

High Skilled Mobility: Changes and Challenges

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Growing International Competition for Highly Skilled Migrants

- Share of college educated admissions is increasing in USA and Europe
- Both traditional and new countries of immigration are changing policies

POLICY CONTINUUM AND RANKING CRITERIA

- Highly controlled / restrictive admission — Policies designed to be unfailingly restrictive and even prohibitive of migration..
- Well managed / controlled admission — Policies that balance facilitating employers' demand and protecting both workers both domestic and foreign.
- Streamlined / competitive admission — Policies that attract as many of the best and brightest as possible, assuming marketplaces ultimately adjust to everyone's benefit.

Criteria:

1. Hard numerical caps
2. Strict labor market test
3. Extensive labor protections
4. Enforcement mechanisms
5. Limited employer portability
6. Restriction on dependents / working spouse
7. Limited permanency rights

Figure 2. Ranking of Index of Controlled/Competitive Temporary

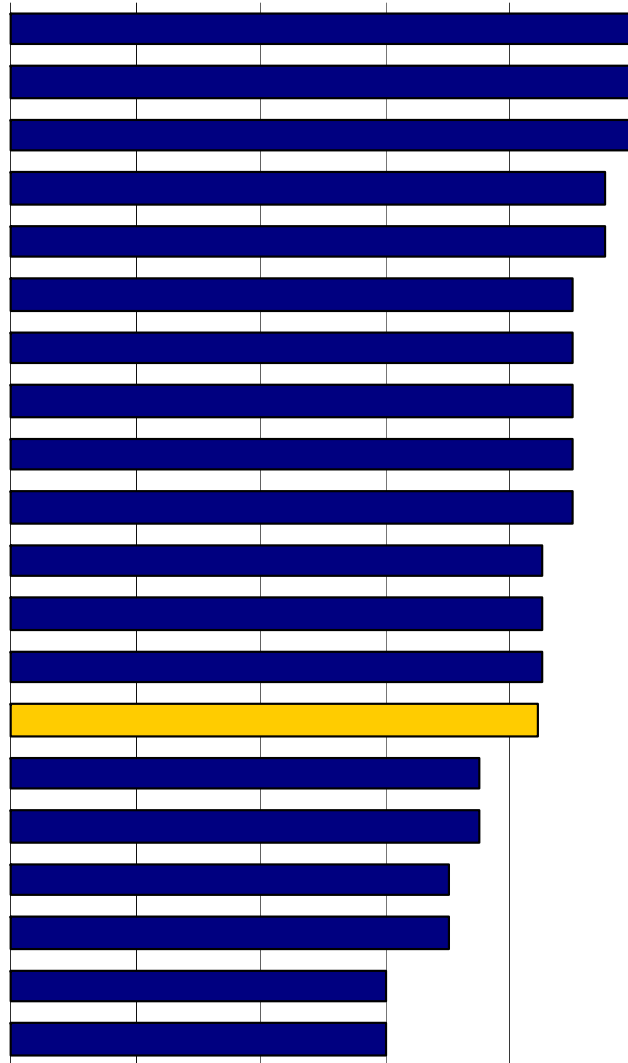
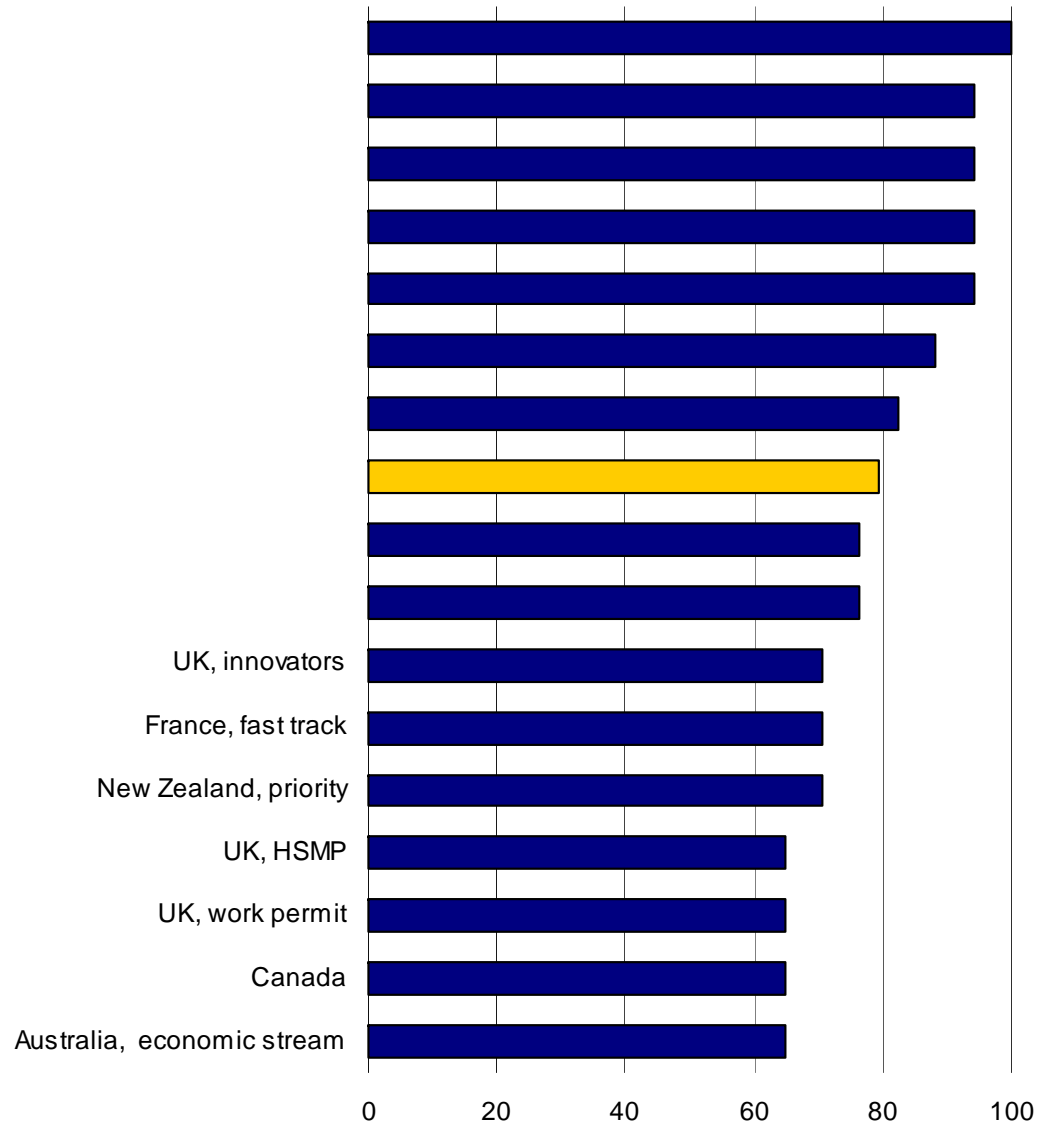
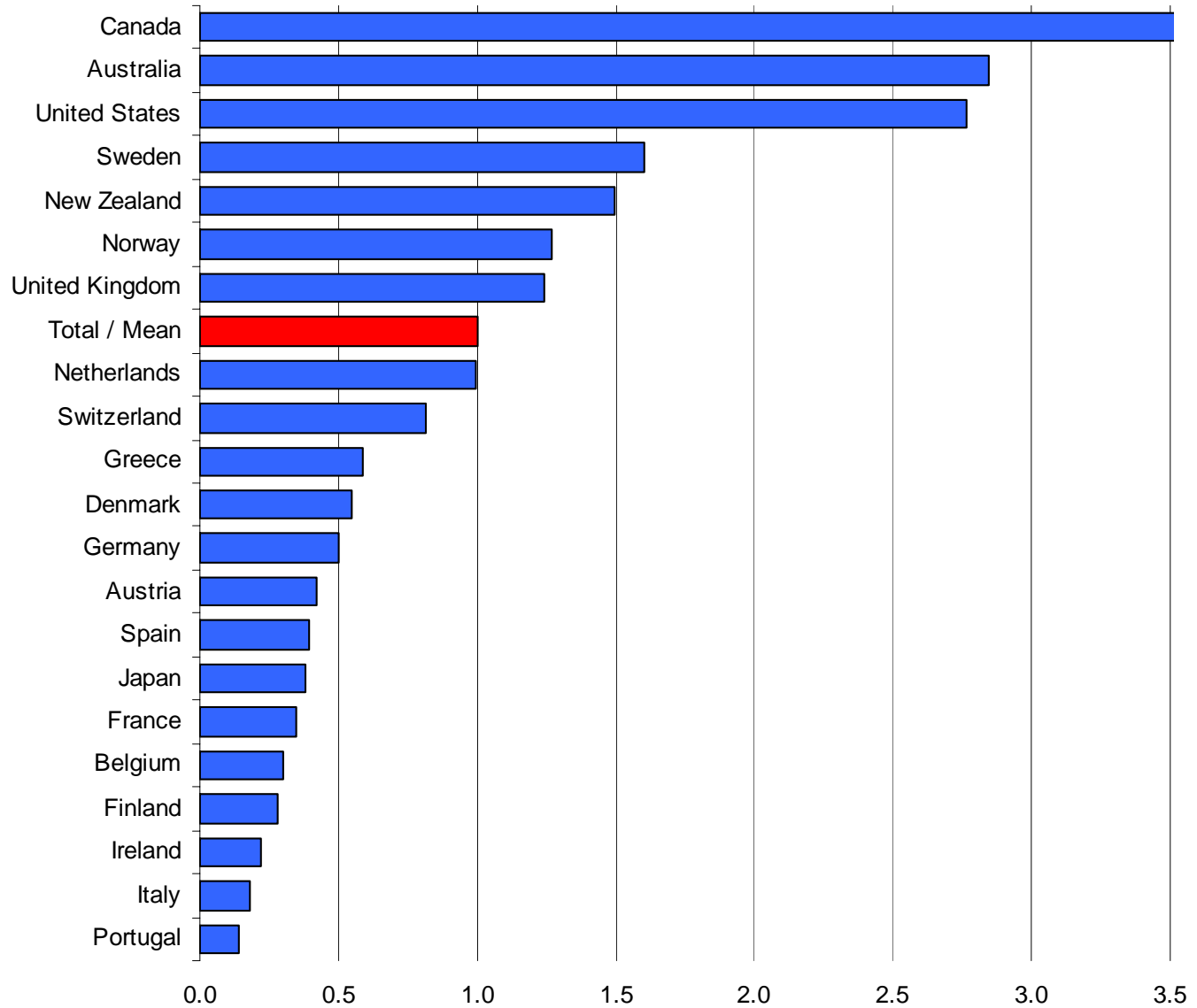


