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Abstract

Like other OECD nations, Australia is facing a crisis in the academic staff of its universities over the next two decades. This is a function of several factors, among which demographic elements are especially significant. The academic workforce of Australia is characterized by three distinct demographic features ? age heaping, a concentration in older ages, and gender imbalance. The first two are a result of rapid expansion in the late 1960s and 1970s when the numbers of students expanded exponentially with the passage of the post-war baby boom cohorts into the university entrance ages and greatly increased participation rates. This, together with increases in student/staff ratios and perhaps the increased attractiveness of alternative vocations, has created a dearth of young academics. The impending and actual retirement of the bulge means that there will be a tightening of the academic labor market and an increase in demand for university staff unprecedented for three decades. This will occur in a context where the number of Australian graduates moving to foreign universities is increasing rapidly as a result of further internationalization of the labor market. Some of the challenges and opportunities that this presents are discussed. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)