

The EU-Australia Leadership Forum: *Impact and Outcomes*



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EU-Australia
Leadership Forum

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The EU-Australia Leadership Forum:

Impact and Outcomes

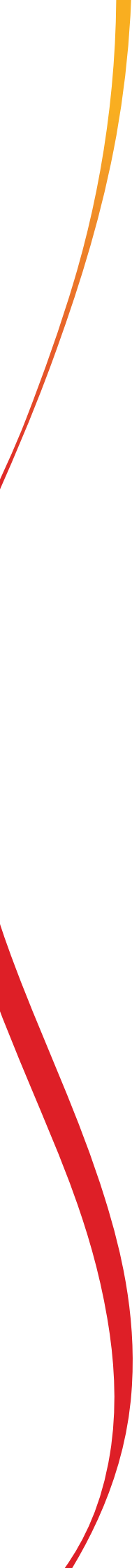


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The EU-Australia Leadership Forum: Adding building blocks for a new chapter in EU-Australia relations

HE Dr Michael Pulch, Ambassador of the European Union to Australia and Chair of the Multi-Stakeholder Steering Committee of the EU-Australia Leadership Forum.

The EU-Australia Leadership Forum took place at a unique time in terms of the EU-Australia relationship.

Not only was a new Framework Agreement signed but negotiations for an innovative Free Trade Agreement were also initiated, opening up the prospect of significant new opportunities for European and Australian producers, investors, traders and consumers and thus further deepening an already rich and diverse economic relationship.

These two Agreements represent a new chapter in EU-Australia relations, one that is underpinned by shared values and principles, building on our already deep people-to-people links and driven by a mutual desire to maximise our opportunities to work together across all sectors. The EU and Australia are like-minded global players, supporting the multilateral institutions that are the bedrock of the international rules-based order. For the EU, multilateralism is an essential part of who we are – it is in our DNA as a union of sovereign states. As Australia's Prime Minister Scott Morrison said “the world works best when the character and distinctiveness of independent nations is preserved within a framework of mutual respect” – which rather sums up the way the EU works.

In this new dynamic context, the EU-Australia Leadership Forum contributed its own unique value, organising two major international forums bringing together experienced professionals and young emerging leaders representing government, business, media, academia and civil society. The young leaders came up with 46 recommendations addressing the challenges facing our society – movement of people, future of industry, environment, climate change, energy transition, women's leadership, the risk of war, digitalisation, privacy and data protection, space and the role of civil society.

The enthusiasm of these emerging leaders throughout the Leadership Forum was a good indication not just of the good health of the current EU-Australia relationship but, more importantly, for its future. Collaborative initiatives such as Erasmus+ and Horizon 2020 and their future iterations will give young generations in Australia and Europe the opportunity to interact and add yet another layer of building blocks to our bilateral relations. •

EU-Australia together in support of the international rules-based order

Gunnar Wiegand, Managing Director for Asia and Pacific, European External Action Service (EEAS).

The EU-Australia Leadership Forum was a great place to generate discussion on a number of issues pertinent to EU-Australia relations.

It sparked a lot of interest and participation. It also resulted in a number of policy recommendations, which will feed into our future cooperation.

This unique project gathered young and senior leaders from business, academia, media and civil society. But most of all it created lasting friendships, networks and professional links with a lot of potential to shape our relations in the future.

The scope of EU-Australia relations is getting ever wider and we were never so close together and ready to engage in new areas as we are today. Our Framework Agreement signed in 2017 creates a good basis for this. However, the framework which we created needs to be filled with concrete actions.

One of the key areas where our interests and actions should converge is support to the international rules-based order, globally and regionally. Our world is experiencing a moment of change, of challenge, perhaps of crisis. Australia and the European Union are partners in leadership – in the G20, in the United Nations and beyond. Both of us stand for a more cooperative, peaceful and just world order.

