# Black-white occupational segregation in Canada, 2021: What do we know

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# Previous research on black-white racial occupational segregation

- Temporal trend
  - Slowed desegregation since 1980s (Childers 2004; King 1992; Watts 1995)
- Geographic variation (Gradín et al. 2015; Ovadia 2003; Semyonov et al. 2000; Tesfai and Thomas 2020)
- Mechanism
  - Human capital (Gradín 2013; Ovadia 2003; Semyonov et al. 2000)
- Limited research on black-white racial occupational segregation outside the US

# The Black Population in Canada

- 1.5 million (4.3%) in 2021 (Statistics Canada 2023)
- Our focus: Black working population aged 25-54, in CMAs, 2021
  - 75% foreign born
  - Concentrated in major cities:
    - Toronto (31% of men; 35% of women)
    - Montreal (24% of men; 25% of women)
- Historical concentration in select occupations
  - Black women in domestic work
  - Black men as railway porters

# Research Questions

1. How has black-white occupational segregation in Canadian cities changed over time?

2. Whether and to what extent do social and demographic factors explain contemporary differences in occupational distributions of black/white women/men?

3. Do the results vary by city and gender?

# Methods

- Data
  - 1981, 1991, 1996, 2001, 2006, 2016, 2021 Census Masterfiles
  - 2011 National Household Survey Masterfile

- Sample
  - Black and white women and men aged 25-54
  - Reported occupation
  - Total Central Metropolitan Areas (CMAs): Toronto; Montreal; other CMAs

1) Index of Dissimilarity (Duncan and Duncan 1955)

