

A stylized map of Canada is shown in the background, with various provinces and territories colored in shades of purple, teal, and brown. A dark silhouette of a tree is overlaid on the map, centered in the northern part of the country.

# Canadian Citizenship

*"Harder to get and easier to lose"*

Andrew Griffith

Canadian Bar Association  
National Immigration Law Conference

8 May 2015



# Agenda

- Policy context
- Statistics
- 2010 Changes and impact
- 2014 Changes and expected impact
- Longer-term implications



# Government Context

- Fearless advice and loyal implementation breakdown
- Ministerial certainty vs. “arrogance of the expert”
- Sharper ideological/values divide
- Evidence and anecdote
- Centre of gravity and priorities



# Policy Context

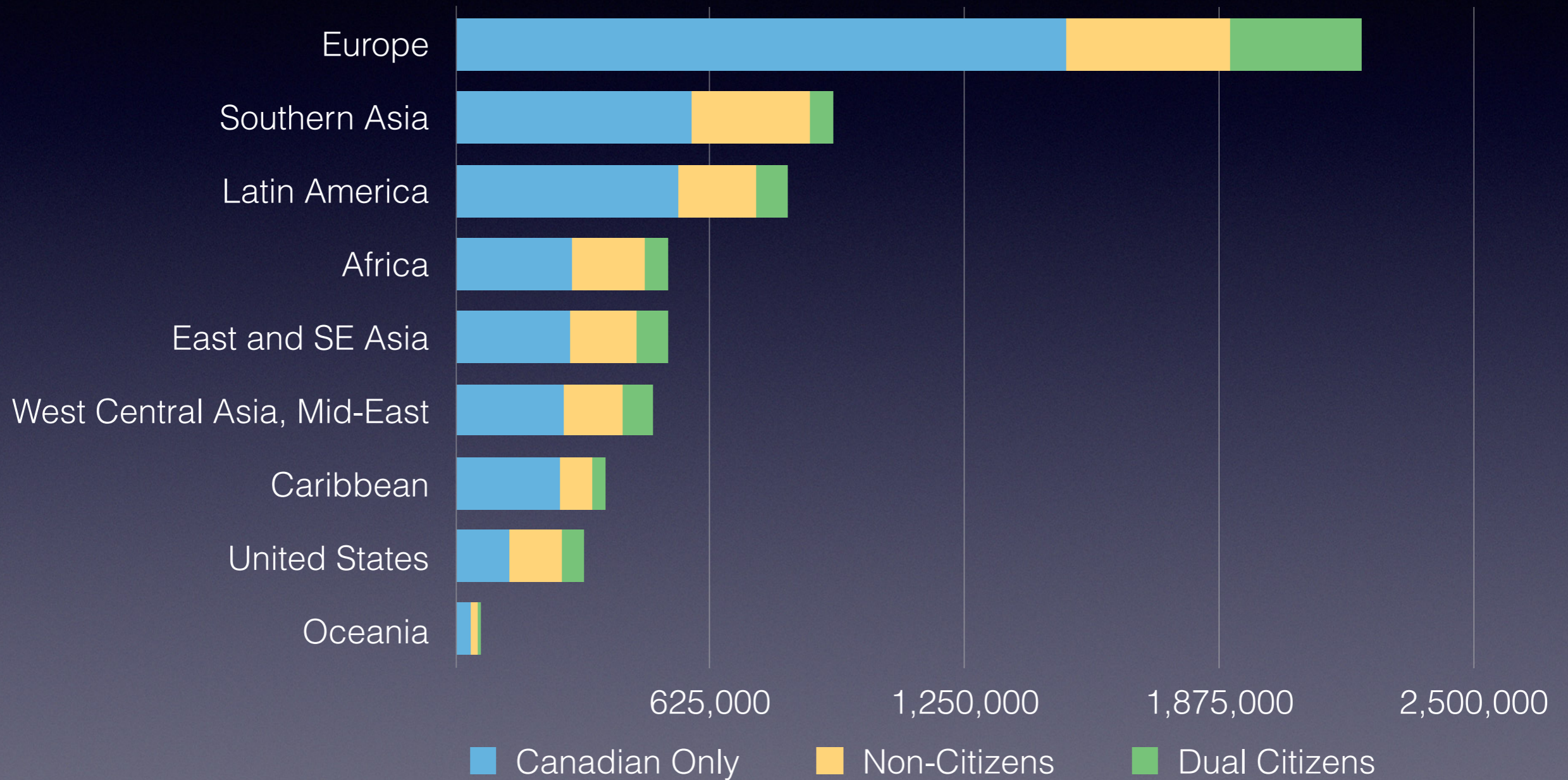
## Global vs Local

- Citizenship: Facilitation vs. Meaningfulness
- Multiculturalism: Accommodation vs. Integration
- Shift towards meaningfulness and integration