We have discussed this in more detail at a dedicated Policy Workshop organised in the framework of the Leadership Forum in April 2018 in Brussels. This expert discussion gave us the possibility to compare our respective priorities. We agreed on a number of policy recommendations including on possible joint actions in the Pacific and in the area of cybersecurity.

When we discuss rules-based international order two aspects are implied: the consequences – for the EU, Australia and for Asia in general – of growing challenges to rules-based international order; and the contributions that the EU, Australia and their Asian partners can make to defend and reinvent the system.

The order that prevailed in past decades is changing.

Until recently, the US-led global order was one of liberal political and economic rules, embodied in a network of international organisations and regulations, such as the United Nations and the World Trade Organization. It both fixed the problems that had caused World War II and it also proved resilient enough to guide us to a new era of prosperity and democracy. Nowadays however, countries such as China, among others in the Indo-Pacific, are challenging this US-led global order.

China is increasingly becoming more active in the South China and East China Sea and is pushing further on its contested claims over islands in this area. We have to ask ourselves the question whether the post-Second World War institutions and rules can survive these challenges to US global leadership and to the rules-based global order that we support.

While globalisation continues, it is also massively contested, most strongly in places where it originated: the US and Western Europe. We are not heading towards a unipolar world, nor a bipolar (G2) or multipolar one. Distribution of power and cohesiveness of the poles depends on the issues and spheres where they occur; military versus economic versus global issues.

There is a strong case for having a fresh look at regional security order in Asia. To what extent are its rules accepted by all? China's rise and its assertiveness coupled with changes in US posture make this rethink even more compelling as the alternative to a rules-based regional order is a power based one.

Asia is deeply connected at the global level meaning that its phenomenal rise has been made possible by the prevailing order. But the flip side is that Asia is as vulnerable as other regions, perhaps more so, to that order being challenged and eroded. Asia cannot 'decouple' from the system and therefore needs to discuss what it can do to uphold and reform it.

In the economic sphere, I see a need and potential for Europeans and Asians to uphold the open, rules-based trading system. There is a real need to make globalisation work for everyone (the main benefits in terms of wage growth have gone to emerging economies) to sustain support for openness at home. But we are clear that the answer is not to be found in economic nationalism. This is the moment where Europe and Asia can forge a great alliance on rules-based trade.

A corollary of this is that we need a EurAsian rules-based approach to strategic connectivity. We should build on the recent *Connecting Europe and Asia: The EU Strategy*. It is a first concrete manifestation of facilitating much deeper ties between Europe and Asia in promoting shared values and joint interests: from upholding the rules-based, multilateral order and developing high standards for digital and physical infrastructure; to embracing sustainability

and clean technologies. The first tangible effect of this approach has materialised in the form of the Partnership on Sustainable Connectivity and Quality Infrastructure signed between the European Union and Japan. Other Partnerships will follow.

We all know that due to globalisation, power has shifted from the West and from governments to others. So we want to bring new players in and reform the system also incorporating their views. We should apply a strategy of inclusion and reform. But the effectiveness of the system needs safeguarding. Some of the new powers are very keen to assert claims for seats at top tables but less keen on providing assets to solve global public goods.

Above all, there's a need to work together to write new rules for new issues, especially when no rules currently exist or where existing ones are too weak: cyber being the primary case. What rules do we need on privacy, accountability, or freedom of expression? How to deal with foreign interference? If in 20 years we want to have a rules-based international order that's fit for purpose, we need to write those rules together today and the EU and Australia should be amongst the most active drafters. •

A vote of confidence for the future of the EU-Australia relationship

*HE Mr Justin Brown PSM, Australian Ambassador to the European Union, NATO, Belgium and Luxembourg.
Ms Cathy Raper, First Assistant Secretary – Europe and Latin America Division, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.*

The EU-Australia Leadership Forum has underscored successfully the breadth and diversity of the two-way relationship and its future potential.