$$DI = 0.5 \times \sum_j |q_j - p_j|$$

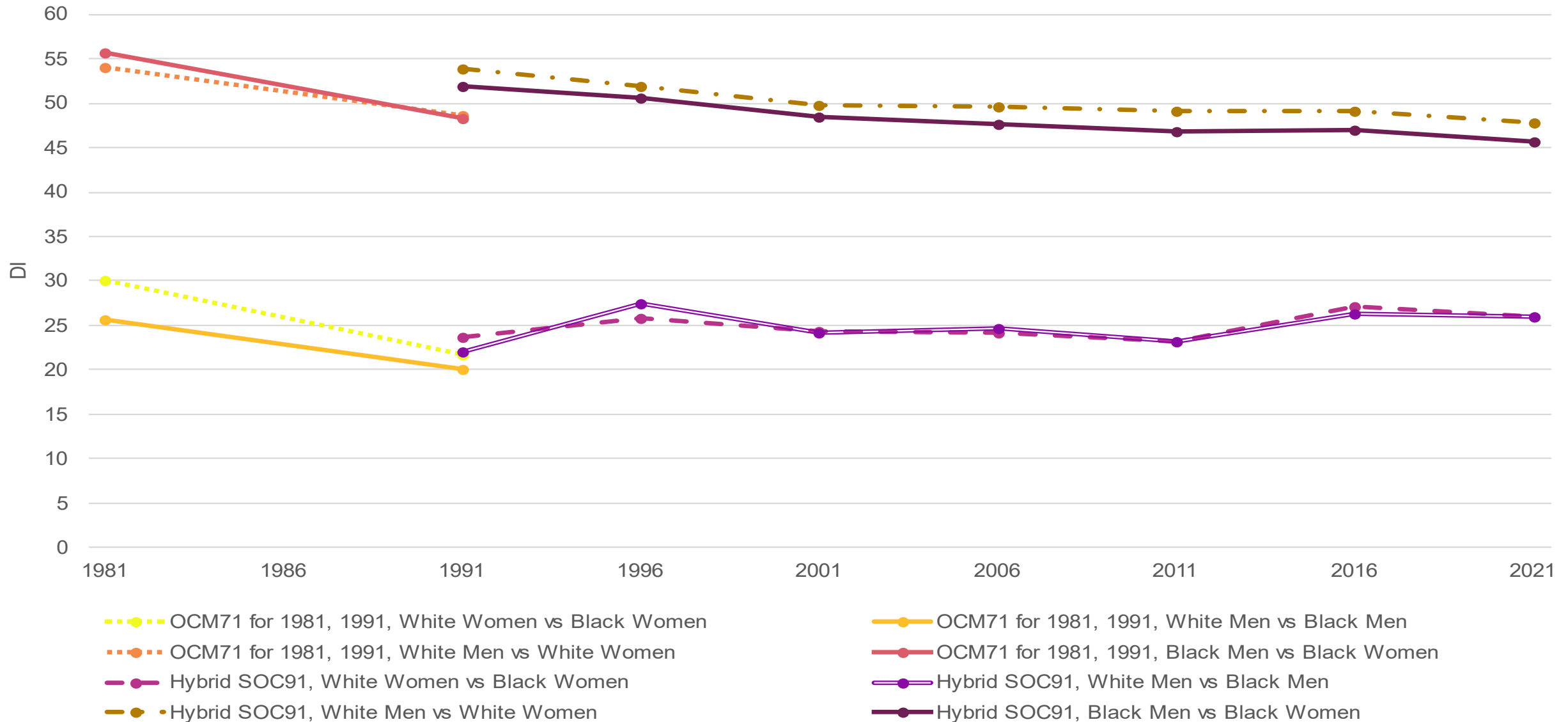$q_j$: *proportion of blacks in occupation $j$*
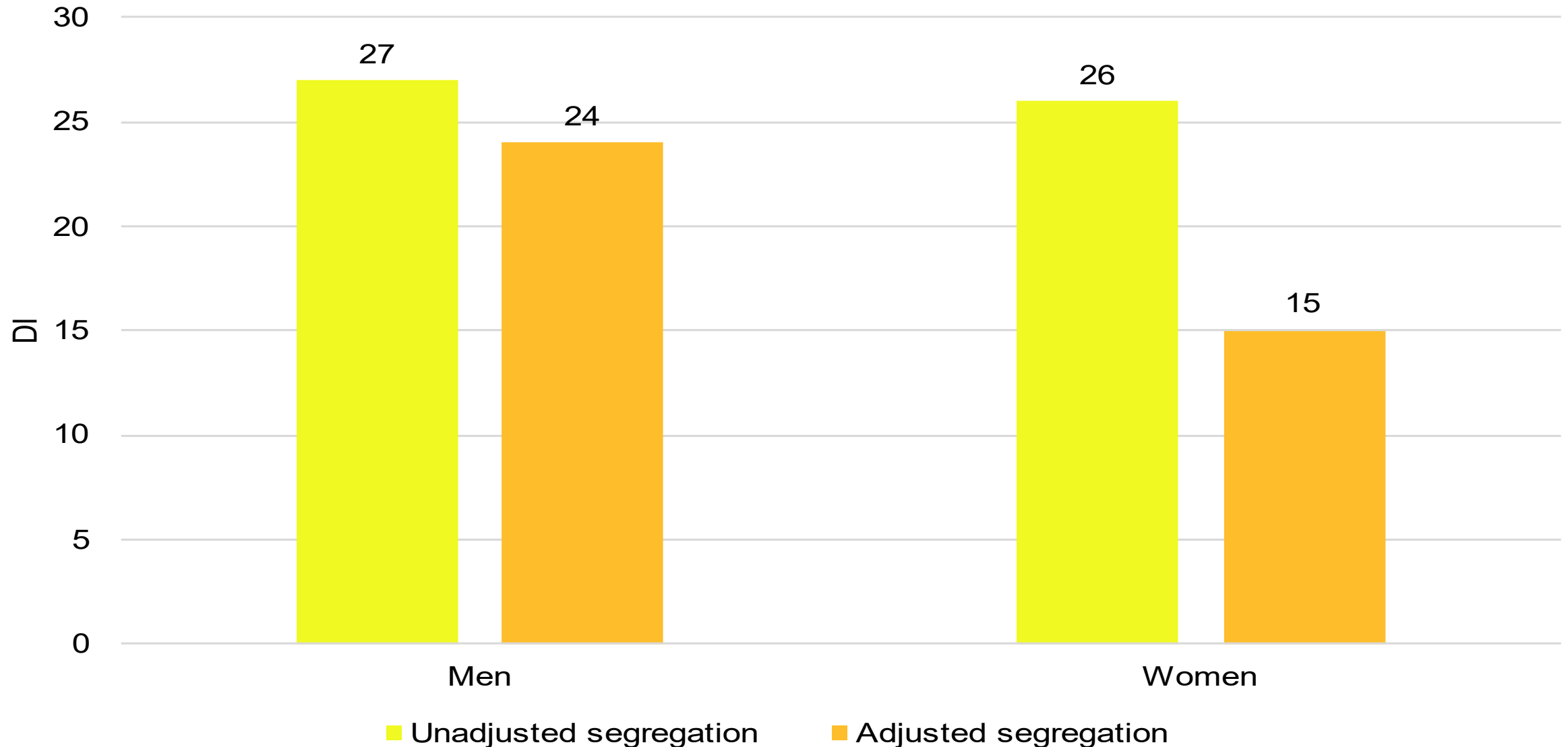$p_j$: *proportion of whites in occupation $j$*