Figure 3. Ranking of the Index of Controlled/Competitive Permanent Skilled Worker Programs



Admission Policies that Risk Brain Drain



Source: Lowell, 2006

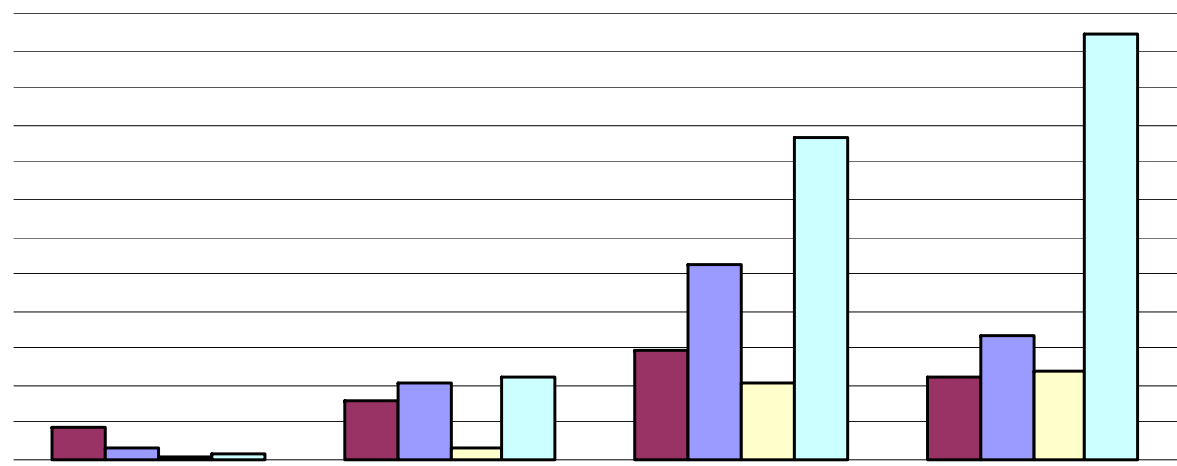
Terminology and the International Mobility of Skilled Workers

