Returning to the Alberta Survey results, there is significant variation in responses across a number of independent variables. Starting with basic demographic characteristics, both *age* and *region* are statistically significant (at p<.05 and p<.01, respectively).

Exploring variation of responses by *region* in Figure 5.4, it is clear that respondents from *Other Alberta* are most likely to believe that, "Canadians should be filling these shortages" (49%). Respondents from *Metro Edmonton* and *Metro*

Calgary more frequently chose a "mix of permanent and temporary residents." Respondents from *Metro Calgary* are the most likely (61%) to be in favour of some combination of im/migrants to help meet labour market needs.

Figure 5.4 – Question 2 – Closer look – Responses by region



The variation between responses across *economic variables* measured in the survey is not statistically significant at the $p<.01$ or $p<.05$ levels. Simply put, these independent variables does not appear to impact individuals' opinions regarding the 'necessity' of im/migrants to meet labour market needs in Canada.

As Figure 5.5 illustrates, variation in responses by *immigrant status* is statistically significant at the .01 level. *Other Immigrant* participants are less likely than the other groups to assert that, "Canadians should be filling these shortage", while their opinions about what ways im/migrants should come to Canada are the most evenly spread across the remaining three categories. *Canadian born* participants seem to be least in favour of im/migrants as a solution

to labour shortages. Finally, *Caucasian Immigrant* survey participants' opinions fall in between those of the other two groupings.

Figure 5.5 – Question 2 – Closer look – Responses by immigrant status

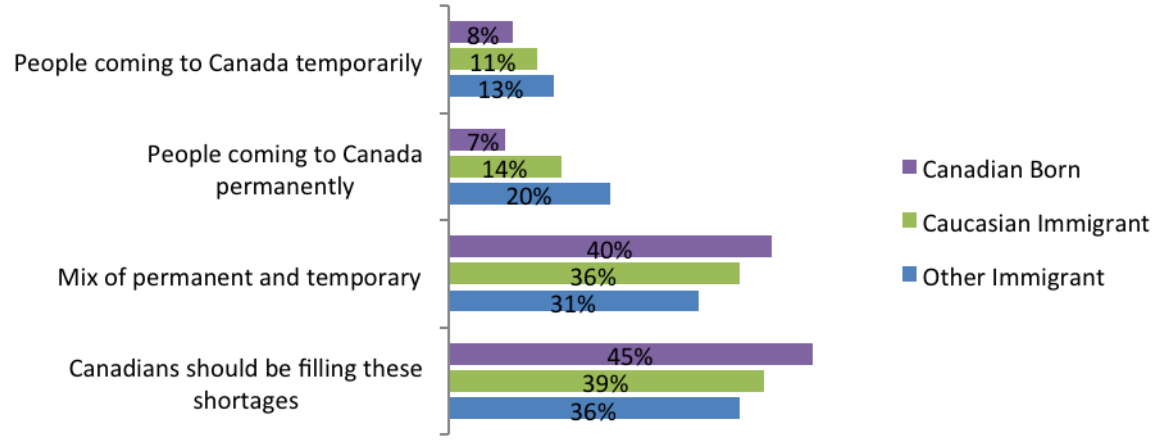
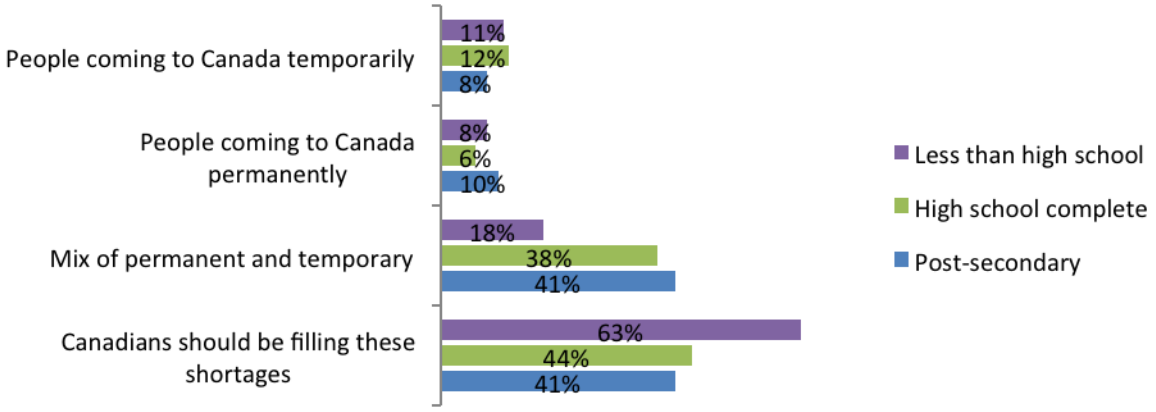


Figure 5.6 – Question 2 – Closer look – Responses by education

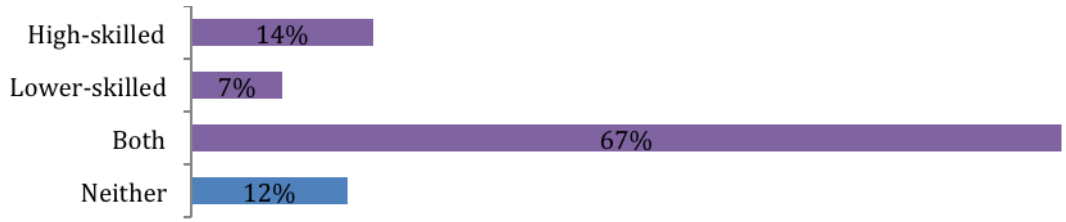


The relationship between *education* levels and opinions about the necessity of im/migrants for meeting labour market needs in Canada is statistically significant at the .01 level (Figure 5.6). Participants with the lowest *education* were least likely to respond that im/migrants were necessary for

meeting labour market needs in Canada. As *education* levels increase, participants are more likely to support some form of im/migrant supplement to the Canadian labour force (59% of participants in the *post-secondary* group).

Question 3 - Sometimes employers report having difficulty finding the people they need to fill labour shortages in Alberta. If this is the case, employers in Alberta should be able to hire Temporary Foreign Workers for:

Figure 5.7 – Question 3 – Overview



As illustrated in Figure 5.7, a large majority of respondents believe that employers in Alberta should be able to hire "both" 'high-skilled' and 'lower-skilled' TFWs when having difficulty meeting labour shortages (67%). Including those who think only highly skilled TFWs can be hired (14%) and those who feel this way only about lower skilled TFWs (7%), almost nine out of ten Albertans (88%) believe hiring TFWs is justified, if the employers are having hiring difficulties.

Table 5.2 – Question 3 – Statistically significant variables

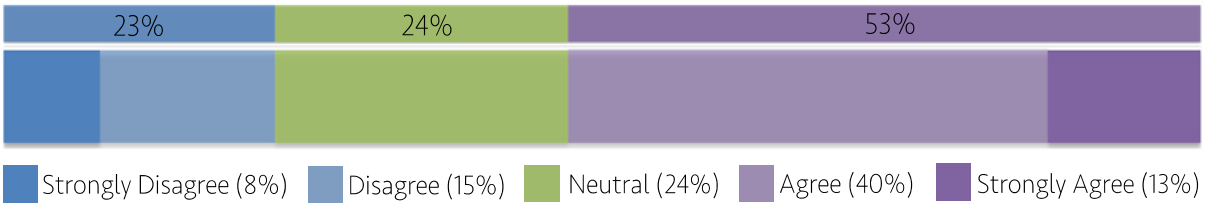
		High-skilled occupations	*Lower-skilled occupations*	*Neither*	*Both*	***Total***
Gender*	*Male*	15%	9%	13%	63%	**100%**
	Female	12%	6%	11%	71%	**100%**
Education* *(highest completed)*	*Less than high school*	18%	11%	21%	50%	**100%**
	High school complete	11%	9%	12%	68%	**100%**
	Post-secondary	14%	6%	11%	69%	**100%**
Political Party*	*Liberal*	9%	4%	17%	70%	**100%**
	NDP	11%	6%	21%	62%	**100%**
	PC/Tory	10%	7%	9%	74%	**100%**
	Wildrose	15%	8%	8%	69%	**100%**

* Chi-square test, p<.05 ** Chi-square test, p<.01

Of the basic demographic characteristics examined as possible predictors, the only independent variable that is statistically significant is *gender* (at the p<.05 level). Consistent with responses to Question 2, none of the *economic variables* pass a chi-square test of significance. This lends support to a null hypothesis of *economic variables* affecting participants' opinions regarding the *necessity* of im/migrant workers to meet labour market needs. Of the remaining variables, both *education* and *political party* have significant effects, at the p<.05 level. Participants with *less than high-school education* are the least supportive of using the TFW program. Participants that would vote *Liberal* or *NDP* are also less supportive of using the TFW program compared to those who would vote *PC/Tory* or *Wildrose*.

Question 4 - Temporary Foreign Workers are needed to fill jobs in the Alberta labour market.

Figure 5.8 – Question 4 – Overview



As Figure 5.8 illustrates, the majority of respondents agree that TFWs are necessary in the Alberta context. None of the basic demographic predictor variables pass the chi-square test of significance. In the case of Question 4 it seems *age, gender,* and *region* do not affect participants' opinions regarding the necessity of TFWs in Alberta.

Table 5.3 – Question 4 – Statistically significant variables

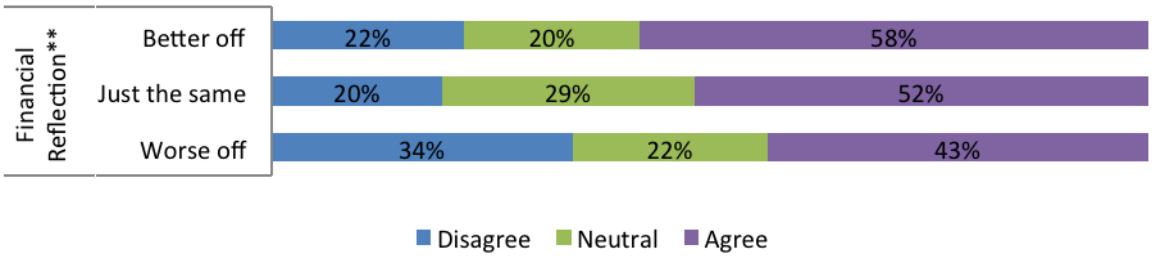
		Disagree	*Neutral*	*Agree*	***Total***
Financial Anxiety** *(since last year)*	*Better off*	22%	20%	58%	**100%**
	Just the same	20%	29%	52%	**100%**
	Worse off	34%	22%	43%	**100%**
Political Party*	*Liberal*	23%	24%	53%	**100%**
	NDP	34%	28%	38%	**100%**
	PC/Tory	19%	21%	60%	**100%**
	Wildrose	21%	23%	56%	**100%**

* Chi-square test, p<.05 ** Chi-square test, p<.01

Among the *economic variables*, *financial anxiety* was the only one to reveal a significant effect (p<.01). As Figure 5.9 illustrates, participants' opinions

regarding the necessity of TFWs to the Alberta labour market appears to be positively correlated with their how well their perceived financial well-being has improved over the past year. Participants who identified as being *better off* than last year were more likely to agree with the statement that TFWs are necessary in the Alberta context, while participants who identified as being *worse off* were less likely to agree.

Figure 5.9 – Question 4 – Closer look – Responses by financial anxiety

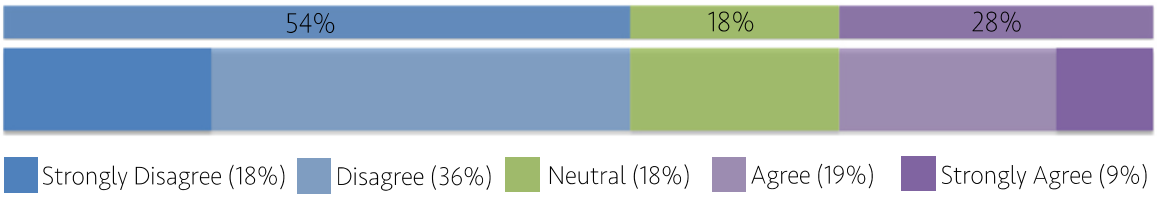


Although the other *economic variables* are not statistically significant, they appear to support a similar hypothesis. Fewer *unemployed* participants agreed with claim that TFWs were necessary in Alberta. Similarly, fewer participants with lower levels of *income* agreed with the claim of necessity. The same is true for *home ownership.* Non-owners were less likely to agree that TFWs were necessary in Alberta.

