

Towards the Integration of Immigrants in Quebec's Qualified Workforce: An Overview of the First Years Following Their Arrival and the Effects of Selection Policies

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Research questions

- Are immigrants able to obtain and maintain jobs commensurate with their education?
- How does their presence in the qualified workforce evolve over time?
- What kind of effect do selection policies have on their presence in the qualified workforce?

Background

- The majority of immigrants (55%) who settle in Quebec are skilled workers selected on a point system basis.
- Selection criteria are based on adaptability, language proficiency, credentials, work experience, immigration programs, age, spouse's profile and presence of children.

Methods

- Survey on skilled migrants in Quebec (n=1,541) *Enquête sur les travailleurs sélectionnés (ETS)*
 - Survey data on the post-migration job history
 - Retrospective data covering 1 to 5 years of settlement
 - Administrative data on points obtained on each item of the selection grid

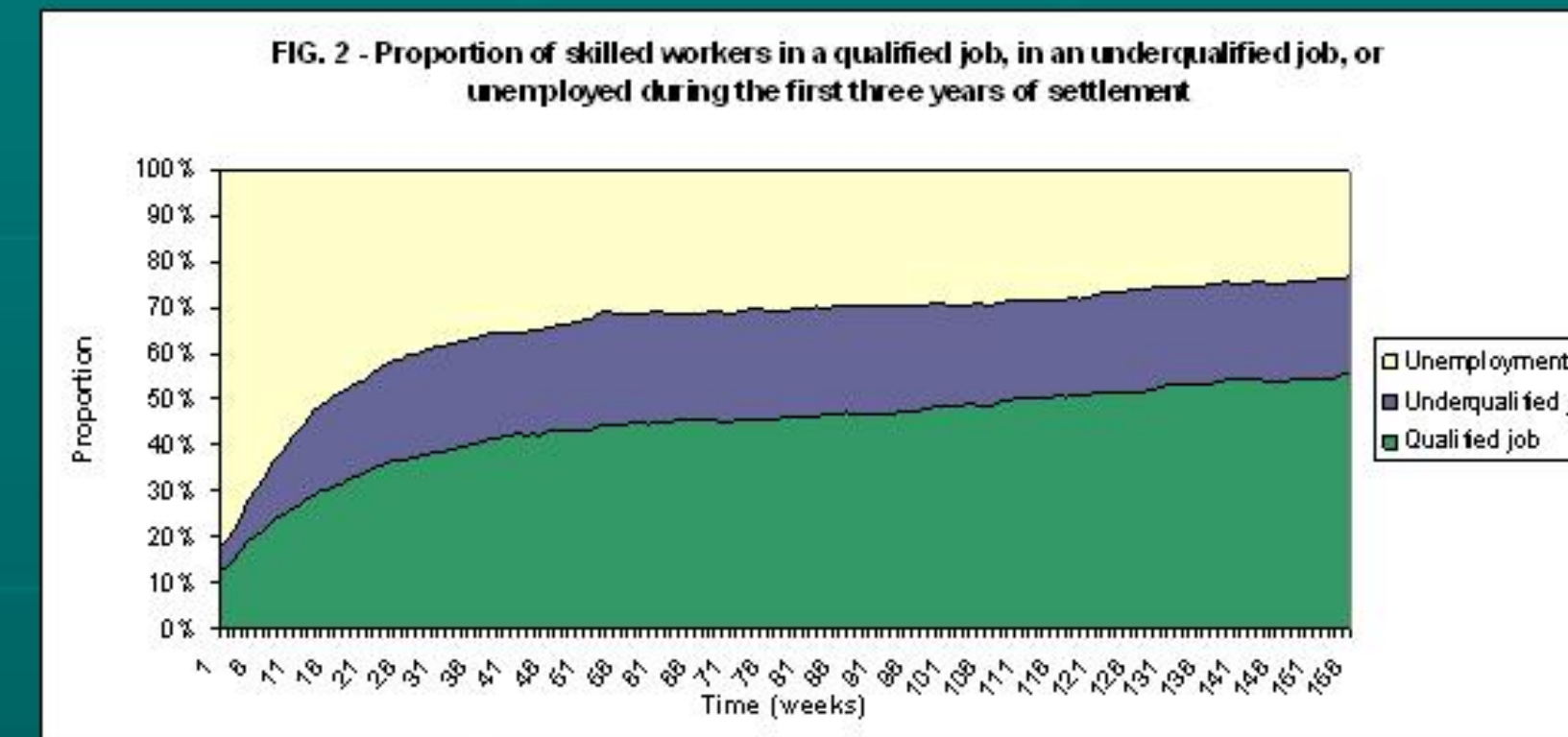
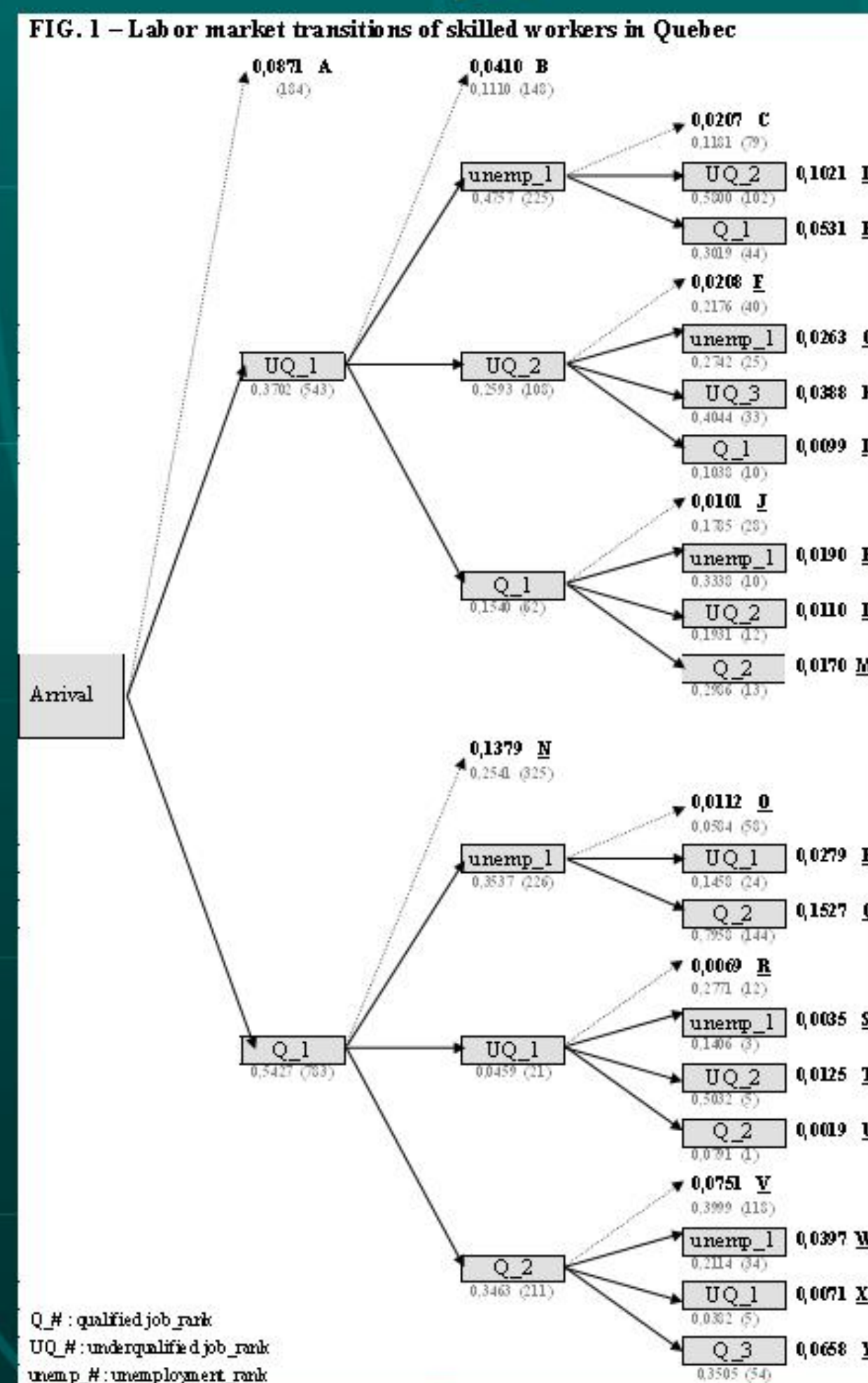
- Definition: Job qualification is determined by comparing the educational requirements for a given position (based on the National Occupational Classification) to the level of credentials upon arrival.

