



CMS Research Conference 2025

## **Migration, Mobilities, and Changing Political Landscapes**

### **Stereotypes of High- and Low-Skilled Immigrants to Canada: Evidence From an Online Survey**

Authors: Vincent Hopkins, Andrea Lawlor, Mireille Paquet

Voters typically prefer high-skilled over low-skilled immigration. While some argue this “skill premium” flows from sociotropic/economic considerations, others argue it reflects ethnic/racial prejudice. Surprisingly, however, few studies simply ask voters what comes to mind when they think about immigrant skill levels. What stereotypes predominate? Are there demographic differences in stereotypical beliefs? How do these beliefs shape attitudes toward immigration? In an exploratory, online survey of Canadians (N=2,422), we use open-ended survey items to identify stereotypes of low- and high-skilled immigrants. We also examine stereotypes toward two temporary resident groups: international students and temporary foreign workers. We measure the valence of different stereotypes and use automated text analysis to code them into substantive categories. We explore the demographic profile of people who believe various stereotypes (e.g., sociotropic/economic versus ethnic/racial), and examine whether stereotypical beliefs predict anti-immigrant attitudes and support for immigration.