



457 visas for temporary skilled workers in 2015-16

457 visas enable skilled workers to enter Australia and work for a sponsoring employer in a skilled occupation for a temporary period of up to four years. Strict eligibility criteria apply to both the employee and the employer. Businesses can only sponsor a worker with a 457 visa if they cannot find an Australian citizen or permanent resident to do the skilled work. Only occupations on the Government's Skilled Occupations List (SOL) are eligible. Pay and work arrangements must meet all Australian workplace laws and are monitored by the Department of Immigration and Border Protection.

The number of primary 457 visas granted annually has declined in every year since 2012-13, when they peaked at 68,481 visas. In 2015-16, 45,395 primary 457 visas were granted (see chart 1). In addition, 40,216 'secondary' 457 visas were granted to accompanying dependants who met the relevant eligibility criteria. As dependants, many of this group would not have been working.

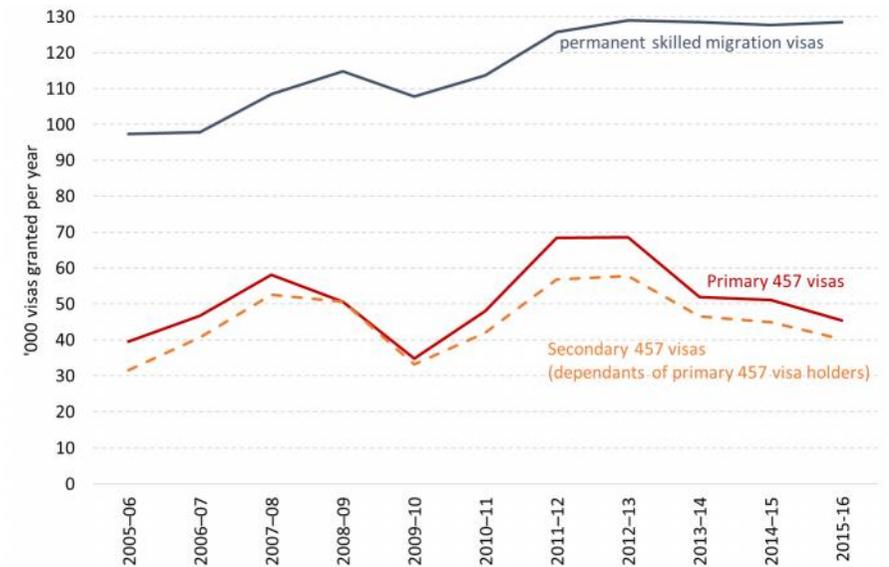
In 2015-16, 43% of primary 457 visas were granted for employment located in NSW, 25% were in Victoria, 13% were in Western Australia and 12% were in Queensland. 25% of primary 457 visas granted came from India, 17% from the UK, 6% from China and around 5% from each of the USA, the Philippines and Ireland.

Across all industries, primary 457 visas granted in 2015-16 made up less than 0.4% of the total workforce. They comprised a sizeable share of the workforce only in the ICT sector (3.5% of all ICT industry workers).

457 visas are available only for nominated skilled occupations. In 2015-16, 55% of primary 457 visas were for professional occupations (in IT, business, health, engineering, education), 23% were for technicians or trades (mainly chefs and cooks plus smaller numbers of mechanical, electrical, engineering and construction trades) and 17% were for managerial roles. 457 visas granted in 2015-16 accounted for 0.9% of the total Australian professional workforce, 0.6% of the total technical and trades workforce and 0.5% of managers (see table 1).

The top occupations granted in 2015-16 were ICT programmers, analysts, engineers and managers (15%) cooks and chefs (8%), marketing or management specialists (5%) and medical officers or practitioners (5%). Only 900 457 visas were granted for community & personal service occupations and just 100 for machinery operators. The very high average salary paid to 457 visa machinery operators (\$107,400) and the fact that half were located in Western Australia suggests they were probably operating specialised mining machinery.

Chart 1: permanent and temporary skilled migration visas, per year



45,395

Number of primary 457 visas granted in 2015-16

0.38%

Primary visas granted in 2015-16, as a share of the total Australian workforce

Reflecting these occupations, 15% of the primary 457 visas granted in 2015-16 were working in the ICT industry, 14% were in the professions, 13% were in personal and other services, 12% were in hospitality and 10% were in healthcare. The giant construction sector (which employs 9% of the total Australian workforce) took 6% of 457 visas in 2015-16, while transport and warehousing (which employs 5% of the total workforce) took just 1% of 457 visas granted in 2015-16.

Reflecting the fact that the majority of 457 visas are for professional or managerial roles, the average salary for all 457 visas granted (\$88,500) was well above the average for all Australian workers (\$77,132) in 2015-16. The average base salary paid to 457 visa holders was above the industry's average weekly earnings for all industries except ICT in 2015-16 (see table 1).

Around 50,000 former 457 visa holders went on to become permanent migrants in each of 2014-15 and 2015-16, through the skilled migration stream. This successful transition suggests that many 457 visa holders are making a valuable contribution and commitment to Australia. These former 457 numbers are included in the total count of skilled migrants, which has been capped at around 128,000 visas per year since 2012-13.

Table 1: primary 457 visas granted in 2015-16, top industries and occupation categories

Industries and occupations	Total industry employment (May 2016)		Primary 457 visas granted, 2015-16		
	Number '000	AWOTE \$ per year*	number	% of industry	Average base salary, \$ per week
ICT, Media & Telecomms.	198.7	\$93,938	6,880	3.46	\$81,100
Professional services	1,009.8	\$90,802	6,490	0.64	\$95,100
Hospitality (food & accomm)	843.5	\$55,630	5,510	0.65	\$58,000
Health Care	1,534.3	\$74,927	4,810	0.31	\$91,500
Construction	1,075.1	\$78,151	3,000	0.28	\$90,800
Education & Training	929.3	\$85,311	2,333	0.25	\$88,600
Manufacturing	883.5	\$70,918	2,070	0.23	\$90,900
Financial & Insurance	435.6	\$94,791	1,690	0.39	\$122,300
Retail trade	1,251.1	\$57,975	1,650	0.13	\$82,800
Mining	221.7	\$135,060	1,090	0.49	\$171,400
Managers	1,534.9	-	7,790	0.51	\$120,000
Professionals	2,739.0	-	25,080	0.92	\$89,500
Technicians and trades	1,661.6	-	10,400	0.63	\$66,700
ALL INDUSTRIES	11,939.3	\$77,132	45,395	0.38	\$88,500

* Average weekly ordinary time earnings (AWOTE) per week in private sector industries, multiplied by 52 weeks. May 2016.

457 visas: information and data sources

For more information about 457 visa applications, eligibility and conditions see:

<http://www.border.gov.au/Trav/Visa-1/457->

For data about 457 visa numbers, characteristics and trends see:

<http://www.border.gov.au/about/reports-publications/research-statistics/statistics/work-in-australia>

For a complete list of occupations on the Skilled Occupation List see:

<https://www.border.gov.au/Trav/Work/Work/Skills-assessment-and-assessing-authorities/skilled-occupations-lists>

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