- Various methodological approaches were taken to illustrate different aspects of the presence of migrants in jobs that match their credentials:

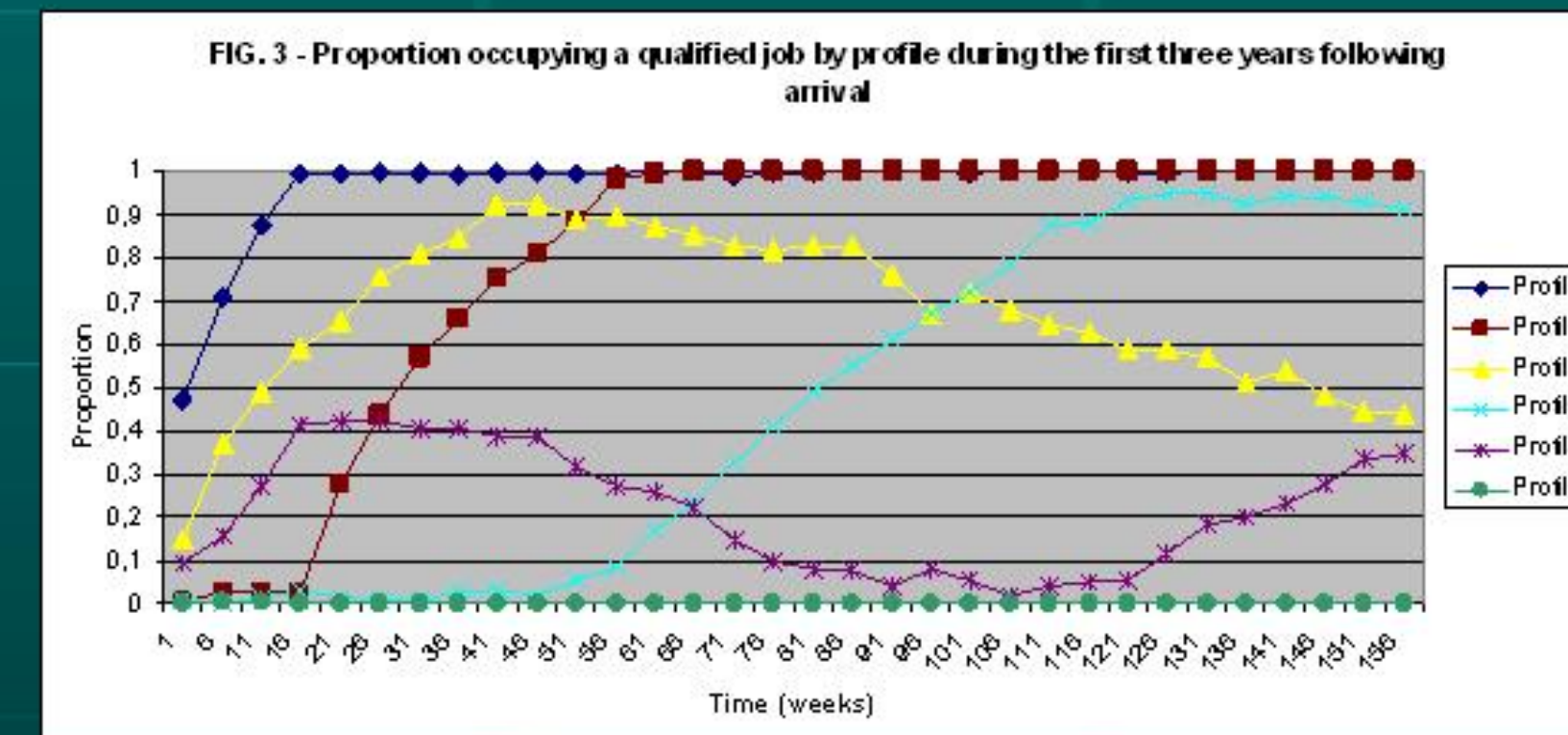
- Event history analysis
- Time series
- Sequence analysis
- Multinomial logistic regression

