

Recent Changes in Refugee and Immigration Policy

October 2014

Canadian Council for Refugees



Conseil canadien pour les réfugiés
Canadian Council for Refugees



Major themes

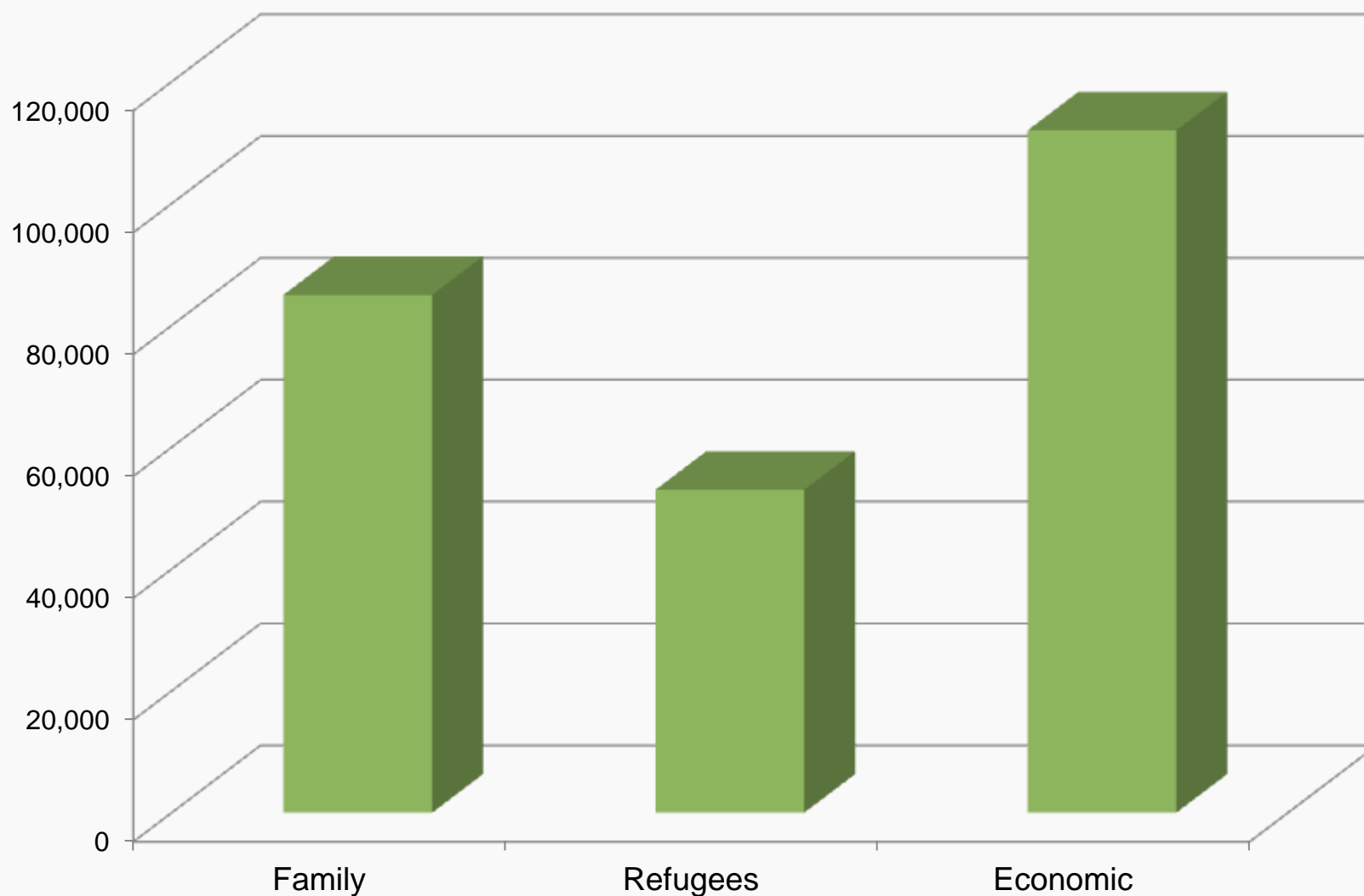
- Shift in priorities to economic
- Increase in precarious status
- Restrictions for refugees
- Emphasis on criminality and fraud



