

Skill level of migrants

Skill level

The skill level of migrants is important in determining employment and settlement outcomes. In recent years, the government has emphasised attracting skilled migrants, recognising the important economic contribution they make. Research suggests that skilled migrants have substantially lower unemployment rates, an ability to find work more quickly, and higher levels of income and expenditure. Employer sponsorship to a job also clearly enhances migrants' economic contribution to Australia. To that end, in 2006-07, the government continues to place emphasis on employer sponsorship of migrants.

A record 97 920 Skill Stream visas were issued in 2006-07, with an increase of 8.9 per cent in Employer Nominations and an increase of 8.7 per cent in Skilled Independent places.

This has occurred within a Migration Program where Skill Stream visas have risen from 29.0 per cent in 1995-96 to 66.1 per cent of the total Migration Program in 2006-07. The planned intake for the 2007-08 year maintains the high proportion of skill in the program.

In general, Skill Stream applicants have to demonstrate a high level of skill, a strong employment history, good English language ability and be under 45 years of age. No skill requirements apply to Family Stream migrants.

Self identification of skill level by settler arrivals as stated on their inbound passenger cards indicates that, of those in the workforce prior to coming to Australia, Skilled Independent and Distinguished Talent migrants are most likely to be skilled.

Migrants in the workforce

Of the 140 148 settlers arriving in Australia in 2006-07, 46.6 per cent were in the workforce prior to migration. Of these, 11.1 per cent were in managerial and administrative occupations, 38.7 per cent in professional occupations, 12.7 per cent were associate professionals, and 13.4 per cent were tradespersons. These four groups contain all the skilled occupations. Semi-skilled migrants made up 17.0 per cent of those in the workforce prior to migration and the unskilled 1.8 per cent. The remaining 5.3 per cent who were in the workforce prior to migration were not in employment.

Overall, 75.9 per cent of settlers, who were in the labour force (employed and not in employment) prior to migrating in 2006-07, were skilled.

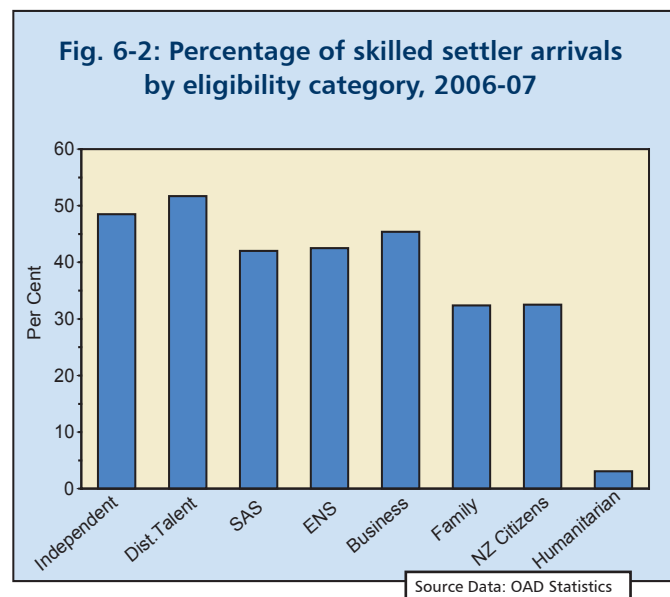
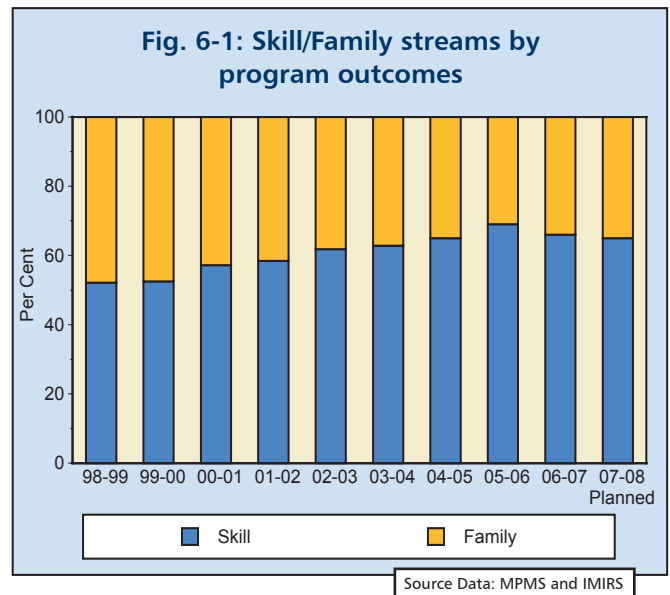
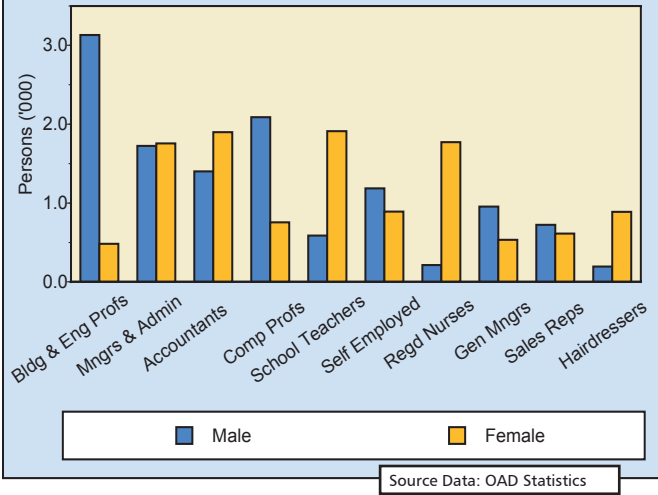