Results

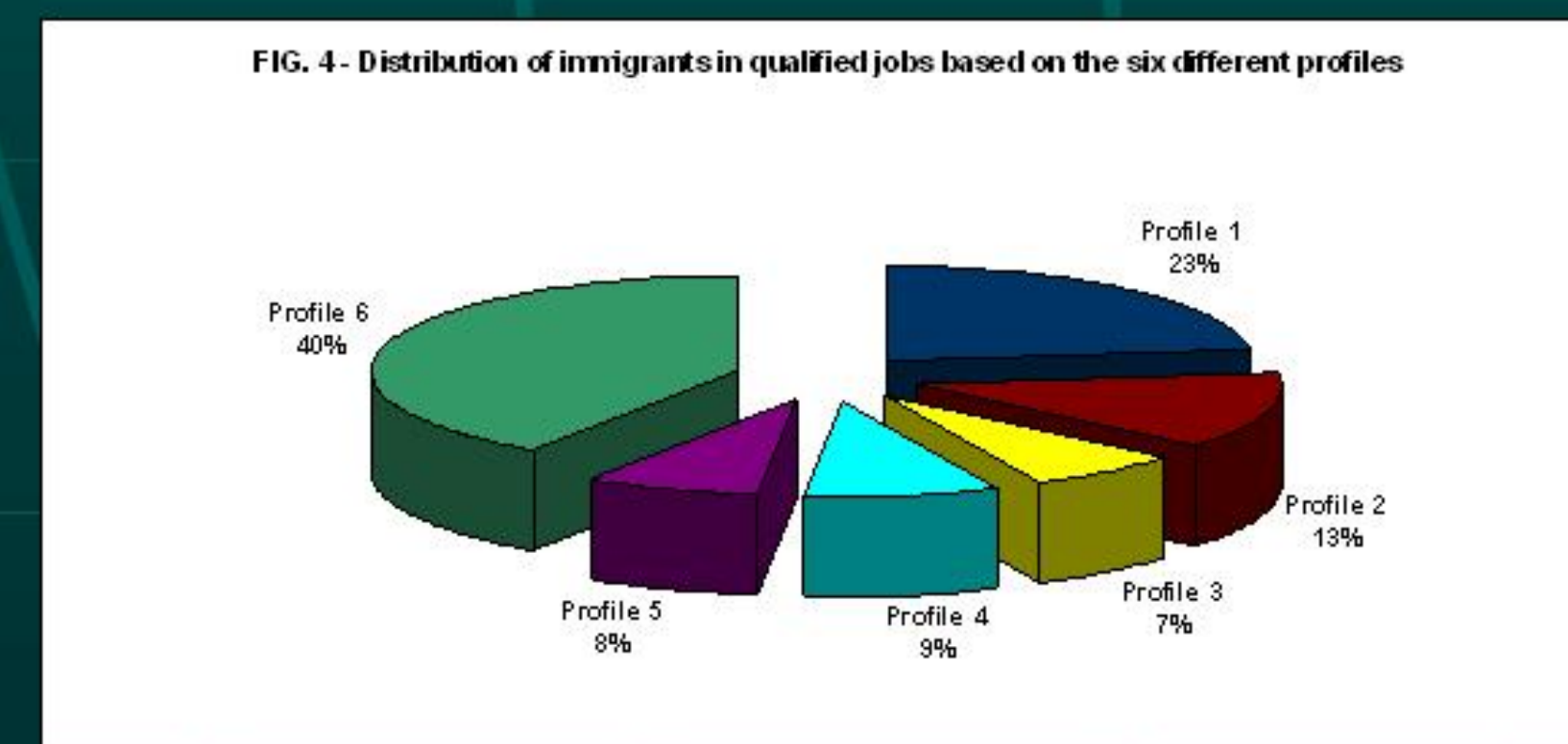
- Only 54% of immigrants have access to a qualified job as their first employment experience in Quebec.
- Once they have had an underqualified job, they will most likely stay in this type of job, and vice versa.
- After three transitions on the labor market, 66% of immigrants will have obtained jobs that match their skills.



- The proportion of immigrants in qualified jobs increases over the first three years of settlement, the most significant increase occurring during the first year.
- In Quebec, the proportion rises from 45% in the first year, to 55% by the end of the third year.



