

Professional Identities in Transit: Factors Shaping Immigrant Labour Market Success

Larissa Remennick*

ABSTRACT

Immigrant professionals comprise a growing segment within current migration waves, but the determinants of successful transnational skill transfer are poorly understood. In this paper, I offer a framework for the evaluation of these determinants, drawing upon three empirical studies among immigrant professionals from the former Soviet Union in Israel. I start by describing the social context of immigrant integration, including policies aimed at assisting skilled immigrants to get a fresh start on the local labour market. Next, I reflect on the nature of various professions in terms of their cultural and linguistic dependency, with the ensuing adaptive potential upon migration. I also tap into the main macro-economic and institutional characteristics of the host society that may facilitate or hinder the initial entry and subsequent mobility of immigrant professionals within local organizations. I apply this analytical frame to the discussion of Israeli studies among immigrant professionals who represent three different points on the scale of cultural dependency: engineers (technical occupation), physicians (combining standard medical training with cultural skills) and schoolteachers (most dependent on language and local cultural codes). In every case, the resulting success or failure of occupational continuity reflects a complex interplay of context-bound and individual factors, aggravated by the small size and rapid saturation of the local labour market.

INTRODUCTION

Since the 1970s, the proportion of immigrants with a college education and professional experience in their countries of origin has been constantly growing within total migrant flows from non-Western countries to the West. The upsurge in the knowledge-based industries within Western economies – information technology (IT), high-tech, biotech, medicine and so on – during the last two decades has further attracted professionals from poorer countries with fewer occupational opportunities (Favell, 2008; Reitz, 2001; Teitelbaum, 2008). The demise of the socialist system in east-central Europe and the economic awakening of mainland China and other East Asian nations in the late 1980s and 1990s have also generated vast numbers of potential migrants with high human capital who wish to get higher returns on their skills. Despite many discrepancies in the definition of a “skilled worker” between sending and

* Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Bar-Ilan University, Israel.

receiving countries, the common criterion seems to be post-secondary or academic education with the ensuing ability to work in a white-collar or “knowledge-based” occupation (Czedo, 2008; Teitelbaum, 2008). It has been estimated that such persons currently comprise at least one-third of the total pool of recent legal immigrants to the United States (USA), Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the European Union (Favell, 2008; IOM, 2008; Siew-Ean et al., 2007). As of 2006, in the USA alone there were more than 6.1 million immigrants 25 years old or older with a bachelor’s degree or higher, representing 15.2 per cent of all college-educated persons in the US civilian labour force (Batalova et al., 2008). According to the 2001 Canadian census, among the immigrants who had arrived within the last 5 years, almost 44 per cent of men and 37.5 per cent of women had a bachelor’s degree or higher, compared to 16.6 per cent and 21.7 per cent, respectively, in the Canadian population. The share of college-educated immigrants has been growing especially fast in Canada and Australia, as the countries use the point system for screening immigrant visa applicants, assigning a high relative weight to labour market potential (Reitz, 2007; Siew-Ean et al., 2007). As a result of recent EU enlargement, wealthy countries of Western and Northern Europe have experienced an influx of labour migrants from poorer Eastern Europe, many of them highly educated and overqualified for the available jobs (Czedo, 2008; Lianos, 2007; Liversage, 2009).

Only a minority (10–15%) of skilled immigrants resettle in Western countries via arranged employment schemes, while the majority have to navigate host labour markets on their own (Teitelbaum, 2008). Recent studies show that a significant share of educated immigrants do not find employment relevant to their skill level and are compelled to make a living by manual or service work in catering, security, cleaning, driving, sales, care of the elderly and similar jobs. In the USA, one of every five college-educated immigrants (1.3 million) works in these sectors (Batalova et al., 2008). In Canada, too, recent waves of educated immigrants have been less successful in finding qualified jobs than comparable immigrants in 1980, judging by the increasing gap in earnings between them and native Canadians with similar formal education. Immigrant skills have reached unprecedented levels, yet their earnings have dropped in both absolute and relative terms, meaning that many newcomers (selected for their skill levels) fail to enter the “knowledge sector” of the economy. When they do work in skilled occupations, immigrants are often overqualified for their jobs and do not receive any extra return on the extra years of their education (Chiswick and Miller, 2008). These negative trends have been observed in both men and women, especially those belonging to “visible minorities”. The explanations have to do with the rising skill levels of native populations, resulting in higher competition for the available jobs, a lower market value of human capital acquired abroad, difficulties of evaluating foreign credentials from the employers’ standpoint and tacit institutional racism (Chiswick and Miller, 2008; Czedo, 2008; Reitz, 2007). The macro-economic loss due to this “brain waste” amounts to billions of dollars, causing “unrealized returns not only to these immigrants and their families but also to the nation as a whole” (Batalova et al., 2008).

Research in North America has pointed to the utmost importance of “contexts of reception” – host countries’ policies and popular attitudes towards the immigrants – for their (and their children’s) economic and social integration (Portes and Rumbaut, 2006). In light of this broad concept, in this paper I pursue a more specific goal: to assess a range of institutional and psycho-social factors shaping skilled immigrants’ employment patterns in their adopted countries. This analysis was inspired by the work of Canadian sociologist Jeffrey Reitz (2001, 2003, 2007), which touched on many generic problems with immigrants’ initial entry into host labour markets and further mobility within “knowledge economy”. Empirically, I draw on the integrated analysis of the recent research – both my own and others’ – among large professional groups of immigrants from the former Soviet Union (FSU) in Israel, trying to discern the essential features of the common professions, as well as contextual differences between sending and receiving countries, that together define their labour market outcomes. I

start with a concise overview of this immigrant wave, the Israeli labour market and social policies towards skilled immigrants at the time of their mass entry in the early 1990s. Next, I reflect on the principal transferability of professional skills and human capital between different economic and cultural contexts. Finally, I apply my theoretical reasoning to three empirical studies of professional groups (engineers, physicians and teachers) to highlight the complex interplay between macro-economic, institutional and individual variables in shaping immigrants' initial entry and subsequent mobility in Israeli white-collar organizations. Comparing the Israeli case with other immigration countries, I try to delineate the relative role of universal and locally specific factors. Finally, drawing upon individual and group-level data, I illuminate the role of immigrants' personal and socio-demographic characteristics for their labour market success.

Educated FSU immigrants of the 1990s: too much of a good thing?