High Skilled Mobility

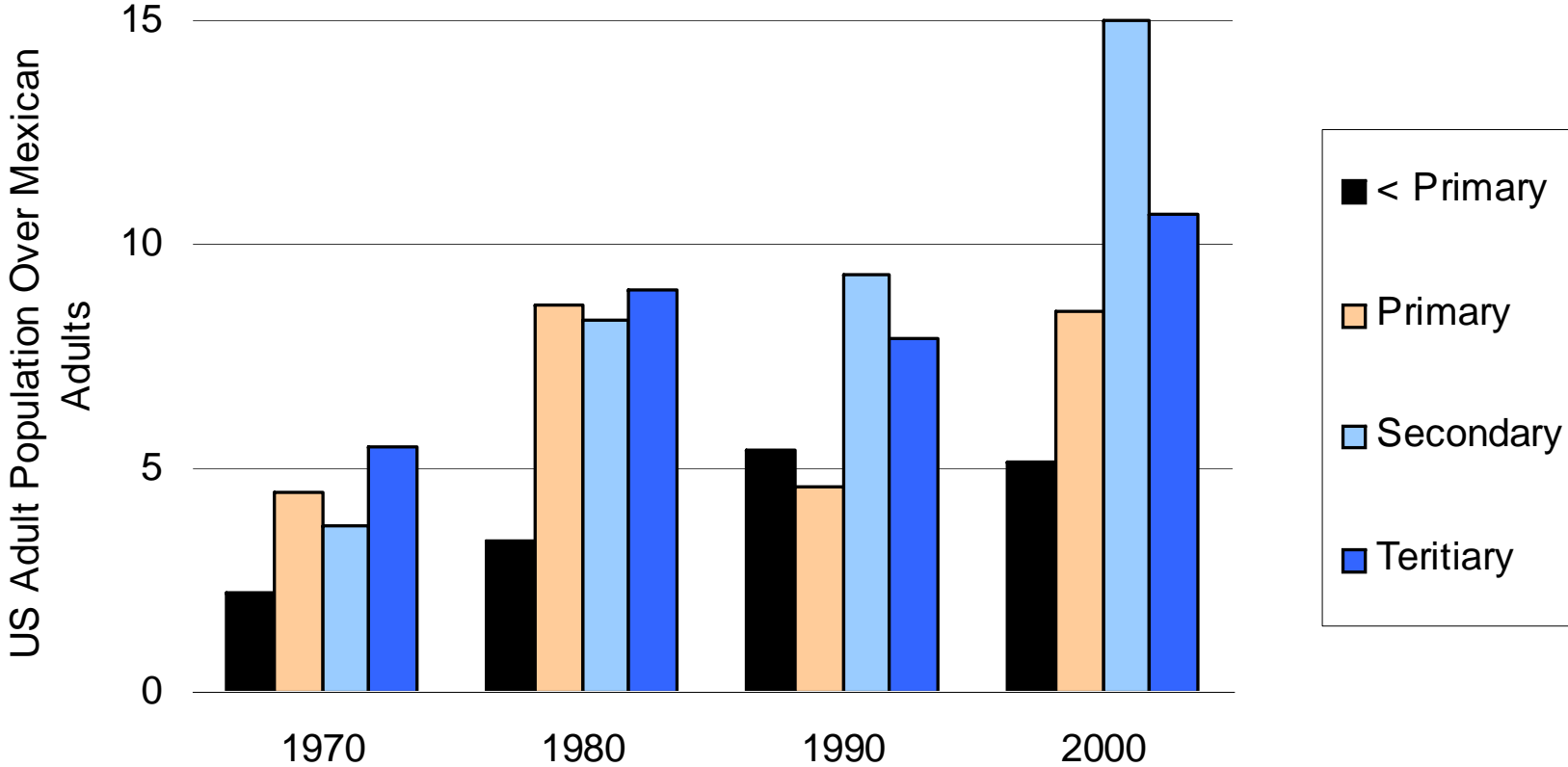
Brain Strain to the United States: Percent of migrants' living abroad