# Citizenship Take-up

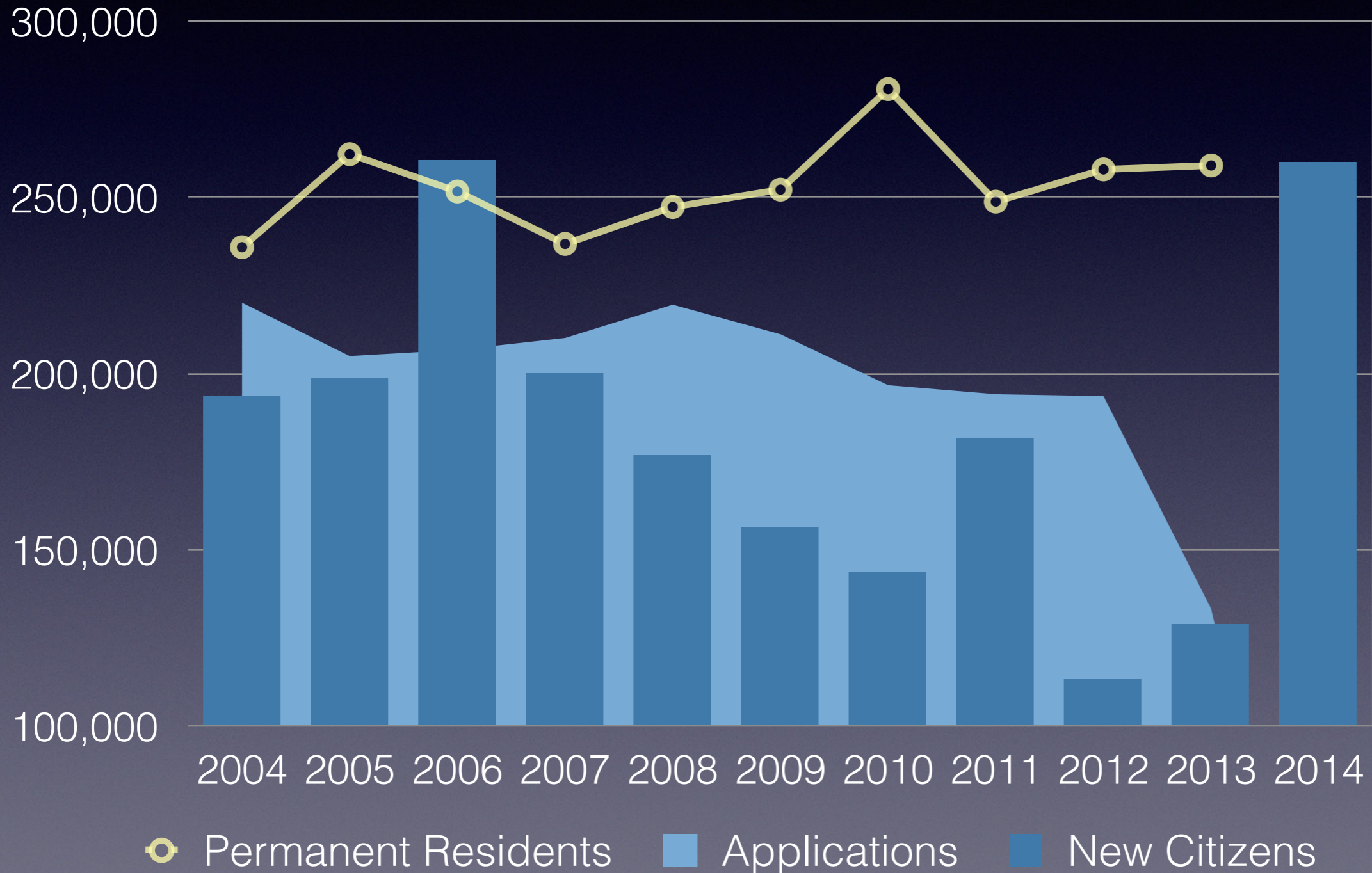
Foreign-born by Place of Birth





