

## MIGRATION AND EMPLOYMENT

Changes in the size of the working-age population affect more strongly the foreign-born than the natives for whom such changes are hardly noticeable from one year to another. This is notably due to the impact of net migration. In most OECD countries, employment rates for immigrants are lower than those for native-born persons. However, the situation is more diverse if one disaggregates employment rates by educational attainment.

### Definition

The employment rate is calculated as the share of employed persons in the 25-64 population (active and inactive persons). In accordance with ILO definitions, employed persons are those who worked at least one hour or who had a job but were absent from work during the reference week. The classification of educational attainment shown is based on the *International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED)* categories. Generally speaking, “low” corresponds to less than upper secondary education; “intermediate” to upper secondary education; and “high” to tertiary education. Tertiary education includes programmes of high-level vocational education whose graduates feed into technical or semi-professional occupations.

### Overview

Labour market outcomes of immigrants and natives vary significantly across OECD countries, and differences by educational attainment are even larger. In all OECD countries, the employment rate increases with education level. While people with tertiary education find work more easily and are less exposed to unemployment, access to tertiary education does not necessarily guarantee equal employment rates for immigrants and native-born persons. In all OECD countries, employment rates are higher for native-born persons with high educational qualifications than for their foreign-born counterparts.

The situation is more diverse for persons with low educational attainment. In the United States, Luxembourg and to a lesser extent in some southern European countries such as Italy and Greece, foreign-born immigrants with low educational qualifications have higher employment rates than their native-born counterparts. The opposite is true in most other countries, in particular in Sweden, Denmark, the Netherlands, Belgium and New Zealand. The higher employment rate of foreign-born persons with low educational attainment in some countries may reflect the persistent demand for workers in low-skilled jobs which are hardly taken up by the in-coming cohorts of native-born workers.

### Comparability

Data for the European countries are from the European Union Labour Force Survey. Data for other countries are mostly taken from national labour force surveys. Even if employment levels can at times be affected by changes in survey design and by survey implementation problems (e.g. non-response), data on employment rates are generally consistent over time.

However, comparability of education levels between immigrants and the native-born population and across countries is only approximate. The educational qualifications of some origin countries may not fit exactly into national educational categories because the duration of study or the programme content for what appear to be equivalent qualifications may not be the same. Likewise, the reduction of the ISCED classification into three categories may result in some loss of information regarding the duration of study, the programme orientation, etc. For example, high educational qualifications can include programmes of durations varying from two years (in the case of short, university-level technical programmes) to seven years or more (in the case of PhDs).

The EU28 aggregate is a weighted average and does not include Croatia or Malta.

### Sources

- OECD (2013), *International Migration Outlook*, OECD Publishing.

### Further information

#### Analytical publications

- OECD (2012), *Jobs for Immigrants (Vol. 3), Labour Market Integration in Austria, Norway and Switzerland*, OECD Publishing.
- OECD (2008), *A Profile of Immigrant Populations in the 21st Century: Data from OECD Countries*, OECD Publishing.

#### Statistical publications

- OECD (2012), *Connecting with Emigrants, A Global Profile of Diasporas*, OECD Publishing.
- OECD (2012), *Settling In: OECD Indicators of Immigrant Integration 2012*, OECD Publishing.

#### Methodological publications

- Dumont, J.C. and Lemaître G. (2005), “Counting Immigrants and Expatriates in OECD Countries: A New Perspective”, *OECD Social, Employment and Migration Working Papers*, No. 25.

#### Online databases

- OECD *International Migration Statistics*.