Israel is a small country – 7.7 million, including 5.8 million Jews, 1.6 million Arabs and 0.3 million others, according to the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS, 2010) – with a dynamic market economy. Over 95 per cent of its Jewish population are first-, second- or third-generation immigrants from more than 70 countries. Reflecting its early socialist legacies, the Israeli economy has a large public sector (over 40% of all workplaces), with most large industries and occupations heavily unionized (CBS, 2006). During the years of post-communist transition in Russia and Eastern Europe, about 1 million former Soviet Jews¹ have moved to Israel, increasing its Jewish population by 20 per cent. The share of individuals with academic degrees among these newcomers was unprecedented by any standard, an average of 58 per cent for the wave arriving between 1989 and 2004. Only 25 per cent of resident Israeli Jews had some form of higher education in the late 1980s, but by the early 2000s the share of academic degree holders had grown to about 40 per cent (CBS, 2006).

The influx of skilled FSU migrants was a mixed blessing for the small and saturated labour market of Israel: in many professions, the numbers of immigrant specialists exceeded the numbers of locally trained ones. Among the arrivals of the 1990s, there were some 40,000 teachers, over 30,000 physicians, dentists and nurses, 19,000 musicians and music teachers, and over 12,000 scientists. Yet, specialists in different branches of engineering and technology were the largest professional group, counting over 90,000 members (CBS, 2006). The incorporation of all of these newcomers in the skilled workforce was clearly beyond the physical capacity of the small Israeli economy. Besides their sheer excess, the incorporation of Russian-speaking professionals was compromised by skill incompatibility between Soviet and Western standards, the protracted licensing procedure for many human-services occupations, poor command of both the Hebrew and English languages, and the low market demand for many common Soviet professions.

In most countries receiving immigrants, the state only provides the legal basis for their employment (issues visas, social security cards and other formalities) and does not interfere in the actual licensing, training and job placement of skilled immigrants. Professional associations typically license immigrants on common grounds with their local colleagues, applying the same state-of-the-art standards. In this ostensibly fair game, immigrants are invariably disadvantaged in comparison to their native colleagues because of the lack of social and financial resources, poor access to relevant information and limited language command (Benson-Rea and Rowlinson, 2003; Iredale, 1997; Reitz, 2003). Israeli policy towards skilled immigrants is unique in that the state agencies are actively involved in their occupational adjustment. Given a strategic interest in immigration as the resource for continuous nation building, economic advancement and the preservation of a Jewish demographic majority, the

approach to immigrant absorption is highly institutionalized. The Jewish Agency for Israel and governmental bodies such as the Ministry of Immigrant Absorption and Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare manage resettlement services, with a special emphasis on assisting educated immigrants in labour market entry (Lerner and Menachem, 2003).

The range of aid and services targeting academic degree holders through the 1990s included: free Hebrew training (general and tailored for specific occupations); professional courses for refreshing original skills and local orientation; retraining to encourage entry into areas of higher demand; technological “hothouses” for the initial promotion of novel ideas and patents by immigrant scientists and engineers; and stipends to scientists and specialists entering their first regular jobs, to encourage employers to hire the newcomers with low economic risks. Beyond the tenets of Zionism, the rationale for these costly interventions was the expected rapid returns from immigrant human capital via taxation, boosted competition with local practitioners, scientific innovation and the expedient integration of new Israelis into the Hebrew mainstream. These expectations were largely met, with Israel experiencing the longest economic boom in its history during the 1990s at the intersection of surging production and consumer demand, hopes for peace in the Middle East after the 1993 Oslo Accords, and the high-tech boom of the late 1990s (Cohen-Goldner and Ekstein, 2008; Weiss et al., 2003).

Despite grave economic forecasts, the increased supply of qualified immigrant cadres did not drive down the earnings of native professionals or the average wages in the main skilled occupations, at least not in the long run (Sussman and Zakai, 1998). During the initial years following their entry, skilled Russian immigrants could not compete with their local peers due to the lack of social resources (languages, social networks), the need for an Israeli license and struggles for daily survival. By the mid-1990s, when these professionals had overcome the initial gaps and started mass entry into biomedical, engineering, scientific and other knowledge occupations, the Israeli market rapidly expanded, reflecting both the investment of foreign venture capital and the ability of Israel to absorb both native and immigrant specialists without compromising income. The depression of wages happened, rather, in the lower tiers of the labour market, where multiple immigrants – who could not find skilled posts – competed with unskilled locals for blue-collar jobs (Ekstein and Weiss, 2004; Friedberg, 2001).

However, for many occupations outside the booming high-tech industries, the barriers to the small and regulated professional market of Israel – tenured and union-protected jobs in the large sectors, such as national and local infrastructures (energy, water, roads etc.), law enforcement, education, health care and human services – were still in place. Therefore, only a fraction of the younger and more dynamic professionals, endowed with better qualifications, and linguistic and social skills, could benefit from these state-sponsored measures. Throughout the 1990s, only around one-third of all educated immigrants could find jobs relevant to their skills, most of them in the less-bureaucratized private or business firms (Menachem and Geijst, 2000; Weiss et al., 2003). Most others had to retrain into white-collar occupations that were in demand (e.g. computing, banking, insurance or social work) or be content with blue- and pink-collar jobs in industry, sales and personal services. According to some organizational and individual-level studies, Russian immigrant professionals who found skilled work had poorer chances for tenure and/or promotion to managerial posts, more often worked on short-term contracts with fewer benefits, and had lower job security than their native co-workers (Rajjman and Semyonov, 1998; Remennick, 2004; Stier and Levanon, 2003).

The analytical framework: career continuity or economic survival?

For most adult immigrants, the workplace is their main social gateway into a new society. At work, they meet their local peers, upgrade their professional skills, strike up new friendships

and improve their language proficiency; as a result, they develop cultural competence in the new society and expand the limits of their personal identity (Remennick, 2003, 2004). Well-paying jobs ensure the material well-being of immigrant families, allowing them to improve their housing, lifestyle and child education, with the ensuing social drift towards the local middle class. Other positive side effects of professional success include mental well-being and higher self-esteem, which often serve as the main criteria for viewing the whole migration endeavour as a success or a failure (Remennick, 2004; Stier and Levanon, 2003).

Before describing the accommodation of specific occupational groups in Israel, let me share some general thoughts on the factors that contribute to immigrants' ability to re-launch their careers upon resettlement. Of primary importance is the very nature of the profession in terms of its cultural dependency: the extent to which a professional practice is embedded in the language, mentality and cultural codes of a specific society. The scale includes roughly three categories. First, carriers of culture-dependent professions, such as educators, lawyers, journalists, artists and entertainers, have the hardest time applying their talents on a different cultural soil. Yet, these professionals are more often self-employed and hence, less dependent on the local institutional context. Next, professions drawing on the "objective" and internationally comparable (at least within the Western world) body of knowledge, such as physicians, nurses, social workers, therapists and other "human services" practitioners, occupy an intermediate position on this scale. Besides acquiring host-country credentials, their success is contingent on the adjustment to the new professional culture and local social codes. Problems faced by these immigrants often reflect the fact that medicine, education, welfare and other human services in many countries are provided within the public/governmental economic sector, which is both heavily regulated and unionized, making entry for the newcomers very difficult. Finally, engineering, technical and scientific occupations are presumably the most convertible between various national contexts, being "culturally neutral" and based on a verifiable set of skills and credentials. To make things easier for the newcomers, most of these jobs (outside universities) belong to the business/private labour market, which is more open and ostensibly meritocratic.