The Forum demonstrated the extent to which innovative and talented people on both sides are forging new partnerships and networks, spanning business, academia and the research sector, the arts and science and technology, and the media.

These efforts are timely. We have many common values and perspectives and have deep historical and cultural links. Above all, we are committed to promoting the international rules-based order which is centrally important to our security and prosperity.

Alongside the European Union and its member states, Australia attaches the highest value to democracy, human rights, open markets and the rule of law. Both of us are opposed to the exercise of coercive power and committed to tackling global security challenges such as terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. We are taking action together in the multilateral framework to address climate change and promote sustainable development.

In a number of important respects, recent geopolitical and economic trends are bringing about a convergence of our interests, and despite our geography our strategic perspectives are increasingly coalescing along similar lines. Looking ahead, there is every reason to expect that the shared agenda of Australia and the EU will continue to expand and develop as we prioritise shared action toward these objectives.

The machinery of the relationship has evolved in a positive way in recent times, providing a solid framework for future collaboration. As we have seen from our respective vantage points in Brussels and Canberra, cooperation between the Australian Government, the European Commission and European Union member states across many areas is being taken forward effectively under the EU-Australia Framework Agreement.

The launch of the Australia-EU Free Trade Negotiations in 2018 was a major milestone in the trade and investment relationship. The successful conclusion of these negotiations and the entry into force of an ambitious and comprehensive agreement would not only generate substantive mutual economic benefits, but also demonstrate our shared commitment to rules-based trade.

That the Forum was made possible through a generous EU investment is a strong vote of confidence in the relationship and its future. The scale of Australian involvement in the Forum reciprocates this sentiment. We congratulate and thank everyone involved in the Forum. We are confident the ties you have created are enduring and that you will continue to seize opportunities to contribute to a relationship that is growing and evolving in new directions. •

A timeline

of the EU-Australia Leadership Forum project

2016

2017

2018

2016

8 September European launch of the EU-Australia Leadership Forum project.

19 October Australian launch of the EU-Australia Leadership Forum Project.

2017

28 March First Sectoral Policy Workshop on the topic of Digital Development (Canberra, Australia).

May Release of the project's first publication – *The EU and Australia: Shared Opportunities and Common Challenges*.

2–6 June The inaugural EU-Australia Leadership Forum, comprising the Senior Leaders Forum and Emerging Leaders Forum, takes place in Sydney, Australia.

7 August *The EU-Australia Framework Agreement is signed.*

By **December 2017**, a total of 297 people had participated in EU-Australia Leadership Forum events.

2018

27 April Second Sectoral Policy Workshop on the topic of Rules-based International Order (Brussels, Belgium).

16 May A Stakeholder Awareness Event is held in collaboration with Business Beyond Borders and EUROCHAMBRES at the CeBIT technology conference (Sydney, Australia).

18 June *Negotiations are launched for an EU-Australia Free Trade Agreement.*

26 September Third Sectoral Policy Workshop on the topic of Progressing the Circular Economy: European and Australian Perspectives on the Plastics Problem (Sydney, Australia)

2019

2020

November Release of the project's second publication – *The EU and Australia: Towards a New Era*.

18-22 November The 2018 EU-Australia Leadership Forum, comprising the second Senior Leaders Forum and the second Emerging Leaders Forum, is held in Brussels, Belgium.

21 November A Media Workshop is held in the margins of the 2018 EU-Australia Leadership Forum (*Brussels, Belgium*).

By **December 2018**, more than 500 individuals had participated in EU-Australia Leadership Forum events.

2020

January Release of the project's third and final publication – *The EU-Australia Leadership Forum: Impact and Outcomes*.

5 February Formal close of the EU-Australia Leadership Forum project.

2019

27 September Networking evening and panel discussion, exclusive to former participants of EU-Australia Leadership Forum events (*Sydney, Australia*).

Did you know?

On 27 February, 2017 a [motion was moved](#) in Australian Federal Parliament by Mr Andrew Wallace, MP to note the launch of the EU-Australia Leadership Forum project and to welcome the project as a positive development in the EU-Australia relationship.

