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NEWS RELEASE

The effects of precarious legal status on immigrants' economic outcomes are long lasting

Montreal – Immigrants with precarious legal status – for example, temporary foreign workers – often end up in precarious work situations that undermine their economic prospects. Moreover, according to Luin Goldring and Patricia Landolt, the authors of a new study published by the Institute for Research on Public Policy (IRPP), these effects are long lasting, even for those who subsequently become permanent residents. Given recent major changes in Canada's immigration system, such as large increases in the number of temporary foreign workers and new pathways to permanent residence, this finding has important implications.

In [*The Impact of Precarious Legal Status on Immigrants' Economic Outcomes*](#), the authors define precarious work as employment that is insecure and of lower quality. They point out that immigrants with these types of jobs are often exposed to labour practices that “erode, violate or evade employment standards.” This is especially of concern in a context where “a growing number of newcomers spend time navigating various forms of temporary and probationary legal status before they can apply for permanent residence,” while others remain in a temporary category or stay in Canada without work or residence authorization.

The authors' quantitative and qualitative analyses are based on original data from a sample of 300 Latin American and Caribbean immigrant workers in the Greater Toronto Area. A key finding is that exposure to precarious work during the initial period in Canada had a lasting negative impact on these workers. As they put it, the effects of living with precarious legal status can be “sticky”; the transition to secure status “does not put people on par with those who entered with secure status.”

In light of this, Goldring and Landolt identify a number of ways to mitigate the effects of precarious status on immigrant economic outcomes, including faster transitions to secure legal status and permanent residence, open work permits for temporary migrant workers, improvements in workplace equity and broader access to settlement services.

[*The Impact of Precarious Legal Status on Immigrants' Economic Outcomes*](#), by Luin Goldring and Patricia Landolt, can be downloaded free of charge from the Institute's Web site (www.irpp.org).

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