The second issue is how far apart are the standards of professional education, accreditation and practice in the home and host countries. The rules of licensure and registration with local professional associations are set for regulated occupations in order to preserve proper standards at the time of mass entry of immigrant professionals into practice (Iredale, 1997; Reitz, 2003). For example, in Israel, physicians who graduated from medical school in the USA, Canada or the United Kingdom (UK) are exempt from the examinations required for all the other foreign-trained physicians, since the standards of medical training and practice in these "Anglo" countries are very similar to those in Israel (Shuval, 1995). For the same reason, the credentials of Soviet-trained engineers and "hard" scientists are accepted automatically, while economists and social scientists often cannot reconfirm their diplomas, since the gap in social disciplines between Western and socialist countries had been very wide (Lerner and Menachem, 2003). Although some objective validation of foreign credentials and skills is essential in most cases, it is often used as a gate-keeping instrument by local professional elites to reduce competition with immigrant peers and control the professional markets in terms of openings, wages and entry criteria (Kugler and Sauer, 2005; Shuval, 1995).

At the same time, specific employers (especially small firms) have few available tools to evaluate foreign diplomas and work records, even when they are translated into the host language and formally confirmed. Given the vast diversity of international educational institutions and labour markets, this systemic challenge seems to be universal in the area of immigrant employment. Thus, drawing on the analysis of Canadian census data for 1970–1996, Reitz (2003) concluded:

Immigrants' post-secondary education-based credentials are significantly discounted in competition for the best-paid professional jobs, but the extent of discounting is greater for managerial posts and most significant outside knowledge occupations. The more professionalized the occupations, the more rigorous the institutional procedures to evaluate education-based job history, with a higher likelihood that foreign qualifications will be properly assessed.

In other words, in occupational domains with fewer clearly stated, "hard" standards and internationally valid criteria of achievement, immigrant candidates will typically be disadvantaged *vis-à-vis* local ones. The role of "soft" cultural features (which are always locally bound) for managers, customer service operators and other workers with direct human contact would typically outweigh that of formal credentials. These positions are seldom offered to immigrants, as their skin colour, foreign demeanour and accent are perceived by employers as a liability in terms of both internal staff relations and external representation of the firm (Chiswick and Miller, 2008; Reitz, 2007).

More broadly, the intellectual and social skills needed for successful professional practice (self-marketing, languages) may widely differ between national contexts. Thus, former Soviet professionals often lack experience in job searching and self-presentation skills in encounters with potential employers that are crucial for immigrants in a new labour market, since in the USSR professional jobs were stable and relocation was typically organized by employers. Landing a professional job in the USSR/FSU depended more on work/study records and personal ties (the insider's reference) than on formal interviews, which were often skipped altogether (Jones, 1991). Actually, the weakness of immigrants' social networks among their local professional peers is another strong factor that works against them during a job search. The salient role of peer networking and access to information about work opportunities for immigrant professionals has been shown in Israel (Remennick, 2004) and in other countries such as New Zealand (Benson-Rea and Rowlinson, 2003).

The final set of factors shaping occupational prospects of educated migrants has to do with the institutional context – the conditions of the host economy and labour market. Of apparent weight is the general phase of the business cycle (boom or recession) and the demand for a specific occupational group; for example, software designers in the years of a high-tech boom or nurses in any aging society. At the same time, immigrants' chances in the labour market depend on the supply of locally trained specialists and the industry's reaction to competition with immigrants in the form of stricter licensure regulation, barriers to senior posts and so on (Shual, 1995). Governmental regulation of certain occupations – for example, the requirement of citizenship (e.g. for public school teachers in Germany) and/or security clearance (for many governmental, security and military jobs in all countries) – also influences access to jobs. The institutional context also includes the prevailing public attitudes towards specific categories of immigrants and minorities: if some of them are stereotyped as conflict-prone, unreliable or having a poor work ethic, most employers (who feed on the same ambient opinions) will refrain from hiring them for any jobs that require responsibility or human contact (Siew-Ean et al., 2007). Even in contexts that do not entail systemic racism (e.g. FSU immigrants in Israel), ethnic prejudice and cultural biases can seriously hamper the employability of recent immigrants. Last but not least, personal characteristics, such as gender, age, and language proficiency or a heavy accent, play a crucial role in the employment and promotion of immigrants, with a greater difficulty for older specialists and women due to ageism and the male preference of employers in competitive professions (Raijman and Semyonov, 1998; Remennick, 2005; Stier and Levanon, 2003).

The interplay of all these forces has created tense competition for scarce jobs and career tracks between native and immigrant professionals in the small and saturated Israeli market (Stier and Levanon, 2003). I will now take a closer look at the specific cases of career

continuity among the three largest occupational categories of the skilled Russian immigrants of the last wave: engineers, physicians and schoolteachers. Besides their high prevalence, these groups represent three distinct points on the above-mentioned scale of professions in terms of their cultural dependency, with engineering being the most neutral and transferable, doctoring being both objectively qualified and culturally sensitive, and teaching being one of the most culturally embedded occupations.

Immigrant engineers: elite specialists and the technical proletariat

Besides their sheer excess, the employment prospects of Russian-speaking engineers in Israel was compromised by several features of engineering education and work in the FSU. Vast Soviet industry, technical Research and Development (R&D) and large-scale construction produced a constant demand for technical specialists, so employment was guaranteed. Engineering education was deemed appropriate for both genders, and women comprised about 40 per cent of the Soviet engineering cadre. The specialization of engineers reflected the structure of the Soviet economy, which was dominated by heavy industry (mining, energy, metallurgy etc.), civil and military engineering, and construction. The majority of older Soviet engineers had been trained and had worked in these areas; fewer specialists had worked in modern branches of computing and electronics. In the younger cohorts, these proportions started to change in line with the new developments in the post-Soviet economy. The elite of Soviet engineers had been employed by the military–industrial complex and the aerospace industry; many of them had high security clearance and could not emigrate until the mid-1990s. Thus, the ex-Soviet engineering corps has been highly stratified, including relatively few elite specialists, a middle class of sound professionals, and the masses of the rank-and-file “technical proletariat”.