# PRs, Applications, Citizens

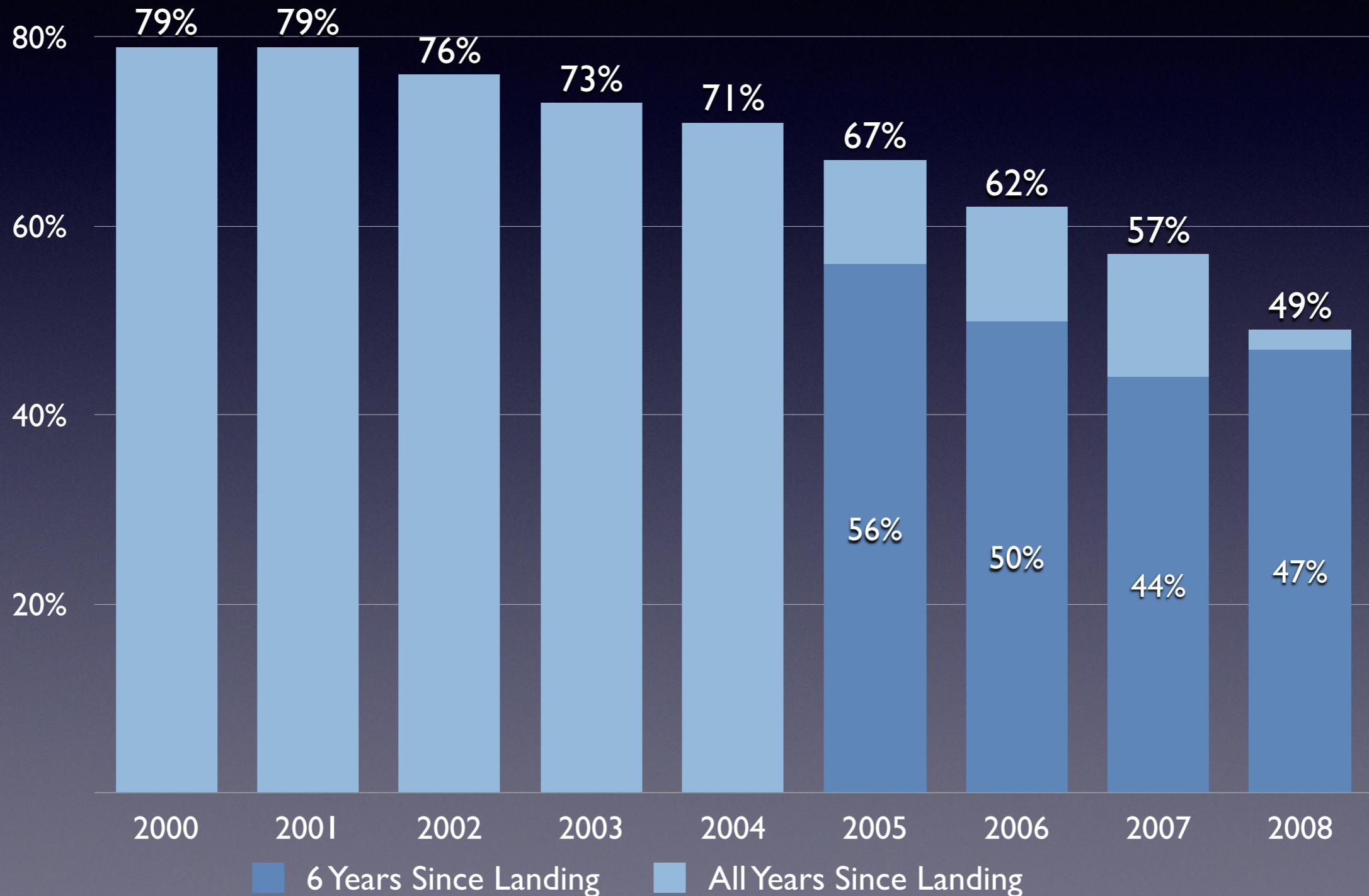
2013 (2014 New Citizens)





