

EU-Australia Relations Factsheet

The EU, its Member States and Australia share strong bonds in all domains - political, economic and social. Bilateral relations are deeply-rooted and expanding.

Diplomatic and Political relations

Diplomatic relations were established in 1962, followed by the opening of the Delegation of the European Commission to Australia (now Delegation of the European Union) in 1981. All EU Member States have diplomatic relations with Australia and 25 of them have Embassies/High Commissions in Canberra. EU Member State Consulates are present in several Australian State capitals, including Sydney and Melbourne. Australia's Mission in Brussels was accredited to the then European Communities in the 1960s. Australia has Embassies in 17 EU Member States as well as a wide net of Consulates across the continent.

EU-Australia political relations are strong and flourishing. A new Framework Agreement signed on 7 August 2017 marks the beginning of a new era of strategic cooperation. Once it enters into force, it will build on an already well-established cooperation basis that includes multiple formal dialogues (e.g. on Foreign and Security policy, Trade policy, Counter Terrorism, Migration & Asylum, Environment, Fisheries, Customs, Human Rights, Development and Consular issues) as well as several sectoral agreements of varying scope, ranging from Scientific and Technical Cooperation to Mutual Recognition in relation to Conformity Assessment, Certificates and Markings; from Wine to the Security of Classified Information; from Australia's participation in EU crisis management operations to the processing and transfer of Passenger Name Record data by air carriers etc.

In addition to formal dialogues and agreements, the EU and Australia can rely on a more informal cooperation track - the EU-Australia Leadership Forum. This is a unique platform (funded by the EU) that enables European and Australian leaders from politics, business, media and civil society to meet and propose new ideas to further the bilateral relationship.

Economic Interaction

EU-Australia economic interaction is strong and vibrant. In 2017 Australia was the EU's 22nd biggest trading partner in goods, while the EU was Australia's 2nd largest goods trading partner after China. Total trade in goods for 2017 was worth EUR 47.7 billion consisting of EUR 13 billion of Australian exports to the EU and EUR 34.7 billion of imports from the EU to Australia. Australia's exports to the EU are dominated by mineral commodities (coal, gold, lead, metallic ores) and agricultural products (oil-seeds, alcoholic beverages, wool and animal hair), while EU's exports to Australia are predominantly manufactured goods (motor vehicles, pharmaceuticals, mechanical

equipment). Trade in services between EU and Australia in 2017 was worth EUR 22 billion with Australia importing EUR 14.3 billion of services from the EU and exporting EUR 7.7 billion.

In 2018, the EU surpassed the US to become the biggest source of foreign direct investment (FDI) in Australia; accounting for 23% of FDI in Australia (AUD 226 bn/EUR 145 bn).

The EU and Australia have a mutual recognition agreement on conformity assessment covering eight sectors: Automotive products, Electromagnetic Compatibility, Low Voltage Equipment, Machinery, Medical Devices, Pressure Equipment, Telecommunications Terminal Equipment, and Good Manufacturing Practice Inspections of Medicinal products. The EU and Australia also have an agreement on trade in wine which includes provisions for the reciprocal protection of geographical indications of wines from the EU and Australia.

Negotiations for a Free Trade Agreement between Australia and the EU were formally launched by Commissioner Malmström, Australia's Prime Minister Turnbull and Trade Minister Ciobo on 18 June 2018 in Canberra. Three rounds of FTA talks have already been held, others will follow.

EU – Australia Cooperation on Research

In 1994 the EU and Australia signed a Scientific and Technical Cooperation Agreement, the first ever between the EU and a non-EU country. Strong cooperation is ongoing. There are on average close to 30 000 publications involving EU and Australian authors every year.

Australian researchers and organisations are actively involved in Horizon 2020 with close to 190 Australian researchers participating in Horizon 2020 related projects to date. Within Horizon 2020, the Marie Skłodowska-Curie actions have seen the involvement of over 130 Australian researchers. The successful involvement of Australian organisations and individuals in Horizon 2020 builds on collaboration that took place under FP7, the EU's previous Research and Innovation funding programme for 2007-13 and all earlier Framework Programs.

Education

Member State and Australian universities have long-established links, matched by their students' interest in studying abroad. There are also several cooperation exchange programs between some EU Member States and Australia's tertiary education sector.

Assistance to foster university level exchange is offered at the national and the EU level, the latter via the *Erasmus+* Programme (2014-20). Building on the previous *Erasmus Mundus* programme, Australian university students actively participate in Erasmus+ through the "student and staff mobility" programme. Since 2004 more than

1000 Australian students have participated in Erasmus student exchange programmes. In 2018 there were nine *Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees* awarded to Australian students. Through the *Jean Monnet* Grants Scheme, in 2017 there were 15 projects awarded to Australia including networks, Chairs and Centres of Excellence.

Environment

The EU and Australia cooperate across a wide variety of international environmental agreements and hold high level dialogues dedicated to environmental issues. Australia and the EU have been working together on many global issues including combating the practice of illegal logging and the issue of whaling.

Broader Social Interaction

People-to-people links are deep and longstanding. Nearly 70% per cent of Australians have European ancestry, forming an integral part of Australia's rich multicultural landscape. Data from 2018 indicates that 29% of Australians were born overseas, with two EU Member States being among the top 10 countries of birth by number.

EU Member State citizens live and work in Australia and vice versa: at the end of 2017 there were approx. over 100 000 Australians with valid residence permits (for at least three months) issued by Member States. Bilateral tourist flows are considerable, with average annual numbers estimated to be in the millions.