Like other Soviet professionals, engineers were state employees, had no professional autonomy and were isolated from their colleagues abroad (Jones, 1991). As a result, most Russian-trained engineers had only a basic command of English, if any, which was insufficient for professional work in the West. Computer literacy among older engineers was also low: under 20 per cent of engineers aged 45 and over had used computers in their work in the FSU (King and Naveh, 1999). Finally, an engineering diploma did not necessarily entail actual engineering experience, as many graduates of technical colleges had been engaged in administrative or office work. As a result, many immigrant engineers discovered that their experience was not applicable outside the Soviet economy and they had to find alternative occupational tracks.

The high quality of Soviet engineering education is well known in Israel, and many local specialists and administrators could aptly evaluate the quality of different diplomas and career tracks, given their own Russian/Soviet or Eastern European origins. Hence, formal credentialing for engineers was simple: having their records translated into Hebrew or English and registered at the Ministry of Labour. If they did not seek public-sector jobs or receive any state benefits, even this was unnecessary. Several Israeli studies have examined the occupational adjustment of former Soviet engineers. A cross-sectional survey by King and Naveh (1999) was based on a national sample of immigrant engineers (58% men, 42% women) who arrived in 1989–1994 between the ages of 25 and 54. Before emigration, 87 per cent of the sample worked in different posts related to engineering and technology, with an average experience of 13 years. This survey has shown that less than one-quarter of all immigrants with engineering diplomas who had registered at the Ministry of Labour (75% of the total) were working in their area of training by 1995 and that another 8–10 per cent worked in related areas. Most immigrant engineers experienced various degrees of occupational downgrading:

44 per cent worked as skilled labourers and 25 per cent as unskilled ones. Over half of all respondents studied in various professional courses sponsored by the state, but this had a minor effect on their subsequent employment. The categories of engineers that most often regained and/or upgraded their old occupational status were electronics and computing-related specialists, software designers, aviation, and civil and construction engineers. The least successful were engineers from traditional Soviet sectors that are almost non-existent in Israel – mining, metallurgy and the automotive industry.

On the positive side, the mass influx of qualified engineers in Israel coincided with, and greatly contributed to, the rapid expansion of high-tech industries during the 1990s. By the year 2000, 20–40 per cent of the R&D staff of Israeli high-tech companies were Russian immigrants, who were making significant intellectual contributions to the global success of the Israeli IT and computing industries (Cohen-Goldner, 2006). Although they usually lacked financial capital and business experience, Soviet-trained engineers and designers often formed the intellectual backbone of start-up companies due to their broad knowledge base and strong work ethics. Many engineers with postgraduate degrees and Soviet experience in R&D found employment in government-sponsored “hothouses” – start-up companies for the development and marketing of new technical projects and patents. A handful of elite specialists were recruited by the Israeli military and aviation industries. An estimated 10–15 per cent found more lucrative opportunities in North America or returned to the FSU. Yet, the majority of low-rank engineers were compelled to retrain into other specialties or to work in manual jobs.

A longitudinal study, including a three-wave survey and focus group discussions with immigrant engineers (Remennick, 2003), has drawn a similar picture: only around 35 per cent have found engineering posts in Israel, either in their old specialty or in a new one after retraining. The major challenge faced by the participants was entering a career track while simultaneously making a living. These two tasks were often mutually exclusive, since most specialists could not find relevant jobs soon after arrival, and first needed to invest in host language learning and professional orientation. The latter activities were time-consuming and often required study in different retraining courses. This conflict was often solved by living on the brink of their physical capacity; for example, taking night classes after toiling for 6–8 hours at a factory or in a nursing home. Many gave up and left professional ambitions behind altogether. In dual-career families, the common strategy was to take turns, letting one spouse study or engage in job search while the other took over as the breadwinner. Not surprisingly, it was often the women who decided to provide for the family while their husbands were learning professional Hebrew or working as volunteers. Regardless of their own education and experience, most women believed that men should be given priority, as they much worse at coping with the loss of professional status (Remennick, 2005).

Age plays an important role in the labour market success of skilled immigrants. Younger specialists, having some pre-migration experience in their field but also fresh enough to readjust their skills to the demands of a new market, are usually the most successful. For ex-Soviet engineers, being younger also correlates with better computing and language skills, and with specialization in modern technologies that are more in demand. Older engineers, who had often been senior specialists in the FSU, had a hard time adjusting to the new work conditions and, as a result, suffered more drastic occupational downgrading. Remennick (2003) found that occupational chances fell steeply after age 45: the share of her respondents who worked as engineers in Israel by the year 2001 was 55 per cent for the age group 25–34; 43 per cent for those aged 35–44 and 27 per cent for those aged 45–55.

The gender aspect is important in this analysis due to different social definitions of engineering work in the FSU and in Israel. In general, occupational venues in Israel are more gendered: for example, medicine, engineering and technology are construed as male occupations. The share of female students in Israeli engineering schools is about 15 per cent, albeit

with some growth over the last decade. Some areas are more open to women than others (e.g. software design and biotechnology versus electronics and mechanics), but the professional market is still dominated by men. Therefore, female engineers with a Russian accent are at a dual disadvantage as immigrants and as women, leaving two options: retraining for younger immigrants and unskilled work for older immigrants (Raijman and Semyonov, 1998). In the three-wave study by Remennick (2003), gender gaps in employment quality and income were preserved over 9 years of observation. Far fewer women than men have found employment in their original specialty (17.6% versus 30.2% by 2001); women have also benefited less from retraining programmes (17% of women versus 20% of men found work in a new field).

The initial years in the new country proved to be crucial for career prospects: immigrants who arrived in the early 1990s and had not found engineering jobs by 1997 did not improve their work status by 2001. Hence, those engineers who postponed professional job search due to the immediate livelihood pressures often lost momentum and got stuck in the manual labour force. This scenario was more typical for women, who often became the main breadwinners for their families, as well as for older engineers and those with specialties that were less in demand (Cohen-Goldner, 2006; Remennick, 2003). The delay of career-related activities until “better times” often means failure, as daily toiling and detachment from the professional milieu gradually diminish both the motivation and the ability to return to a professional track (Weiss et al., 2003). The focus group data confirmed the salience of informal social networks for the occupational adjustment of newcomers and their basic disadvantage in that respect *vis-à-vis* their Israeli-trained peers. Immigrants’ low proficiency in both Hebrew and English has further exacerbated this disadvantage (Kheimets and Epstein, 2001; Remennick, 2003). Similar findings regarding the value of expedient search, the role of local peer networks and language skills have been reported by Yelenevskaya and Fialkova (2009) regarding ex-Soviet scientists in Israel, and by Vinokurov et al. (2000), who examined occupational adjustment among educated Soviet immigrants in the USA.

