

WORK IN PROGRESS / PLEASE DO NOT QUOTE

Economic inequalities arising from an immigrant background in Quebec:

1. The facts with reference to the Montreal CMA, 2006

Jacques LEDENT

Institut national de la recherche scientifique
Centre Urbanisation, Culture et Société

Prepared for discussion at the International Seminar *Rethinking Equity in India and Quebec: Towards Inclusive Societies* to be held in Montreal, November 7-9, 2011

Introduction¹

Dealing with economic inequalities among ethnic groups in Quebec and, more generally, in Canada is not a simple matter, owing to a lack of relevant data. True, the national statistical agency, Statistics Canada, makes available on its website a huge data file which shows, for various ethnic subpopulations, a large selection of demographic, cultural, labour force, educational and income characteristics by ethnic group². However, in this file, ethnic origin is broken down in 101 categories which are problematic in various ways. First, these categories reflect a mix of ethnic and cultural origins associated with the ancestors of census respondents and thus are very heterogeneous in nature. Second, they include the most common ethnic origins in Canada, regardless of the spatial entity considered, and thus they do not necessarily consider the most numerous ethnic origins pertaining to each specific spatial entity. In some instances, some of them can even be missed entirely.

As a result, rather than look at economic inequalities from an ethnic standpoint, we attack this issue from a different angle, one that emphasizes immigrant background. More precisely, we will pay attention to economic differences which are linked to several dimensions of such background and we will do this with reference to the Census Metropolitan Area of Montreal (in short the Montreal CMA) rather than Quebec as a whole, because the Quebec population with an immigrant background is essentially concentrated in and around the city of Montreal.³ Data from the 2006 census found on the website of Statistics Canada will be used (almost) exclusively for that purpose.

More specifically, we will focus on the following dimensions:

- status/period of immigration
- visible minority status/group
- mother tongue

and, for each of these three dimensions, we will examine economic differences between relevant groups on the basis of the following outcome indicators:

¹ This is the first of two papers reporting on work in progress which is devoted to economic inequalities arising from an immigrant background in Quebec. Specifically, it presents the facts with reference to the metropolitan area (CMA) of Montreal as they come out of the 2006 Census of Population, whereas the companion paper deals with the explanations behind those facts : Victor Chung, Alain Bélanger and Jacques Ledent, *Economic inequalities arising from an immigrant background in Quebec: 2. Explanations*. Prepared for discussion at the International Seminar *Rethinking Equity in India and Quebec: Towards Inclusive Societies* to be held in Montreal, November 7-9, 2011.

² Statistics Canada, *Ethnic Origin (101), Age Groups (8), Sex (3) and Selected Demographic, Cultural, Labour Force, Educational and Income Characteristics (309), for the Total Population - Canada, Provinces, Territories, Census Metropolitan Areas and Census Agglomerations - Cat. No. 97-564-X2006007*.

³ Indeed, according to the 2006 census, the Montreal CMA which is home to 48% of the population aged 15 years and over living in Quebec comprises 88% of immigrants, 91% of visible minorities and 81% of non-French speakers among them.

- labour market indicators such as participation, employment and unemployment rates but also underemployment (overeducation) rates⁴
- income indicators such as median and average total incomes as well as prevalence of low income.

Naturally, intergroup outcome differences stem from differences in the socio-demographic characteristics of the groups concerned such as age, education or knowledge of the two official languages (French and English), which suggests completing our examination with a look at such differences. However, we will do this only with education, because i) age will be considered in our analysis of labour market indicators and ii) the role of knowledge of official languages cannot be easily evaluated, in an immigrant background context.

The paper consists of five sections. Section 1 is a brief description of how the Montreal CMA population aged 15 years and over is distributed with regard to the three dimensions of immigrant background. It is followed by three sections which address intergroup differences with respect to these dimensions. Section 2 deals with the immigrant dimension, Section 3 with the visible minority dimension and Section 4 with the mother tongue dimension. Next and finally, Section 5 is concerned with intergroup differences in the level of education.

1. The distribution of the study population according to the three immigrant background dimensions

Status/period of Immigration

Table 1 presents the distribution of the population aged 15 years and over in the Montreal CMA with respect to the immigration dimension. Out of a total of 2 967 700 persons, this population includes 693 400 immigrants—that is, persons who are, or have been, landed immigrants in Canada or, in plain words, have been granted the right to live in Canada permanently by the immigration authorities⁵. In other words, slightly less than one person in five is an immigrant (23.7%). But, whereas one (big) half (55.4%) of all immigrants arrived in Canada before 1991, the other (small) half (44.6%) came in since, especially in the last quinquennial period (2001-2006) which has seen the arrival of almost one out of five immigrants residing in the CMA in 2006.