The motion was seconded by Mr John Alexander OAM, MP, and spoken to and endorsed by four other Members of Parliament including the Hon. Anthony Albanese who stated: "It is of great mutual benefit, this relationship between Australia and the European Union, and it should be strengthened into the future."

Project outcomes

Outcomes of the EU-Australia Leadership Forum

Dr Bryce Wakefield, Team Leader, EU-Australia Leadership Forum.

In an uncertain world, it is important for actors with as similar values and approaches as Australia and the European Union to discuss and cooperate on international policy issues.

As developed economies, Australia and the EU face similar challenges and opportunities around such emerging technologies as automation and big data exchange. Geographical distance, meanwhile, can be translated into fruitful avenues for cooperation in areas such as space technology. While the specifics are different, Australia and Europe also face arguably similar challenges to the international order that has promoted stability in their respective regions since the Second World War. And, of course, Canberra and Brussels are currently negotiating a free trade agreement that will open up new commercial possibilities.

There is obviously fertile ground for discussion and debate between Australia and the European Union, and it has therefore been an absolute pleasure to lead a team that has organised and implemented the EU-Australia Leadership Forum. The forum consisted of a number of events, most notably sectoral policy workshops, two large conferences, respectively in Sydney in 2017 and in Brussels in 2018, and a final stakeholder event in Sydney in 2019 to reflect on the lessons of the forum. The forum has successfully brought Australians and Europeans together to discuss specific policy issues, and during the conferences and stakeholder events, the focus was on bringing younger emerging leaders together with senior leaders at the top of their respective fields.

Since joining the project in September 2018, I have had the honour of working with an incredibly capable organising team. Anca Andreescu, Caterina Cigala and others from Stantec assembled the team and managed relations in Brussels.

Amber Carvan expertly managed communications, while Dr Michael Zettinig of the German-Australian Chamber of Industry and Commerce devoted his considerable talent to event logistics. Special thanks must also go to the EU Delegation in Canberra, who were always on hand to offer advice.

A highlight of the forum was the major conference in Brussels in November 2018, which was designed to allow emerging leaders to test their ideas in various policy fields before joining the senior leaders in the plenary and breakout sessions. During special brainstorming sessions, Australian and European emerging leaders crafted their ideas in the policy areas of: movement of people; industry 4.0; environment, climate change and energy transition; women's leadership; risk of war; digitalisation with a focus on privacy and data protection; space cooperation; and civil society in the EU-Australia relationship. Many of the senior leaders told me how impressive the contributions of their younger counterparts in the later breakout sessions were.

Indeed, so enthusiastic were the emerging leaders that they continued to meet on their own accord to craft policy recommendations in the eight policy areas they had discussed at the forum. Presented to the forum organisers, these policy proposals are a remarkable statement of the trust that these emerging leaders have in the forward progression of the EU-Australia relationship.

Thus, while the EU-Australia Leadership Forum is drawing to a close, the bonds that it has nurtured will continue in ways that enhance bilateral ties. •

Did you know?

- ? *The European Union's 2016 Global Strategy describes the rules-based international order as an 'existential interest' of the Union.*
- ? *Australia's 2017 Foreign Policy White Paper identifies the European Union as an increasingly important partner in protecting and promoting a rules-based international order.*



Investing in a new generation of European and Australian leaders

The EU-Australia Leadership Forum project was conceived to create a space for senior and emerging leaders from a wide variety of sectors to collaborate on new ideas, and to promote and deepen the relationship between the European Union and Australia.

Given this remit, it was apt to launch the initiative at consecutive events in both Europe and Australia.

The project was officially launched in Europe on 8 September, 2016 by Federica Mogherini, High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Vice-President of the European Commission and Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Hon. Julie Bishop MP, at the headquarters of the European External Action Service in Brussels.