In sum, the determinants shaping the occupational success of immigrant engineers and technology specialists include not only “objective factors” (market demand, skill level and compatibility), but also access to peer networks, family support, language skills, gender and age. Policy-wise, this evidence means that host resettlement agencies should maximize their effort to help immigrant specialists to return to the professional track soon after arrival via intense language training, subsidized professional courses and assistance in job searches. These programmes may be costly, but they help prevent a much greater loss of productivity due to skilled immigrants’ occupational downgrading or unemployment. Time is of the essence, and it works against those educated migrants who wish to regain their careers, but who also struggle to make ends meet.

Physicians: from patient-centred to managed care

Doctoring is another traditional Jewish occupation; according to the Israeli Ministry of Immigrant Absorption, over 15,000 Russian-speaking physicians, surgeons and dentists, as well as over 25,000 nurses and paramedics, have immigrated to Israel since 1990 (IMIA, 2004). The hosting medical establishment was concerned about professional accommodation of the newcomers on the almost saturated medical market, as the numbers of Doctors of Medicine (MDs) and dentists in Israel had more than doubled by 1995. According to the early 1990s estimate by the Israeli Ministry of Health (MOH), about 3,000 new MDs would be enough to serve the added immigrant population. What would the rest of the 15,000 physicians do? These concerns reflected the centralized character of the Israeli healthcare system,

whereby the numbers of medical posts and residencies, medical facilities and beds are regulated by the MOH and services are delivered by means of managed care organizations. At the same time, local practitioners, and the Israeli Medical Association (IMA) representing their interests, felt threatened by the potential wage depression due to the oversupply of physicians, and a potential compromise in quality of care reflecting dubious standards of medical education and practice in the FSU (Shuval, 1995).

The systemic response entailed installing multiple filters (both overt and covert) on the route leading Russian doctors to clinical practice. In the late 1980s, on the eve of the mass post-Soviet migration, the MOH and the IMA had established new accreditation rules for foreign medical graduates, which were revised again in the early 1990s in light of the “Russian invasion”. The new rules required that all MDs with Soviet diplomas (and all other foreign diplomas, except those received in the USA, Canada and the UK) undergo comprehensive medical examinations if their professional experience was below 14 years. Those with 14 or more years of work in the FSU were required to have 6 months of supervised practice in a recognized medical facility. Upon passing theoretical examinations or a supervised practice period, immigrant physicians were granted a general medical license as MDs, regardless of their former medical specialty. To regain their status, immigrant doctors had to proceed to a 4–6-year residency, side-by-side with beginning Israeli doctors. Only a small number of senior medical specialists with academic degrees or an international reputation (about 15% of the total) have been licensed as specialists by the IMA.

However, the Israeli medical and absorption establishments did offer the newcomers some help in meeting these stringent demands. Immigrant doctors were offered free classes in medical Hebrew and English, preparation courses for the licensing examinations and also examinations in the immigrant’s language of choice (Hebrew, English or Russian). Thus, access to senior medical posts for the newcomers was fully controlled by senior Israeli practitioners representing the medical establishment, while access to grass-roots general practice was made more widely available, pending some reasonable quality control. Yet, all things considered, this policy was rather lenient in comparison to the USA and Canada’s particularly stringent rules of licensing and practice for foreign MDs (Shuval and Bernstein, 1997).

What has happened in the case of the thousands of Russian doctors in Israel is often described as a medical marvel. Operating within this harsh system of checks and balances, over 70 per cent of those who had applied for the Israeli license at the outset (and about 25% had not) managed to complete accreditation and get a general medical license. Among those licensees, about three-quarters found work as doctors, including some 30 per cent who started a new residency to become specialists. As a result of their mass entry into Israeli medicine, doctors of Russian origin today comprise about half of all Israeli practitioners under the age of 45 and one-quarter of those aged 45–65 (MOH, 2004). Among immigrant nurses, over 95 per cent found work, usually after some additional training and/or examinations; this reflects the ever-high demand for nurses in Israel, which is not fully met even to this day. The same is true with regard to Soviet-trained paramedical personnel (imaging technicians, physical therapists etc.) and pharmacists.

As a result, former Soviets form a large segment of the medical staff in most Israeli hospitals and outpatient clinics, especially at the lower levels of the medical practice (ER, ambulance, night shifts, geriatric and internal wards). Fewer Russian immigrant MDs are found so far among senior specialists, but this is gradually changing as more young and middle-aged Russian doctors complete their residencies. Thus, Russian doctors in Israel have succeeded against all odds in the small and saturated professional market. Admittedly, they have filled the less prestigious niches of the medical practice that are unattractive to Israeli doctors, and most of them will never regain their former status as medical specialists. Yet, the majority have managed to get back into medicine as their main source of livelihood – an achievement

that cannot be taken for granted for immigrant MDs in many other countries (Shuval and Bernstein, 1997). Those who have failed to obtain an Israeli license, or who did not apply for one, have often converted to paramedical occupations, such as diagnostic imaging, physiotherapy or laboratory medicine (Remennick, 2004).

The absence of the damping effect on medical wages that was expected due to the oversupply of MDs is explained by several systemic changes in the Israeli healthcare sector that coincided with the migrant influx during the 1990s. Rapid population aging (including a significant amount of immigrant elders) led to the expansion of geriatric hospitals and wards, long-term care facilities and emergency outpatient centres – representing the bottom tier of the medical system in terms of pay and professional prestige. Not surprisingly, these niches, which were unattractive to established local physicians, were staffed mainly by the recently licensed migrant MDs. Furthermore, during the mid-1990s, the medical system experienced a general overhaul after the enactment of the National Health Insurance Law, which enhanced competition among healthcare providers. This period was also marked by a series of high-profile strikes of doctors in public facilities, demanding, and receiving, drastic salary raises. More recently, the expansion of private medical services in addition to the public sector has caused a rising demand for physicians, nurses and paramedics. These structural changes have allowed the majority of immigrant doctors to regain their professions, and most local practitioners to sustain and even improve their preferential terms of employment (Kugler and Sauer, 2005; Sussman and Zakai, 1998).

Aside from organizational barriers, former Soviet doctors faced significant cultural challenges in the local medical institutions, adjusting to the new principles and norms of Americanized Israeli health care (Remennick and Shtarkshall, 1997). Doctoring Israeli-style is very different from medical care in the low-tech hospitals and clinics of Russia or Ukraine, where doctors often had to treat patients almost with bare hands, given an unending shortage of basic equipment and pharmaceuticals. In this context, Soviet doctors had to rely on their classic clinical and diagnostic skills, intuition and hands-on care, which they often provided due to nursing shortages. Russian-trained MDs approached patients in a less specialized and more holistic way and, if needed, also served as counsellors and social workers. Many good Russian doctors believed in a helping ethos as the core of their profession; they could afford to spend time with their patients during long hospital stays, especially when little could be done medically. On the other hand, Soviet medicine was overflowing with “informal relations” (under-the-table payments, exchanges of personal favours, and privileges for friends and family) as the flip-side of its lack of enforceable standards (Field, 1990).