Of the remaining possible predictor variables, *political party* affiliation also had a significant effect on responses to this question ($p<.05$). Respondents who voted *NDP* were the least likely to agree with the claim that TFWs are necessary (38%), while *Wildrose* (56%) and *PC/Tory* (60%) were the most likely.

Question 5 - Temporary Foreign Workers are taking jobs away from Albertans.

Figure 5.10 – Question 5 – Overview



This question intentionally employs dramatic language to try and tease out differences of opinion across groups of Albertan residents. It asks participants to respond to a negatively framed version of the previous question, while changing the meaning only slightly. Comparing Figure 5.10 with Figure 5.8, we can see that this question has, to some extent, pulled respondents out of the "neutral" (-6%) middle-ground, and encourage them to pick a side.[69] Even so, the responses to this pair of questions are essentially reversed. A cross-tabulation of the two sets of responses reveals a statistically significant relationship ($p<.01$; results not shown in table). Because of this fact, in further analyses in Chapter 6 these two questions are used to create an index.

As Table 5.4 illustrates, the only basic demographic variable to pass the chi-square test of significance is *region* ($p<.05$). Survey participants in *other Alberta* are more likely to believe TFWs are taking jobs from Albertans, than

[69] Similar to how the RBC scandal got much more attention than any previous report about instances of abuse within the TFW program, it seems that Albertans (and Canadians), are more likely to have an opinion about something that feels more 'personal'. As the national narrative changed from "the TFW program facilitates abuses" to "the TFW program is taking *our* jobs", it seemed to illicit a much stronger reaction from the media (and their viewers). As I mentioned in the 'measurement' section, this question is intended to get at that emotional aspect, making the question 'hit closer to home'.

participants in *metro Edmonton* or *metro Calgary.* However, we must also remember that 14% of participants in *other Alberta* stated that they knew "nothing" about the TFW program in Question 1.

Table 5.4 – Question 5 – Statistically significant variables

		Disagree	*Neutral*	*Agree*	***Total***
Region*	*Metro Edmonton*	59%	14%	27%	**100%**
	Metro Calgary	56%	20%	24%	**100%**
	Other Alberta	49%	20%	31%	**100%**
Employment Status*	*Employed*	54%	19%	27%	**100%**
	Unemployed	45%	**6%**[70]	49%	**100%**
Home Owner?**	*Own*	56%	19%	25%	**100%**
	Rent	47%	16%	37%	**100%**
Financial Anxiety** *(since last year)*	*Better off*	54%	18%	28%	**100%**
	Just the same	60%	18%	22%	**100%**
	Worse off	40%	17%	43%	**100%**
Education** *(highest completed)*	*Less than high school*	48%	11%	41%	**100%**
	High school complete	49%	20%	31%	**100%**
	Post-secondary	58%	18%	24%	**100%**

* Chi-square test, p<.05 ** Chi-square test, p<.01

Table 5.4 also shows that three of the *economic variables* had significant relationships with Question 5, including two at the p<.01 level. Figure 5.11 reveals that home owners were less likely than renters to agree that TFWs are taking jobs away from Albertans. Additionally, a higher proportion of participants who identified as being *worse off* financially since the previous year agree that TFWs were taking Albertans' jobs.

[70] This cell contains fewer than five total responses; therefore, the chi-square test of significance is unreliable.

Figure 5.11 – Question 5 – Closer look – Responses by home owner & financial anxiety

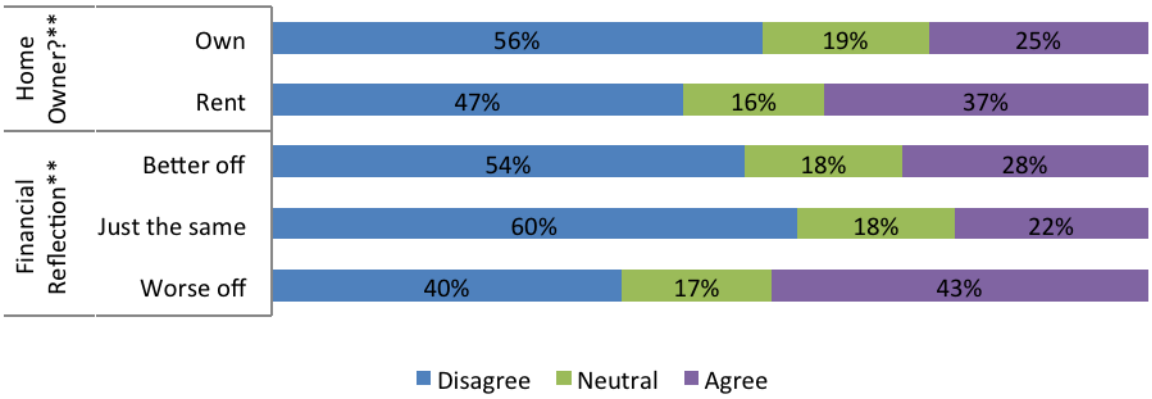
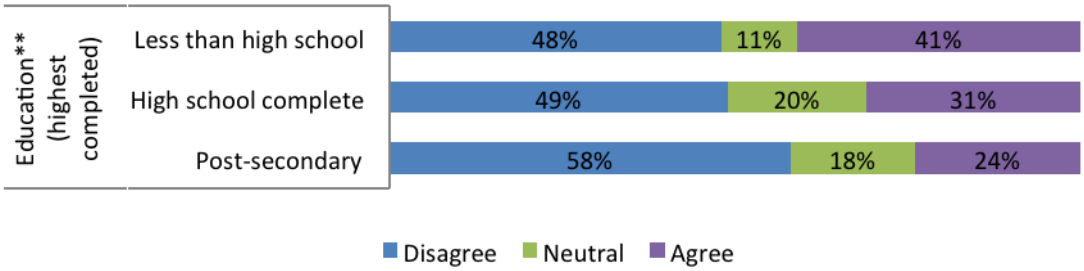


Figure 5.12 – Question 5 – Closer Look – Responses by education



As Figure 5.12 illustrates, level of *education* is negatively correlated with the opinion that TFWs are taking jobs away from Albertans. Participants with lower levels of *education* are more likely to agree with the statement proposed.

Perceptions of Racial Background of TFWs

Question 6 - Most Temporary Foreign Workers are members of visible minority groups (non-white in race or colour).

Figure 5.13 reveals that the majority of respondents (64%) agree with the statement, "most TFWs are members of visible minority groups." While I do not

intend to (and cannot) compare this with the actual population of TFWs in Alberta (to determine the degree to which perception matches reality), it does provide insight into who participants are picturing when they express opinions around the necessity/utility of the program and the rights that should be afforded TFWs.

Figure 5.13 – Question 6 – Overview

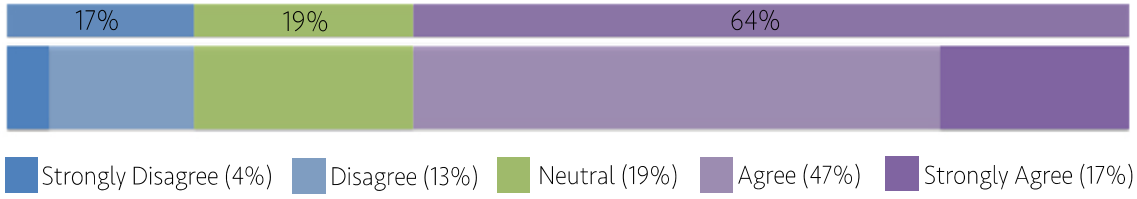


Table 5.5 – Statistically Significant Variables for Question 6

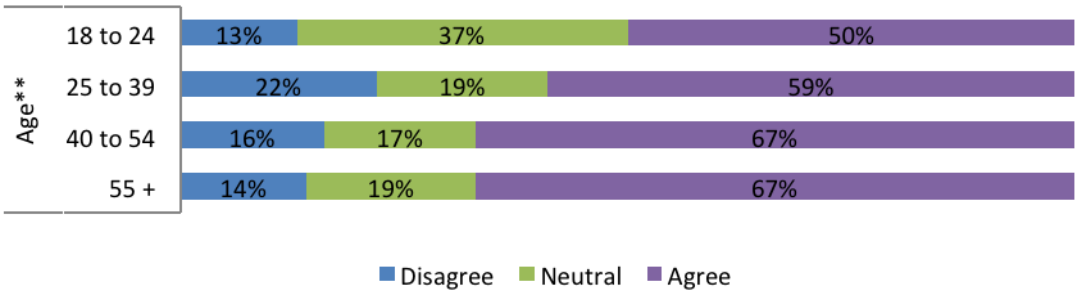
		Disagree	*Neutral*	*Agree*	***Total***
Age**	*18 to 24*	13%	37%	50%	**100%**
	25 to 39	22%	19%	59%	**100%**
	40 to 54	16%	17%	67%	**100%**
	55 +	14%	19%	67%	**100%**
Immigrant Status**	*Canadian Born*	15%	20%	65%	**100%**
	Caucasian Immigrant	22%	26%	52%	**100%**
	Other Immigrant	28%	7%	65%	**100%**
Education* *(highest completed)*	*Less than high school*	25%	9%	66%	**100%**
	High school complete	17%	23%	60%	**100%**
	Post-secondary	16%	19%	65%	**100%**

* Chi-square test, p<.05 ** Chi-square test, p<.01

Among the basic demographic variables, *age* is the only variable that passes the chi-square test of significance (Table 5.5). Figure 5.14 illustrates the positive correlation between *age* and agreement with the statement that most TFWs are members of visible minority groups. None of the economic variables

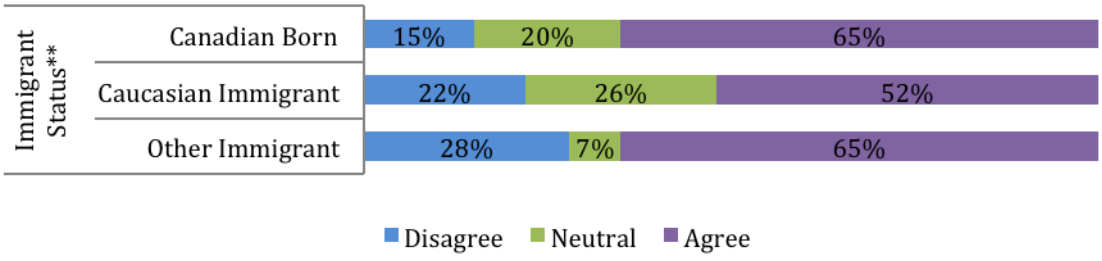
pass a chi-square test of significance.

Figure 5.14 – Question 6 – Closer look – Responses by age



Immigrant status and *education* do, however, have significant relationships with this dependent variable. While statistically significant, the differences in responses across education groups are small and not easily interpretable (Table 5.5). Figure 5.15 reveals an equally difficult to interpret pattern for *immigrant status*: 65% of both *Other Immigrant* and *Canadian Born* participants "agree with the claim that the majority of TFWs are visible minorities, compared to just over half (52%) of *Caucasian Immigrant* survey respondents.

Figure 5.15 – Question 6 – Responses by immigrant status

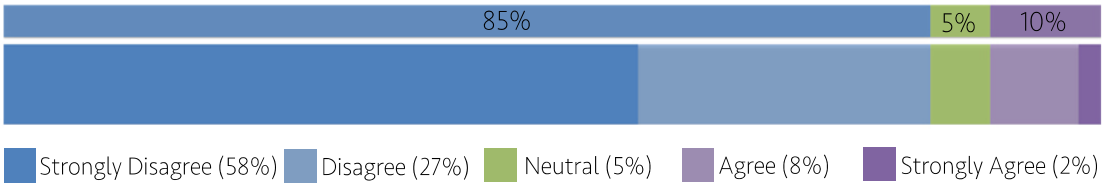


Workplace Rights for TFWs

The next set of three questions explores Albertans' opinions regarding the kinds/extent of workplace rights TFWs should have.