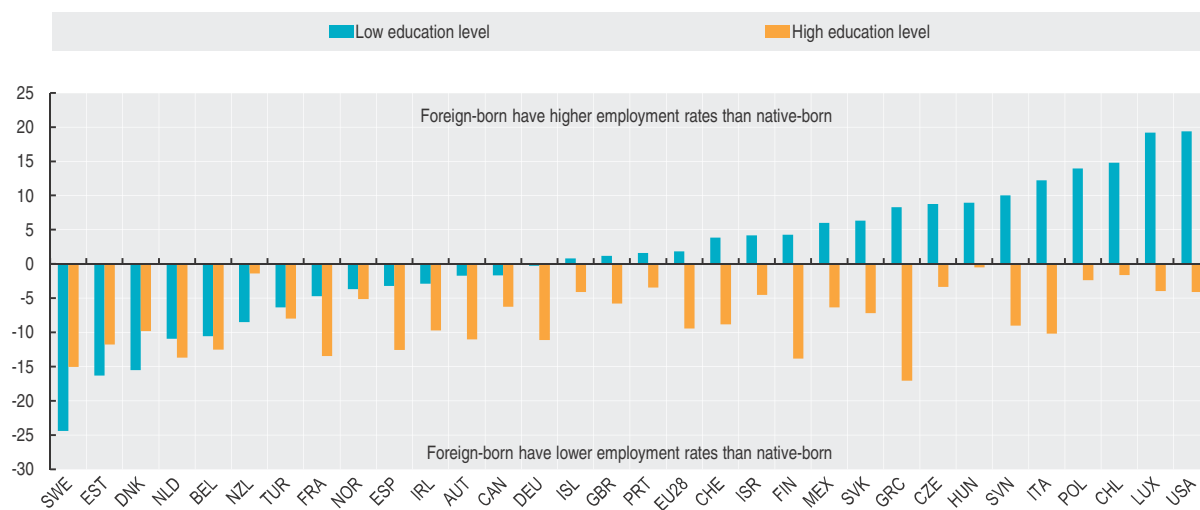

**Employment rates of native- and foreign-born population by educational attainment**

As a percentage of population aged 25-64

	2007						2012					
	Native-born			Foreign-born			Native-born			Foreign-born		
	Low	High	Total	Low	High	Total	Low	High	Total	Low	High	Total
Australia	..	..	77.2	..	..	71.1	..	..	77.1	..	..	72.9
Austria	57.1	89.5	76.5	57.5	75.5	67.3	55.7	89.5	78.0	53.9	78.5	69.4
Belgium	51.8	86.3	71.9	39.5	73.8	55.3	50.2	86.5	73.0	39.7	74.0	56.4
Canada	..	..	..	..	..	..	56.6	83.4	77.4	54.9	77.2	73.2
Chile	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Czech Republic	45.7	85.3	74.6	45.7	81.9	69.6	39.8	84.7	75.0	48.6	81.4	71.7
Denmark	67.4	88.8	81.3	54.1	76.4	63.9	62.5	87.4	78.8	47.0	77.5	63.4
Estonia	56.5	88.3	80.1	45.7	83.1	75.2	51.7	84.0	76.2	35.4	72.2	66.8
Finland	58.0	85.6	76.2	54.1	76.5	70.7	54.1	84.8	75.7	58.4	71.0	67.6
France	59.0	85.0	73.7	54.3	70.8	62.1	56.0	86.0	73.5	51.3	72.5	60.7
Germany	56.1	87.7	76.2	52.3	70.5	62.8	57.2	89.5	79.8	56.9	78.4	69.4
Greece	56.7	83.8	68.3	74.8	70.9	72.7	46.3	72.4	58.4	54.5	55.3	54.4
Hungary	38.4	80.5	65.4	50.1	77.5	70.7	38.7	79.7	65.2	47.6	79.2	71.3
Iceland	82.3	92.5	87.8	86.9	88.4	86.8	72.7	91.0	83.5	73.5	86.9	81.5
Ireland	58.6	88.3	74.0	60.3	80.9	75.9	43.5	82.5	66.0	40.6	72.8	64.4
Israel	42.8	85.4	71.2	43.0	80.4	69.0	..	..	..	..	..	..
Italy	51.5	80.6	64.4	66.9	75.2	71.0	49.1	79.7	63.4	61.4	69.5	65.5
Japan	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Korea	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Luxembourg	52.3	83.8	69.8	70.5	85.1	76.3	49.6	87.3	73.9	68.8	83.4	76.0
Mexico	60.1	80.5	67.8	65.1	66.4	65.5	60.6	77.6	68.1	66.6	71.2	70.1
Netherlands	63.7	88.4	79.2	50.9	77.7	64.3	64.3	89.0	79.7	53.4	75.3	66.6
New Zealand	69.8	85.4	81.5	60.8	80.0	75.4	67.1	84.4	79.5	58.5	83.0	76.1
Norway	66.5	90.3	82.3	58.1	86.6	75.3	65.2	90.6	82.3	61.5	85.5	77.1
Poland	41.2	84.6	65.7	15.3	65.7	36.3	39.7	84.7	67.4	53.7	82.3	68.7
Portugal	71.3	85.8	74.3	75.4	87.0	79.2	63.1	82.3	68.8	64.7	78.8	71.4
Slovak Republic	29.0	84.2	70.0	40.4	87.2	70.1	30.7	80.2	68.9	37.0	73.0	66.7
Slovenia	56.1	88.0	75.0	56.7	81.8	69.2	45.2	85.6	71.5	55.2	76.6	66.6
Spain	57.8	85.5	69.7	71.4	78.8	74.9	49.4	78.5	62.9	46.2	66.0	55.8
Sweden	71.1	90.5	84.8	51.5	78.3	67.7	71.9	91.7	85.9	47.5	76.7	67.9
Switzerland	65.0	93.0	84.5	67.3	82.7	75.5	66.0	92.4	85.8	69.8	83.6	78.0
Turkey	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	48.9	..	..	46.4
United Kingdom	54.7	88.9	76.8	47.1	83.2	70.6	46.2	85.6	76.4	47.4	79.8	71.3