Visible minority status/group

In the distant past, immigrants to Canada came mostly from the United States and Europe but, starting in the nineteen seventies, the geographical origin of immigrants shifted away from these regions to the rest of the world where the population is predominantly non white so that

⁴ Unlike the other indicators, overeducation rates are not available on Statistics Canada's website and their values come from a special compilation of the 2006 Census pertaining to the Island (rather than the CMA) of Montreal.

⁵ Almost all immigrants were born outside Canada but a small number were born in Canada, mostly children of foreign diplomats, born in Canada, who normally do not obtain Canadian citizenship at birth.

today a vast majority of immigrants to Canada as well as Quebec belong to the visible minorities. According the Employment Equity Act (1986) enacted by the federal government to underpin its employment equity programs⁶, visible minorities are persons other than Aboriginal people who are non Caucasian in race and non white in skin colour. Such persons are classified in 10 categories (Chinese, South Asian, Black, Filipino, Latin American, Southeast Asian, Arab, West Asian, Korean and Japanese), but relevant figures released by Statistics Canada also include an undefined category (visible minority n.i.e.) and a multiple category.

Table 1: Distribution according to status/period of immigration - Population 15 years and over, Montreal CMA, 2006

Status/period of immigration	Numbers	Proportion (%) of	
		Total	Immigrants
Total	2,967,715	100	
Non-immigrants	2,237,580	75.4	
Immigrants	693,370	23.4	100
Before 1991	384,440	13.0	55.4
1991 to 1995	94,335	3.2	13.6
1996 to 2000	80,950	2.7	11.7
2001 to 2006	133,650	4.5	19.3
Non-permanent residents	36,770	1.2	

Source : Statistics Canada, 2006 Census of Population - Catalogue number 97-564-XCB2006008

Table 2 presents the distribution of the population under study with respect to the visible minority dimension. 448 300 persons aged 15 years and over in the Montreal CMA, or a 15.1% proportion, belong to the visible minorities .They are, however, unevenly distributed among visible minority groups, with size differences between groups reflecting more or less differences in timing of arrival. Thus, Blacks (28%) come ahead of four groups with roughly similar numerical importance—Arabs (16%), Latin Americans (13%), Chinese (13%) and South Asians (12%)—followed by three other groups with a single digit proportion—South East Asians (8%), Filipinos (4%) and West Asians (3%)—whereas the two remaining groups (Koreans and Japanese) amount each to less than 1%.⁷

⁶ From some time now, it is also been used to support programs that promote equal opportunity for everyone in the social, culture and economic life of Canada.

⁷ In what follows, the discussion of labour force and income indicators for visible minority groups will be limited to the eight most populous groups, from Blacks (28%) to West Asians (3%).

Table 2: Distribution according to visible minority status/group - Population 15 years and over, Montreal CMA, 2006

Visible minority status/group	Numbers	Proportion (%) of	
		Total	Visible minority population
Total	2,967,715	100	
Visible minority population	448,285	15.1	100
Chinese	56,710	1.9	12.7
South Asian	53,030	1.8	11.8
Black	124,070	4.2	27.7
Filipino	18,925	0.6	4.2
Latin American	59,640	2.0	13.3
Southeast Asian	35,495	1.2	7.9
Arab	73,450	2.5	16.4
West Asian	11,675	0.4	2.6
Korean	3,580	0.1	0.8
Japanese	2,400	0.1	0.5
Visible minority, n.i.e.	2,845	0.1	0.6
Multiple visible minority	6,460	0.2	1.4
Not a visible minority	2,519,435	84.9	

Source : Statistics Canada, 2006 Census of Population - Catalogue number 97-562-XCB2006017

Mother tongue

Table 3 shows the distribution of the population under study according to mother tongue with French but also English, the other language in use in Montreal for more than two centuries, being separated from other languages--labelled by Statistics Canada as non-official languages in contrast with the two official languages, French and English. Thus, in the population under study, French is the mother tongue of just under two in three persons (65%), whereas, as a result of the continuous flow of immigrants to Canada, the mother tongue of the remaining one person in three is more often a non-official language than English (22% and 11%, respectively, of all mother tongues).