Question 7 - It is OK for Alberta workplace laws and standards – which are mean to protect workers' rights – to be less strict for Temporary Foreign Workers, because they are likely used to lower standards.

Figure 5.16 – Question 7 – Overview



As Figure 5.16 illustrates, a large majority (85%) of participants "disagree" that it is OK for workplace standards to be less strict for TFWs. Even more striking is the fact that over half (58%) of respondents "strongly disagree" with this statement. Even so, it is interesting to explore the variation in responses that exists across groups.

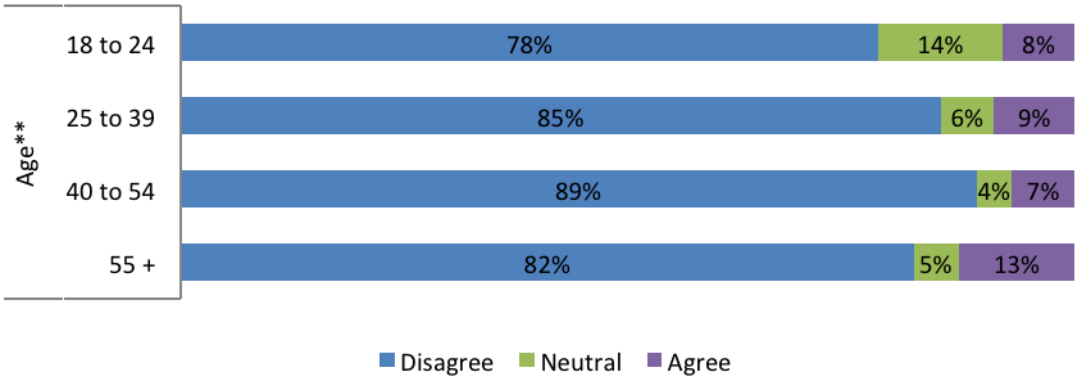
Among the basic demographic variables only *age* passes the test of significance. As Figure 5.17 reveals, the relationship between *age* and opinions that labour laws can be relaxed for TFWs is curvilinear. The youngest and oldest survey respondents (22% and 18%, respectively) are most likely to agree, although the oldest participants were somewhat more likely to "strongly agree." It is not immediately clear why this pattern exists.

Table 5.6 – Question 7 – Statistically significant variables

		Disagree	*Neutral*	*Agree*	***Total***
Age**	*18 to 24*	78%	14%	8%	**100%**
	25 to 39	85%	6%	9%	**100%**
	40 to 54	89%	4%	7%	**100%**
	55 +	82%	5%	13%	**100%**
Household Income**	*< $30,000*	71%	9%	20%	**100%**
	$30,000 to $59,999	79%	7%	14%	**100%**
	$60,000 to $89,999	87%	4%	9%	**100%**
	$90,000 +	88%	4%	8%	**100%**
Immigrant Status**	*Canadian Born*	86%	5%	9%	**100%**
	Caucasian Immigrant	84%	5%	11%	**100%**
	Other Immigrant	67%	10%	23%	**100%**
Education** *(highest completed)*	*Less than high school*	62%	7%	31%	**100%**
	High school complete	84%	7%	9%	**100%**
	Post-secondary	87%	4%	9%	**100%**

* Chi-square test, p<.05 ** Chi-square test, p<.01

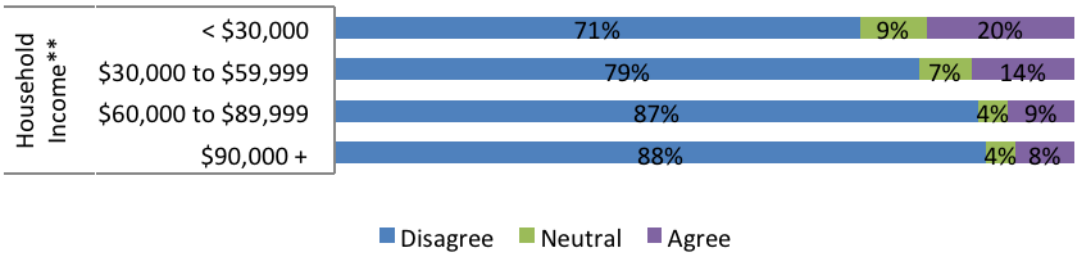
Figure 5.17 – Question 7 – Closer look – Responses by age



Of the *economic variables* measured on the survey, only *household income* passes the chi-square test of significance (p<.01). Figure 5.18 highlights a negative relationship. Survey participants with higher *income* are less likely to

"agree" with the statement that it is OK for workplace standards to be lower for TFWs.

Figure 5.18 – Question 7 – Closer look – Responses by household income

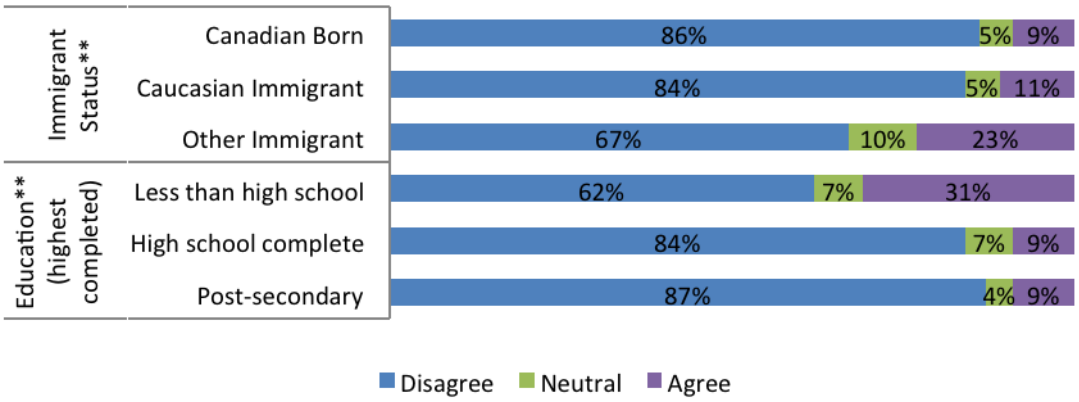


Two of the remaining variables (*immigrant status and education*) also have significant relationships with responses to this question about workers' rights ($p<.01$). *Other immigrant* participants are considerably more likely to "agree" that it is OK for workplace standards to be lower for TFWs (Figure 5.19). This finding was probably the most unexpected. I had expected that survey participants who had immigrated to Alberta would be more empathetic to the situation experienced by TFWs, but this is not what I observed when I included all immigrants (Caucasian and other) in one category. I then decided to work with a more detailed *immigrant status* measure, splitting the initial two-category variable into a three-category variable using participants' *country of origin* as a proxy variable for *visible minority status*.

In addition, there appears to be a negative correlation between *education* and "agreeing" with the statement that it is OK for TFWs to have fewer rights (Figure 5.10). Survey participants with less than a high school education are much

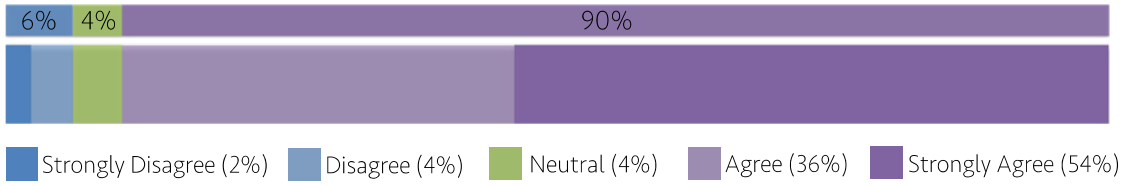
more likely to "agree" that it is OK for workplace standards to be lower for TFWs.

Figure 5.19 – Question 7 – Closer look – Responses by immigrant status & education



Question 8 - Temporary Foreign Workers should be given the exact same workplace rights as Canadian workers.

Figure 5.20 – Question 8 – Overview



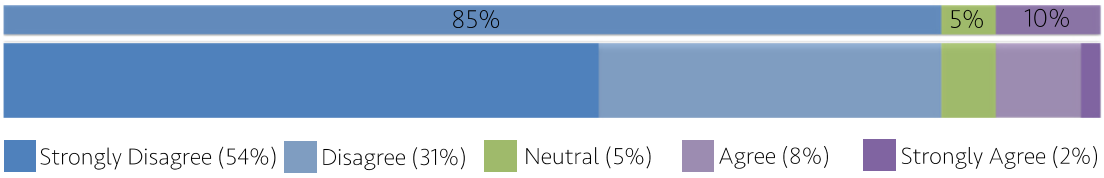
Question 8, a follow-up to Question 7, asks about the same issue in a reversely-worded fashion. An even higher percentage of participants "agree" (90%) with this statement (Figure 5.20), than "disagreed" (85%) with the statement proposed in Question 7 (Figure 5.16). Clearly, most Albertans believe TFWs should have access to the same workplace rights as Canadian workers. Unlike Question 7 however, none of the predictor variables explored in the cross-

tabulations passed a chi-square test of significance, perhaps because of the very high level of overall agreement with Question 8.

Question 9 - It is OK if Temporary Foreign Workers are paid less than Canadian workers performing the same job (Or: Temporary Foreign Workers do not need to be paid the same as Canadian workers performing the same job).

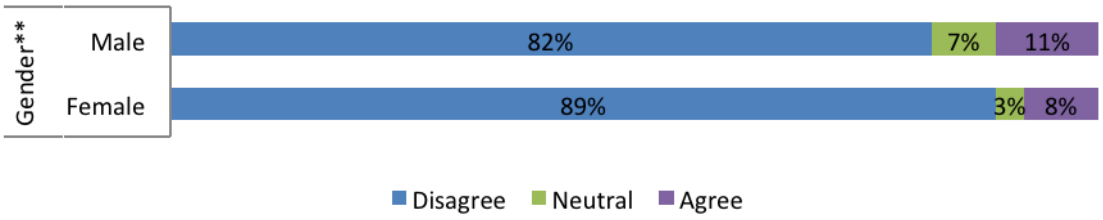
Exploring Albertans' opinions regarding TFWs workplace rights in greater detail, Question 9 aims to determine the degree to which Albertans' opinions aligned with (what was at the time) a program policy that allowed employers to pay TFWs between 5 to 15% less than the 'market rate'.

Figure 5.21 – Question 9 – Overview



Not surprisingly, given the responses to more general questions about workplace rights for TFWs (discussed above), a large majority of survey participants (85%) disagreed with the policy that allowed employers to pay TFWs less than the 'market rate' (Figure 5.21). Although this policy was removed shortly after the survey began in 2013, these findings confirm that there was a significant disconnect between public opinion and public policy regarding the issue of pay equity.

Figure 5.22 – Question 9 – Closer look – Responses by gender



Among the basic demographic variables, only *gender* was significantly associated with responses to this question. As Figure 5.22 demonstrates, *females* were somewhat more likely to disagree with TFWs being paid less than Canadians. None of the *economic variables* passed the test of significance.

Table 5.7 – Question 9 – Statistically significant variables

		Disagree	*Neutral*	*Agree*	***Total***
Gender**	*Male*	82%	7%	11%	**100%**
	Female	89%	3%	8%	**100%**
Education* *(highest completed)*	*Less than high school*	79%	3%	18%	**100%**
	High school complete	88%	5%	7%	**100%**
	Post-secondary	85%	5%	10%	**100%**
Political Party*	*Liberal*	90%	5%	5%	**100%**
	NDP	96%	2%	2%	**100%**
	PC/Tory	85%	5%	10%	**100%**
	Wildrose	82%	8%	10%	**100%**

* Chi-square test, p<.05 ** Chi-square test, p<.01

In contrast, both *education* and *political party* were significantly associated with this dependent variable (Table 5.7). Similar to findings for previous questions about workplace rights, we see a positive correlation between level of *education* and more egalitarian opinions about the rights that should be afforded TFWs (in this case, greater disagreement among more educated

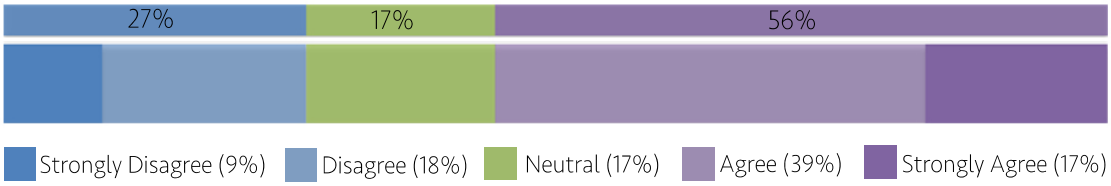
respondents). Participants who identify with the more conservative *political parties (PC/Tory* and *Wildrose)* are less likely to be concerned with TFWs being paid at the same level as Canadians.

