

University of
Lethbridge



Department of
Sociology

Faculty of Arts & Science

Economic Gains and Social Pains: The Interplay of Economic and Socio-cultural Experiences of Immigrants in Canada

ABDIE KAZEMIPUR

Conference:

*Taking Stock of a Turbulent Decade and Looking Ahead:
Immigration to North America in 2000-2010*

University of Western Ontario
London, April 28-30, 2011

One Big Turbulence of 2000-2010:

Backlash against Diversity and Multiculturalism

E Pluribus Unum: Diversity and Community in the Twenty-first Century
The 2006 Johan Skytte Prize Lecture

Robert D. Putnam*

Too diverse?



A screenshot of the BBC News website from May 2006. The page features a red header with the BBC logo and navigation links. The main headline reads "Does diversity make us unhappy?" by Mark Easton, Home editor at BBC News. The article text states: "It is an uncomfortable conclusion from happiness research data perhaps - but multicultural communities tend to be less trusting and less happy". A "WATCH LIVE" button for BBC News 24 is visible. The page is dated Tuesday, 30 May 2006.



Book cover for "Who Are We? The Challenges to America's National Identity" by Samuel P. Huntington. The cover features the title in large, stylized letters and an American flag graphic.



Book cover for "Who Are We? A Citizen's Manifesto" by Richard D. Wolff. The cover is red with the title in large, stylized letters and a graphic of a stack of books.

One Big Turbulence of 2000-2010: Backlash against Diversity and Multiculturalism

Muslims
were at the heart
of this debate

E Pluribus Unum
Community
The 20

Robert
bbc
UK

WHICH
ARE
WE?
THE CHALLENGES TO
AMERICA'S NATIONAL IDENTITY
SAMUEL P.
HANTINGT

Does diversity make us unhappy?
By Mark Easton
Home editor, BBC News

It is an uncomfortable conclusion from happiness
research data perhaps - but multicultural communities
tend to be less trusting and less happy

underpin a good se
3:00
ole version

WHO ARE

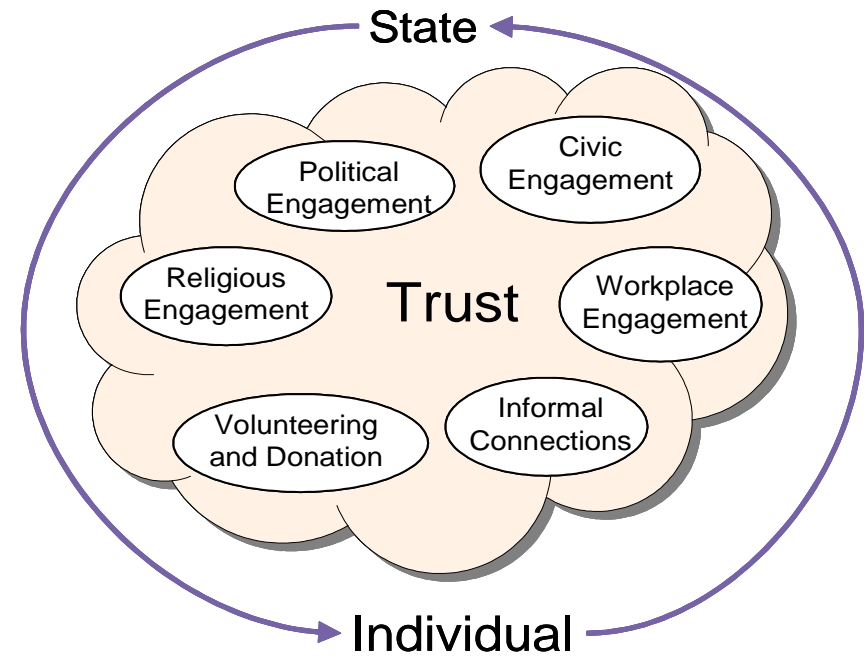
A CITIZEN'S HANDBOOK
EUSTACE BRITTON

Slow integration of Muslim immigrants

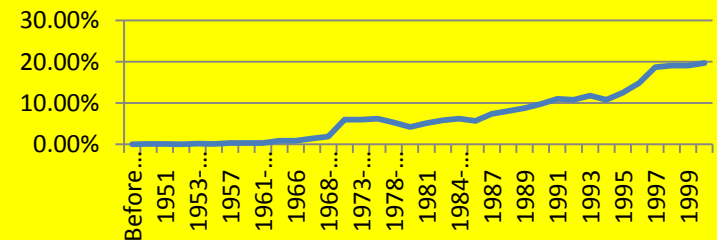
- Reasons offered:
 - Lack of willingness
 - Lack of ability
- Solutions offered:
 - Assimilation/Exclusion
 - Inter-cultural understanding

The goal of this research

- To examine the impact of economic factors on the attachment of immigrants in Canada,...
- ... measured through the level of their social trust towards the general population
- ... with a focus on Muslim immigrants