Table 3: Distribution according to mother tongue - Population 15 years and over, Montreal CMA, 2006

Mother tongue	N	%
Total	2,967,715	100
English	338,115	11.4
French	1,925,555	64.9
Non-official language	649,745	21.9
Multiple responses	54,300	1.8

Source: Statistics Canada, 2006 Census of Population - Catalogue number 97-560-XCB2006030

2. Economic inequalities with respect to status/period of immigration

Labour force indicators

As can be seen from Panel A in Table 4, immigrants are much less present in the labour market than non-immigrants as their participation rate is about 7 percentage points lower (61.5% vs. 68.2%). Moreover, when they participate to the labour market, immigrants are much more often unemployed, in fact about twice as much, as non-immigrants (11.1% vs. 5.7%) so that their employment rate shortfall amounts to almost 10 percentage points: 54.7% vs. 64.3%.

The labour force indicators of immigrants are likely to vary with the period of immigration to Canada and one would expect participation to increase and unemployment to decrease with duration of residence. Such an expectation is met in the latter case: the unemployment rate decreases from close to 20% for those arrived in the five years preceding the 2006 census to slightly above 7% for those arrived before 1991. By contrast, the expectation of a participation rate increasing with duration of residence is not substantiated. The participation rate initially increases before eventually decreasing with duration of residence.

In truth, the participation rate just examined is an indicator for all those aged 15 years and over in the CMA and thus it is affected by the age composition of this population. Consequently, it renders senseless any comparison of the values of such an indicator among subpopulations with very different age structures, such as groups of immigrants distinguished by period of immigration. Any meaningful comparison of participation thus requires controlling for age structure. Among the several ways, more or less sophisticated, to accomplish this control, one quick but purposeful way is simply to substitute the participation rate of the population aged 25-54 years for that of the whole population aged 15 years and over.

Table 4 : Economic indicators according to status/period of immigration - Montreal CMA, 2006

A - Labour force indicators

Status/period of immigration	Participation rate (%)	Employment rate (%)	Unemployment rate (%)	Participation rate (%) for 25-54 years old	Overeducation rate (%)*
Total	66.5	61.9	6.9	86.0	36.6
Non-immigrants	68.2	64.3	5.7	88.3	33.5
Immigrants	61.5	54.7	11.1	79.9	43.2
Before 1991	55.9	51.8	7.3	84.4	35.6
1991 to 1995	69.5	61.8	11.1	80.6	44.7
1996 to 2000	71.6	62.9	12.2	80.9	46.3
2001 to 2006	65.9	52.9	19.8	72.2	54.1
Non-permanent residents	54.6	46.8	14.4	66.6	44.0

B - Income indicators

Status/period of immigration	Median total income (\$)	Average total income (\$)	Prevalence of low income after tax in 2005 (%)	
			Economic family members	Persons not in economic families
Total	25161	34196	11.7	37.5
Non-immigrants	27782	36204	8.8	34.3
Immigrants	19414	28269	21.3	47.1
Before 1991	22388	32981	10.3	39.4
1991 to 1995	17554	23996	22.1	52.1
1996 to 2000	18119	24195	25.1	49.6
2001 to 2006	13178	18715	43.2	65.2
Non-permanent residents	10815	22557	38.8	76.5

Source: Statistics Canada, 2006 Census of Population

- All indicators but overeducation rate: Catalogue number 97-564-XCB2006008
- Overeducation rate: Special Compilation

* for Island of Montreal

Indeed, such a substitution leads to the expected result-- the participation rate of the 25-54 years old increases from 72.2% for the more recent immigrants (2001-2006) to 84.4% for those arrived before 1991—although no increase and, in fact, a marginal decrease, is observed between the immigrant cohorts of the late and early nineties. Such a finding, however, could be attributed to the fact that the immigrants who arrived in the early nineties did so at a time of a severe economic recession, which made their integration into the host country quite arduous. Note in passing that the participation rate in question is quite low for the cohort of immigrants arrived in the 2001-2006 period (about 8 percentage points lower than that of the previous quinquennial cohort), whereas earlier immigrants, those arrived before 1991, appear to be less active than non-immigrants with a shortfall amounting to 4 percentage points (84.4% vs. 88.3%)

Finally, turning to underemployment (overeducation), it appears that, among salaried workers residing on the Island rather than the CMA of Montreal, more than two immigrants in five (43.2%)⁸ have an education level that is superior to the one required by the job they hold, whereas it is the case of only one non-immigrant in three (33.5%). Moreover, as one would expect, the overeducation rate of immigrants declines with duration of residence. While overeducation affects more than one person in two among the 2001-2006 cohort, it is about 10 percentage points lower for the two previous quinquennial cohorts (with only a small decrease between the cohorts of the late and early nineties) and another 10 points lower in the cohort of those arrived before 1991.