Permanent Residency Rights for TFWs

Question 10 - All Temporary Foreign Workers should have the opportunity to obtain permanent residency in Canada.

This last survey question asks respondents for their opinions regarding the right to obtain permanent residency. Compared to responses to the previous three questions about workplace rights, Albertans appear to be somewhat less supportive of permanent residency rights for TFWs. However, as Figure 5.23 illustrates, the majority of participants (56%) still do agree that all TFWs should be able to access permanent residency.

Figure 5.23 – Question 10 – Overview



Among the basic demographic predictors, only *age* has a significant effect on responses to this question. Younger participants appear to be more supportive of TFWs right to access permanent residency than older participants (Table 5.8).

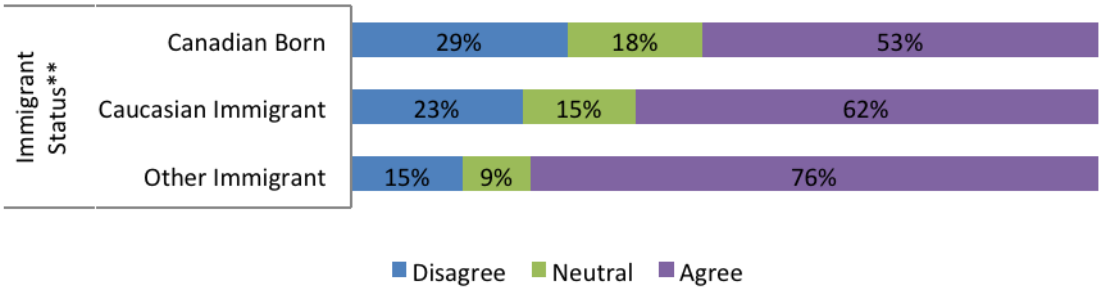
Table 5.8 – Question 10 – Statistically significant variables

		Disagree	*Neutral*	*Agree*	***Total***
Age*	*18 to 24*	14%	12%	74%	**100%**
	25 to 39	24%	18%	58%	**100%**
	40 to 54	32%	17%	51%	**100%**
	55 +	27%	17%	56%	**100%**
Financial Anxiety* *(since last year)*	*Better off*	23%	17%	60%	**100%**
	Just the same	29%	17%	54%	**100%**
	Worse off	35%	17%	48%	**100%**
Immigrant Status**	*Canadian Born*	29%	18%	53%	**100%**
	Caucasian Immigrant	23%	15%	62%	**100%**
	Other Immigrant	15%	9%	76%	**100%**

* Chi-square test, p<.05 ** Chi-square test, p<.01

As Table 5.8 also shows, the only *economic variable* to pass a chi-square test of significance is *financial anxiety* (p<.05). Participants who considered themselves to be financially *better off* than the previous year are more likely to "agree" (60%) that all TFWs should be able to access permanent residency than other participants. Of the remaining possible predictor variables, only *immigrant status* significantly affects responses to this final question about permanent residency rights (Figure 5.24). *Other immigrants* are most likely to "agree" that all TFWs should have access to permanent residency, while *Canadian born* participants are least likely to "agree".

Figure 5.24 – Question 10 – Closer look – Responses by immigrant status



The results from this question reveal another disconnect between public opinion in Alberta and existing program policy which heavily restricts access to permanent residency.

Discussion and Conclusion

The descriptive findings outlined above offers valuable insights into Albertans' opinions regarding the TFW program. Several key findings should be highlighted. First, a majority of Albertans have at least heard of the program, and over a quarter report knowing "quite a bit" or "a lot". Second, in contrast to the existing nation-wide surveys of public opinion, a majority of Albertans believe that the use of the TFW program is necessary. Third, a large majority of Albertans generally believe that the TFWs employed in the program should be afforded the same workplace rights as Canadians. Fourth, Albertans typically believe that most TFWs are members of visible minority groups. Lastly, a majority of Albertans believe that TFWs should be given permanent residency rights, although a larger majority were in favour of equal workplace rights for TFWs.

The descriptive findings also highlight two instances where, at the time the 2013 Alberta Survey was completed, public opinion and public policy were significantly disconnected. A very large majority (85%) of Albertans believed that it was not OK for TFWs to be paid less than Canadians in the same position. It was not until after the survey was completed that changes to the TFW program policy brought it into alignment with public opinion on this issue. In addition, a majority of Albertans (56%) believed that TFWs should have access to permanent residency in Canada. However, access to permanent residency was (and remains) heavily restricted by TFW program policy.

While these basic frequencies offer important insights into Albertans' opinions regarding the TFW program, I am also keenly interested in exploring the key determinants of these opinions. In this chapter, I discussed a series of cross-tabulations involving a large set of possible predictor variables. Table 5.9 summarizes these bivariate analyses, highlighting the statistically significant relationships with the dependent variables (excluding Question 1).

Questions 5 (focusing on the *necessity* of the TFW program*)* and Question 7 (asking about *workplace rights)* have the highest proportion of statistically significant independent variables. Turning from dependent variables to the predictor variables *knowledge of the program, age, immigrant status,* and *education* were significantly associated with the most dependent variables. Mapping the statistically significant variables in this way allows for an initial insight into the key determinants of Albertans' opinions regarding the TFW program.

Table 5.9 – Summary of Statistical Significance

Independent Variable	**Chi-square test of significance** p<.05									**Total**
Knowledge of Program (Q1)	-	-	Q4	Q5	-	Q7	-	Q9	Q10	**5**
Age	Q2	-	-	-	Q6	Q7	-	-	Q10	**4**
Gender	-	Q3	-	-	-	-	-	Q9	-	**2**
Region	Q2	-	-	Q5	-	-	-	-	-	**2**
Employment Status	-	-	-	Q5	-	-	-	-	-	**1**
Household income	-	-	-	-	-	Q7	-	-	-	**1**
Home owner	-	-	-	Q5	-	-	-	-	-	**1**
Financial anxiety	-	-	Q4	Q5	-	-	-	-	Q10	**3**
Immigrant status	Q2	-	-	-	Q6	Q7	-	-	Q10	**4**
Education	Q2	Q3	-	Q5	Q6	Q7	-	Q9	-	**6**
Political Party	-	Q3	Q4	-	-	-	-	Q9	-	**3**
Total	**4**	**3**	**3**	**6**	**3**	**5**	**0**	**4**	**4**	**32**

Recognizing that some of the predictor variables (e.g., *age* and *education*) are themselves correlated, as are some of the outcome measures (e.g., the various *workplace rights* questions), in Chapter 6 I explore the key determinants of Albertans' opinions regarding the TFW program using a step-wise multiple regression analysis. Rather than working with a large number of outcome measures, I employ two multi-item indices, the first regarding the *necessity* of the program, and the second about *rights* afforded TFWs in the program.

Chapter 6 – Multiple Regression Analyses and Discussion

Analysis Strategy

The step-wise multiple regression analyses outlined below were conducted in order to further explore, and attempt to account for, the differences in opinion across survey participants. These analyses provide insights into the variation in opinion across the sample regarding both the *necessity* of the TFW program as well as which *rights* should be afforded TFWs. To facilitate this analysis, I created two multi-item indices. The first includes the two Likert-scale questions (Q. 4 and Q. 5) regarding the *necessity* of the program, while the second index groups three of the Likert-scale questions (Q. 7, 8, and 9) regarding the *workplace rights* afforded TFWs.

A Pearson's correlation test revealed that the two *necessity* items were significantly correlated ($r = 0.507$; $p<0.01$). Cronbach's Alpha for this two-item index was 0.671. Prior to finalizing the *necessity* index, steps were taken to mitigate the effect of missing values on either of the questions used. For survey participants who answered only one of the two questions (35 individuals in total), I replaced the missing value indicator on the one question with the respondent's score on the answered question. My reasoning was that, since the responses to the two questions were strongly correlated, item substitution to reduce missing values was justified. After completing this step, only 15 survey respondents were coded as missing values for the *necessity* index.

The same process was completed when compiling the three-item *workplace rights* index (the permanent residency rights question was not included in this index). The responses to the three questions were significantly and positively correlated (Pearson's correlations between .311 and .420; $p<.01$; Cronbach's Alpha = 0.622). A similar strategy was used to reduce missing values. For survey participants who answered only two of the three questions (40 in total), the average score from the two answered questions was used to replace the missing value indicator on the third un-answered question. Eleven cases where more than one question had a missing value were coded as missing on the *rights* index.

The net effects (controlling on other variables) of the many possible predictor variables already examined in the bivariate descriptive analyses in Chapter 5 are systematically examined in the following stepwise multiple regression analyses. Some of these independent variables were selected to control for participant's basic demographic characteristics (*region, age, gender, immigrant status*) and *knowledge* about the program. In addition, the multiple regression analyses incorporate theoretically central variables like *educational attainment*, economic characteristics (*household income, financial anxiety, employment status, home ownership*), and *political preference*.

Some of these independent variables (e.g., age, household income) were already measured at the interval level and so could be included without

modification in the regression analyses. *Financial anxiety* and *knowledge of the program*, measured at the ordinal level, were treated as if they were interval measures. Two variables (gender and home ownership) were included in the analysis as basic binary variables (e.g., female = 1; male = 0). The remaining categorical variables (e.g., immigrant status, employment status, educational attainment, political preference) were recoded into sets of binary variables. For each set of binary variables, one value from the original variable was omitted from the regression analysis and treated as the reference category (see footnotes in Tables 6.1 and 6.2).

Predictors of the Necessity Index

The dependent variable in the first multiple regression analysis, the *necessity* index, was constructed from two different questions exploring participants' opinions regarding the necessity of the TFW program (see above). The results from the five-step analysis are outlined in Table 6.1. Each column displays the standardized regression coefficients (betas), for each variable included in the corresponding equation. The bottom of each column includes both the number of participants represented in the equation, as well as the adjusted R^2 score – which reports how well the corresponding equation can account for variation between responses. *Household income* was intentionally omitted as a

predictor variable until the very last step, since its inclusion substantially reduced the number of respondents represented.[71]

As we move through the steps in Table 6.1, adding additional predictor variables, the explanatory power of the analysis increases. The final equation accounts for close to 7% of the variation in respondents' opinions. Although this does not seem particularly high, each equation remains statistically significant ($p<.01$), telling us that the predictor variables do significantly account for variation in opinions regarding the *necessity* of the TFW program in Alberta.

Examining the control variables in Equation 1 we see that *knowledge* of the program, *region*, and *age* are all statistically significant predictors. Residents of Edmonton, compared to Albertans living outside of Edmonton and Calgary, were significantly more likely to agree that TFWs are necessary, although the relationship was weak (beta = .108). The same is true of residents of Calgary, compared to Albertans outside of Calgary and Edmonton (beta = .073). In addition, participants with higher levels of self-reported knowledge of the program (beta = .120), and older participants (beta = .70) were more likely to believe in the necessity of the TFW program. Overall however, the first equation can only account for less than 3% of the variation in responses ($R^2 = 0.025$).

[71] *Household income*, like other income measures, is frequently a variable with a high non-response rate in public opinion surveys. For this reason, when it is added to a multiple-regression analysis, the number of respondents the equation can draw from is significantly reduced.