Fig. 6-3: Top 10 settler arrival occupations by gender



Occupational profile

Australia continues to attract migrants with a wide variety of skills and occupations. The profile of the top occupations has changed compared to the last few years. Building and engineering professionals has topped the list (3612), followed by managers and administrators (3482), accountants (3301) and computing professionals. A notable movement in occupation of migrants compared to 2005-06 has been the decline in computer professionals (1095 persons).

The occupational and gender profile of migrants varies across eligibility categories. Professional and management occupations are more likely to be represented in the Skill Stream categories.

Fig. 6-4: Skilled Australian Sponsored top 10 occupations by gender, 2006-07

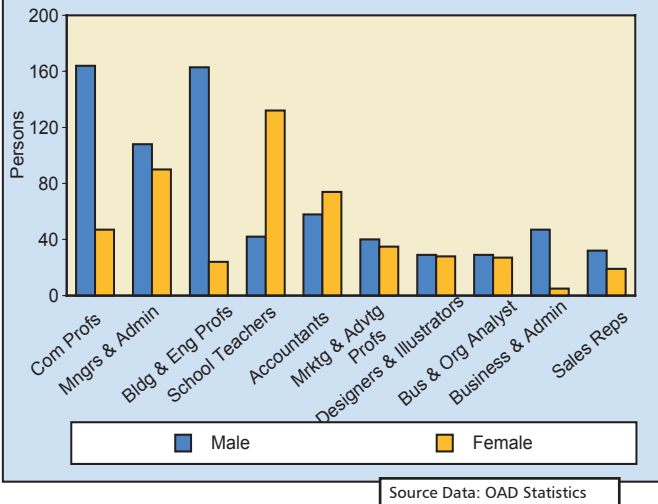


Fig. 6-6: Skilled Independent top 10 occupations by gender, 2006-07

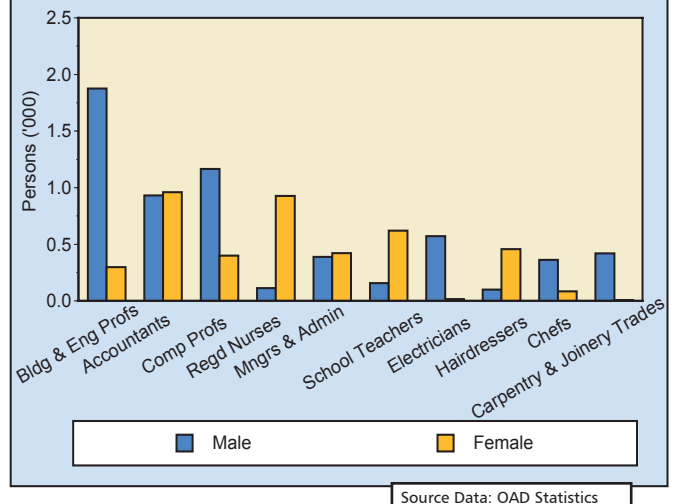


Fig. 6-5: Family stream top 10 occupations by gender, 2006-07

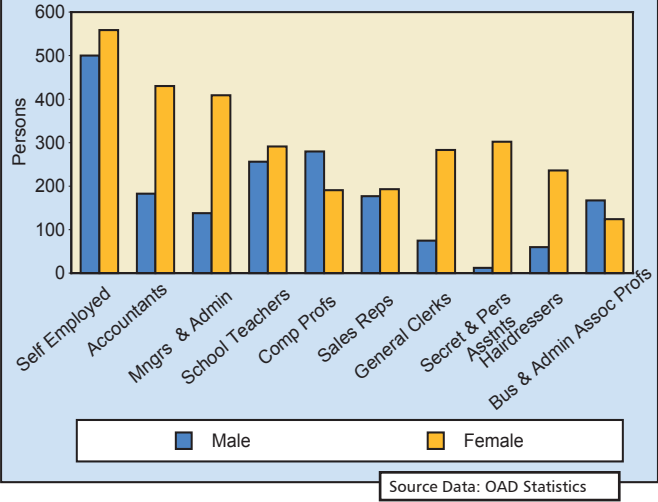


Fig. 6-7: Employer Nomination Scheme top 10 occupations by gender, 2006-07