Income indicators

Now shifting from labour force to income indicators, the figures shown in Panel B of Table 4 leads to a picture which is very similar to the one just described. First, with regard to total income, median as well as average values are some eight thousand dollars lower among immigrants than non-immigrants: \$19 400 vs. \$27 800 for median income and \$28 300 vs. 36 200 for average income. Moreover, both indicators take on values which, for immigrants, tend to increase with duration of residence, although once again the values pertaining to those arrived in the early nineties are not higher but rather slightly lower than those arrived in the late nineties. As for the values reached by the cohort arrived before 1991, they remain below the corresponding values for non-immigrants. In addition, a direct comparison of median and average values of total income by status/group of immigration suggests that income is much less evenly distributed among immigrants than non-immigrants as well as among immigrants arrived before 1991 than those arrived hereafter. In other words, there is a comparatively

⁸ Recall that, in a given group of people holding a job, the overeducation rate is defined as the rate of those persons having a level of education that is higher than the level of education corresponding to the skills required by their job. In the present case, the values of such a rate have been established on the basis of a four level categorization drawing borrowed from the skills categorization set forth by Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (voir <http://www5.rhdcc.gc.ca/CNP/Francais/CNP/2006/Tutoriel.aspx#9>.)

higher proportion of persons with high income among immigrants than non-immigrants, especially among those immigrants arrived more than a quarter of a century ago.

The above income inequalities show up again with reference to the prevalence of low income. According to Statistics Canada, economic families⁹ and persons not living in economic families, differentiated by size of family and area of residence, are said to have a low income if they spend 20% more than average of their after tax income on food, shelter and clothing. First, immigrants are much more affected by low income than non-immigrants: 47.1% vs. 34.3% for persons not living in economic families and 21.3% vs. 8.8% for non economic family members. Second, the longer the duration of residence, the less prevalent low income although, once again, the situation of the cohort of the early nineties is not better but rather slightly worse than that of the cohort of the late nineties.

Summary

Economic inequalities in the CMA population 15 years and over with respect to the immigration dimension are clear. Immigrants are not so well-off as non-immigrants and the longer the duration of residence (the earlier the period of immigration), the better is their economic situation. This being said, it appears consistently that:

- The performance of earlier immigrants (arrived before 1991) remains lower than that of non-immigrants¹⁰
- Immigrants arrived in the early nineties (in times of a severe economic recession) did not perform better but rather marginally worse than those arrived in the late nineties
- The situation of recent immigrants (arrived between 2001 and 2006) is preoccupying in all accounts and one is drawn to attribute this to actual difficulties of integration rather to a short time of residence per se.

3. Economic inequalities with respect to the visible minority status/group

Labour force indicators

According to Table 5a, the residents of the Montreal CMA aged 15 years and over appear to take part in the labour market in roughly the same proportion, be they members of the visible minorities or not: the former have a participation rate of 65.8% vs. 66.6% for the latter. But, those residents who belong to the visible minorities are more than twice as often unemployed than those who do not: their unemployment rate reaches as high as 13.2% vs. 5.8%. Such a difference in unemployment according to visible minority status explains why the visible

⁹ An economic family is a group of two or more persons who live in the same dwelling and are related to each other by blood, marriage, common-law or adoption. A couple may be of opposite or same sex.

¹⁰ Nevertheless, it could well be that the performance of the most ancient cohorts of immigrants surpasses that of non-immigrants but this cannot be substantiated without access to more detailed data.

minority population lags almost 5 percentage points behind the rest of the population in employment rate (57.2% versus 62.7%).

Table 5a : Economic indicators according to visible minority status/group (A - Labour force indicators) - Montreal CMA, 2006