Economic priority

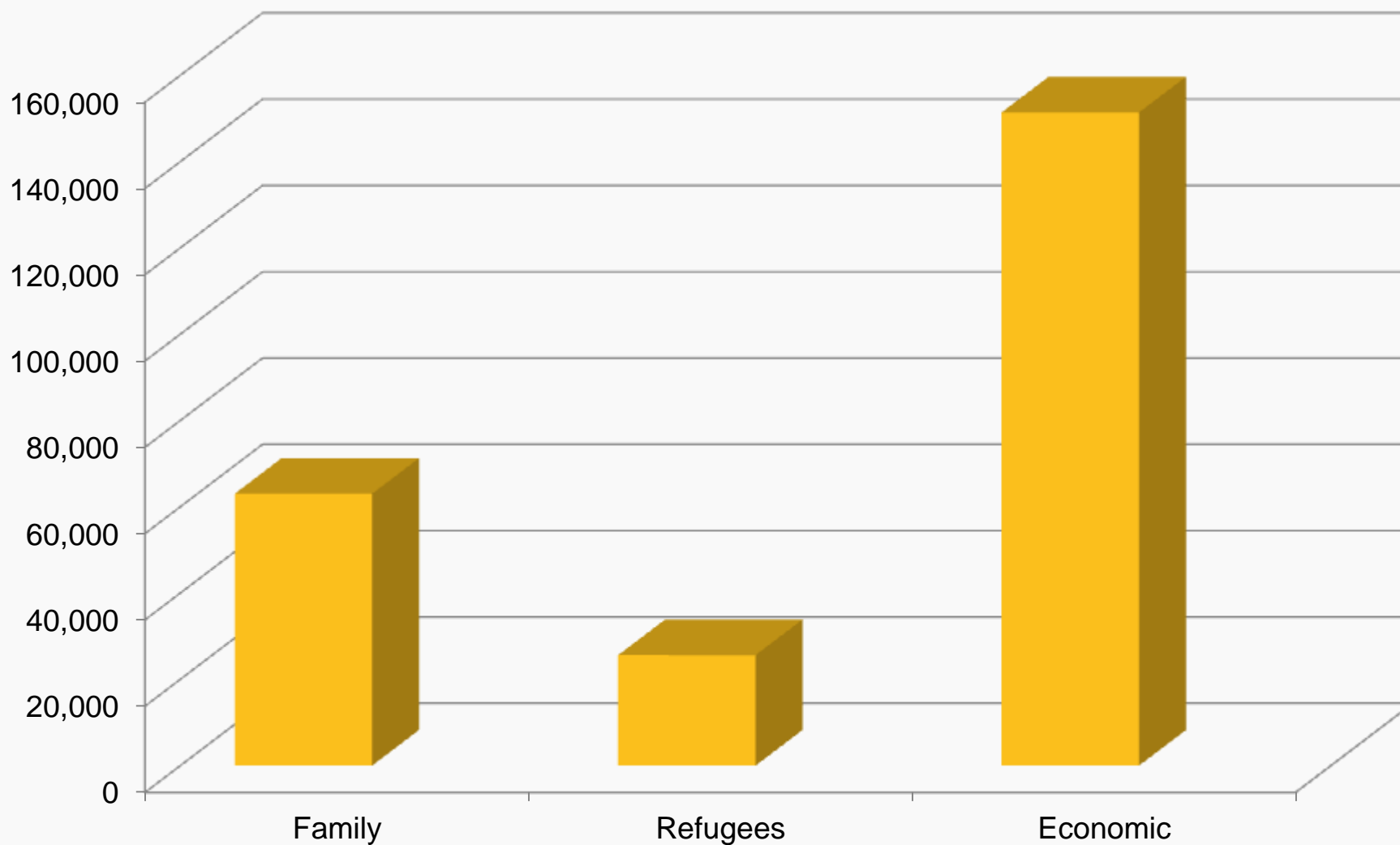


Immigration categories: 1995

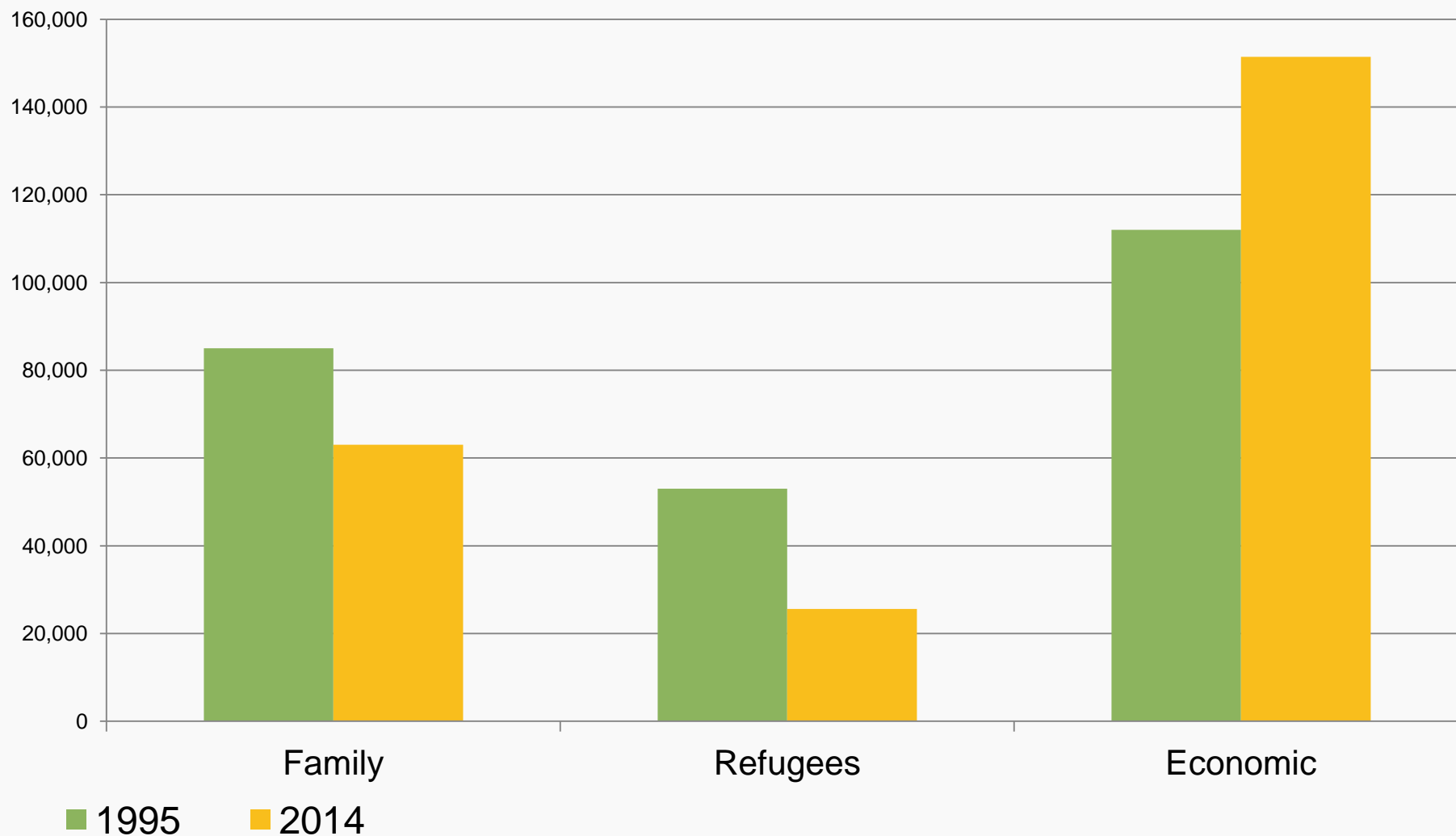




Immigration categories: 2014 targets



Immigration categories: 1995 vs. 2014



Priority to economic migration

Reflected (for example)
in policy changes:

- Sponsorship of parents and grandparents
- Age of dependents from under 22 to under 19