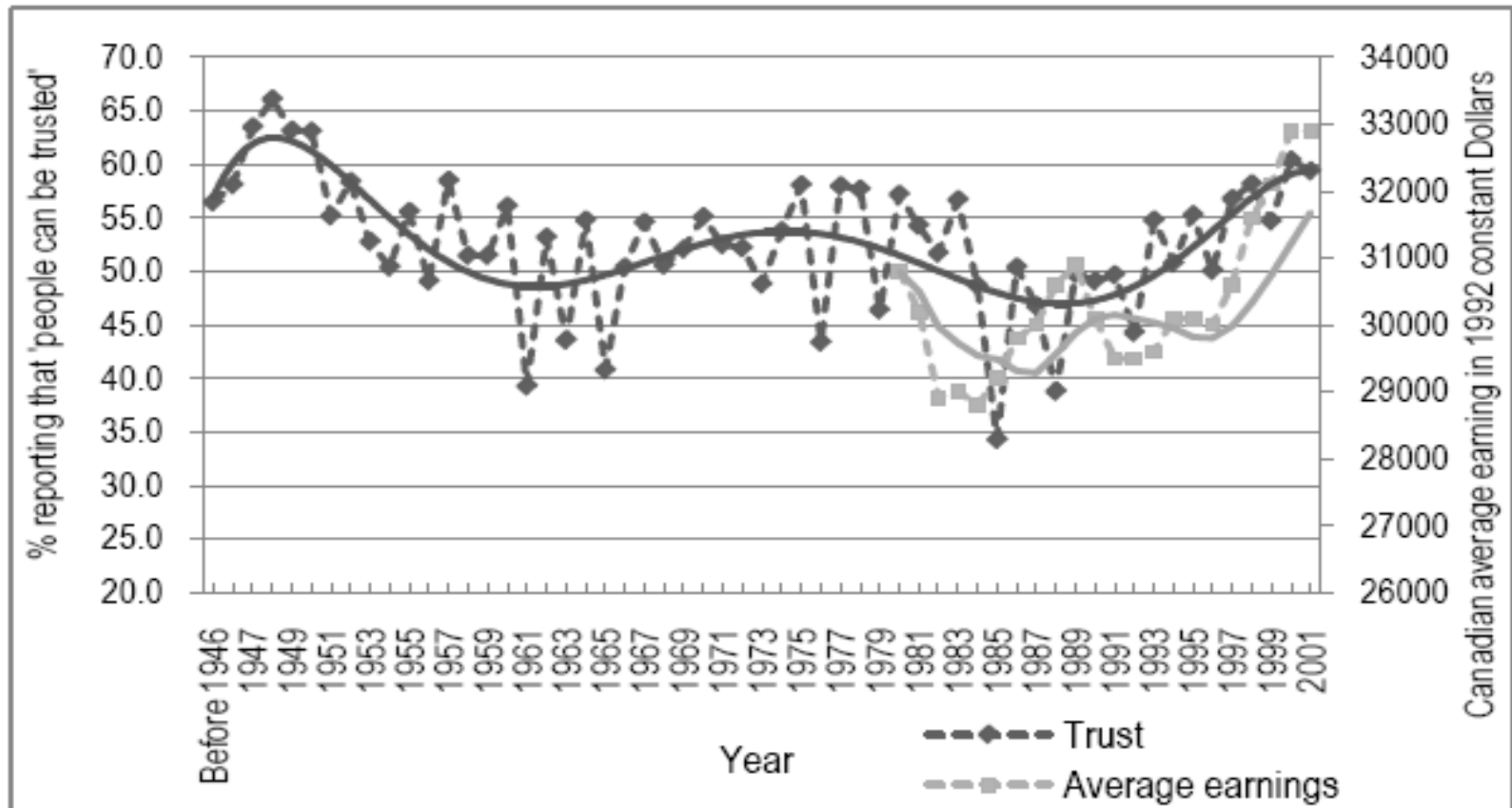
Muslim Immigrants as a % of Total Immigrants to Canada by year



**Do economic experiences
have any impact on social
trust among Immigrants?**

Today's trust levels correlate with the early economic experiences (at arrival)

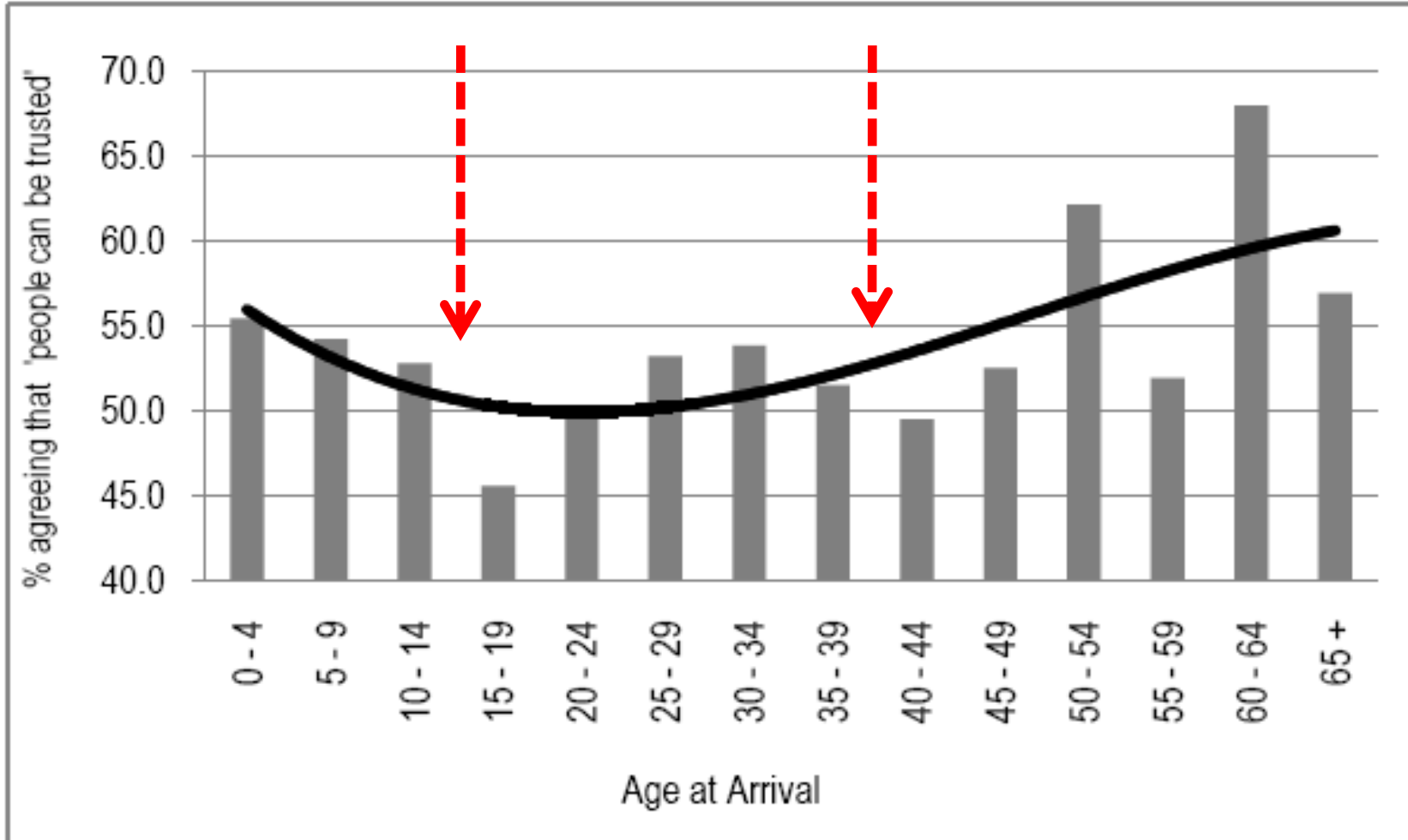
Trust, by period of immigration, 1946–2001