- Good measures of “brain drain” are new
- Differences between countries: Caribbean high and South America low
- Substantial increase since the 1970s
- Notable share educated in USA
- Unexamined losses of the highest education, e.g, masters and doctorates

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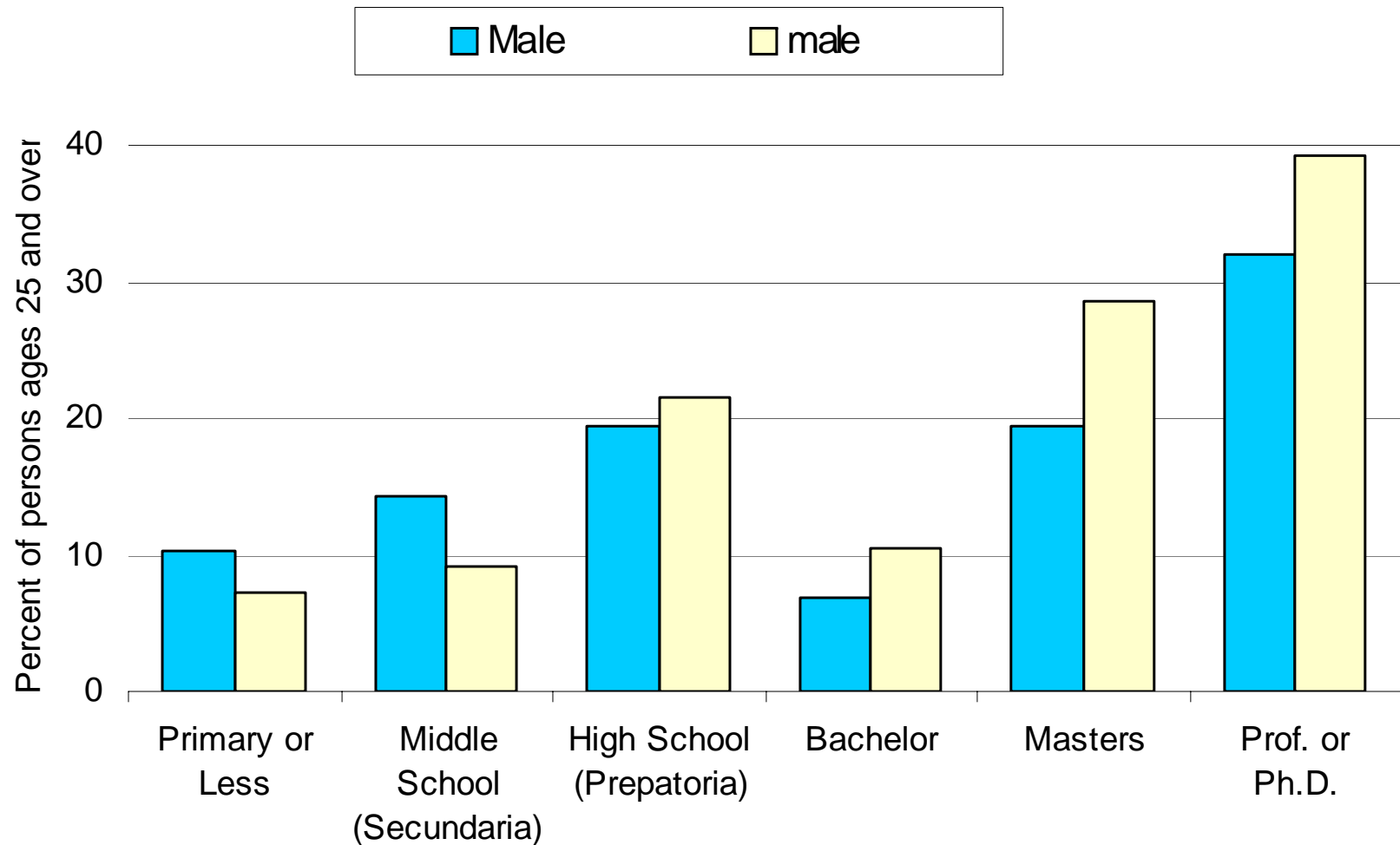