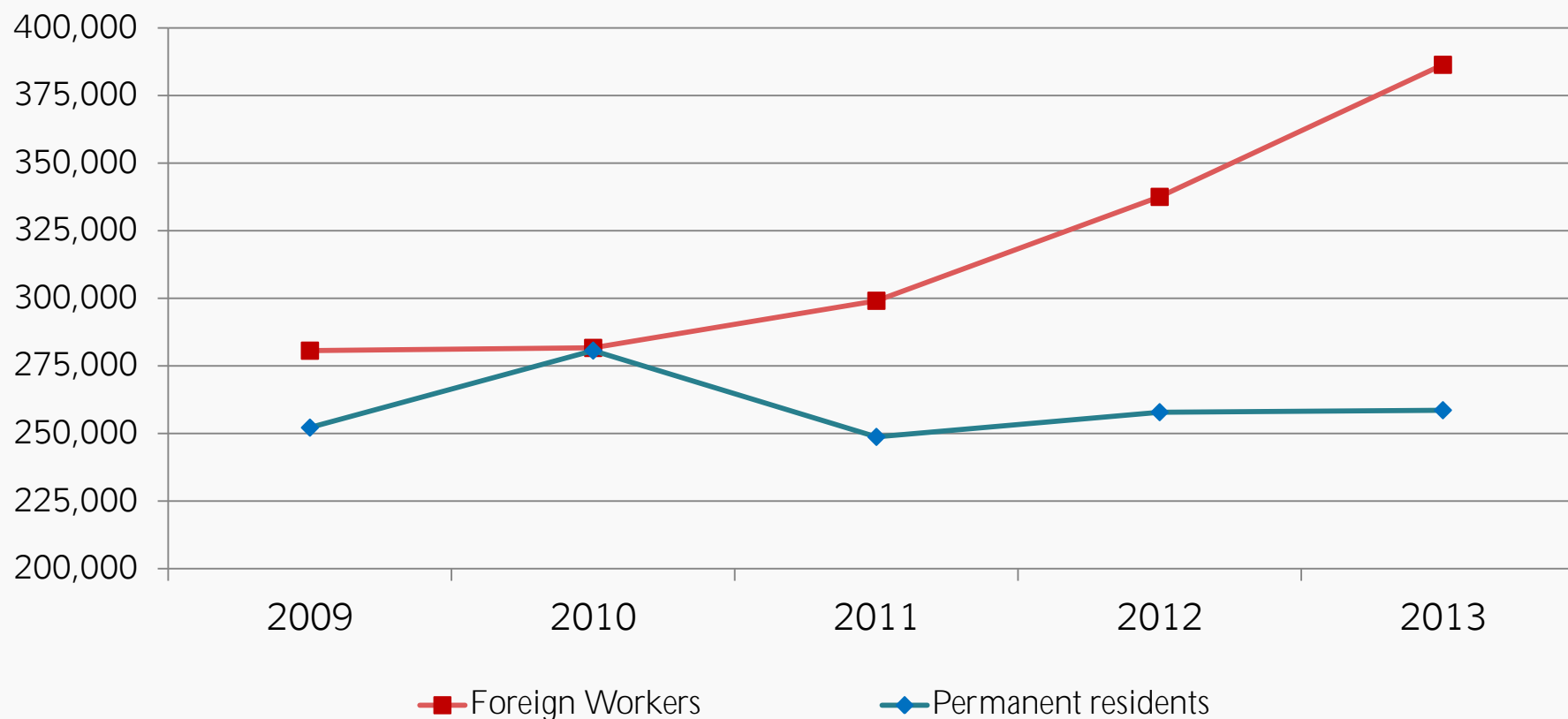


Precarious status



Migrant workers

Temporary Foreign Workers vs Permanent Residents
2009-2013



Migrant workers' rights

Vulnerable to exploitation and abuse due to:

- lack of permanent status
- employer-specific work permits
- isolation
- lack of access to information or rights
- lack of monitoring
- no settlement services



Trafficked persons

New barriers to protection through a Temporary Resident Permit

- Refugee claimants (one year ban)
- Designated Foreign Nationals (five year ban)



Conditional Permanent Residence

- Regulatory change Oct 2012
- Sponsored spouses/partners, together for less than 2 years (no children)
- PR conditional for 2 years
- Exception for abuse or neglect