Source: Trust: EDS; Earnings: CANSIM

Today's trust levels correlate with age at arrival (can it be due to their economic experiences?)

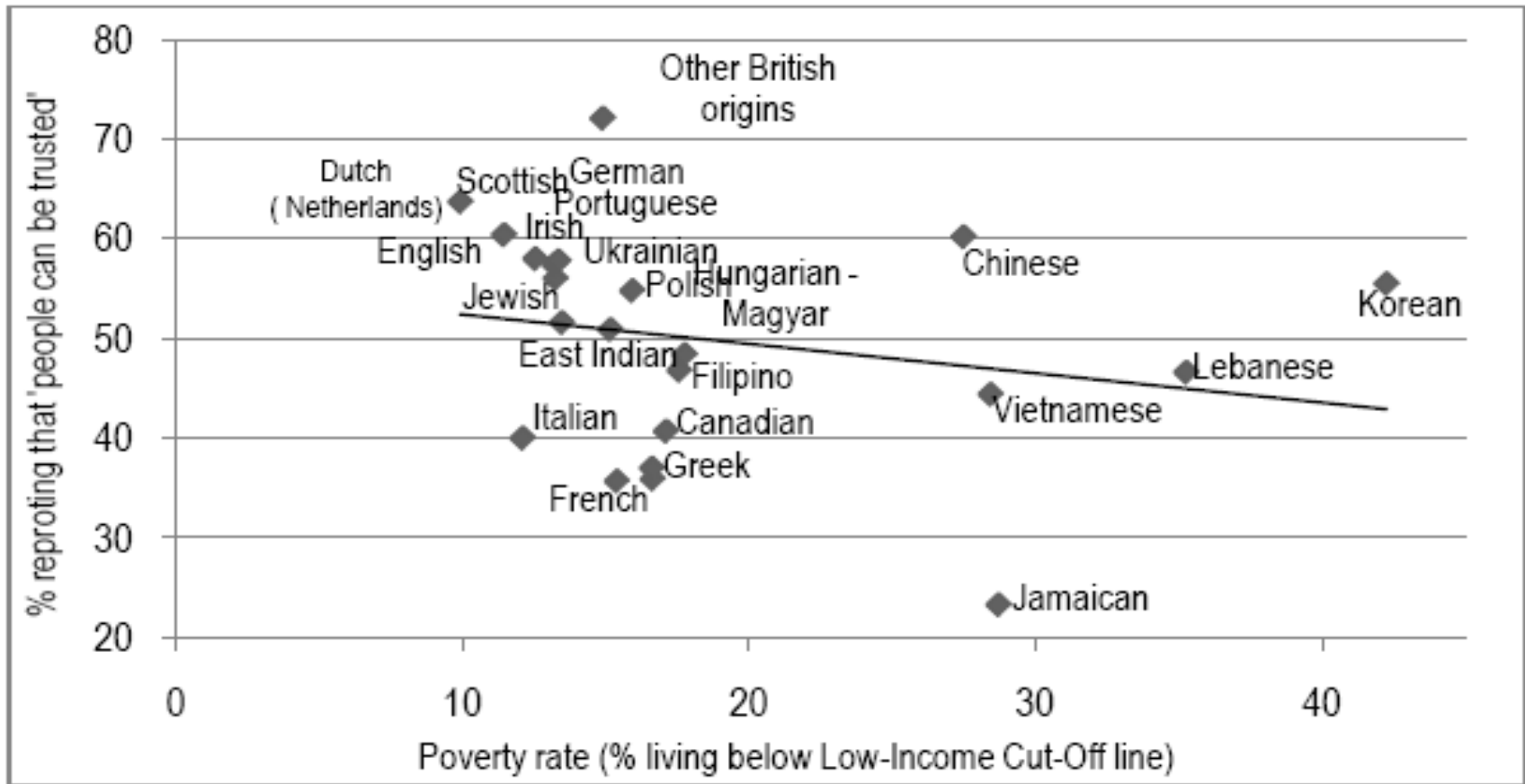
Trust level by age at arrival



Source: EDS, 2002

Trust levels are lower among those who live in poverty

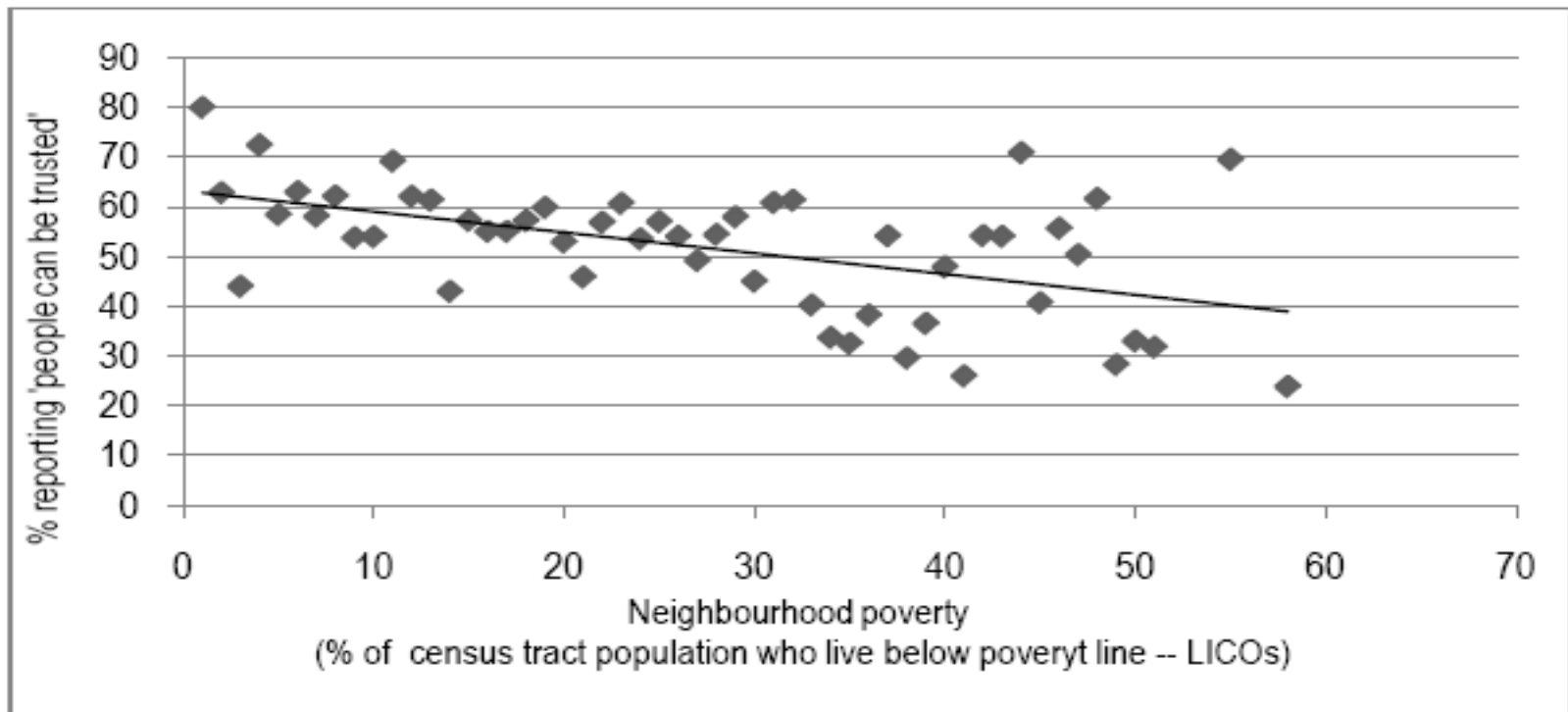
Trust by poverty rate, ethnic groups, Canada