Visible minority status/group	Participation rate (%)	Employment rate (%)	Unemployment rate (%)	Participation rate (%) for 25-54 years old	Overeducation rate (%)*
Total	66.5	61.9	6.9	86.0	36.6
Visible minority population	65.8	57.2	13.2	77.9	48.0
Chinese	60.0 (8)	54.2 (5)	9.6 (2)	74.0 (6)	41.6 (3)
South Asian	61.1 (7)	51.9 (8)	15.1 (7)	71.5 (8)	44.1 (4)
Black	68.4 (3)	59.2 (3)	13.4 (5)	82.5 (2)	51.7 (7)
Filipino	75.4 (1)	71.1 (1)	5.6 (1)	85.8 (1)	63.1 (8)
Latin American	69.3 (2)	60.2 (2)	13.1 (4)	79.2 (3)	50.5 (6)
Southeast Asian	64.8 (5)	58.4 (4)	9.9 (3)	79.1 (4)	38.1 (2)
Arab	66.0 (4)	54.1 (6)	18.1 (8)	75.7 (5)	46.1 (5)
West Asian	61.5 (6)	52.6 (7)	14.4 (6)	72.1 (7)	37.8 (1)
Korean	56.3	50.3	10.9	70.2	
Japanese	57.5	53.8	6.5	72.4	
Visible minority, n.i.e.	66.6	58.3	12.4	80.9	
Multiple visible minority	67.3	59.1	12.2	79.8	
Not a visible minority	66.6	62.7	5.8	87.7	33.4

Source : Statistics Canada, 2006 Census of Population

- All indicators but overeducation rate: Catalogue number 97-562-XCB2006017
- Overeducation rate: Special compilation

* for Island of Montreal

But again, such a comparison of participation is not meaningful to the extent that the visible minority population is much younger than the other. Thus, limiting the analysis to the 25-54 years old, it now appears that the true propensity of persons who belong to the visible minorities to be present in the labour market is significantly less than that of those who do not: 77.9 % vs. 87.7%, which indeed is a totally different finding from the one found above. On an individual basis, members of the visible minorities are much less present in the labour market than non members. Moreover, their presence varies widely from one visible minority to another. Based on the participation rate for the 25-54 years (again to control somewhat for intergroup differences in age composition), it appears that, in comparison to the 77.9% average for the whole visible minority population, two groups--the Filipino and Black groups

(respectively, 85.8% et 82.5%) participate more often, whereas, on the contrary three other groups-- the Chinese, West Asian and South Asian groups (respectively, 74.0%, 72.1% and 71.5%) take part less often. As for the remaining three groups, they are present in the labour market in about average proportion: the Latin-American, Southeast Asian and Arab groups.

These intergroup differences in participation apply in broad terms to unemployment in the sense that visible minority groups with high (low) participation generally have low (high) unemployment. Thus, the Filipino group which has the highest participation rate (85.8%) ahead of the Black group (82.5%) has the lowest unemployment rate (5.6%), way ahead of the Chinese group (9.6%). Nevertheless, there are a few exceptions worth noting: the Black group has comparatively high participation (82.5%) and medium un employment (13.4%), the Arab group has comparatively medium participation (75.7%) and high unemployment (18.1%) and especially the Chinese group has comparatively low participation (74.0%) and low unemployment (9.6%).

Finally, members of the visible minorities are much more often concerned by overeducation than non members (48.0% versus 33.4%), exhibiting a wide range of values, which extend from 37.8% and 38.1% for the West Asian and Southeast Asian groups, respectively, to 63.1% for the Filipino group which is a lot more affected than the next most affected group—that is, the Black group (51.7%).

Income indicators

As can be seen from Table 5b, visible minority status has a strong impact on total income. First, its median value is about \$11 000 lower for immigrants than non-immigrants (\$16 400 vs. \$27 200), whereas its average value is more than \$13 000 lower (\$22 800 vs. \$36 100). Second, both median and average values vary somewhat among the eight visible minority groups, but the intergroup differences observed bear no resemblance between the two types of values. On the one hand, average values lead one to set the Southeast Asian group (\$26 000) apart the other groups which are seemingly similar (\$20 200 for the West Asian group to \$23 100 for the Chinese and Filipino groups). On the other hand, median values suggest a wider variation among the eight visible minority groups, going from the West Asian group (\$12 900) to the Black group (\$19 900) with the Southeast Asian group in the middle of the pack (\$16 900). Which goes to mean that income is unevenly distributed in some groups such the Chinese and especially the Southeast Asian groups. In the case of the latter group, such a finding could be attributed to the substantial proportion of highly educated immigrants from Vietnam who have a good job, especially in the health sector. Finally, note that the West Asian comes dead last, by a substantial margin, for both median and average values.