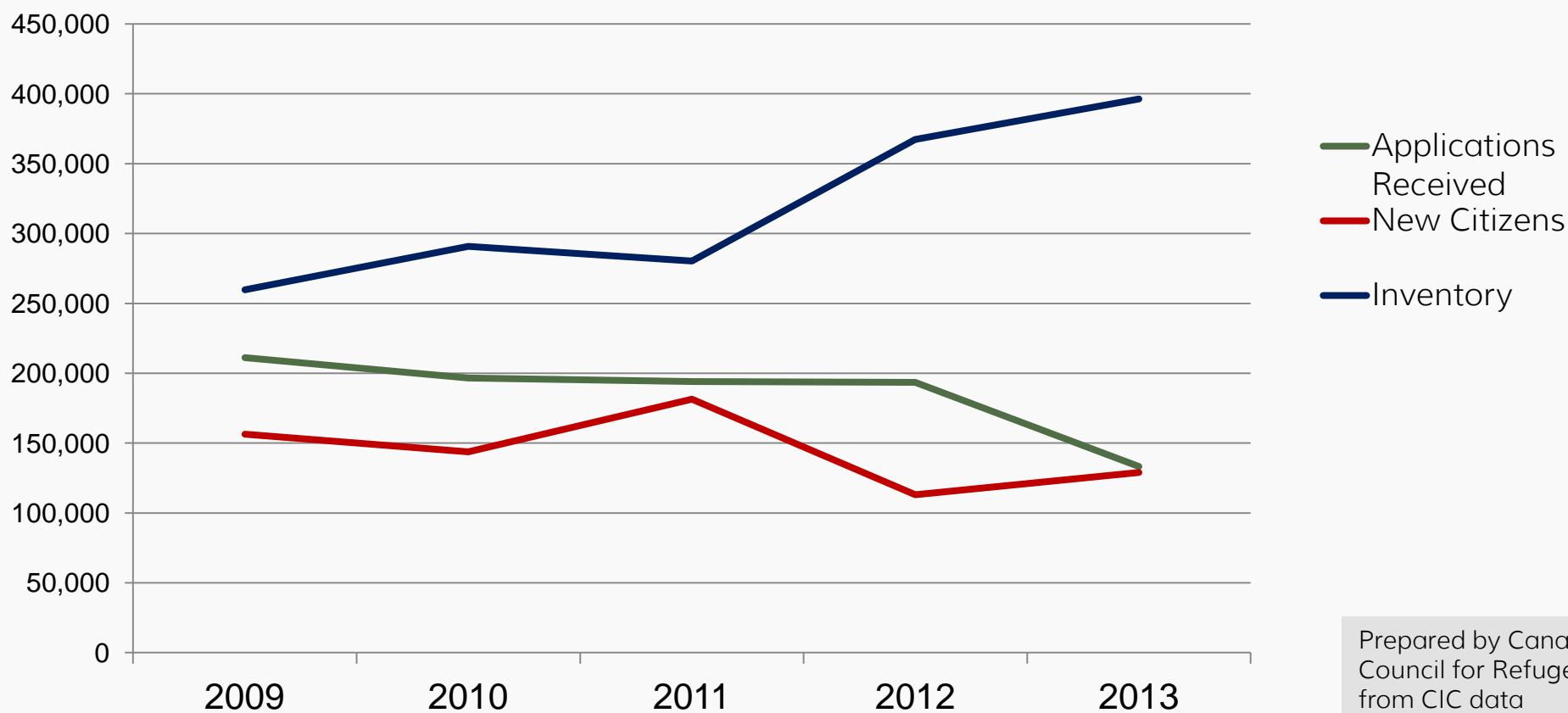


Cessation and loss of Permanent Residence

Since 2012, permanent residents who came as refugees lose their permanent residence if they are found to no longer need protection.

Barriers to citizenship

Citizenship applications





Barriers to citizenship

- Slow processing – 24 months
- Residence Questionnaire
- New requirement – provide proof of competence in English/French
- Increased fees – February 2014

Amendments to Citizenship Act

- Approved June 2014
- Most provisions not yet in force
- Citizenship “harder to get, easier to lose”





Restrictions for refugees

Refugee Health Care

Refugee Health Care: Impacts of recent cuts





Interim Federal Health Program

- Cuts effective June 30, 2012
- Affect resettled refugees, refugee claimants and others
- Federal Court: cuts “cruel and unusual treatment” (July 2014)

Refugee claim system



Warning –
EXTREME
COMPLEXITY!