During her opening remarks, High Representative Mogherini commented on the ideal timing of the launch of the project noting that, despite the geographic distance, Australia and Europe work daily on a wide variety of issues as like-minded partners with a similar vision of the way in which global crises need to be resolved, and also on the many opportunities that the relationship embodies.

At the Australian launch of the project in Parliament House, Canberra, on October 19, Minister Bishop referred to the example Europe had set over preceding decades, and noted the great significance Australia placed on Europe as “a global force for peace, a shining example of a commitment to democracy, the rule of law, and ensuring peace and prosperity for its citizens.”

Minister Bishop went on to reference the European values which underpin many of the legal systems and instruments that form the rules-based international order. These shared values, it was asserted, meant that over recent years the relationship between Australia and the EU had been strengthened, despite times of great global uncertainty and disruption.

At both events, there was great enthusiasm for injecting an innovative and fresh dimension to the already strong bilateral relationship, and for reaching out to stakeholders beyond government, to create a community of likeminded leaders from different sectors of society. As High Representative Mogherini noted at the launch of the initiative: “Today we invest in a new generation of leaders, and a renewed friendship between Europe and Australia.” •



Federica Mogherini, High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Vice-President of the European Commission and Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Hon. Julie Bishop MP at the European launch of the EU-Australia Leadership Forum project.



Did you know?

In 2019, the number of smart phones in the world was estimated at 3 billion. The rise of the smart phone is changing the landscape of financial inclusion, with 64% of the developing world now having access to mobile money.

The global penetration of ICT, particularly mobile phones, raises the important issue of how best to do development in a digital age.



Adapting aid and development to a digital world

The first Sectoral Policy Workshop of the EU-Australia Leadership Forum was held at the offices of the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade in Canberra on 28 March 2017.

The objective of the workshop was to bring together experts from the EU and Australia to discuss the potential of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) in international development around the topic 'Digital Development: ICT as a development enabler'.

Attending the workshop were 16 representatives from business, NGOs and government along with 10 officials and observers. The discussion was guided by Co-chairs Mr Chris Locke (Founder, Caribou Digital) and Ms Claire Rogers (Chief Executive, World Vision Australia).

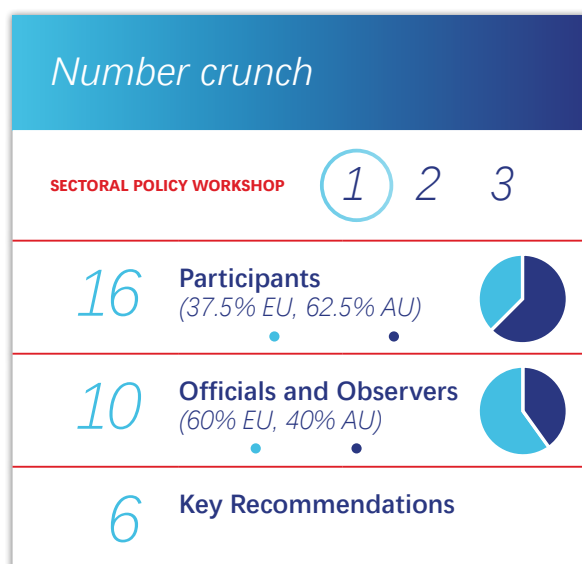
In his opening remarks, Chris Locke discussed the increase in private sector investment and involvement in societal connectivity transformation. Although connectivity used to be a public-private interaction, it was noted that it is becoming increasingly private. As such, a need has arisen to accelerate the relationship between the public and private sector to inspire innovation, while still holding companies accountable for their actions and tying them to civil society rules.

Claire Rogers presented on the work of World Vision and discussed its engagement with ICT and the places and ways it has found it to be a powerful tool. It was noted that ICT has the potential to connect donors with their impact and to make the personal connection to giving more powerful, especially for the generation who have grown up consuming many services through technology.