Table 5b : Economic indicators according to visible minority status/group (B - Income indicators) - Montreal CMA, 2006

Visible minority status/group	Median total income (\$)	Average total income (\$)	Prevalence of low income after tax in 2005 (%)*	
			Economic family members	Persons not in economic families
Total	25161	34196	11.7	37.5
Visible minority population	16391	22848		
Chinese	14789 (6)	23130 (2)	26.8 (4)	66.5 (8)
South Asian	15361 (5)	22434 (6)	33.0 (6)	58.9 (4)
Black	18109 (2)	22701 (4)	26.1 (3)	55.4 (3)
Filipino	19497 (1)	23105 (3)	12.0 (1)	54.5 (2)
Latin American	17144 (3)	21168 (7)	27.3 (5)	59.3 (5)
Southeast Asian	16857 (4)	26017 (1)	21.3 (2)	52.1 (1)
Arab	14669 (7)	22590 (5)	36.5 (7)	64.5 (7)
West Asian	12949 (8)	20225 (8)	38.5 (8)	61.6 (6)
Korean	12560	10018	32.6	74.8
Japanese	17367	46070	20.6	47.2
Visible minority, n.i.e.	18259	22608		
Multiple visible minority	17556	24424		
Not a visible minority**	27205	36126	8.0	34.7

Source : Statistics Canada, 2006 Census of Population

- Employment income: Catalogue number 97-563-XCB2006060

- Total Income: Catalogue number 97-563-XCB2006007

- Low income: Catalogue number 97-564-XCB2006009

* Low-income figures are for population groups rather than visible minority groups (see footnote 11)

** Low-income figures are for the white group (single responses)

Note: Rankings shown in parentheses apply to the set of the eight most populous visible minority groups

As was the case with respect to immigration status/period, low income indicators¹¹ here suggest a picture of differences with respect to visible minority status/group which is more or less akin that obtained on the basis of labour force indicators. Overall, prevalence of low income is high for those persons not in economic families in all eight visible minority groups, varying relatively little from a 52.1% value for the Southeast Asian group to a 64.5% value for the Arab group. It is, however, somewhat less for economic family members, although the corresponding prevalence rate differs much more between groups, ranging from 12.0% for the Filipino group (not much more than for the total population) to 36.5% and 38.5% for the Arab and West Asian groups, respectively.

Summary

In the Montreal CMA, the visible minority population shows a huge shortfall in labour market and income performance in comparison to the rest of the population. It is hampered by a lower propensity to participate to the labour market, higher unemployment and underemployment and finally lower income and thus a higher prevalence of low income. But the situation of this population is highly heterogeneous among the relevant groups. As can be seen from a tabular summary of the intergroup differences described above (see Table 6), the eight most populous visible minority groups can be classified, as follows, in order of decreasing outcome:

- First come two groups with a highly positive score on almost all accounts: the Filipino group for which underemployment, however, is a price to pay for economic performance and the Southeast Asian group whose participation to the labour market is only about average
- Second is the Black group which is about average when it does not score positively (that is, for unemployment and underemployment)
- Third is the Latin American group which happens to be about average on all accounts
- Fourth is the Chinese group which has a couple of negative scores but also a couple of positive ones as well (with regard to unemployment and underemployment)
- Fifth and last are the South Asian, West Asian and Arab groups, with mostly negative scores (although the first two groups score positively with regard to underemployment).

¹¹ The information provided here is based on population groups rather than visible minority groups, which explains why there are no totals provided for persons belonging or not to a visible minority. To understand the difference between population and visible minority groups, the best way is to start from the census respondents' form in which the 'population group' question provides mark-in circles for whites as well as the 10 visible minority groups, thus allowing multiple responses. As a result, visible minority counts and population group counts stem from a differing treatment of multiple responses. Multiple responses which include a white response are considered separately in the population group counts, whereas they are attributed to specific subgroups in the visible minority counts: to the white group if the other response is Latin American or Arab or to the corresponding visible minority group if the other response is one of the other eight minority groups.

Table 6: A tabular summary of the economic situation of visible minority groups

Visible minority group	Participation	Unemployment	Underemployment	Income
Chinese	-	+	+	?
South Asian	--	~	+	-
Black	+	~	~	+
Filipino	++	++	--	++
Latin American	~	~	~	~
Southeast Asian	~	+	++	++
Arab	~	--	~	--
West Asian	--	~	++	--

++ much better than average; + better than average

~ about average

- worse than average; -- much worse than average

Source: Tables 5a and 5b

4. Economic inequalities with respect to mother tongue

Labour force indicators

As suggested by Table 7, among the CMA residents aged 15 years and over, those whose mother tongue is a non-official language show lower participation and higher unemployment and, consequently, lower employment than those whose mother tongue is an official language, be it French or English. Moreover, as expected from what we know about the age structure of the two groups, the higher participation of the former group vis-à-vis the latter sticks with reference to the population aged 25 to 54 years.