Source: Poverty rate: Canadian census PUMF Individual level, 2001; trust: EDS, 2002

Trust levels are lower among those who live in poor neighbourhoods (even if they are not poor themselves)

The relationship between Trust and neighbourhood poverty, immigrants



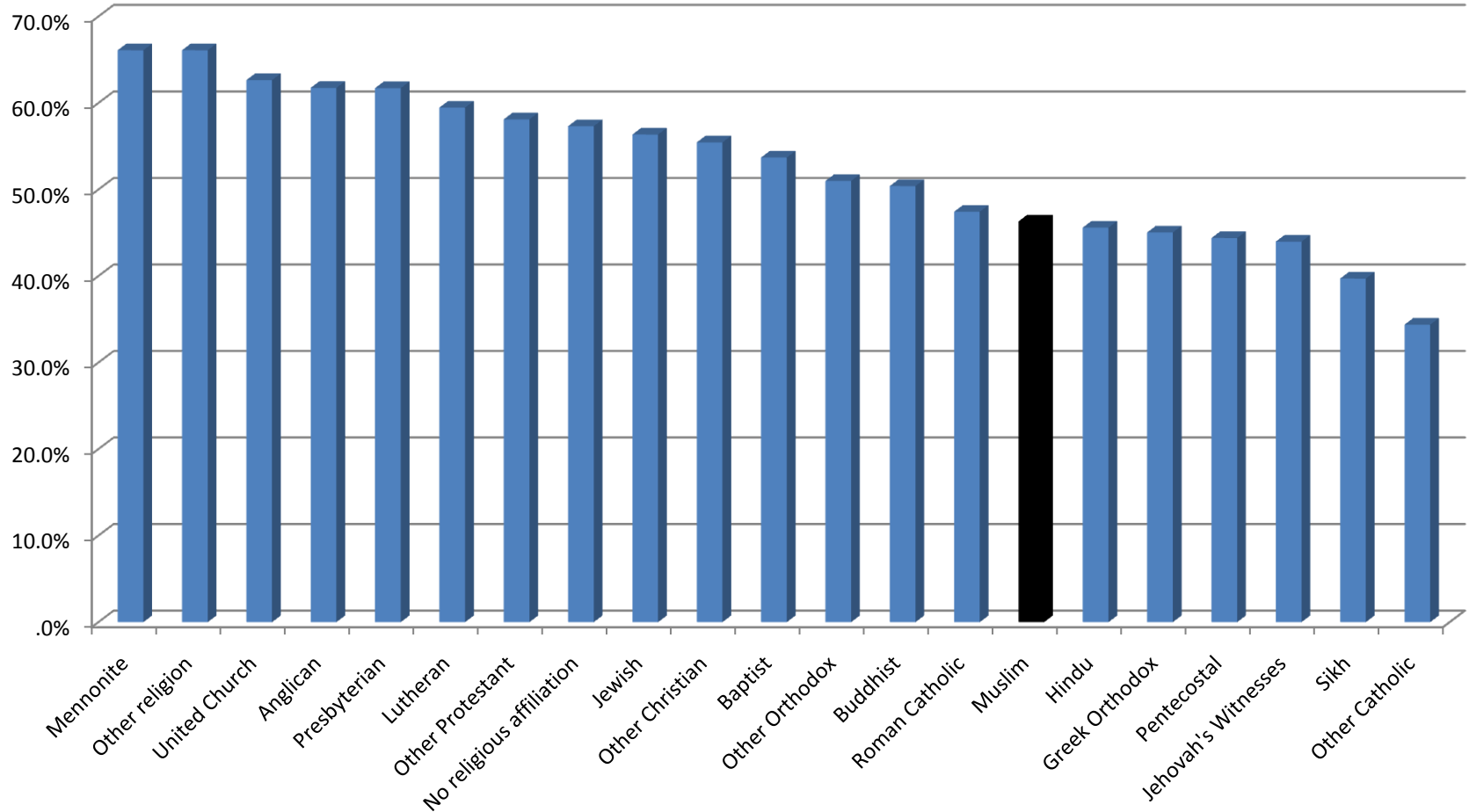
Source: Neighbourhood poverty: Canadian Census Profile, 2001; Trust: GSS17, 2003