The initial entry of immigrant doctors into local medical practice caused an upsurge of their negative stereotyping by co-workers, patients and the mass media. However, the close encounters between Israeli and former Soviet practitioners working side-by-side gradually mitigated the mutual negative attitudes and helped each party to appreciate the merits of the other (Remennick and Shtarkshall, 1997). It seems that, by now, most immigrant physicians have found a middle path between their old and new professional ethos, and have enriched Israeli medicine with some of their better qualities (e.g. diagnostic intuition and more holistic approach to patients). As about two-thirds of Russian immigrant physicians are women, their entry into practice has also feminized Israeli medical care, adding diversity along both cultural and gender lines (Kugler and Sauer, 2005).

Teachers: survival of the fittest

As teachers' salaries plummeted below the poverty line and the schooling system started to deteriorate with the end of socialism, many Jewish teachers in the FSU embarked on

emigration. Over the course of the 1990s, about 40,000 schoolteachers arrived in Israel (85% of them women), facing the dilemma of occupational continuity versus change. To help these teachers join Israeli schools, the Israeli Ministry of Education provided a series of university-based certification courses aiming to adapt the skills of the former Soviet teachers to the local curriculum. In the early 1990s, there were many vacancies in the disciplines that were less dependent on language proficiency (mathematics, the sciences, physical education, art and music), which were soon filled by immigrant teachers, despite their imperfect Hebrew. The teachers of humanities faced a grave challenge – school principals were unwilling to hire history, English or French teachers with a Russian accent.

Like medicine (or perhaps more), teaching is a culturally embedded occupation: pedagogy and teacher–student relations in Israel are very different from those in Russian/Soviet schools. Israeli children are raised as independent individuals, with few limits set by parents and teachers; as a result, they are bold and forthcoming in their demands and their dissent, and they feel little social distance between themselves and adults, including educators. Classroom culture is very informal: students can interrupt and challenge the teacher, chat and use cell phones in class, walk out without asking permission, and call the teacher by his or her first name. Most Israeli teachers take all this for granted and respond to students in a similarly informal fashion, trying to maintain discipline in class and solve conflicts by joking or cajoling, but seldom by criticizing or punishing. In many schools, teachers have to handle large classes (around 40 students), and struggle to enforce minimal academic standards. The message for the students is that hard work and educational achievement are optional rather than universally expected, as there is no regular control or feedback (e.g. by checking homework). In elementary and middle school, students can get good grades without much effort; in high school, though, the soaring workload, the pressure of tests and the pursuit of higher matriculation grades often cause stress and the need for private tutoring (Eisikovits, 1995).

The schooling principles in the FSU were quite the opposite: children were trained to take their studies seriously from grade one, and even the weakest students had to be pulled up to meet the minimal standards of literacy and knowledge. The increments of effort and workload were gradual, preparing the students for the final intense years of high school. The teacher ruled the classroom, and it was uncommon for him or her to be openly challenged. Understandably, former Soviet teachers had a hard time adjusting to Israeli schools. Having little respect for teachers generally, Israeli students were openly making fun of immigrant teachers, fuelled by their Russian accent and short temper in the face of the students' *chutzpah*. Disappointed by the local education practices, Russian immigrant parents and teachers teamed up to develop an alternative school framework that would “salvage” the education of the young generation (Epstein and Kheimets, 2000).

One interview-based study compared 19 immigrant teachers who continued teaching in Israel and 16 teachers who left this occupation for different reasons (Remennick, 2002). All of the above-mentioned contrasts between the Russian and Israeli school cultures surfaced in the teachers' narratives as highly vexatious. Many informants referred to “survival of the fittest” as a key metaphor of their ability to work in Israeli schools. Age, gender and teaching experience emerged as important determinants of success: teachers in their thirties, with 5–15 years of experience (men and women alike) had the best chances of achieving job continuity and satisfaction. In older age groups, school principals often preferred to hire male teachers, as they were potentially more able to keep the class in check. Hebrew proficiency was another factor that shaped job retention.

Disciplinary problems in class and the “guts” needed to control students repeatedly surfaced in the interviews. Many teachers complained that a lot of time had to be wasted in disciplining the students, which compromised the teaching process and hampered academic results. Many immigrant teachers also found it difficult to relate to Israeli parents, who often

pulled their superior rank as natives *vis-à-vis* ostensibly naïve immigrants who “misconstrued Israeli culture”. In contrast to the Russian tradition, in conflict situations, Israeli parents tended to side with their children and set out to prove the teacher wrong. Special bonds linked Russian immigrant teachers and immigrant students in their classes. Based on common cultural grounds, these relationships often served as a safety net for both parties.

Relations with Israeli colleagues were described as rather diverse, as was the amount of support received by the newcomers during the accommodation period. In better schools with more educated and secure teaching staff, they were offered assistance and soon given an equal footing with others. The welcome was typically cooler in problem-ridden schools in poorer or remote areas, where local teachers were less educated and perceived Russian newcomers as a threat to their jobs. In such schools, Russian teachers felt more isolated, had poorer contractual terms and were not promoted as often. The lack of instrumental aid was often aggravated by popular stereotypes about Russian teachers being inflexible and authoritative, ostensibly due to their experience in the “totalitarian Soviet educational system”. Many teachers felt angry about this unfair labelling, which was often used against them in office politics.

Most dropout teachers never regretted their decision, explaining it either by an inability to master the new curriculum in Hebrew or to adjust to this “messy” school system. The study showed that former Russian teachers were self-selected into alternative occupational tracks, depending on their professional commitment to teaching and available alternatives. Those who stayed in teaching often paid a high personal cost for their persistence, but ultimately enjoyed a strong sense of accomplishment. Personal traits, especially self-confidence and resilience, had a major role to play in the immigrant’s ability to win and keep his or her place in the local school “jungle”.

Together, the latter two case studies shed more light on the challenges of occupational integration for educated immigrants whose professions are culturally and linguistically sensitive. Even in a society generally committed to the cause of immigrant occupational integration, there are high cultural and institutional barriers to successful professional performance. For Russian teachers, making it in Israeli schools means not only mastering Hebrew and a new curriculum, but also adjusting to the new school culture and relationships between teachers, students and parents. In many cases, immigrant teachers also have to resist their negative stereotyping by Israeli colleagues. This experience is shared by many immigrant professionals working in education, health and human services. In this respect, the findings among Russian teachers (Remennick, 2002), doctors (Remennick and Shtarkshall, 1997) and medical laboratory workers (Remennick, 2004) fall into the same pattern, showing that, beyond instrumental skills, immigrant professionals have to comprehend and adopt local styles of doctoring, teaching and socializing with co-workers and clients. Both medicine and teaching are “social” occupations, deeply embedded in local culture, traditions and social networks. In the process of professional readjustment, the social support provided by local peers and the broader mainstream public (including the media, which can either dispel or reinforce their negative stereotyping) can make a real difference. As in other professional fields, younger and male immigrants with better language skills typically have higher chances of success.

