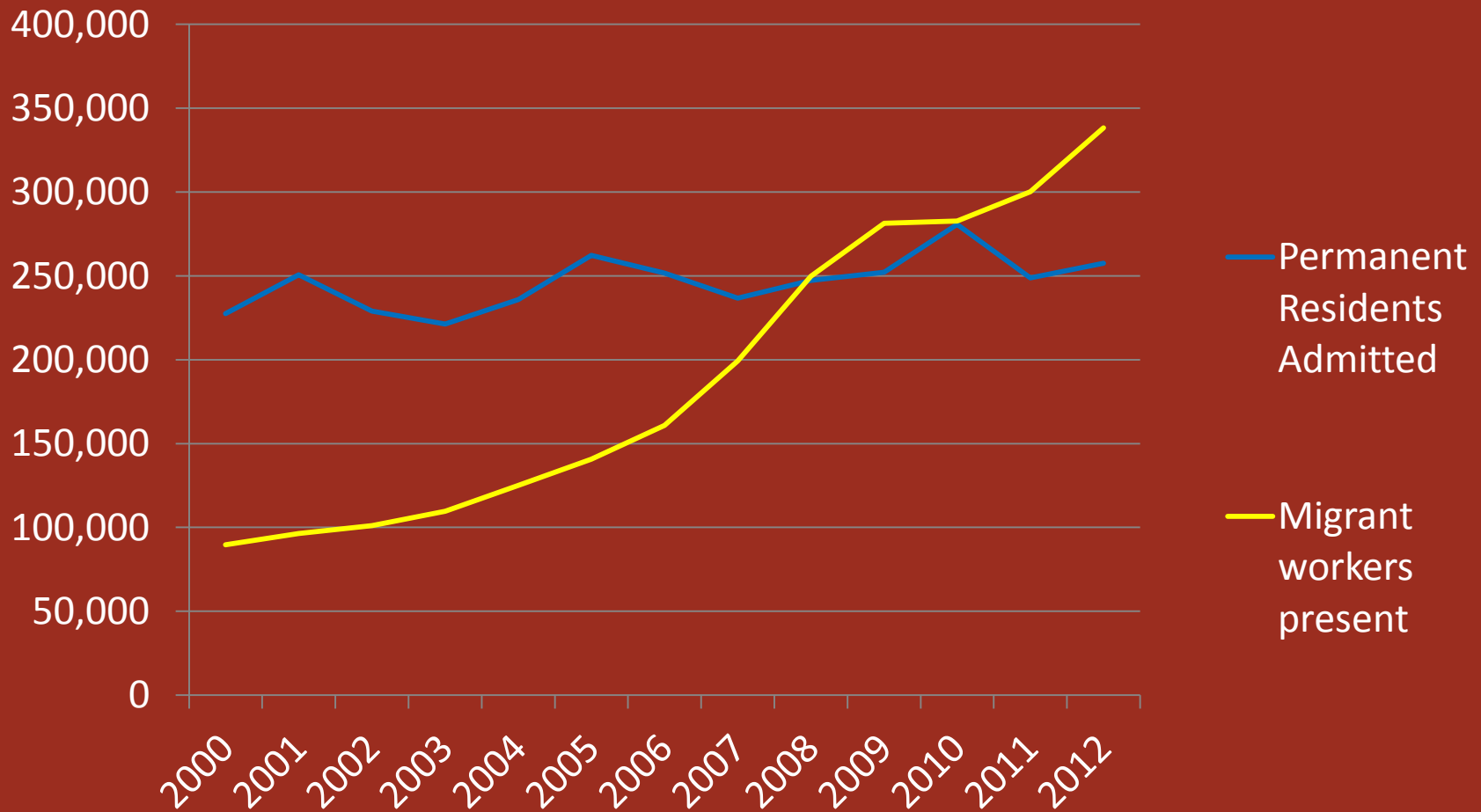


Manufacturing Vulnerability: How Canada's shift towards temporary labour migration opens the door to human trafficking