Focusing on Muslims in Canada:

- 1) They show a relatively low level of trust;**
- 2) They have a higher level of human capital;**
- 3) They have poor economic records**

Trust in general public

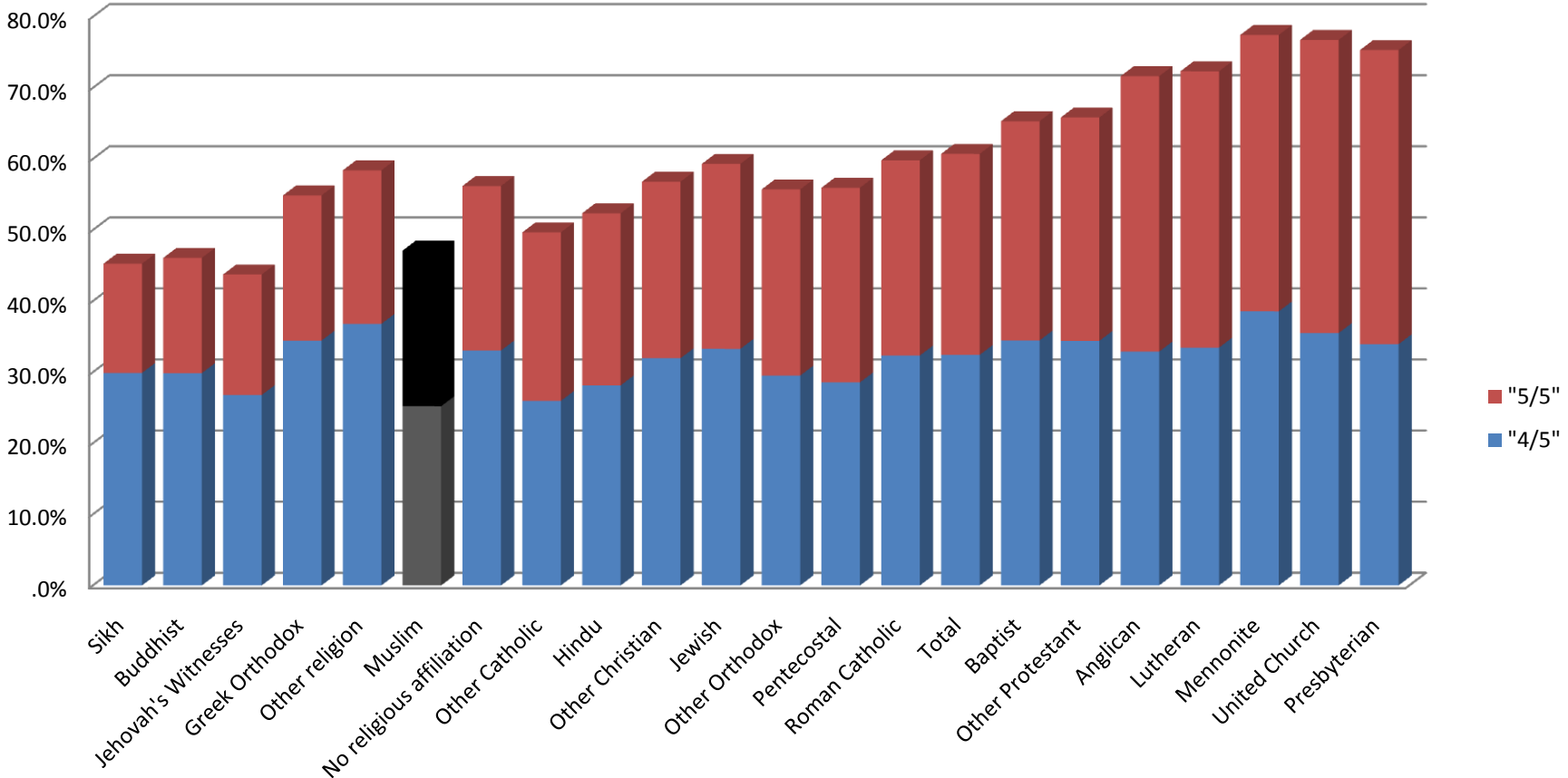
Proportion who indicated "People can be trusted"



Source: EDS, 2005

Trust in neighbours

How much do you trust the people in your neighbourhood?
(Proportion who indicated 4/5 or 5/5)