The first of two formal sessions, entitled 'Lessons from ICT for Development' focused on the

need for governments to take more investment risks in infrastructure and create digital identity in developing countries. The second session, 'Development in the Digital Age', considered the necessity of supporting local innovators with training, coaching and opportunities to co-found new initiatives.

Workshop participants developed six key recommendations for the European Commission's Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development. These included: the establishment of an EU-Australia Digital Development Innovation Fund; the extension of EU-Australia data-sharing agreements to encompass aid and development; the creation of an EU-Australia eGovernance Cooperation Program in the Pacific; investigating EU-Australia cooperation in infrastructure to support digital development; designing a joint program on digital voice; and the potential creation of a European equivalent of the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's innovationXchange. •





Spreading the word about the EU-Australia Leadership Forum project

As a public advocacy project, the EU-Australia Leadership Forum invested significant attention to develop and maintain a robust program of social media and communication activities.

In a survey conducted in the final quarter of the project, all respondents indicated that they either usually (76%) or sometimes (24%) followed updates of the project through these channels.

The project's social media channels on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn as well as the project website were launched in September 2016. Each of these channels proved useful in different ways.

During the project lifetime, 648 Facebook posts were published and the total estimated organic reach of the project's Facebook posts in the final 24 months of the project was more than 188,000. The most popular channel in terms of followers, Facebook proved particularly useful for the promotion of the call for applications from emerging leaders, and for the dissemination of custom-created infographics with interesting facts about different aspects of the EU-Australia relationship.

While the project's Twitter followers were slightly less numerous, this channel was the most effective in terms of engagement. During the 2018 EU-Australia Leadership Forum for example, individual profiles of the participating Emerging Leaders were disseminated through Twitter which proved a very popular and engaging tactic for increasing awareness of the event and its participants. Over the course of the project the EU-Australia Leadership Forum's Tweets generated a total of 792,518 impressions.

The project's LinkedIn presence comprised a main company page, with a modest following of 410, and a private group with 117 members, which was established exclusively for project alumni. While changes made to the functionality of LinkedIn groups impacted on the effectiveness of this channel, a positive feature was that it enabled alumni to post directly to the group and initiate discussion.

The EU-Australia Leadership Forum website was also established in September 2016 and served as a central repository of project information, notably news items, project reports and publications. In the period September 2016 to November 2019 21,268 unique users had accessed the site, generating 92,182 pageviews.

The project's social media channels and website were supplemented by the release of regular electronic newsletters – 9 in total over the course of the project. As at November 2019 the project had 525 newsletter subscribers. •