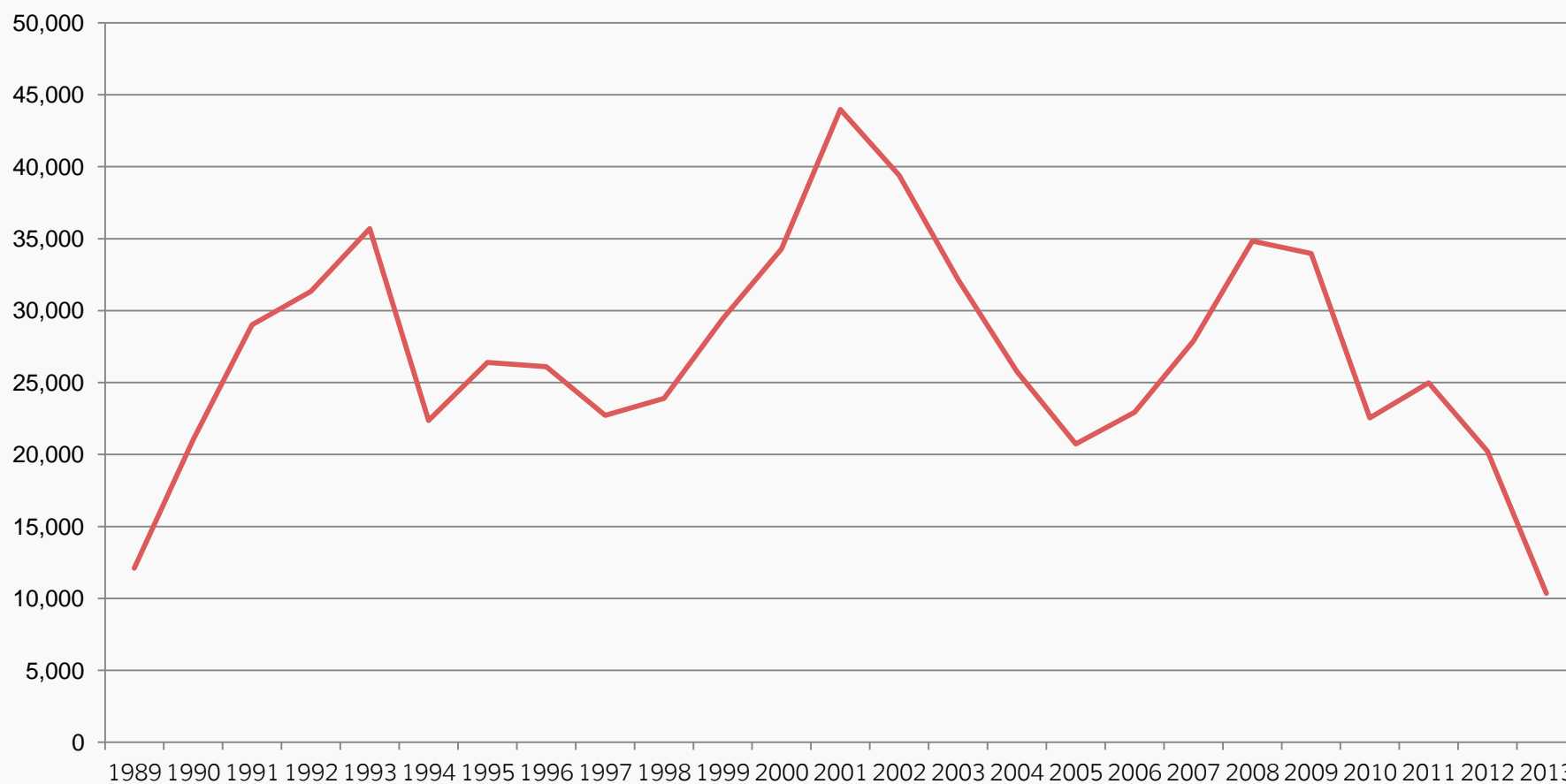
Changes to claims - Key features

- Very short timelines
- Differential treatment
- Refugee appeal but bars on recourses