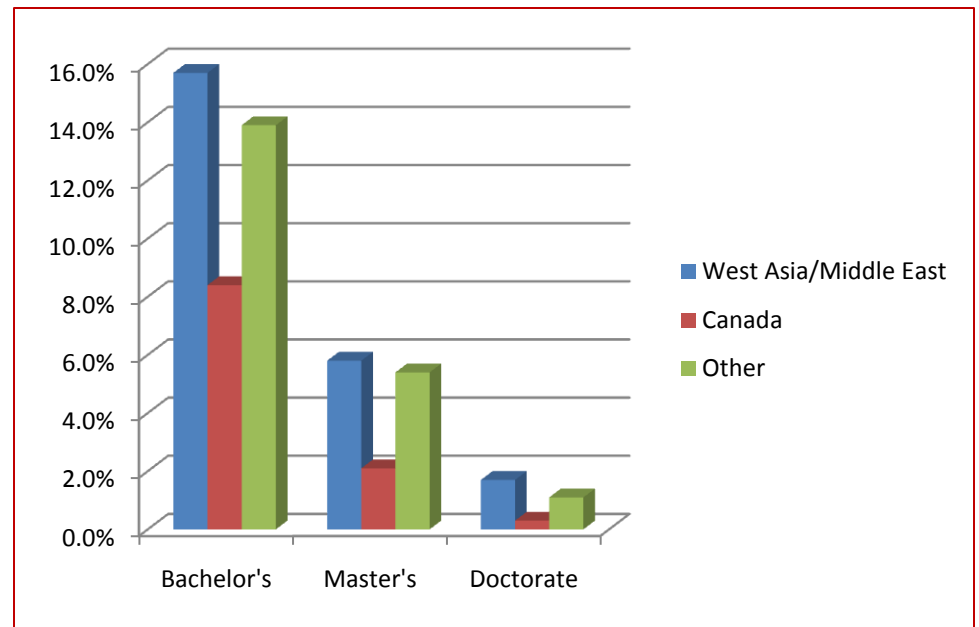
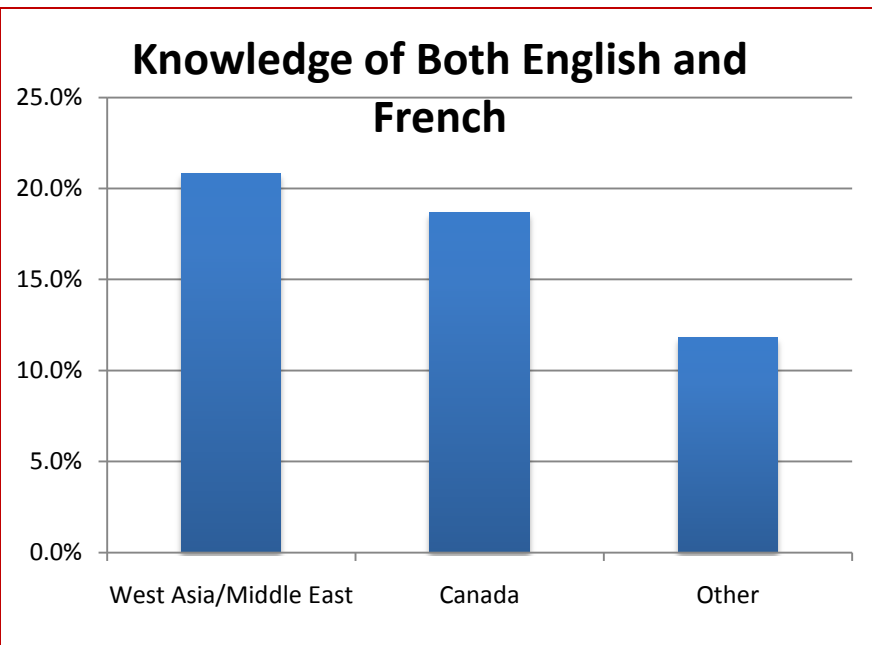


Source: EDS, 2005

Could the low level of trust among Muslims in Canada be due to their economic experiences?

Human capital profile:

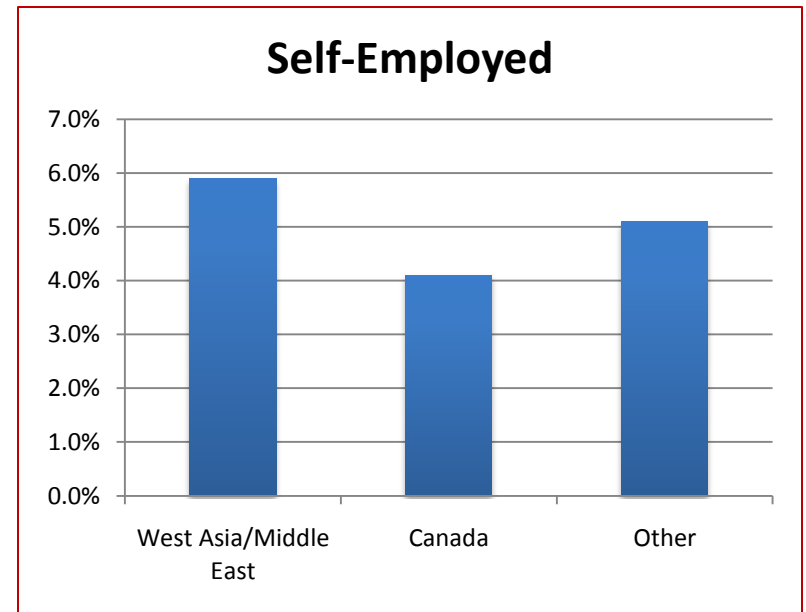
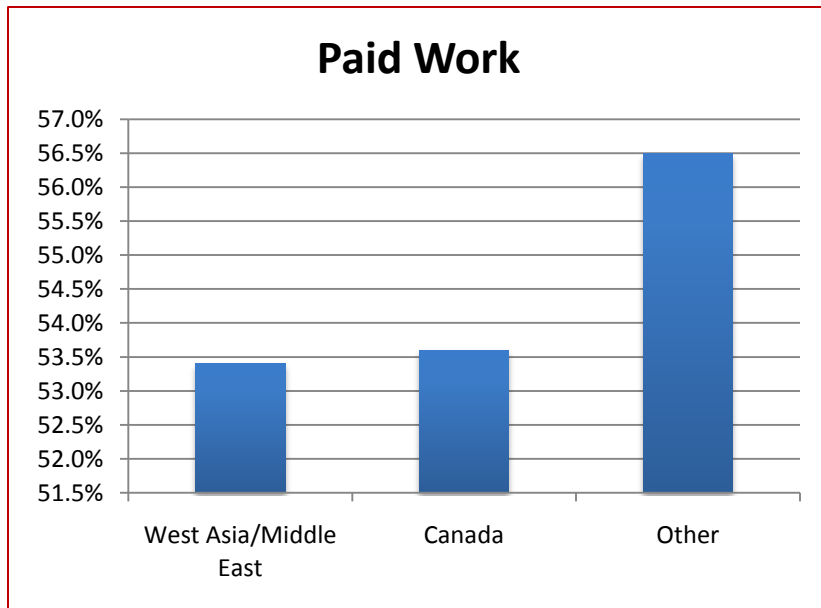
Muslims seem to have higher levels of human capital, compared to both native-born Canadians and other immigrants



