

IMPACT OF SKILLED MIGRATION

1. QUESTION: What has been the effect of skilled migration of engineers?

Although there has been renewed interest in recent years, skilled migration has been an important element of Australia's supply of engineers for many decades and has contributed substantially to the its size and structure.

In 2006, Australia's supply of engineers was 200,615 (179,448 men and 21,167 women):

- 51.6% were Australian born (52.9% of the men and 40.2% of the women)
- The other 48.4% were born overseas (47.1% of the men and 59.8% of the women)

By 2011, the overseas born cohort had increased by 46.5% and accounted for 71.4% of the growth in the supply of engineers to 263,890:

- The Australian born proportion fell to 46.1% (47.8% of the men and 34.3% of the women)
- The overseas born proportion increased to 53.9% (52.2% of the men and 65.7% of the women)

There are important differences between the labour market experiences of Australian born and overseas born engineers:

- In 2006, 70% of unemployed engineers were overseas born and unemployment rates were generally higher for overseas born engineers (3.9% for men, 7.1% for women and 4.3% overall) than for Australian born engineers (1.7% for men, 2.3% for women and 1.8% overall).
- This pattern was repeated in 2011; 71.7% of unemployed engineers were overseas born and since unemployment for engineers increased to 9,375, unemployment rates were higher; for overseas born engineers they increased to 4.2% for men, 7.9% for women and 4.7% overall and for Australia born engineers they increased to 2.1% for men, 2.6% for women and 2.2% overall.
- The proportion of the supply of overseas born qualified engineers who are employed in engineering occupations is substantially lower than for the supply of Australian born engineers.
- Unemployment rates for overseas born engineers are higher, the more recent their arrival in Australia.

If you need further details about this answer two options are available. Either

- Look at the Policy Note "Changes in the Australian Engineering Labour Market", November 2012 at www.engineersaustralia.org.au/
- or send an email to policy@engineersaustralia.org.au and ask your question.