

Immigrants and employment

Did you know?

Statisticians define employment as work for pay or profit of at least one hour in the last week.

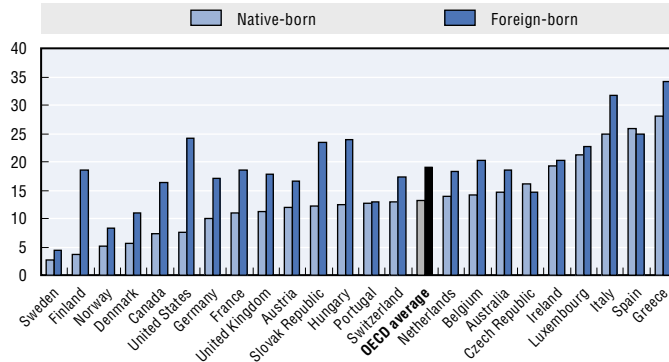
Like native-born women, immigrant women are less often employed than their male counterparts. But the difference between men and women is larger for immigrants. Immigrant women can be said to have a double “handicap” in the labour market: as immigrants, they have lower employment rates compared to non-immigrants and as women, lower employment rates compared to men.

In most OECD countries, finding a job is harder for immigrant women than for immigrant men and is harder for immigrant women than for native-born women.

The chart below shows the gender gaps for employment of foreign-born versus native born people. It shows, for example, that native-born Finnish women are almost as likely to be employed as native-born Finnish men, but foreign-born Finnish women are far less likely to work than foreign-born Finnish men.

Gender gap in employment of native-born and foreign-born adults

Employment rates for men less employment rates for women (2004)

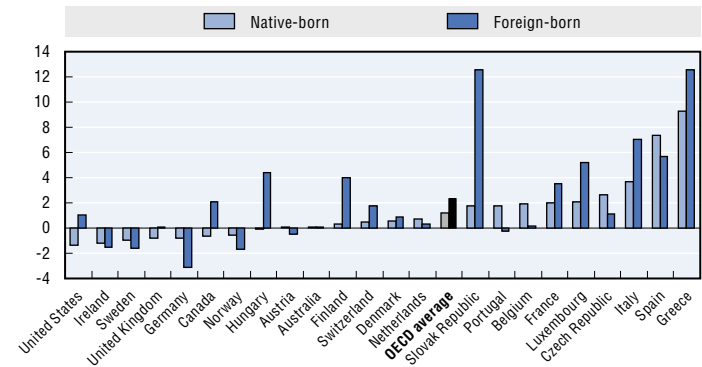


This is a common pattern – in all except two countries unemployment among the foreign-born is higher than that of native-born people. The two exceptions are Spain and the Czech Republic.

Although immigrant women are not employed as often as immigrant men, differences in unemployment rates between immigrant men and women are small. Indeed, when the bars in the chart below fall below the zero-line, immigrant women are less likely to be unemployed than immigrant men. Ireland, Sweden, Germany and Norway are countries where this is the case. Overall, if native-born women find it harder than native-born men to find work, then it is generally also the case for foreign-born women compared to foreign-born men.

Gender gap in unemployment rates, native-born and foreign-born

Unemployment rate for women minus unemployment rate for men in 2004



Source: OECD (2006), *International Migration Outlook*, OECD, Paris.

Further reading:

OECD (2006), *International Migration Outlook – 2006 Edition*, OECD, Paris.