- Six profiles of immigrants in qualified jobs were identified.
- Among these profiles, two of them show a direct access to qualified jobs within the first year and an ongoing presence afterwards. Together, these two profiles represent 36% of the sample.
- The other four profiles raise questions about the ability of skilled workers to find and maintain jobs that match their credentials.
- They either show a late onset (profile 4: 9%), an intermittent presence (profiles 3, 5: 7% and 8% respectively) or a complete lack of qualified jobs (profile 6: 40%).



TAB. 1 - Multinomial logistic regression for the effects of selection criteria on the profiles of immigrants in qualified jobs

	Profile 1 vs 6	Profile 2 vs 6	Profile 3 vs 6	Profile 4 vs 6	Profile 5 vs 6
	Coef.	Sig.	Coef.	Sig.	Coef.
Intercept	-1.966 **		-2.470 **	-1.937 **	-1.824 **
Selection grid items					
Level of education (ref. University, PhD)	0.633 **		0.052	0.717	0.000
High school or less	-0.759		0.635	0.152	-0.128
Postsecondary education	-1.803 ****		-0.238	-0.787	-0.968
University schooling, undergraduate	-2.037 ****		-0.596	-1.447 **	-1.299 **
University schooling, graduate studies (MA)	-1.759 ****		-0.672	-1.141	-0.868
2 nd specialization	0.221		0.063	-0.550	-0.255
Privileged education	0.576		0.808 ****	0.503	0.381
Selection criteria (ref. Employability and professional mobility program)					
Profession in demand in Quebec	0.229		0.442	0.442	0.306
Other (exception and assured employment)	1.586 ****		0.676	0.291	0.310
Work experience	0.294		0.344	-0.245	-0.188
Knowledge of French	0.505		0.964	0.522	0.128
Knowledge of English	0.720		0.410	0.109	0.236
Postsecondary education in French	0.604		0.913	0.359	0.268
Personal suitability	0.702		0.864	0.702	1.006
Motivation	-0.417		-0.755	0.317	-0.290
Knowledge of Quebec	-0.190		-0.324	-0.538	0.060
Visits to Quebec (ref. None)					
To work or study	1.350 ****		0.314	0.918 **	-0.063
Other	0.599 **		0.542	1.018 ****	0.148
Social ties with Quebec (ref. None)					
Relatives					
Friends	-0.455 **		-0.052	-0.084	0.239
Presence of a spouse (ref. Ab)	-0.816 **		-0.400	-1.874	-0.887
Spouse's age	0.298		-0.033	-0.651	0.437
Spouse's level of education	-0.363		0.688	0.406	0.158
Spouse's work experience	0.898 **		0.151	1.879 **	0.669
Spouse's knowledge of French	0.410		0.530	0.757	0.456
Presence of children	-0.310		-1.245 **	0.476	-0.410
Other socio-demographic characteristics					
Gender (ref. Female)					
Region of origin (ref. Western Europe and USA)					
Maghreb	-1.361 ****		-0.670 **	-0.644	0.049
Eastern Europe and former USSR	-1.114 ****		-0.127	-0.360	0.185
East Asia and Oceania	-1.173 ****		-0.834	-0.549	-0.606
West Asia and Middle East	-1.856 ****		-0.632	-1.048	-0.474
Americas (excluding USA)	-1.979 ****		-0.767	-0.527	-0.342
Africa (excluding Maghreb)	-1.217 **		-0.362	0.239	-0.757
N :	1409				
LL :	-1988.99				
DF :	165				
LR(2) :	452.02 ****				
Pseudo-R2 :	0.102				

*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

- The selection grid plays a minor role (10%) in determining the profile.
- The items of the grid best explain the two profiles of immigrants who are able to obtain and maintain a qualified job within a year. Their effect mostly refers to characteristics of human capital.
- Immigrants who are not of Western European or American origin face greater difficulty accessing and maintaining jobs that match their skills within the first months of settlement.
- The selection grid has very little impact on the last four profiles, despite the fact that these individuals all qualified for immigration.

Conclusions

- Not all migrants are able to easily find and maintain jobs that match their academic credentials.
- Local experience at all costs? For these newcomers, accepting an underqualified job might mean never finding a job commensurate with their education.
- Selection policies only have a limited impact on the presence of migrants in the qualified workforce, despite the fact that the government tries to select candidates with the highest potential for labor market integration.
- Future research will need to focus on the dynamics of settlement and the conjectural impact on the presence of migrants in the qualified and underqualified workforce.