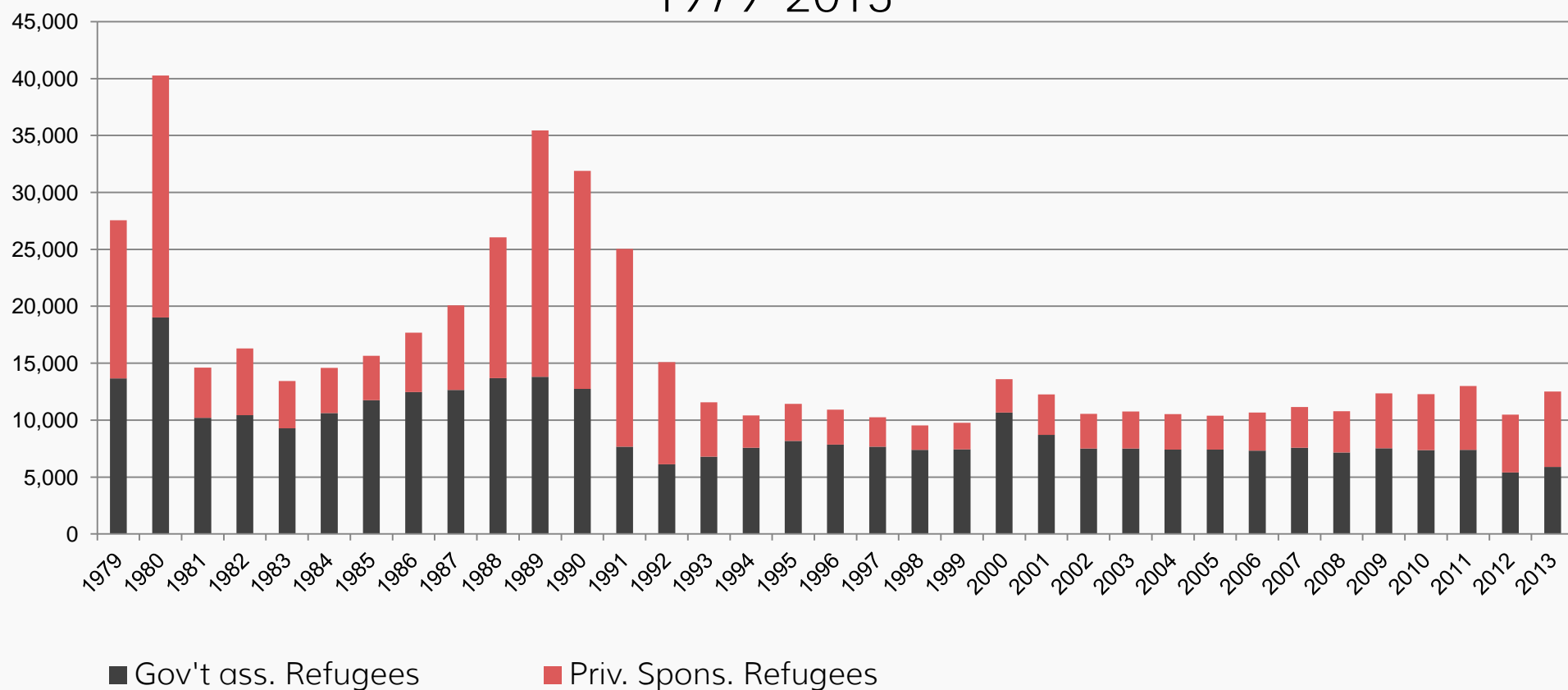
Drop in numbers of claims

Claims referred, 1989-2013



Refugee resettlement

The highs and lows of refugee resettlement to Canada
1979-2013





Changes in resettlement

- Increased restrictions for private sponsors (but increased expectations)
- Ministerial priorities
- Focus on limited number of refugee populations
- Little response to Syrian crisis



Focus on fraud, criminality



Permanent residence and criminality

- Faster Removal of Foreign Criminals (C-43) June 2013
- No right of appeal – 6 month sentence (previously 2 years)



Divisive rhetoric

Common themes:

- Fraud
- Criminality
- Queue-jumping
- Pitting Canadians against refugees





For more information:

ccrweb.ca