United States	51.5	84.0	76.5	68.8	80.3	75.2	44.7	81.3	72.4	64.1	77.2	71.3
EU 28	55.6	86.3	72.1	57.8	76.5	67.4	51.4	84.7	71.4	53.2	75.3	65.4
OECD	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Brazil	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
China	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
India	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Indonesia	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Russian Federation	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
South Africa	27.8	79.9	36.3	60.8	75.3	63.7	..	..	..	..	..	..

 StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933027323>
**Gap in employment rates between foreign- and native-born population by educational attainment**

Percentage points, 2012


 StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933024720>



**From:**  
**OECD Factbook 2014**  
Economic, Environmental and Social Statistics

**Access the complete publication at:**  
<https://doi.org/10.1787/factbook-2014-en>

**Please cite this chapter as:**

OECD (2014), "Migration and employment", in *OECD Factbook 2014: Economic, Environmental and Social Statistics*, OECD Publishing, Paris.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1787/factbook-2014-8-en>

This work is published under the responsibility of the Secretary-General of the OECD. The opinions expressed and arguments employed herein do not necessarily reflect the official views of OECD member countries.

This document and any map included herein are without prejudice to the status of or sovereignty over any territory, to the delimitation of international frontiers and boundaries and to the name of any territory, city or area.

You can copy, download or print OECD content for your own use, and you can include excerpts from OECD publications, databases and multimedia products in your own documents, presentations, blogs, websites and teaching materials, provided that suitable acknowledgment of OECD as source and copyright owner is given. All requests for public or commercial use and translation rights should be submitted to [rights@oecd.org](mailto:rights@oecd.org). Requests for permission to photocopy portions of this material for public or commercial use shall be addressed directly to the Copyright Clearance Center (CCC) at [info@copyright.com](mailto:info@copyright.com) or the Centre français d'exploitation du droit de copie (CFC) at [contact@cfcopies.com](mailto:contact@cfcopies.com).