Table 6.1 – Dependent Variable: *Necessity Index*

Model	Equation 1**	Equation 2**	Equation 3**	Equation 4**	Equation 5**
Knowledge of the program	0.120**	0.112**	0.107**	0.101**	0.105**
Region Binary - Edmonton = 1	0.108**	0.096**	0.103**	0.113**	0.136**
Region Binary - Calgary = 1	0.073*	0.049	0.061	0.058	0.068
Gender - Female =1	0.010	0.004	0.009	0.014	0.016
Age	0.070*	0.081**	0.092**	0.075*	0.11**
Imm Binary-Caucasian Imm =1	-0.043	-0.041	-0.037	-0.032	-0.051
Imm Binary-Other Imm = 1	-0.032	-0.040	-0.047	-0.040	-0.02
Ed Binary - HS Diploma=1	--	0.072	0.042	0.035	0.082
Ed Binary - College/Tech = 1	--	-0.015	-0.042	-0.046	0.009
Ed Binary - University = 1	--	0.137*	0.100	0.096	0.128*
Household Income	--	--	--	--	0.010
Financial anxiety	--	--	-0.126**	-0.124**	-0.124**
Emp Status Binary-Emp = 1	--	--	0.012	0.007	-0.007
Emp Status Binary-Unemp = 1	--	--	0.017	0.017	0.02
Home ownership Binary	--	--	0.046	0.041	0.047
Prov Politics - PC/Tory = 1	--	--	--	0.076*	0.053
Prov Politics - Wildrose = 1	--	--	--	0.055	0.046
Prov Politics - Liberal = 1	--	--	--	0.069*	0.051
Prov Politics - NDP = 1	--	--	--	-0.039	-0.054
N (total sample, n=1207)	**1165**	**1165**	**1161**	**1161**	**974**
Adjusted R^2	***0.025***	***0.041***	***0.055***	***0.063***	***0.065***

* p<.05; ** p<.01

Reference categories for sets of binary variables are: *region* (other Alberta); *immigrant status* (Canadian born); *educational attainment* (less than highschool); *employment status* (unemployed and not looking); *home ownership status* (renter); *political preference* (all other survey participants, including those who said they would not vote for one of the big four parties, said they were not eligible, said they would not vote, and those who did not answer).

Equation 2 adds theoretically important predictor variables to the analysis, and the explanatory power of the equation increases slightly to 4% ($R^2 = 0.041$).

Although it is only university degree holders who stand out as significantly more likely to agree with the necessity of TFWs (beta = 0.137), introducing the *education* variables helps to clarify some of the effects of the control variables (see Equation 1). For instance, the impact of *age* increases (beta = .081), and residing in Calgary is no longer significant. The effects of *knowledge* of the program (beta = .112) and residing in Edmonton change very little.

With the introduction of measures of *financial anxiety* in Equation 3, the effects of *knowledge* of the program (beta = .107), residence in *Edmonton* (beta = .103), and *age* (beta = .092) again change in only a minor way. At the same time, the effect of *university degree* becomes non-significant, no doubt because university graduates tend to be more financially secure. While *financial anxiety* is the only new predictor in Equation 3 to be statistically significant, it provides an interesting insight into what kinds of measures of financial security might affect opinions of the *necessity* of TFWs. It appears that individuals' *employment status*, and *home ownership* do not significantly influence opinions about the TFW program. Individuals with higher levels of *financial anxiety*, however, are less likely to believe that TFWs are necessary. In fact, this is the strongest predictor in Equation 3 (beta: -.126). Overall, the third equation can account for 5.5% of the variation in opinions.

The *political preference* binary variables are added to the fourth equation where we see that respondents who said they would vote PC/Tory or Liberal,

compared to 'other political party' were significantly more likely to believe TFWs are necessary. The effects of the remaining independent variables do not change substantially with the introduction of political preference. Overall, Equation 4 accounts for over 6% of the variation in opinions about the *necessity* of the TFW program (R^2=.063).

Equation 5, introduces *household income* as yet another financial measure. As noted earlier, it was entered into the equation in a separate and final step because a large minority of survey respondents did not answer this question. In fact, we find that the net effect of this additional predictor is very small and not statistically significant. Furthermore, the explanatory power of the equation increases very little (R^2=.065) compared to Equation 4. And, with two exceptions, the effects (statistically significant or not) of the other predictor variables change very little. Equation 5 once again reveals that university graduates are significantly more likely to support the TFW program (this variable was significant in Equation 2, but then not quite significant in Equations 3 and 4). In addition, none of the provincial political preference binary variables are statistically significant in Equation 5, although two were in Equation 4. In short, because *household income* is correlated with *educational attainment*, as well as *political preferences*, its inclusion in the final multiple regression equation leads to small changes in the effects of these other variables. But the overall pattern of results does not change.

Predictors of the Workplace Rights Index

The dependent variable in the second multiple-regression analysis, the *workplace rights* index, is constructed from responses to three different questions exploring participants' opinions regarding the *workplace rights* that should be afforded TFWs (see above for more detail). In addition to the independent variables used in the prior analysis of the *necessity* index, I now include that index as an independent variable. I expect that respondents who believe the TFW program is *necessary,* compared to those who don't, might have differing opinions regarding what rights TFWs should have, although I do not hypothesize whether they would be in favour of fewer or more rights. The results from the five-step multiple regression analysis, following the same analysis strategy as before, are outlined in Table 6.2.

From the outset, it is evident that, compared to the analysis of the *necessity* index (Table 6.1), the analysis of the *workplace rights* index (Table 6.2) has greater explanatory power. As we move through the steps, the equations are able to account for between 8% and 12% of the variance in opinions regarding rights that should be afforded TFWs. This increased explanatory power may be due, in part, to respondents being more confident in offering opinions about *workplace rights*, as compared to the *necessity* of the TFW program. In addition, Table 6.2 contains one additional predictor variable – *opinions about the necessity*

of the TFW program – which has a significant effect in each equation. All five equations are statistically significant ($p<.01$).

Most of the control variables in Equation 1 have statistically significant effects on the *rights* index. Beliefs about the *necessity* of the program (beta=.127), and *knowledge* of the program (beta=.156) are positively correlated with opinions about equal rights for TFWs. Similarly, Edmonton residents (beta=.064), and women (beta=.076) are more likely to agree with this position. In contrast, *age* (beta= -0.118) is negatively correlated with opinions about TFWs deserving equal rights, and visible minority immigrants (beta= -0.154) are less likely to agree. The impact of *immigrant status* is an unexpected one, which I discuss in further detail below. Overall, the first equation can account for almost 8% of the variance in opinions regarding TFW rights ($R^2 = 0.078$).

With the introduction of the three *educational attainment* binary variables in the second equation, the explanatory power of the equation increases to almost 9%. Compared to survey participants who had not completed high school, those with a high school diploma (beta = 0.187), a college or technical school certificate (beta = 0.222) or a university degree (beta = 0.194) were all more likely to agree that TFWs should have equal *workplace rights*. The addition of the *educational attainment* variables to the equation has little effect on the impact of the control variables, although the effect of *age* declines between Equation 1 and 2, since older survey respondents are typically less educated.

Table 6.2 – Dependent Variable: *Rights Index*

Model	Equation 1**	Equation 2**	Equation 3**	Equation 4**	Equation 5**
Necessity Index	0.127**	0.124**	0.133**	0.142**	0.154**
Knowledge of the program	0.156**	0.143**	0.147**	0.136**	0.113**
Region Binary - Edmonton = 1	0.064*	0.050	0.050	0.024	-0.005
Region Binary - Calgary = 1	-0.007	-0.014	-0.021	-0.018	-0.064
Gender - Female =1	0.076**	0.074**	0.072*	0.071*	0.073*
Age	-0.140**	-0.118**	-0.113**	-0.093**	-0.056
Imm Binary-Caucasian Imm =1	-0.014	-0.021	-0.024	-0.020	-0.017
Imm Binary-Other Imm = 1	-0.154**	-0.156**	-0.155**	-0.157**	-0.162**
Ed Binary - HS Diploma=1	--	0.187**	0.202**	0.194**	0.249**
Ed Binary - College/Tech = 1	--	0.222**	0.236**	0.226**	0.251**
Ed Binary - University = 1	--	0.194**	0.213**	0.199**	0.249**
Household Income	--	--	--	--	0.119**
Financial anxiety	--	--	0.060*	0.052	0.058
Emp Status Binary-Emp = 1	--	--	0.004	0.010	-0.024
Emp Status Binary-Unemp = 1	--	--	-0.005	0.005	0.031
Home ownership Binary	--	--	-0.044	-0.038	-0.095**
Prov Politics - PC/Tory = 1	--	--	--	-0.025	-0.040
Prov Politics - Wildrose = 1	--	--	--	-0.013	-0.20
Prov Politics - Liberal = 1	--	--	--	0.020	0.041
Prov Politics - NDP = 1	--	--	--	0.132**	0.130**
N (total sample, n=1207)	**1158**	**1158**	**1154**	**1154**	**967**
Adjusted R^2	***0.078***	***0.087***	***0.088***	***0.104***	***0.124***

* p<.05; ** p<.01

Reference categories for sets of binary variables are: *region* (other Alberta); *immigrant status* (Canadian born); *educational attainment* (less than highschool); *employment status* (unemployed and not looking); *home ownership status* (renter); *political preference* (all other survey participants, including those who said they would not vote for one of the big four parties, said they were not eligible, said they would not vote, and those who did not answer).

The effects of variables already in the equation change little as the *financial security* variables are introduced in the third equation. The overall

explanatory power of the equation increases only slightly (R^2=.088). *Financial anxiety* is positively correlated with opinions of more equitable rights for TFWs (beta=.060). This is somewhat unusual, given the significant negative relationship this variable had with opinions about *necessity* of the TFW program (Table 6.1). Controlling for opinions regarding *necessity*, it appears that respondents with higher levels of *financial anxiety* are nevertheless somewhat more likely to believe that TFWs should have equal *workplace rights*.

In the fourth equation, with the introduction of the *political preference* binary variables, we see that the overall explanatory power of the equation increasing to over 10%. NDP voters, however, are the only group to hold significantly different opinions – they are most likely to believe that TFWs should have the equal *workplace rights*. In Equation 4, the *financial anxiety* measure is no longer quite significant. The effects of the remaining variables change very little.

Household income, introduced as a predictor variable in the final equation, has a significant positive effect (beta =0.119) on beliefs about equal *workplace rights* for TFWs. We also see a few additional interesting changes. The effect of *age* is no longer significant, as a result of the correlation between *age* and *income*, while *home ownership* becomes a significant predictor (beta = -0.095). In addition, the effects of all the *education* binary variables increase substantially. The apparent suppressed effect of both *education* and *home ownership* after

controlling on *household income* reveals a complex pattern. More educated people may have more liberal beliefs, but they also earn more (as reflected in their higher level of home ownership), which can make them more conservative in their opinions. The effects of the remaining variables are generally similar in Equations 4 and 5. Thus, with the exception of some evidence of suppressed effects, the overall pattern of results changes little in the smaller sample necessitated by inclusion of *household income* as a predictor variable. Overall the fifth equation can account for over 12% of the variation in responses (R^2=.124).

Discussion

These multivariate analyses offer several important insights into the key determinants of Albertans' opinions regarding the *necessity of the* TFW program and the *workplace rights* that should be afforded those working within it. Before discussing the core theoretical variables (from the attitudes towards immigration literature), a few comments about several other stand-alone variables are warranted.

First, familiarity with the TFW program is important. While 87% of survey participants reported knowing something about the program (Chapter 5), a considerable proportion reported knowing very little, and 13% stated that they knew nothing at all about the TFW program. We would expect knowledge of a topic to affect opinions about it, and so included *knowledge* as a control variable.

Not surprisingly, it had a statistically significant effect throughout each set of step-wise multiple regression analyses. The more *knowledge* a participant reported having of the program the more likely they would believe that the program was *necessary*, and that those employed within it should have access to equal *workplace rights.*

The same is true for the single item about permanent residency rights (i.e., permanent residency) for TFWs. While not included within the *workplace rights* index, the findings reveal that the more *knowledge* a participant reported having about the TFW program, the more likely they believed TFWs should be able to access permanent residency in Canada.

Second, differences in opinion across *region* were observed in all stages of the analysis regarding *necessity* of the TFW program (Table 6.1), but were virtually absent in the analysis exploring opinions regarding *workplace rights* for TFWs (Table 6.2). Overall, residents of Edmonton were more likely than those living outside Edmonton and Calgary to agree with the *necessity* of the TFW program. An explanation of this difference is not immediately apparent.