2) Conditional segregation

- Counterfactual reweighting approach (Gradín 2013)
- Shapley decomposition (nativity, education, language use)

# RQ1. Racial occupational segregation levels are lower than gender segregation, but persistent

Legend:
- OCM71 for 1981, 1991, White Women vs Black Women
- OCM71 for 1981, 1991, White Men vs Black Men
- OCM71 for 1981, 1991, White Men vs White Women
- OCM71 for 1981, 1991, Black Men vs Black Women
- Hybrid SOC91, White Women vs Black Women
- Hybrid SOC91, White Men vs Black Men
- Hybrid SOC91, White Men vs White Women
- Hybrid SOC91, Black Men vs Black Women

# RQ2. For women, nativity difference largely explains black-white occupational segregation level
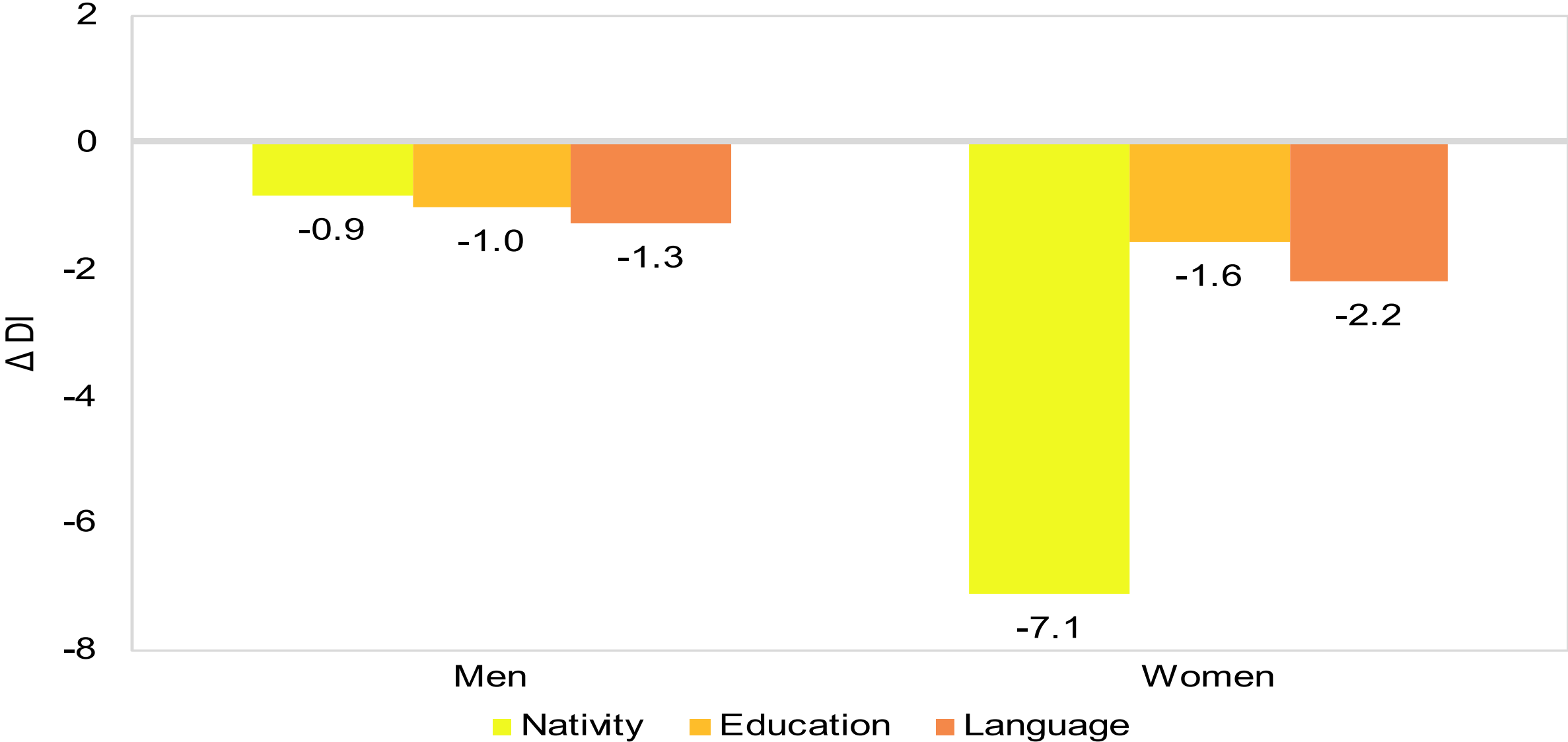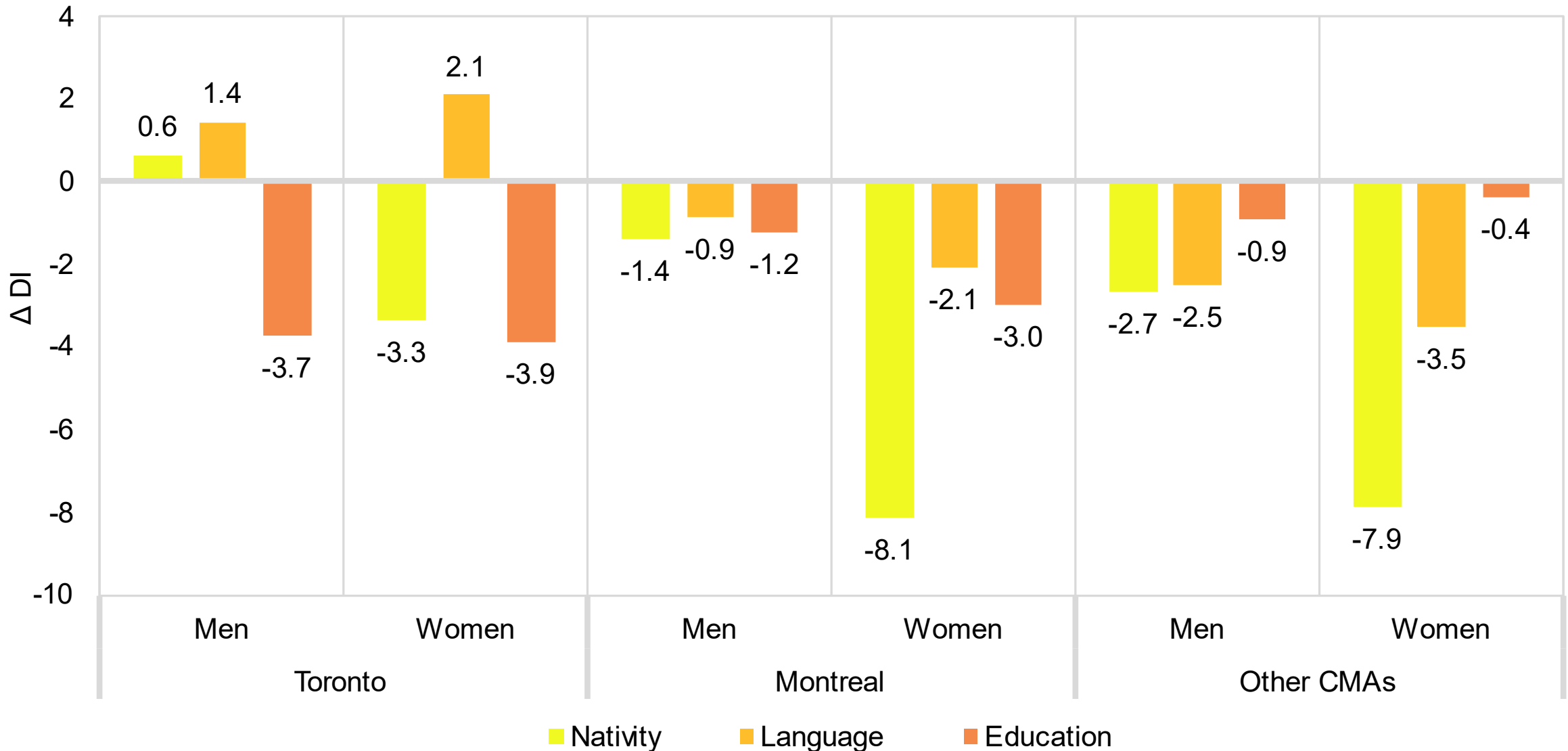
# RQ3. City-specific findings
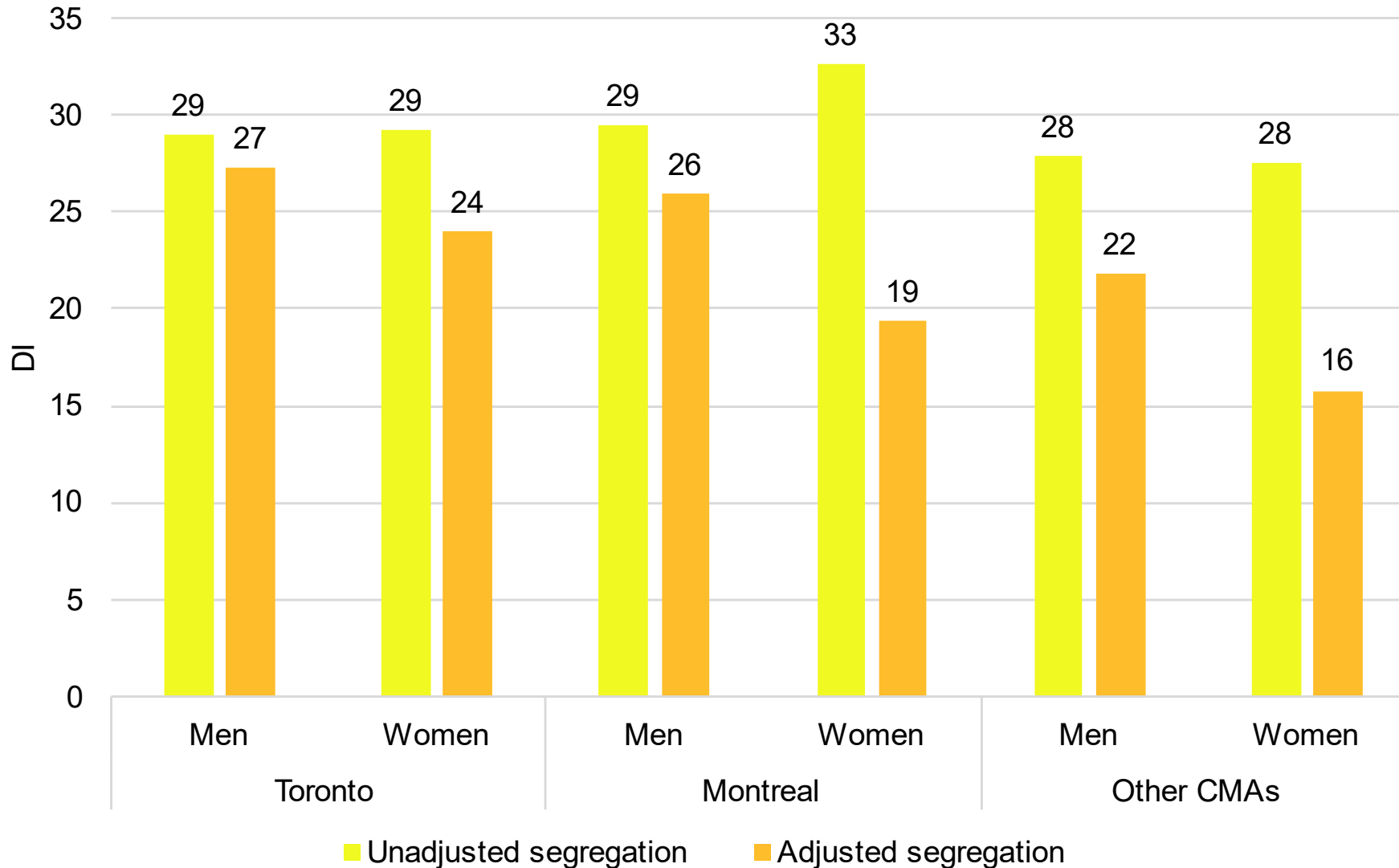


- Highest black-white segregation levels for women in Montreal

- Compositional differences better explain racial segregation of men in other CMAs

- Relatively high adjusted segregation of women in Toronto

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# RQ3. City-specific decomposition results

# Conclusions & future research

- Black-white occupational segregation in CMAs has been around DI=25 for women/men since 1991
- Black-white occupational segregation varies by city and gender
  - Variations in local labor supply/demand (Perales and Vidal 2015 Semyonov et al. 2000)
  - Importance of explanatory factors varies across places
- Immigration experiences matter, especially for black women
  - Roles of migration-related factors (entry class, age at migration, place of education)

# Thank you!

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https://occupationalsegregation.artsci.utoronto.ca/

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