Marisa Berry Méndez
Canadian Council for Refugees

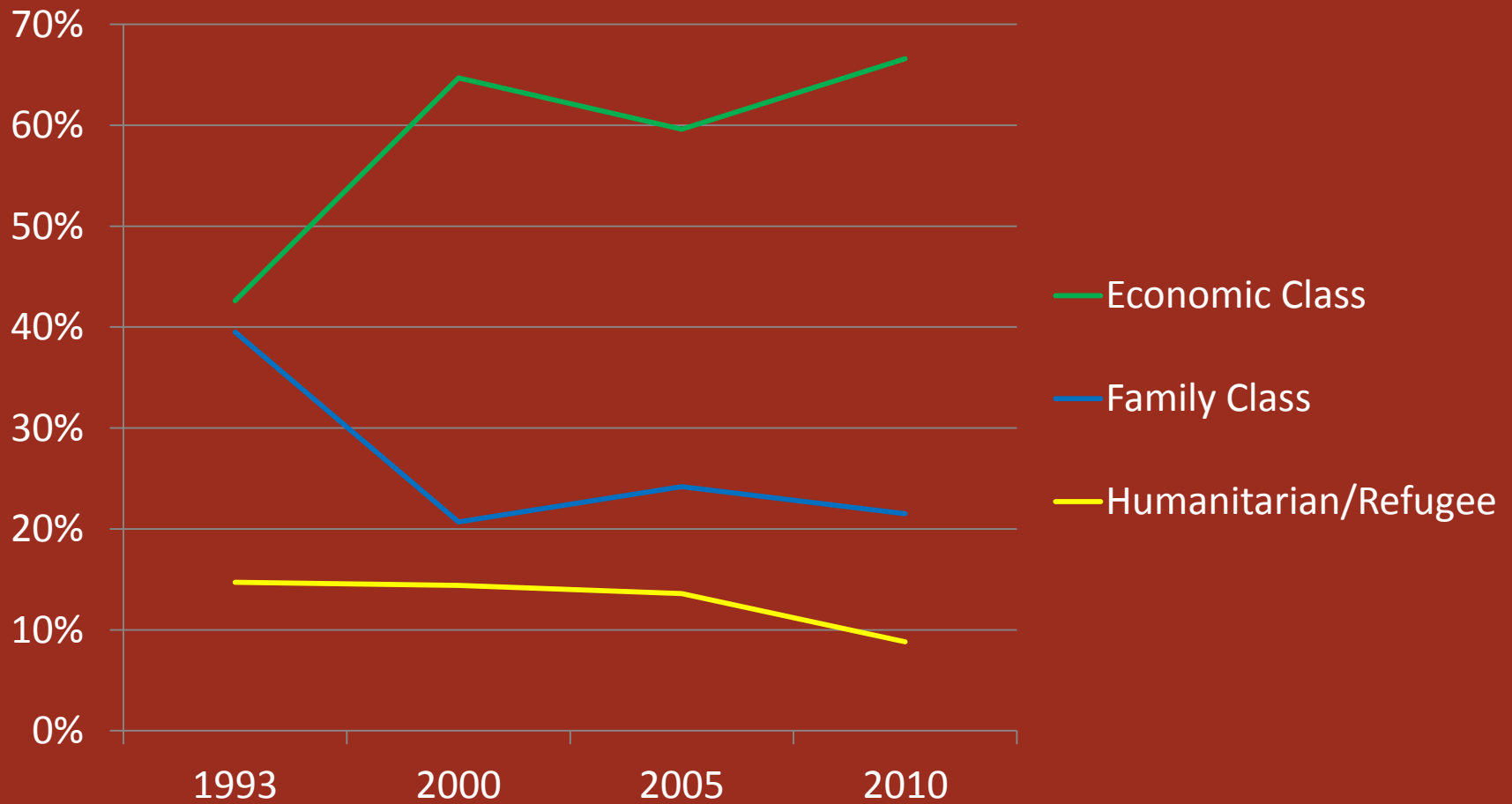


Migrant Workers present vs. Permanent Residents admitted since 2000



Immigrants by Category, 1993 – 2010

(as percentage of total)



Canada's Temporary Foreign Worker Program

3 categories for “low-skilled” workers:

- Live-in Caregiver Program (LICP)
- Seasonal Agricultural Workers Program (SAWP)
- Pilot Project for workers with lower levels of formal training
 - NOC C&D occupations (service, food processing, etc.)
 - Agricultural stream (since 2011)

Concerns

- Two-tier labour system
- Exploitation and abuse
 - Human trafficking

What is it about these programs that make migrant workers vulnerable to trafficking?

- Dependence on employer (closed work permit)
- Temporariness/precarious status
- Lack of access to information on their rights
- Lack of monitoring or enforcement
- Recruitment fees being charged to workers

(Lack of) Monitoring and Enforcement

- HRSDC hands-off approach
- CIC initiative to monitor employers
- “Wild West”
- Question of responsibility

Issues around Recruitment

- Recruiters in Canada charging fees
- Employers in Canada deducting wages from worker to recover recruitment fee
- Recruiters in country of origin charging exorbitant fees



“The exploitation is not isolated and anecdotal. It is endemic. It is systemic.”

- *Made in Canada* Report on migrant workers' insecurity, 2012

Provincial Initiatives

- “Manitoba Model” *WRAPA* 2009
- Nova Scotia *WRPA* 2013
- Saskatchewan *FWRIS Act* 2013

Questions raised:

- Why hasn't there been public debate for such a major shift?
- If the jobs aren't temporary, why are the workers temporary?
- Why the discrimination between "skilled" and "low-skilled" categories?

CCR Campaign

Three central demands:

- Access to permanent residence
- Protection of rights
- Access to services

Learn more about
the CCR Campaign
on migrant workers

Visit our migrant
workers campaign web
page for information
and resources:

www.ccrweb.ca/en/migrant-workers

MIGRANT WORKERS AND TRAFFICKING

In some cases, Temporary Foreign Workers have become victims of human trafficking, meaning that they are under coercion and exploited for their labour.

Linda's Story

When she arrived in Canada, Linda's recruiter took her to a fish factory in Ontario where she worked for one year. She was paid much less than minimum wage and had to work unpaid overtime. She was also charged for transportation and housing.

Linda's boss confiscated her passport. She was forced to sign documents she couldn't understand.

She was not permitted to leave the house, except on limited occasions when she was accompanied by the employer or one of his men.

Linda's experience has had serious psychological consequences, including depression, insomnia, apathy and loss of appetite.