In comparison to the non-official language group, the official language group is a lot less under the influence of immigration and thus it is much more affected by the relative dynamics of his two subgroups. Interestingly, the French subgroup appears to enjoy a better performance than the English subgroup which itself does better than the non official language groups in a similar fashion. When compared to those with English mother tongue, those with French mother tongue participate more (68.2% vs. 65.6%) and are less often unemployed (5.4% vs. 7.7%). The advantage of the French mother tongue subsists even after control for age as the participation rate of the 25 to 54 years old reaches 88.7% vs. 84.6%.

Table 7 : Economic indicators according to mother tongue - Montreal CMA, 2006

Mother tongue	Labour force indicators				Income indicators	
	Participation rate (%)	Employment rate (%)	Unemployment rate (%)	Participation rate (%) for 25-54 years old	Median total income (\$)	Average total income (\$)
Total	66.5	61.9	6.9	86.0	25161	34196
English	65.6	60.5	7.7	84.6	25396	39433
French	68.2	64.5	5.4	88.7	27975	35712
Non-official language	61.9	55.1	11	79.4	n.a.	n.a.

Source : Statistics Canada, 2006 Census of Population

- Labour force indicators : Catalogue number 97-560-XCB2006030

- Income indicators : Catalogue number 97-555-XCB2006053

Income indicators

Finally, with regard to income indicators for which no values are available for the non-official language group, it is interesting to note that, whereas the advantage of the French subgroup over the English one observed with labour force indicators applies to total median income (\$28 000 vs. \$25 400) but not to average total income. Indeed, the difference between the subgroups appears to be reversed (\$35 700 vs. \$39 400), thus suggesting that there is in a much higher proportions of individuals with very high income in the English than in the French subgroups.

Summary

Clearly, the non-official language group, strongly influence by immigration, does not perform as well as the two official language subgroups but, among those two, the French subgroup does better than its English counterpart although the latter appears to include a larger proportion of persons with very high income.

5. Differences in level of education

As hinted in the introduction, economic inequalities arising from an immigrant background in the population under study may have to do, among other things, with differences in socio-demographic characteristics such as age, education and knowledge of the official languages. Consequently, in this last section of the paper, an attempt is made to explore the impact of the

level of education, based on a set of tables (Tables 8-10) which show the distribution of the CMA population 15 years and older according to the level of education with respect to each of the three dimensions of immigrant background.

In a nutshell, education is measured with respect to a four-level categorization derived from the 13 values of the census variable (hcdd) pertaining to the highest certificate, diploma or degree obtained:

- Level D: No certificate, diploma or degree
- Level C: High school certificate or equivalent
- Level B: Other diploma below bachelor's level
- Level A: University certificate, diploma or degree at bachelor's level or above.

Status/period of Immigration

As can be seen from Table 8, immigrants are better educated than non-immigrants, with comparatively more persons in level A (26.8% vs. 18.9%) and fewer in levels B and C. Moreover, the more recent the period of immigration, the higher is the level of education of immigrants. In fact, whereas the cohort of immigrants arrived in the 1991-1995 period appears to have a similar education structure as non-immigrants (thanks to a huge drop in the level D share as compared to the immigrants arrived before 1991), the two subsequent cohorts show similar improvements with, in both cases, a huge 11-12 percentage point increase in the level A share accompanied by a common 3 to 5 point decrease in the other three shares. Such a result clearly illustrates the increased preference given, in the selection process of immigrants, to individuals who hold at least a bachelor's degree.

Table 8 : Distribution (%) according to level of education - Population 15 years and over by status/period of immigration, Montreal CMA, 2006

Status/period of immigration	All levels	Level D	Level C	Level B	Level A
Total	100	22.0	22.4	34.6	21.0
Non-immigrants	100	21.6	23.5	36.0	18.9
Immigrants	100	23.9	18.9	30.4	26.8
Before 1991	100	29.2	19.3	31.4	20.2
1991 to 1995	100	21.7	23.0	32.9	22.4
1996 to 2000	100	18.4	19.2	29.2	33.2
2001 to 2006	100	13.3	15.0	26.6	45.1
Non-permanent residents	100	12.6	20.5	26.2	40.6

Source : Derived from Statistics Canada, 2006 Census of Population - Catalogue number 97-564-XCB2006008

Clearly, on a global basis, the better education of each new cohort of immigrants does not translate into better economic performance. Many reasons may account for this which will not be discussed here: from the comparatively lower quality of diploma obtained abroad, especially in non occidental countries to the role of duration of residence in the economic performance of immigrants.