Third, in addition to the predictor variables utilized in the *necessity* analysis, the *necessity* index itself was added as a control variable in the *workplace rights* analysis. Respondents who thought the program was necessary were also more likely to agree that TFWs should have access to equal workplace *rights*. This variable remained significant ($p<.01$) throughout the workplace *rights*

multiple regression analysis.

Hypothesis Testing

In order to test the hypotheses outlined in Chapter 3, I now turn to a discussion of the predictor variables most closely linked to the theoretical framework drawn from the attitudes towards immigration literature.

Self-Interest

My first hypothesis stated that *measures of self-interest will be negatively correlated with opinions regarding the necessity of the TFW program, and negatively correlated with opinions regarding what rights should be afforded TFWs employed within it*. To test this, several measures of *self-interest* were included in the step-wise multiple regression analyses outlined above.

Financial anxiety, employment status, and *home ownership status* were all introduced in the third equation, while *household income* was introduced in the final equation (because of a higher level of missing data). As noted above, the only measure of *self-interest* that was statistically significant in the *necessity* analysis (all five equations) was *financial anxiety*. Survey participants reporting more *financial anxiety* were less likely to believe the TFW program was *necessary.* This is consistent with the proposed hypothesis based on the scarce resource theory literature. *Financial anxiety*, perhaps a result of increased

competition for limited resources, is negatively associated with support for the TFW program.

None of the other *self-interest measures* were significant in any stage of the *necessity* analysis. This may be due to the inter-correlations among these measures; including them all as predictors might cancel out some of their effects. Alternatively, *financial anxiety* may simply be a more appropriate measure for testing this theory. Even if a person is not a homeowner, for example, she or he might not be feeling anxious about their financial future. But if they are feeling anxious, this sentiment may begin to generate concerns about others (e.g., TFWs) possibly taking away jobs.

The second part of the first hypothesis addressed the impact of measures of *self-interest* on participants' opinions regarding the *workplace rights* afforded TFWs employed within the program. Here, measures of *self-interest* had even less of an impact on participants' opinions, at least until *household income* was introduced as a predictor in Equation 5. In this final equation, both *household income* and *home ownership status* were statistically significant, with positive and negative effects, respectively. As noted in my earlier discussion of these findings, suppressed effects involving *education*, *household income*, and *home ownership* result in a complicated, difficult to interpret set of relationships. Controlling on *household income* and *education*, perhaps homeowners are more conservative, and hence less willing to support equal rights for TFW. Even so, the positive net

effect of *household income* was consistent with the proposed hypothesis. In other words, those with lower household income are less supportive of equal *rights.* Overall, then, findings involving some measures of *self-interest* support the proposed hypothesis, while others do not.

Educational Attainment

Throughout the analyses outlined above, *educational attainment* was utilized as a measure of the educational progressivism theoretical perspective. Specifically, my second hypothesis was that *educational attainment will not be a predictor (null hypothesis) for opinions regarding the necessity of the TFW program, and will be positively correlated with support for more rights for TFWs employed in the program.* To test this, the *education attainment* variable was recoded into three binary variables (with less than high school status as the reference category).

Within the *necessity* analysis, *educational attainment* was largely a non-factor, with one exception. University graduates were significantly more likely than participants with less than high school to believe the TFW program was *necessary.* The other two *educational attainment* binary variables did not have significant effects. Hence, I do not find complete support for my (null) hypothesis. Even so, the significant effect of *educational attainment* is unlikely to be an indicator of educational progressivism. It is difficult to reason that an

opinion that the TFW program is necessary reflects a more open and accepting worldview (the core assumption of educational progressivism theory).

Within the *workplace rights* analysis, however, all of the *educational attainment* binary variables were statistically significant in every equation. Compared to survey respondents who had not completed high school, high school, college/technical school, and university graduates were more likely to agree that TFWs should have equal workplace rights. This is completely consistent with the educational progressivism theoretical perspective, as well as the proposed hypothesis.

Ideological Orientation

Although imperfect, the only variable in the 2013 Alberta Survey that could serve as a measure of *ideological orientation* was *provincial political preference*. Like the *educational attainment* variable, *provincial political preference* was broken down into a set of binary variables, with all other survey participants[72] as the reference category. My hypothesis was that *a conservative political orientation will be negatively correlated with opinions regarding necessity and more equal access to rights*.

In the *necessity* analysis, both PC/Tory and Liberal supporters were significantly more likely to express opinions regarding the *necessity* of the TFW

[72] This includes those who said they would not vote for one of the big four parties, that they were not eligible, and that they would not vote, as well as those who did not answer.

program. This offers only partial support for the proposed hypothesis. Neither effect remained significant, however, in the final (and most comprehensive) equation with *household income* as an additional predictor. As a result, there is no support for the hypothesis that a conservative political orientation is negatively correlated with opinions regarding the *necessity* of the TFW program.

In the *workplace rights* analysis, however, there appears to be one clear relationship between political party preference and support for more equal *workplace rights* for TFWs. NDP supporters were significantly more likely to support equal rights for TFWs. This is consistent with my hypothesis, that a conservative political orientation would be negatively correlated with more equal *rights* for TFWs, and vice versa.

Secondary Hypotheses

In addition to the primary hypotheses presented above, I was interested in testing a number of secondary hypotheses. The first proposed that the *age* of participants would be negatively associated with opinions both about the *necessity* of the TFW program and the *rights* that should be afforded to those employed within it. In both cases, the results from the step-wise multiple regression analyses supported the hypotheses. *Age* was significantly negatively correlated with opinions that the TWF program was *necessary* throughout all steps of the analysis. The same pattern was observed in the *workplace rights* analysis.

In addition to *age*, the existing literature suggested the hypothesis that female survey participants would be more likely to support equal *workplace rights* for TFWs. A null hypothesis was proposed for the impact of *gender* on opinions of *necessity.* The analysis results support both hypotheses. *Gender* did not have a significant impact on participants' opinions regarding the *necessity* of the program. In contrast, female survey participants were more likely than their male counterparts to support equal *workplace rights* for TFWs.

The final secondary hypothesis tested the impact of *immigrant status* on opinions regarding *necessity* and access to *workplace rights.* As outlined above, *immigrant status* remained statistically significant throughout the entire *workplace rights* analysis. But visible minority immigrants were less, not more, likely than the reference category (Canadian-born participants) to assert that TFWs should have equal *workplace rights*. This contradicts the proposed hypothesis that immigrants would be more sympathetic to TFWs' position. Interestingly, the opinions of Caucasian immigrants were more closely aligned with the control group (Canadian-born). It is not immediately clear why this difference in opinion exists. Perhaps recent immigrants might be resentful towards TFWs who appear to gain access to Canada without waiting in line for many years. Alternatively, visible minority immigrants may actually believe that TFWs are accustomed to lower standards of *workplace rights* in their countries of origin and therefore do not need access to equal rights in Canada.

Conclusion

Overall then, there appear to be some similarities between the findings in the attitudes towards immigration literature and my findings. Most notably, the results highlight the explanatory value of educational progressivism theory; the most highly educated sample members (university graduates) were most likely to support equal access to *workplace rights* for TFWs. My survey results were also generally consistent with the literature with respect to the effects of *age* on opinions about the *necessity* of the TFW program and *rights* afforded to TFWs.

Several other predictor variables led to results that were similar (although not consistently) to previous research on attitudes towards immigration. Across several measures of self-interest, *financial anxiety* and *household income* were the only two that generated expected effects, for one dependent variable each. Survey respondents who felt more financially anxious were less likely to think that the TFW program was *necessary*, while those with higher household incomes were more likely to agree that TFWs should enjoy the same *workplace rights* as do other workers. As for *political preference* (my only measure of *ideological orientation*), NDP supporters were more supportive of equal *workplace rights* for TFWs, but other political preferences were not significantly associated with either of the dependent variables.

Finally, several other variables not directly discussed in the existing literature - *knowledge* of the program, *region*, *immigrant status,* and beliefs about

the *necessity* of the TFW program – were statistically significant in one or more of the multiple regression analyses. *Knowledge* of the program was positively correlated with opinions regarding the *necessity* of the program, as well as support for *equal rights* for those employed within it. *Regional* differences emerged in regards to the *necessity* of the program; Edmonton residents were more likely to agree about its *necessity*. Unexpectedly, *immigrant status* was negatively correlated with opinions regarding equal *workplace rights* for TFWs. As noted above, it is difficult to determine why this difference in opinion exists.

Chapter 7 - Conclusions

The findings outlined in this thesis help to fill several gaps in the existing literature regarding Canada's Temporary Foreign Worker program. Beyond providing a detailed overview of the history of the program and recent changes within it, this study offers valuable insight into recent events which attracted heightened public attention, and the ways in which public policy might connect to, and be influenced by, public opinion at such times. This study's most significant contribution is its detailed description of Albertans' opinions regarding the TFW program, and an exploration of the key determinants of these opinions. Several key findings from this project are worth reiterating here.

Summary of Findings

As outlined in Chapter 2, the Temporary Foreign Worker program has changed significantly in recent years, in both size and form. Following an expansion into 'lower-skilled' occupations in 2002, and the expedited application processes introduced in 2006 and 2010, the program grew at an unprecedented rate, more than tripling in size in less than a decade. Alberta experienced the fastest growth in Canada, highlighted by the number of TFWs as a proportion of the employed, unemployed, and total populations (see Chapter 2).

Over the same period of time, there has been increasing concern about protecting TFWs from abuse, and ensuring that Canadians are "first in line" for

job opportunities. This was highlighted particularly well by several program controversies that attracted national media attention like never before, the 2013 RBC and the 2014 McDonald's / food services scandals. These cases illustrated that Canadians appeared to react more strongly towards instances where they, or someone they could more easily relate to, lost their job. As outlined in Chapter 2, this was substantiated by an exploratory analysis tracking public attention, utilizing Google trends, and Twitter analytics software.

These stories were also examples of the kinds of controversy in which public policy appeared to be particularly responsive to public opinion. Following these events and the increased public scrutiny, ESDC and CIC quickly announced several policy changes (in 2013 and 2014) that responded directly to the controversies. While it is difficult to determine the direct impacts public opinion has had on program policy, it is clear that public policy has responded to increases in public scrutiny in the case of the TFW program. This public opinion –public policy analysis highlighted the importance of gaining a better understanding of Canadians' opinions regarding the TFW program and the factors that shape those opinions. Alberta's unique political and economic context, and the prominent role it had in the program's expansion, made it a particularly interesting context to explore public opinion.

What's more, the existing research exploring Canadians' opinions regarding the TFW program is extremely limited. As Chapter 3 illustrates, almost

all of the existing public opinion research on the topic is either limited in scope or reliability, with the majority of studies offering at best a basic description of public opinion and stopping short of an explanation, that is, an exploration of the factors that shape opinion. In this way, the related literature on attitudes towards immigration was particularly useful in developing a conceptual framework for analysis of my survey data.

The findings outlined in Chapter 5 highlight several important aspects of Albertans' opinions regarding the TFW program. First, at the time of the 2013 Alberta Survey, the majority of Albertans believed that the TFW program was necessary and was not displacing Canadians from their jobs. This contrasts with findings from much of the existing research exploring Canadians' opinions of the necessity of the program. Second, a large majority of Albertans believed that TFWs should have access to the same workplace rights as Canadians. Third, regarding permanent residency rights, the majority of Albertans believe that all TFWs should be able to access permanent residency in Canada. These findings also highlight two specific points of disconnect between public opinion and program policy at the time of the survey. First, a large majority of Albertans disagreed with (what was at the time) program policy that allowed for TFWs to be paid below the prevailing market rate. Second, TFW's access to permanent residency was, and remains, highly restricted.

Chapter 6 employed two stepwise multiple regression analyses, to explore

the key determinants of opinions regarding the necessity of the program and the rights of TFWs within it. The findings highlight the value of the theoretical perspectives extracted from the attitudes towards immigration literature. In particular, the regression results highlight the explanatory value of educational progressivism theory in regard to TFWs access to equitable workplace rights. Specifically, more educated Albertans were more likely to support equal rights, controlling on other variables in the analysis. In addition, the findings related to the effects of age are consistent with the existing literature. Older participants were less likely to believe the TFW program is necessary, and less supportive of the rights afforded to TFWs.