# Citizenship Take-Up

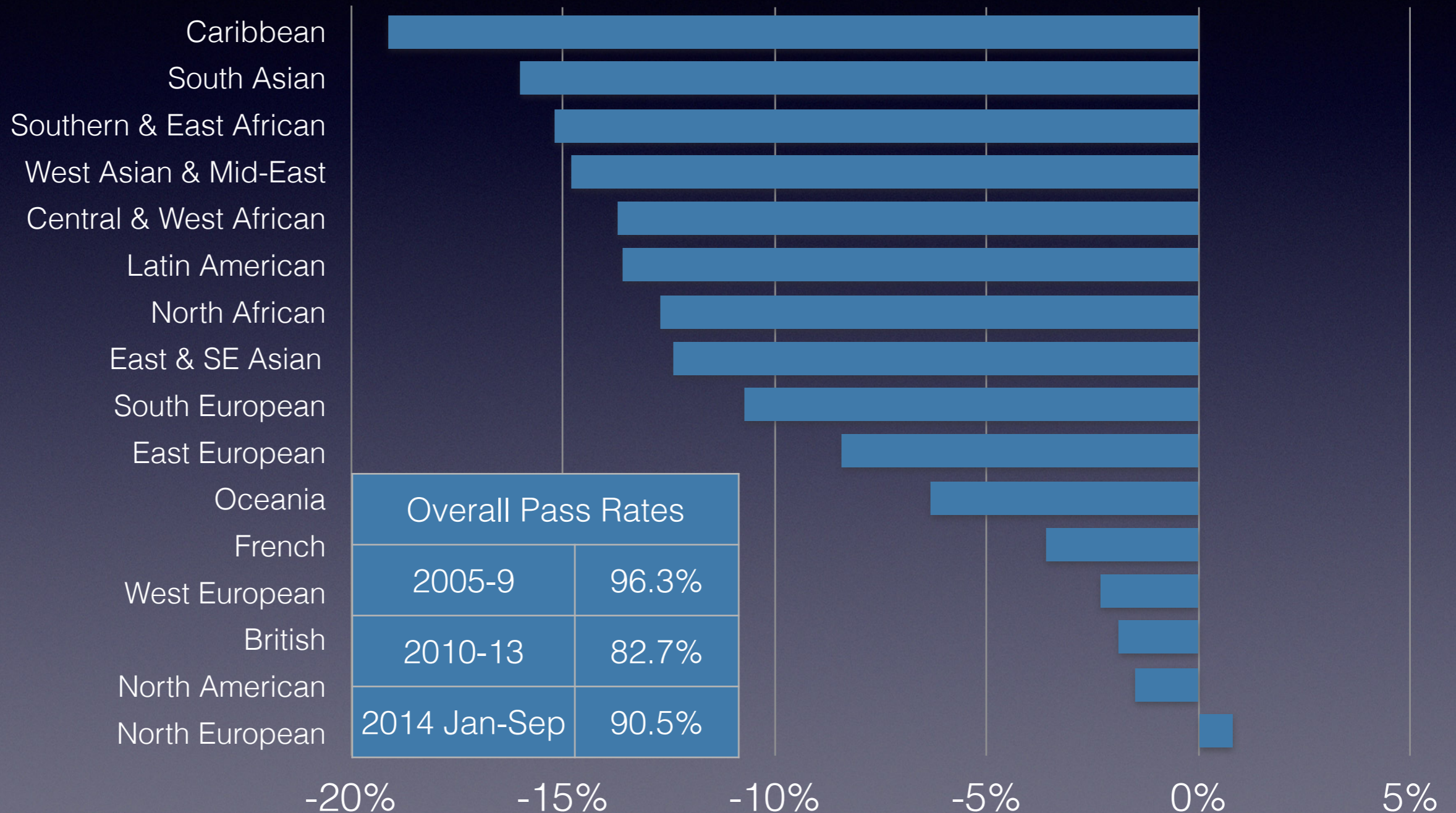
6 Years Since Landing vs All Years Since Landing 2014