Source: Canadian Census Data, 2006

Employment status:

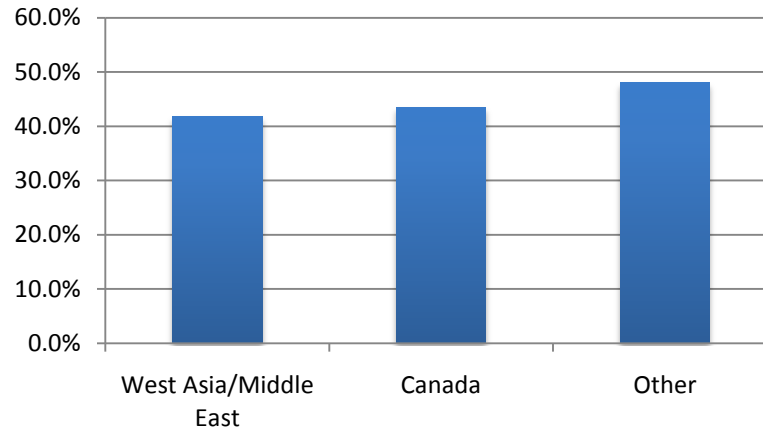
Despite their higher human capital, Muslims seem to be unable to translate it into economic gains



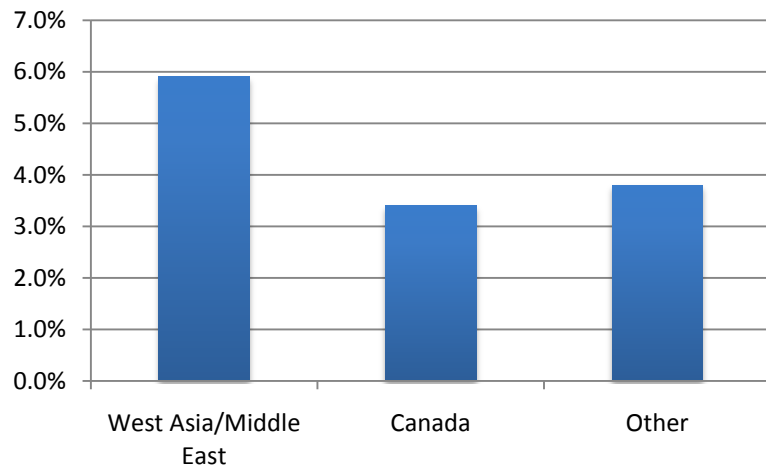
Source: Canadian Census Data, 2006

Employment status

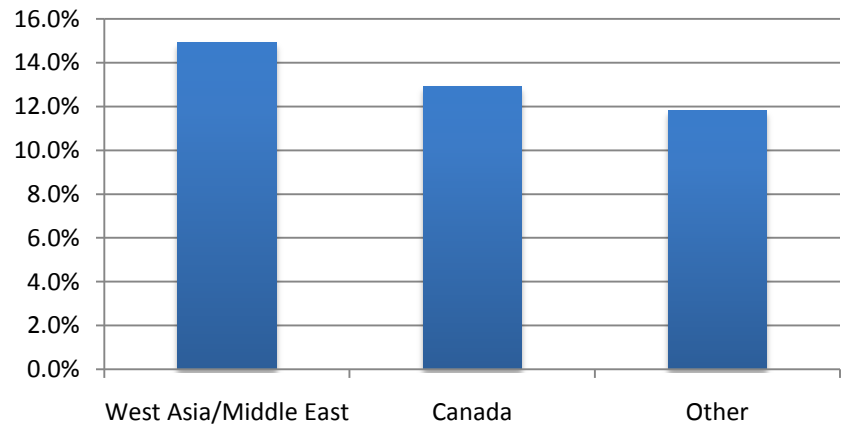
Worked mainly full-time weeks in 2005



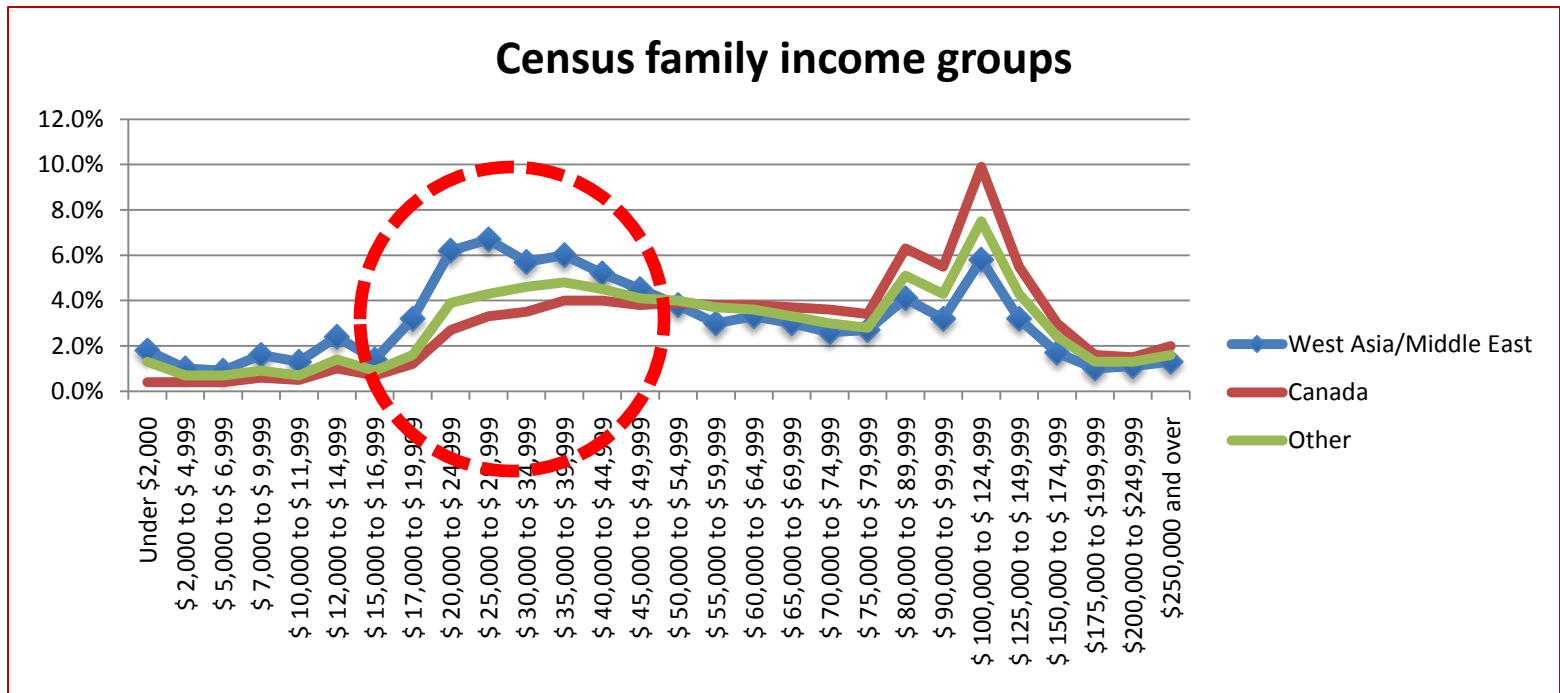
Unemployed



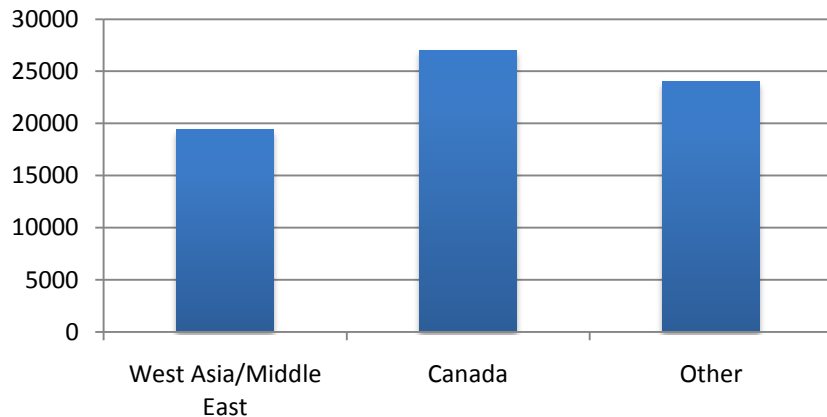
Worked mainly part-time weeks in 2005



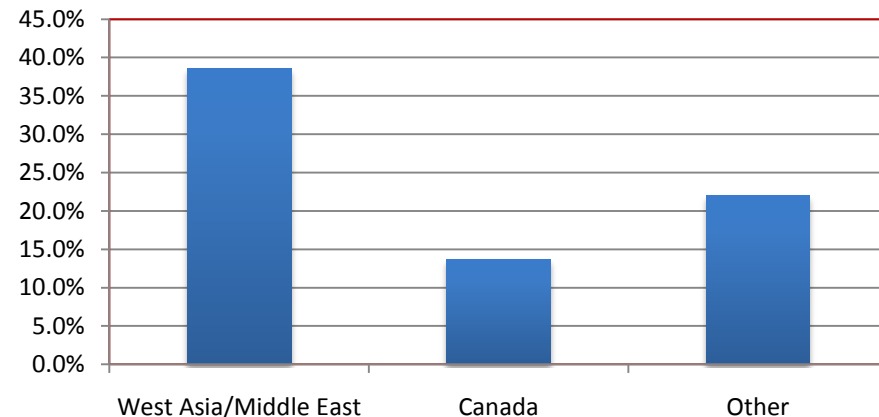
Income status



Mean Employment Income



Low income family status



Source: Canadian Census Data, 2006

Conclusions

- 1. The status of Muslims in Canada could be alarming
- 2. This status could create challenges for their identification with Canada
- 3. Given the general trends of trust and economic experiences for immigrants, at least one major reason for Muslims' low level of trust could be their unique economic experiences, i.e., the mismatch between their human capital and economic status
- 4. Without treating the above structural issue, the cultural solutions (like inter-faith dialogues) may not be too effective in creating bridges between Muslims and mainstream populations.