There were also several predictor variables that provided similar (though not always consistent) results, compared to previous research on attitudes towards immigration. Financial anxiety and household income were the only two measures of self-interest that generated the expected effects, and only for one dependent variable each. Similarly, political preference revealed only one case consistent with existing theories regarding ideological orientation. Finally, several other variables not discussed in the existing literature – knowledge of the program, region of the province, immigrant status, and beliefs about necessity – were statistically significant in one or more of the multiple regression analyses.

Research Contributions

This study makes several important contributions to the existing literature. First, it is the first to offer an in-depth exploration of public opinion regarding the TFW program in Alberta. As illustrated in Chapter 2, not only does Alberta offer a unique political and economic context within which to explore public opinion, but it has also played an important role in the rapid and sustained growth the TFW program has experienced in recent years. More generally, this research contributed to the dearth of existing literature exploring public opinion regarding the TFW program in Canada. Second, the findings have highlighted the extended utility of the theoretical perspectives within the attitudes towards immigration literature – particularly in regards to the educational progressivism theory, and the impact of age on public opinion. Third, this research provides new insight into the linkages between public opinion and public policy, particularly the moments in which public policy appears particularly responsive to increased public scrutiny.

Limitations of Research

The findings outlined in this study are not without limitations. The first is related to the methods used to collect data. The findings are based on data obtained from the 2013 Alberta Survey – an annual province-wide random-digit-dialling telephone survey administered by the Population Research Laboratory at the University of Alberta. Utilizing data collected by telephone survey is not

without its limitations, particularly amidst a significant decline in response rates observed over recent years.[73] As Teresa Bladon (2010) demonstrates, declining response rates (or increases in nonresponse rates) can greatly reduce the validity of survey data as a result of an increased potential for nonresponse bias.[74] In fact, a high nonresponse rate can effectively undermine the "very purpose of a random sample survey, that is, to accurately represent the views of the population sampled" (Bladon, 2010, p. 147). Therefore, it is particularly important to demonstrate the degree to which the sample is representative of the population of interest.

In this study, I attempt to mitigate the impact of nonresponse bias by weighting the sample to account for variables that had high levels of dissimilarity between the sample and population. Specifically, I weighted the 2013 Alberta Survey sample by *age* and *education*, to account for an over-representation of older and more educated individuals. While this undoubtedly greatly reduced the impact of nonresponse bias, it cannot be removed altogether. The degree to which the sample is representative of the target population is therefore a limitation of this study.

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[73] For example, in the case of the Alberta Survey, the response rate has dropped from 74% in 1991 (Bladon, 2010) to 21% in 2013.

[74] Nonresponse bias occurs when the sample population is significantly different than the population of interest. This can effectively give the opinions of one (or more) segment of the population more weight than other segments. For example, Bladon effectively demonstrated an "increasing level of [nonresponse] bias in variables related to respondent education" (2010, p. 131).

Second, there are limitations to some of the specific findings discussed in Chapter 5 and 6 – in particular, the findings regarding the impact of *immigrant status.* In an effort to explore the impact of *immigrant status* in greater detail, the variable was recoded to include three categories instead of two. The derived variable relies on the proxy variable, *country of origin,* to differentiate between visible minority immigrants and Caucasian immigrants. This is admittedly problematic, due to the fact that an individual's country of origin is not a determinant of visible minority status in Canada. However, it was the most accurate measure at my disposal.

The expanded *immigrant status* variable was used in an effort to provide a more detailed account for the variation observed between responses in the exploratory stages of analysis. It was clear that *immigrant status* was a key determinant of opinions (particularly in regards to the *rights* that should be afforded TFWs), but it was unclear why. Splitting *immigrant status* into three categories, instead of two, revealed significant differences between immigrant populations, and provided rich insight into the key determinants of opinion.

Limitations also arise from the measures used in the survey. In particular, as discussed in Chapter 5, my attempt to replicate a question from the 2010 EKOS nation-wide survey was compromised by my omission of the stem of the question. This greatly reduced the value of any comparison of differences between the findings. I was also limited in the number, and type, of questions I could ask. The

Alberta Survey Graduate Student Award provided the opportunity to design and include 10 closed-ended, multiple-choice questions in the 2013 survey. If had the opportunity again, I would elect to include one or more open ended questions to explore the nuances of differing opinions regarding the TFW program.

Finally, there are limitations in extrapolating the findings from this study to the current context in Alberta, which has experienced significant changes since 2013. In addition to substantial changes to the TFW program in 2014 – outlined in detail in Chapter 2 –there have been significant changes to the political and economic context within Alberta since 2013. In late 2014 Alberta sustained a significant blow to its resource-reliant economy, with a drastic decrease in the global price of oil. This has undoubtedly affected the economic outlook (and level of *financial anxiety*) of a large proportion of Albertans, a variable demonstrably linked to opinions towards the TFW program and TFWs. Additionally, the 2015 provincial election brought with it a drastic change to the political landscape in Alberta; ending the Progressive Conservative's 44 year majority government, and bringing in an NDP majority. It is unclear how the changes to the TFW program, and the changes to the political and economic context in Alberta, will have influenced Albertans' opinions regarding the TFW program and TFWs. Therefore, it is important that the findings from this study be discussed within the context that the data was collected. This does, however, illustrate a particularly interesting direction for future research.

Directions for Future Research

This study reveals several interesting directions for future research. First, it would be valuable to follow up this research with more public opinion surveys regarding the TFW program. In particular, recognizing the limited existing research into the opinions of Canadians regarding the TFW program, it is important to gain further insight into the public opinion in other provinces and regions. In addition, the significant changes to the TFW program in 2014, and to the political and economic context in Alberta in 2015, invites a re-examination of public opinion regarding the TFW program within the Albertan context.

Second, there are several additional issues that could be explored in future surveys, both in Alberta and nationally. In addition to gaining insight into whether or not Canadians believe the program is necessary, it would be useful to understand why they hold these opinions. This could be facilitated well with an open-ended question following up on a question regarding necessity. It would also be worthwhile to examine the degree to which public opinion and public policy are in line regarding the 'four-in/four-out' legislation that came into effect April 1, 2015, which requires TFWs who have been in Canada for four years, to leave the country for four years before being eligible for re-entry.

Finally, it would be valuable to expand on the analysis of online activity related to the TFW program outlined in Chapter 2. There are several analytical

tools that could be employed to explore this area further. Beyond mapping the moments that received increased interest on a topic, there is potential to complete a content analysis of the aggregated data.

Policy Implications

It is worth noting that the 2014 overhaul of the TFW program, and the introduction of the International Mobility Program (IMP) have brought policy closer in line with public opinion - at least on paper. Recognizing that most of Albertans surveyed in 2013 believed TFWs should have access to the same workplace rights as Canadians, the 2014 policy changes that promise increased enforcement of program rules and increased penalties for employers that break the rules. This included a promise of more frequent workplace inspections, the launching of a national confidential tip line, and improved information sharing between agencies. For those found to be breaking the rules, ESDC promised tougher penalties including suspending, revoking, or blacklisting employers from the program, in addition to monetary fines and potential criminal charges.

These changes appeared to have teeth, promising substantial consequences for noncompliant employers. However, apart from the five businesses listed on ESDC's blacklist, it is not clear if anything has come of the promises made with the policy changes. In fact, there has been little evidence that workplace inspections have increased at all since the program changes. What's more, the

reasons provided for revoking permits are vague at best. Despite the fact that abuse of TFWs almost definitely arose in at least one of the cases, [75] this is not the reason given for permits being revoked. For all of the current employers on the blacklist the cited reason is that "LMOs of employer found to be, or suspected to be, non-compliant with program requirements" (ESDC, 2015).

In order for TFWs to truly have access to the same workplace rights as Canadians it is imperative to ensure they can leave abusive situations if and when they arise. At the moment, this represents an extremely difficult decision for TFWs. If they choose to leave their employer, their status in Canada could be threatened. Migrant rights advocates have long called for more substantial changes to the TFW program. At minimum, a first step for minimizing the potential for program abuse (through threat of deportation etc.) would be to switch to industry- or region-specific work permits, rather than the employer-specific permits the program currently uses. This would promise to ensure TFWs do not feel trapped in a bad employment situation. Taken a step further, many have called for access to permanent residency for all eligible TFWs. This would extend their rights even further – and would, in fact, bring program policy closer in line with the opinions gathered from the 2013 Alberta Survey.

[75] Parvaz Film Corporation was accused of promising non-existent jobs to an Iranian couple, after requiring them to pay over $15,000 to secure the positions (see http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/parvaz-film-corp-blacklisted-following-cbc-go-public-investigation-1.2667888).

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Appendix 1 – Survey Instrument

2013 Alberta Survey

INTRO1
Hello, my name is _____. I'm calling (long distance) from the Population Research Laboratory at the University of Alberta. Have I dialed XXX-XXXX? Your phone number was randomly selected.

PRESS '1' TO CONTINUE

Hello, I am calling back from the Population Research Laboratory to continue an interview that we started previously.

INTRO2
The Population Research Laboratory is conducting a public opinion survey on behalf of university and policy researchers on various topics such as climate change, China's role in Canada's economy, interactions with financial institutions/debt usage/debt management, life experiences and health, Temporary Foreign Workers, public health/injuries, and alcohol use. This survey addresses different but current issues facing Albertans. Your opinions are very important and valuable to us and the information will be used to help with decision-making in developing public policies to improve programs and services in Alberta.

[OPTIONAL READ: The study sponsors are the Population Research Laboratory, University of Alberta researchers, Alberta Centre for Child, Family and Community Research, China Institute, and Alberta Centre for Injury Control and Research.]

PRESS '1' TO CONTINUE

NUMWOM
Before we start this interview, we need to make sure that we speak to an equal number of men and women. Can you please tell me ...

How many women (including yourself) aged 18 and older live at this number?

_____ Number of women (including yourself)

99 Refused **[DO NOT READ]**

NUMMEN
And how many men (including yourself) aged 18 and older live at this number?

_____ Number of men (including yourself)

99 Refused **[DO NOT READ]**

[TERMINATE THE INTERVIEW: If no one 18 years or older lives in the household.]
[RESPONDENT SELECTION GUIDELINES: Select a household respondent according to the standardized respondent selection guidelines.]

[**OPTIONAL READ**: We don't always speak to the person who answers the phone. If possible, we would like to speak to an adult member of the household who is 18 years of age or older. May I speak to the male/female who is available? (Repeat **INTRO** if necessary)] [**SCHEDULE CALLBACK IF NOT AVAILABLE**]

[**INTERVIEWER NOTE**: If looking for MALE – can say: as MALE QUOTA is harder to fill.]

VERIFY18
This interview will take approximately 20 minutes depending on how many questions apply to you. Is this a good time for me to continue?

And just to confirm, are you 18 years of age or older?

1 Yes, 18 years or older
2 No, underage **[ASK TO SPEAK TO ADULT MEMBER OF HOUSEHOLD]**

INTRO4
May we start the interview now?

1 Yes
2 No

[**NOTE: CELL PHONES** - If the person is on a cell phone, continue if he/she says it is okay. If they provide you with another number they would like you to call instead, record the new number in message line and schedule callback.]

FOIPP
I would like to assure you that your participation in this interview is completely voluntary. If there are any questions you don't wish to answer, please point these out to me and we'll go on to the next question. You, of course, have the right to end this phone call at any time.

The information you provide will be used only for the indicated purposes in conformity with the Alberta Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIPP). Your answers are confidential and will be stored in a secured database only for study purposes. The results of this study will be analyzed only in group format. No single person will be identifiable.

If you have any questions about this study, you can call Rosanna Shih, Research Coordinator at the Population Research Lab at (780) 492-4659.

The plan for this study has been reviewed for its adherence to ethical guidelines by a Research Ethics Board at the University of Alberta. For questions regarding participant rights and ethical conduct of research, contact the Research Ethics Office at 780-492-2615.