Male Mexican Born Adults Living in the USA by Completed Education, Percent



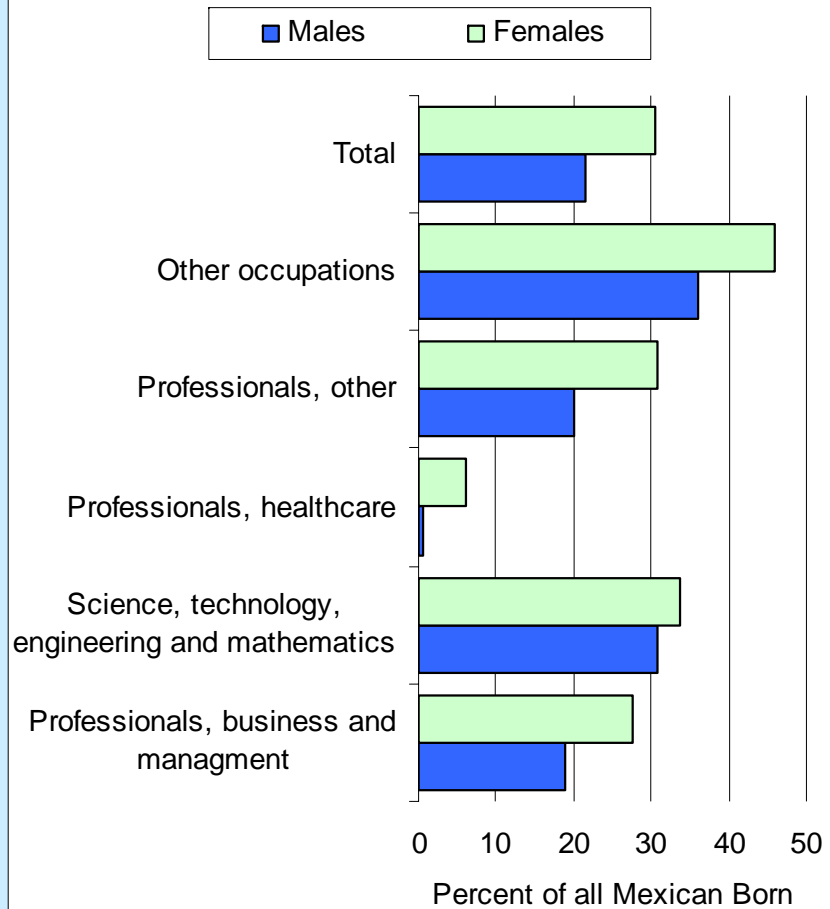
Source: B.L. Lowell, US Census and Barro and Lee, 2002.

Percent of All Mexican Born Adults Residing in the United States by Level of Completed Education, 2000



Source: Mexican and U.S. Census microdata

Mexican Born Professionals with Master Degrees in the United States, 2000



Policies to combat brain strain and optimize skilled mobility

- Lobby receiving countries to care

POLICY OPTIONS FOR INDUSTRIAL RECEIVING COUNTRIES

Source: Lowell and Findlay (2002).

Migration policies to help protect the interests of developing countries

- Encourage temporary stays.
- Restrict duration of stay or immigration from at-risk countries.
- Make recruitment agencies and employers accountable.
- Establish best practices on foreign workers.
- Facilitate return migration.

International migration policies: bilateral agreements and harmonization

- Bilateral and multilateral agreements: appropriate for occupations in chronic undersupply
-

POLICY RESPONSES OF SOURCE COUNTRIES: “SIX RS”

Source: Lowell (2002).

Return of Migrants to their Source Country

Return is one important way to cultivate human capital for source countries.

Restriction of International Mobility

Overly restrictive admissions risk of impedi