Visible minority status/group

Since a majority of the immigrants arrived in the last three decades belong to the visible minorities, it is no surprise that the visible minority population appears to have a more favourable distribution by education than the rest of the population. According to Table 9, among those persons 15 years old and over who reside in the Montreal CMA, the two groups have similar level C and D shares but the visible minority group has a higher level A share (25.5% vs. 20.2%) and therefore a lower level B share (31.2% vs. 35.2%). In other words, the better education of the members of the visible minorities over non-members is almost entirely due to a higher proportion of persons with a university degree (baccalaureate or better).

Table 9 : Distribution (%) according to level of education - Population 15 years and over by visible minority status/group, Montreal CMA, 2006

Visible minority status/group	All levels	Level D	Level C	Level B	Level A
Total	100	22.0	22.4	34.6	21.0
Visible minority population	100	21.5	21.9	31.1	25.5
Chinese	100	20.9	19.1	23.1	36.9
South Asian	100	24.5	28.4	23.9	23.2
Black	100	23.4	21.8	38.2	16.5
Filipino	100	9.6	21.1	38.4	30.8
Latin American	100	25.1	23.5	32.9	18.5
Southeast Asian	100	30.1	22.2	25.0	22.8
Arab	100	13.1	17.4	31.7	37.8
West Asian	100	23.7	24.9	23.4	28.0
Korean	100	7.3	23.7	26.4	42.3
Japanese	100	6.0	20.0	29.6	44.0
Visible minority, n.i.e.	100	26.7	24.4	34.8	13.9
Multiple visible minority	100	24.5	21.5	30.4	23.5
Not a visible minority	100	22.1	22.5	35.2	20.2

Source : Derived from Statistics Canada, 2006 Census of Population - Catalogue number 97-562-XCB2006017

But, naturally, the education distribution of the whole visible minority group is not homogeneous as it presents some wide variations across its eight most populous groups. In a nutshell, intergroup differences can be summarized by means of the following categorization based on a diminishing level of education:

- First, two groups stand out: the Chinese and Arab groups with a level A share of, respectively, 36.9% and 37.8%, as compared to a 25.5% average
- Second comes the Filipino group which has not only a high level A share (30.2%) but also a high level B share (38.4% vs. an average of 31.1%)
- Third are the West Asian, Black and Latino-American groups with average level C and D shares but a higher than average level A share (West Asians) or level B share (Latino-Americans and especially Blacks)
- Fourth comes the South Asian group with a somewhat less favourable distribution with a high level C share
- Fifth and last, the Southeast Asian group lies at the bottom of the spectrum with a comparatively high level D share.

Clearly the above categorization on the basis of education level differs from the one established above on the basis of the economic performance of immigrants and this again may be explained by a variety of factors ranging from differing values and standards between groups to again duration of residence.

Mother tongue

Finally shifting to the third dimension of immigrant background, the figures shown in Table 10 suggest that, even though the results for the official language group are not shown specifically, the education level distribution of those whose mother tongue is a non-official language is more favourable than those whose mother tongue is an official language, be it French or English. But, interestingly, the education level distribution is quite different among the two official language subgroups with the French subgroup having a much less favourable distribution than the English subgroup. Actually, while the non-official language group is more educated than the official language subgroup, it is only slightly better educated than the English subgroup (similar levels B and C shares but higher level D share).

Actually, the direct comparison of the two distributions pertaining to the two official languages indicates that, in comparison to those with English mother tongue, those with French mother tongue are less educated in the top as well as the bottom halves of the distribution:

- Fewer in level A (18.9% vs. 25.3%) but more in level B (36.8% vs. 30.4%)
- Fewer in level C (22.4% vs. 27.3%) but more in level D (21.9% vs. 17.0%).

In other words, although the persons with French mother tongue are less educated than those with English mother tongue, they appear to perform better in the labour market and to enjoy higher income. But the latter statement does not apply to average income owing to a large

proportion, among those with English mother tongue, of high income which could be related to a high proportion of university degrees.

Table 10 : Distribution (%) according to level of education - Population 15 years and over by mother tongue, Montreal CMA, 2006

Mother tongue	All levels	Level D	Level C	Level B	Level A
Total	100	22.0	22.4	34.6	21.0
English	100	17.0	27.3	30.4	25.3
French	100	21.9	22.4	36.8	18.9
Non-official language	100	25.3	20.0	29.8	24.9
Multiple					

Source: Derived from Statistics Canada, 2006 Census of Population, Catalogue number. 97-560-XCB2006030