# Impact 2010 Changes

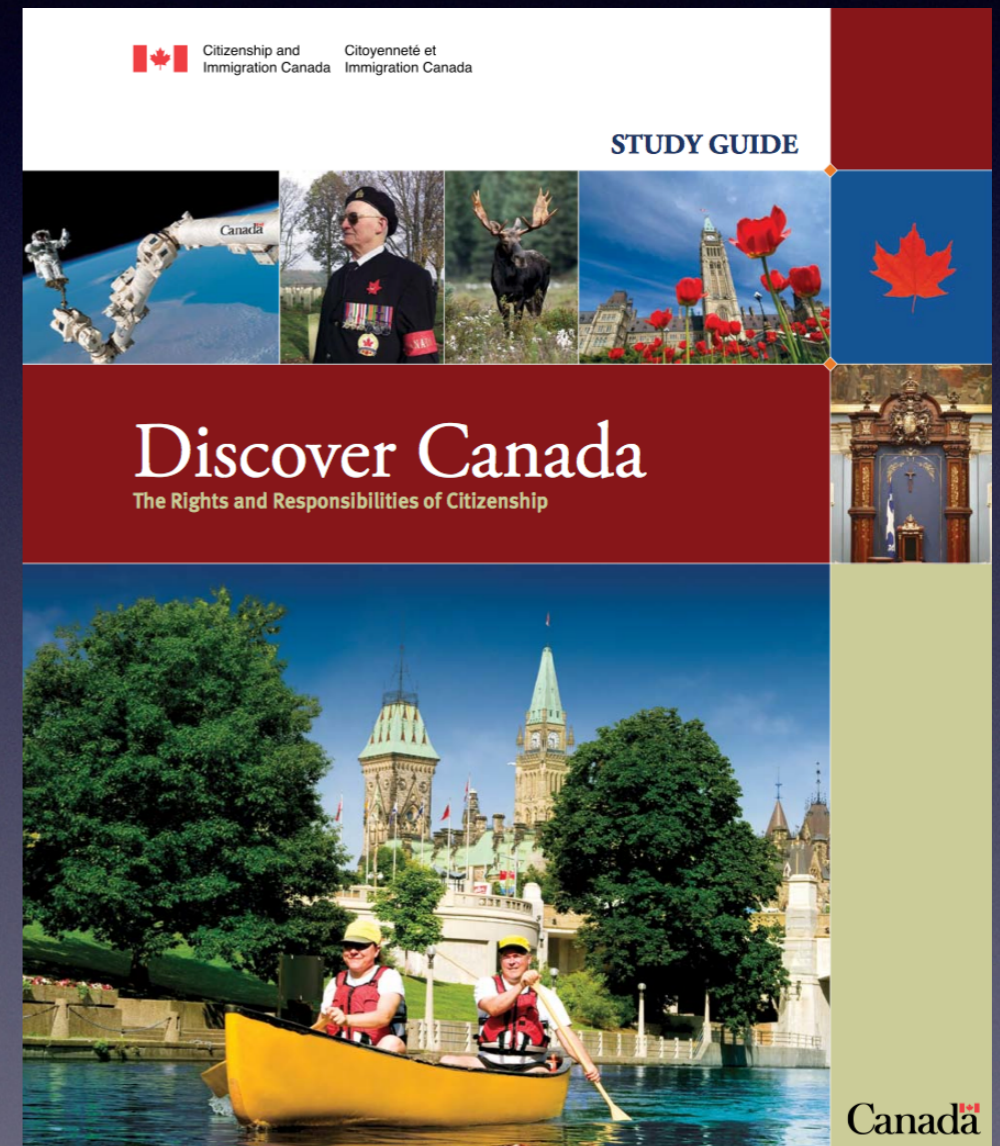
Citizenship Test Pass Rates - 2005-9 to 2010-13 Comparison





# Changes 2010

- Emphasis on history, military, responsibilities
- More rigorous knowledge test
- Language “pre-assessment”
- Anti-fraud





# 2014 Citizenship Act

## Residency and Testing

- Longer residency (4 out of 6), physical presence
  - From “honour system” to residency questionnaire
- “Intent to reside”
- Knowledge and language required 14-65
- Tax returns



# 2014 Citizenship Act

## Business Processes

- Removal of citizenship judges
- Ability to cancel incomplete applications
- Electronic means to verify citizenship.
- “Soft” commitment one year processing



# 2014 Citizenship Act

## Fairness

- “Lost Canadians” fix
- Fees from \$100 to \$530
- Revocation
  - Fraud: Ministerial discretion
  - “Terror and Treason” and dual nationals



# Radicalization Examples

## Dual vs Canadian Nationality

|  | Dual Nationals  | Canadian Only  |
|--|---|--|
| Canadians charged by the RCMP but still at large                                   | Ferid Ahmed Imam<br>Ahmad Waseem<br>Maiwand Yar<br>Hasibullah Yusufzai  |  |
| Canadians reported to be fighting or supporting extremists abroad, but not charged | Mohammed Ali<br>Sami Elabi<br>Um m Haritha<br>Omar Hassan<br>Mohammad Ibrahim<br>Abu Dujana al-Muhajir<br>Farah Mohamed Shirdon | Collin Gordon<br>Gregory Gordon<br>John Maguire                  |
| Canadians accused of possible terrorist links by other countries                   | Faker Boussora<br>Abderraouf Jdey<br>Amer El-Maati<br>Abu Ameenah Bilal Philips   |  |
| Recent trials  | Hiva Alizadeh<br>Misbahuddin Ahmed  | John Nuttal<br>Amanda Karody<br>Carlos Larmond<br>Ashton Larmond |



# Implications

- Burden on low-income, less educated and refugees
- Further reduction in naturalization rate
- Weaker due process
- Challenges to revocation as unconstitutional likely



# Broader Issues

- Dual nationality, diaspora politics and loyalty
- Global mobility vs. belonging — competitiveness
- Declining naturalization rate and increased proportion of non-citizens
- Other: Voting rights, Birth tourism, Niqab ban



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