CONCLUSION AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

This paper contributes to the sociological analysis of labour market adjustment among skilled immigrants by building a nexus between macro, meso, and micro levels of research. The current literature on skilled immigrants is dominated by statistical studies using national censuses and workforce surveys to examine the links between macro-economic trends and

(un)employment, income and job characteristics, often in comparison with the native population (Chiswick and Miller, 2008; Ekstein and Weiss, 2004; Reitz, 2001, 2007). These studies help to identify the key exogenous or “ecological” determinants of skilled immigrants’ success in the knowledge economies of Western countries, and explain the recent decline in their access to the best-paid professional and managerial posts. In most immigrant-receiving societies, these explanations include the growing educational attainment of the native population, with the ensuing heightened competition, barriers to fair assessment of foreign credentials, undermining of foreign work experience by employers and negative social attitudes towards “visible minorities” (Favell, 2008; Reitz, 2007; Siew-Ean et al., 2007).

While all of these factors are indeed important, there have been few attempts to examine how they affect immigrants’ careers in actual organizational contexts and for specific occupational groups. In an attempt to fill this void, I applied the macro-level analytical framework developed by Reitz (2001, 2003, 2007) to the “grounded experiences” of three professional groups of Russian immigrants in Israel. Besides the institutional and economic forces analysed by Reitz, I have also highlighted the role of the cultural dependency of specific professions, and their affiliation with the tightly regulated public sector or the flexible and dynamic private businesses. In addition, I underscored multiple gaps and disparities in the standards of professional practice between Western and non-Western professionals that further exacerbate the adjustment processes even in such an ostensibly culturally neutral domain as engineering, let alone teaching or doctoring. Extending my analysis to the micro level, I have also stressed the role of age, gender and personal resources in this process. In Israel and elsewhere – for example, in Greece (Lianos, 2007) and in Denmark (Liversage, 2009) – immigrants with no economic safety net in the new country often cannot afford a prolonged period of licensing and professional job search and therefore succumb to the needs of daily economic survival. Among dual-career couples, one partner usually has to postpone or give up his or her career plans to provide for the family via unskilled work, giving the other spouse a chance to realize career readjustment (Remennick, 2005).

The Israeli case is interesting (and rather unique) in two respects: (1) the mass influx of educated immigrants over a short period of time; and (2) the active and immigrant-friendly policies of the state in immigrant accreditation and labour market entry. Compared to most other countries where immigrants are left to struggle on their own (Benson-Rea and Rowlinson, 2003; Lianos, 2007; Reitz, 2003;), in Israel the process seems to be more expedient, as the assessment of foreign education and experience is fairly transparent and based on clear criteria. Moreover, given the co-ethnic character of immigration of Jews to Israel, the ever-present forces of institutional racism and the marginalization of “visible minorities” found in most Western societies are allegedly absent from Israel’s social landscape and labour market. Yet, a closer look at the occupational tracks and experiences of most professionals who participated in the described studies reveals that many of them have suffered from negative ethnic stereotypes that are not based on skin colour but, rather, on the “soft” differences, such as their Russian accent, their appearance and “odd” everyday habits. Many informants were sure that they were not hired, or that they were denied promotions and tenure, because of their Russian background, whatever subtle form of expression might have become apparent. A similar role of subtle ethnic prejudice in immigrants’ occupational trajectories has been found in recent qualitative studies among Eastern European professionals working in Western Europe (Czedo, 2008; Liversage, 2009). Israeli data indicate that the glass ceiling is especially hard to break for migrants employed in unionized and heavily regulated workplaces within educational, medical, military and security, municipal and other such organizations (Remennick, 2004; Yelenevskaya and Fialkova, 2009).

Specific to the Israeli social context, as a small, closely knit and historically young society, is the utmost importance of personal social networks in the initial job search and subsequent

mobility. Immigrants are clearly disadvantaged in this respect compared to native workers with similar credentials. Also peculiar to Israel are prevalent age- and gender-based discrimination, which puts women and older professionals at a disadvantage *vis-à-vis* men and younger candidates. This selective attitude of Israeli employers also harms native professionals, but older and female immigrants suffer from double jeopardy (Remennick, 2004, 2005). Although age- and gender-based discrimination of immigrants is certainly found in other labour markets (Batalova et al., 2008; Favell, 2008), in Israel, it is more common and less subtle. Along with weak enforcement of anti-discrimination laws, this is probably due to the mass influx of qualified older and female jobseekers (which is less common in other immigration countries). In this context, the employers practice “cream-skimming” tactics and feel no need to conceal their sex and age preferences. Thus, in the Israeli case, some of the internationally valid institutional factors work to the immigrants’ benefit (e.g. support in credentialing and initial incentives for employers), while others influence them negatively (e.g. the lack of local social capital, harsh competition with local peers, subtle forms of ethnic prejudice, ageism and sexism).

Although differential success of skilled immigrants on host labour markets is probably inevitable, reflecting unequal human capital, personal resources and life circumstances, it is important that receiving societies exercise fair policies that do not discount immigrants, their credentials and experience on the very doorstep of the local labour market. The North American, Australian, European and Israeli research summarized in this paper shows that those who did not succeed in accreditation and landing a professional job within the initial 5–6 years after resettlement will probably never find skilled positions, meaning that their economic and human potential has been largely wasted. It is about time that policy makers in immigrant-receiving countries with developed knowledge economies invested more energy and thought in making skilled immigration work.

NOTE

1. Throughout the paper, this group of immigrants is interchangeably called “former Soviets” or “Russians”, as the Russian language and culture form the main common ground for these otherwise diverse immigrants.

REFERENCES

- Batalova, J., M. Fix, and P.A. Creticos
 2008 “Uneven progress: the employment pathways of skilled immigrants in the United States”, *Research Paper*, Migration Policy Institute (MPI), Washington, DC.
- Benson-Rea, M., and S. Rowlinson
 2003 “Highly skilled and business migrants: information processes and settlement outcomes”, *International Migration*, 41(2): 59–79.
- CBS (Central Bureau of Statistics)
 2006 *The Statistical Abstract of Israel*, CBS Publishing, Jerusalem.
 2010 *The Statistical Abstract of Israel*, CBS Publishing, Jerusalem.
- Chiswick, B.R., and P.W. Miller
 2008 “Why is the payoff to schooling smaller for immigrants?” *Labour Economics*, 15(6): 1317–1340.
- Cohen-Goldner, S.
 2006 “Immigrants in the Israeli high-tech industry: comparison to natives and the effect of training”, *Research in Labour Economics*, 24: 265–292.