PRESS '1' TO CONTINUE

STRATA Area of the Province

1 Metro Edmonton
2 Metro Calgary
3 Other Alberta

SEX1
RECORD GENDER OF RESPONDENT (IF NOT SURE, PLEASE ASK)

1 Male
2 Female

TIME
[INTERVIEWER NOTE: START TIMING NOW].

PRESS '1' TO CONTINUE

Section 5
Temporary Foreign Workers
Chad Doerksen, Department of Sociology, University of Alberta

Introduction
The following questions are about Temporary Foreign Workers. We are only looking for your personal opinion about Temporary Foreign Workers, and there are no right or wrong answers.

The term Temporary Foreign Worker refers to an individual from another country employed in Canada on a temporary work permit. This permit is tied to a specific job for a specific employer. Temporary worker status may not exceed 4 years.

Self-identified Knowledge of the Program

FT1
1. Not everyone necessarily knows about this program, which is fine. In your opinion, how much do you know about the Temporary Foreign Worker Program? (READ)

Nothing	Very little	Some	Quite a bit	A lot	Don't know	No response (volunteered)
0	2	3	4	5	8	0

FT2
2. Which of the following best reflects your point of view? Skill and labour shortages in Canada should be met by… (READ)

1 A mix of people coming to Canada on a permanent and temporary basis
2 People coming to Canada permanently
3 People coming to Canada temporarily
4 Canadians should be filling these shortages

8 Don't know (volunteered)
0 No response (volunteered)

FT3

3. Sometimes employer's report having difficulty finding the people they need to fill labour shortages in Alberta. If this is the case, employers in Alberta should be able to hire Temporary Foreign Workers for: (READ)

    1 High-skilled occupations (Occupations that require a Degree or specialized training)
    2 Lower-skilled occupations (Occupations that require minimal training prior to employment)
    3 Neither
    4 Both

    8 Don't know (volunteered)
    0 No response (volunteered)

Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements using a 5-point scale, where 1 means "strongly disagree", 2 means "disagree", 3 means "neither disagree nor agree", 4 means "agree", and 5 means "strongly agree," you can choose any number from 1 to 5.

Necessity

FT4

4. Temporary Foreign Workers are needed to fill jobs in the Alberta labour market.

Strongly disagree				Strongly agree	Don't know	No response (volunteered)
1	2	3	4	5	8	0

FT5

5. Temporary Foreign Workers are taking jobs away from Albertans.

Strongly disagree				Strongly agree	Don't know	No Response (volunteered)
1	2	3	4	5	8	0

Visibility/TFW Characteristics

FT6

6. Most Temporary Foreign Workers are members of visible minority groups (non-white in race or colour).

Strongly disagree				Strongly agree	Don't know	No response (volunteered)
1	2	3	4	5	8	0

Workplace Standards

FT7

7. It is OK for Alberta Workplace laws and standards – which are meant to protect workers' rights – to be less strict for Temporary Foreign Workers because they are likely used to lower standards.

Strongly disagree				Strongly agree	Don't know	No response (volunteered)
1	2	3	4	5	8	0

FT8

8. Temporary Foreign Workers should be given the exact same workplace rights as Canadian workers.

Strongly disagree				Strongly agree	Don't know	No response (volunteered)
1	2	3	4	5	8	0

FT9

9. It is OK if Temporary Foreign Workers are paid less than Canadian workers performing the same job **(IF NECESSARY: ALTERNATE WORDING:** Temporary foreign workers do not need to be paid the same as Canadian workers performing the same job**).**

Strongly disagree				Strongly agree	Don't know	No response (volunteered)
1	2	3	4	5	8	0

Access to Permanent Residency

FT10

10. All Temporary Foreign Workers should have the opportunity to obtain permanent residency in Canada.

Strongly disagree				Strongly agree	Don't know	No response (volunteered)
1	2	3	4	5	8	0

Section 8: Demographic Section

These last questions will give us a better picture of the Albertans who took part in this study. The first questions are about employment.

K1a

1. What is your present employment status? Are you… **(READ)**

1 Employed full-time (30 or more hours/week)
2 Employed part-time (less than 30 hours/week)
3 Unemployed, LOOKING for work
4 Not in labour force, NOT looking for work
5 Student employed part-time or full-time
6 Student not employed
7 Retired
8 Homemaker
9 Maternity leave
10 On disability
11 Other (please specify) ___**K1aoth**_____

0 No response/Refused (volunteered) -1 Don't know (volunteered)

[NOTE: If semi-retired, probe for hours and put in "Other specify". If self-employed, probe for hours and enter as "1 – Full-time" or "2 – Part-time".]

K3a

2a. Including yourself, how many ADULTS live in your household (related to you or not)?

_____ # Adults (18+)

-1 No Response/Refused (volunteered)

K3b

2b. ...and how many CHILDREN under the age of 18 (live in your household)?

_____ # Children (Under 18)

-1 No Response/Refused (volunteered)
-2 NA-No response/Refused to K3a

K3c

2c. That is a total of ___ people in the household, right?

Enter the total number of people: ___

-1 No Response/Refused (volunteered)
-2 NA-No response/Refused to K3a

AGE

3. What is your age?

___ Years Old

17 No response/Refused (volunteered)

AGEX – AGE GROUPED (COMPUTED VARIABLE)

1 18-24
2 25-34
3 35-44
4 45-54
5 55-64
6 65 and over

17 No response/Refused

K5a

4. What is your CURRENT marital status? (READ)

1 Never Married (Single)
2 Married
3 Common-Law Relationship/Live-In Partner
4 Divorced
5 Separated
6 Widowed

0 No Response/Refused (volunteered)

K6

5. What is your highest level of education (This includes complete and incomplete.) [DO NOT READ]

NO SCHOOLING……...1 (GO to question 7)
ELEMENTARY
Incomplete……2
Complete ……..3
JUNIOR HIGH
Incomplete……4
Complete ……..5
HIGH SCHOOL
Incomplete……6
Complete……..7
COLLEGE/TECHNICAL INSTITUTE (non-University)
Incomplete……....8
Complete ……..9
UNIVERSITY
Incomplete……..10
Diploma/certificate …….....11
Bachelor's Degree 12
Professional Degree (vets,doctors,dentists,lawyers).....13
Master's Degree.....14
Doctorate.....15

No Response/Refused (volunteered) ..... 0 (GO TO question 7)

K6GROUP – EDUCATION GROUPED (COMPUTED VARIABLE)

1 Less Than High School
2 High School Complete
3 Post Secondary

0 No Response/Refused

K7

6. In total, how many years of schooling do you have? (This includes the total of grade school, high school, vocational, technical, and university.)

____ Years of Schooling

98 No Response (volunteered)
99 Not applicable - No response/Refused to K6/

K8a

7. What is your religion, if any? (Probe with categories if needed)

1 No Religion (Including agnostic and atheist)
2 Anglican
3 Baptist
4 Greek/Ukrainian Orthodox
5 Jewish
6 Lutheran
7 Mennonite
8 Latter Day Saints (Mormon)
9 Pentecostal
10 Presbyterian
11 Catholic (including Roman Catholic, Ukrainian Catholic, Greek Catholic)
12 United Church
13 Protestant (not on list, Probe: Any particular denomination?)
14 Christian (not on list, Probe: Any particular denomination?)
15 Islam (including Sunni Islam, Shia Islam)
16 Other (specify) _____**K8aoth**_____

0 No Response (volunteered)

[NOTE: Other includes other faiths, i.e. Hindu, Buddhism, Bahai, Wicca, Native Spirituality, etc.]

MRELIG – RELIGION GROUPED (COMPUTED VARIABLE)

1 Protestant
2 Catholic
3 Other
4 No religion

0 No Response

CANB

8a. Were you born in Canada?

1 Yes (GO TO question 8b)
2 No (GO TO question 9)

0 No response/Refused (volunteered) (GO TO question 9)

ABB

8b. Were you born in Alberta?

1 Yes
2 No

0 No response/Refused (volunteered)
9 Not applicable – Born outside Canada/No response to CANB

CGRP

9. People living in Canada come from many different backgrounds. Are you …?
(READ) (SELECT <u>ONE</u> ONLY)

1 White (Caucasian)
2 Aboriginal (e.g., First Nations, Inuit or Métis)
3 South Asian (e.g., East Indian, Pakistani, Sri Lankan, etc.)
4 Chinese
5 Black
6 Filipino
7 Latin American
8 Arab
9 Southeast Asian (e.g., Vietnamese, Cambodian, Malaysian, Laotian, etc.)
10 West Asian (e.g., Iranian, Afghan, etc.)
11 Korean
12 Japanese
13 Other (please specify) ____**cgrpoth**_____

0 No Response

K10

10. Would you say that you (and your family) are BETTER OFF, just the SAME, or WORSE OFF financially than you were a year ago?

1 Better Off
2 Just the Same
3 Worse Off

8 Don't Know (volunteered) 0 No Response (volunteered)

K11

11. Now looking ahead, do you think that a YEAR FROM NOW, you (and your family), will be BETTER OFF, just about the SAME, or WORSE OFF financially than now?

1 Better Off
2 Just the Same
3 Worse Off

8 Don't Know (volunteered)
0 No Response (volunteered)

K12a

12. What is the TOTAL income of ALL members of this HOUSEHOLD for the past year, BEFORE taxes and deductions? We're just looking for a ballpark figure.

[**INTERVIEWER NOTE**: Probe with categories as examples if needed.]

1	Under $6,000	13	28,000-29,999	25	70,000-74,999
2	6,000-7,999	14	30,000-31,999	26	75,000-79,999
3	8,000-9,999	15	32,000-33,999	27	80,000-84,999
4	10,000-11,999	16	34,000-35,999	28	85,000-89,999
5	12,000-13,999	17	36,000-37,999	29	90,000-94,999
6	14,000-15,999	18	38,000-39,999	30	95,000-99,999
7	16,000-17,999	19	40,000-44,999	31	100,000-124,999
8	18,000-19,999	20	45,000-49,999	32	125,000-149,999
9	20,000-21,999	21	50,000-54,999	33	150,000+
10	22,000-23,999	22	55,000-59,999		
11	24,000-25,999	23	60,000-64,999	34	Don't Know (volunteered)
12	26,000-27,999	24	65,000-69,999	35	No Response (volunteered)

K13

13. Do you (or your spouse/partner/parents) presently own or rent your residence?

[**INTERVIEWER NOTE**: If respondent lives in parents' home and they own it, put own for respondent too.]

1 Own
2 Rent

0 No Response (volunteered)

K16a

14a. For this next question, please tell me: If an election was held today, how would you vote federally? **(DO NOT READ CATEGORIES)**

1 Conservative Party of Canada (PC or Tory)
2 Green Party of Canada
3 Liberal Party of Canada (Liberals)
4 New Democratic Party (NDP)
5 Other (specify) _____**K16aoth**_____

6 Would not vote
7 Not eligible

8 Don't know (volunteered) 0 No response/Refused (volunteered)

[**INTERVIEWER**: Only if necessary, probe for the name of a political party.]

K16b

(If an election was held today, how would you vote?)

14b. Provincially? **(DO NOT READ CATEGORIES)**

1 Alberta First Party
2 Alberta Liberal Party (Liberal)
3 Alberta New Democratic Party (NDP)
4 Alberta Party
5 Alberta Social Credit Party
6 Communist Party – Alberta
7 Green Party of Alberta
8 Progressive Conservative Association of Alberta (PC/Tory)
9 Wildrose Alliance Party
10 Other (Specify) _____**K16both**_____

11 Not eligible
12 Eligible to vote but would not vote
13 No response/Refused (volunteered)
14 Don't know (volunteered)

[**INTERVIEWER**: Only if necessary, probe for the name of a political party.]

K17

15. To ensure that we have reached people from all areas of the province, may I please have **the first 3 digits of** your postal code?

    ENTER POSTAL CODE _____ [T#X]
    [INTERVIEWER NOTE: It should start with a CAPITAL "T", e.g., T2A]

    T99 No Response/Don't know (volunteered)

We've reached the end of the interview. All your answers are confidential and anonymous. If you have any questions about this study, please contact the PRL research coordinator. Thank you very much for your time and participation.

LENGTH

Please enter length of interview.

____ Length in minutes