- Cohen-Goldner, S., and Z. Ekstein
2008 "Labour mobility of immigrants: training, experience, language, and opportunities", *International Economic Review*, 49(3): 837–872.
- Czedo, K.
2008 "Negotiating skills in the global city: Hungarian and Romanian professionals and graduates in London", *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 34(5): 803–823.
- Eisikovits, R.A.
1995 "Educational success and long-term adaptation of immigrant students in Israel", *Qualitative Studies in Education*, 8(2): 171–181.
- Ekstein, Z., and Y. Weiss
2004 "On the wage growth of immigrants: Israel 1990–2000", *Journal of the European Economic Association*, 2(4): 665–695.
- Epstein, A., and N. Kheimets
2000 "Cultural clash and educational diversity: immigrant teachers' effort to rescue the education of immigrant children in Israel", *International Studies in Sociology of Education*, 10(2): 191–210.
- Favell, A.
2008 "The new face of East–West migration in Europe", *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 34(5): 701–716.
- Field, M.G.
1990 "Noble purpose, grand design, failing execution, mixed results: Soviet socialized medicine after seventy years", *American Journal of Public Health*, 30: 144–152.
- Friedberg, R.
2001 "The impact of mass migration on the Israeli labour market", *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 116: 1373–1408.
- IMIA (Israeli Ministry of Immigrant Absorption)
2004 *Immigrants from the FSU: The Main Facets of Adjustment*, IMIA Publishing, Jerusalem (in Hebrew).
- IOM (International Organization for Migration)
2008 "Migrations and the host society: partnerships for success", *Paper No. 11, Dialogue on Migration Series*, IOM Publishing, Geneva.
- Iredale, R.R.
1997 *Skills Transfer: International Migration and Accreditation Issues: A Comparative Study of Australia, Britain, Canada, New Zealand and the United States*, University of Wollongong Press, Wollongong, NSW.
- Jones, A. (Ed.)
1991 *Professions and the State: Expertise and Autonomy in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe*, Temple University Press, Philadelphia, PA.
- Kheimets, N.G., and A.D. Epstein
2001 "English as a central component of success in the professional and social integration of scientists from the former Soviet Union in Israel", *Language and Society*, 30(2): 187–215.
- King, J., and G. Naveh
1999 *The Absorption into Employment of Immigrant Engineers*, JDC-Brookdale Institute for Gerontology and Adult Human Development, Jerusalem (in Hebrew).
- Kugler, A., and R. Sauer
2005 "Doctors without borders: the returns to an occupational license for Soviet immigrant physicians in Israel", *Journal of Labour Economics*, 23(3): 437–466.
- Lerner, M., and G. Menachem
2003 "Decredentialization and recredentialization: the role of governmental support in enhancing occupational opportunities of immigrants, the case of Russian immigrants in Israel in the 1990s", *Work and Occupations*, 30(1): 3–29.
- Lianos, T.P.
2007 "Brain drain and brain loss: immigrants to Greece", *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 33(1): 129–140.
- Liversage, A.
2009 "Finding a path: investigating the labour market trajectories of high-skilled immigrants in Denmark", *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 35(2): 203–226.

- MOH (Ministry of Health)
2004 *Summary Report on the Medical Personnel in Israel*, MOH Publishing, Jerusalem (in Hebrew).
- Portes, A., and R.G. Rumbaut
2006 *Immigrant America: A Portrait*, third edition, University of California Press, Berkeley, CA.
- Raijman, R., and M. Semyonov
1998 "Best of times, worst of times and the occupational mobility of Soviet immigrants to Israel", *International Migration*, 36: 291–312.
- Reitz, J.G.
2001 "Immigrant success in the knowledge economy: institutional change and the immigrant experience in Canada, 1970–1995", *Journal of Social Issues*, 57(3): 579–613.
2003 "Occupational dimensions of immigrant credential assessment: trends in professional, managerial, and other occupations, 1970–1996", In C. Beach, A.G. Green and J.G. Reitz (Eds), *Canadian Immigration Policy for the 21st Century*, J. Deutsch Institute for the Study of Economic Policy, Kingston, ON: 469–506.
2007 "Immigrant employment success in Canada, part I: individual and contextual causes", *Journal of International Migration and Integration*, 8(1): 11–36.
- Remennick, L.
2002 "Survival of the fittest: Russian immigrant teachers speak about their professional adjustment in Israel", *International Migration*, 40(1): 99–121.
2003 "Career continuity among immigrant professionals: Russian engineers in Israel", *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 29(4): 701–721.
2004 "Work relations between immigrants and old-timers in an Israeli organization: social interactions and inter-group attitudes", *International Journal of Comparative Sociology*, 45(1–2): 43–69.
2005 "Immigration, gender, and psychosocial adjustment: a study among 150 immigrant couples in Israel", *Sex Roles: A Journal of Research*, 53(11–12): 847–864.
- Remennick, L., and R. Shtarkshall
1997 "Technology versus responsibility: immigrant physicians from the former USSR reflect on Israeli health care", *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 38: 191–202.
- Siew-Ean, K., C. Voigt-Grof, P. McDonald, et al.
2007 "Temporary skilled migration in Australia: employers' perspective", *International Migration*, 45(4): 175–201.
- Shuval, J.T.
1995 "Elitism and professional control in a saturated market: immigrant physicians in Israel", *Sociology of Health and Illness*, 17(4): 550–565.
- Shuval, J.T., and J.H. Bernstein
1997 *Immigrant Physicians: Former Soviet Doctors in Israel, Canada and the United States*, Praeger, Westport, CT.
- Stier, H., and V. Levanon
2003 "Finding an adequate job: employment and income of recent immigrants in Israel", *International Migration*, 41(2): 81–105.
- Sussman, Z., and D. Zakai
1998 "The mass immigration of physicians and the steep rise wages of veterans in Israel: a paradox?" *Economic Quarterly*, 45: 28–63.
- Teitelbaum, M.S.
2008 "The meanings and the futures of skilled migration", *Canadian Diversity*, 6(3): 26–29.
- Vinokurov, A., D. Birman, and E. Trickett
2000 "Psychological and acculturation correlates of work status among Soviet Jewish refugees in the United States", *International Migration Review*, 34(2): 538–559.
- Weiss, Y., R. Sauer, and M. Gotlibovsky
2003 "Immigration, search, and loss of skill", *Journal of Labour Economics*, 21(3): 557–591.
- Yelenevskaya, M., and L. Fialkova
2009 "The case of ex-Soviet scientists", in E. Ben-Rafael and Y. Sternberg (Eds), *Transnationalism: Diasporas and the Advent of New (Dis)order*, Brill, Leiden: 613–635.