Number crunch

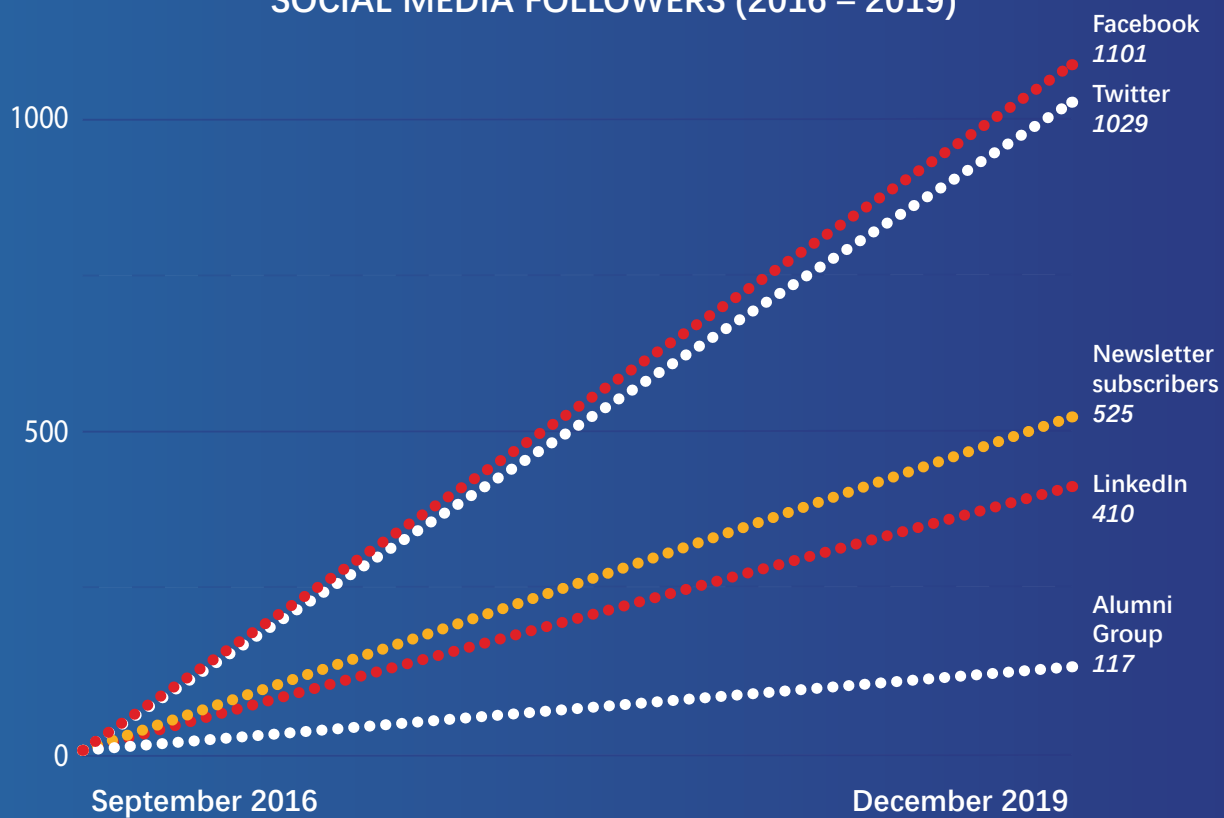
2,652 social media followers

792,518 Tweet impressions

188,000+ people reached on Facebook



EU-AUSTRALIA LEADERSHIP FORUM SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOWERS (2016 – 2019)





The EU and Australia: Shared Opportunities and Common Challenges

The first publication of the EU-Australia Leadership Forum project entitled *The EU and Australia: Shared Opportunities and Common Challenges* was published in May 2017 and made available free of charge in both hard and soft copy formats.

The 96-page publication, featuring original and reprinted pieces of analysis from 36 of the brightest minds in EU-Australia affairs, provides an insight into the relationship between the European Union and Australia and examines it from European, Australian and sometimes joint perspectives.

Topics covered include: security, foreign policy and development dimensions of the EU-Australia relationship; trade and investment; cooperation in the area of scientific research and innovation; partnerships in energy, climate change and environment; and migration, an issue high on the agenda of both the EU and Australia.

The publication also presents the findings of a baseline survey undertaken by the EU-Australia Leadership Forum project into perceptions of the European Union among key Australian stakeholders. The original research, based on a series of semi-structured interviews, was one of the foundation elements of the work of the EU-Australia Leadership Forum project.

The findings indicate a dynamic and changing relationship based on a shared history of mutual trade and common values, which – despite challenges such as Brexit, climate change and the rise of issues related to migration – shows no signs of weakening.

The publication was officially launched at the inaugural EU-Australia Leadership Forum, held in Sydney in June 2017. •

Number crunch

PUBLICATION

1

2

3

96

Pages

36

Contributors

37

Articles

5

Thematic areas





The EU and Australia: Towards a New Era

On 21 November 2018, the EU-Australia Leadership Forum launched its second publication entitled *The EU and Australia: Towards a New Era* at the 2018 EU-Australia Leadership Forum in Brussels.

The publication, compiled after the project had been running for two years, provided a chance to address new and emerging issues that had arisen since the project's inception.

The articles, written by 34 expert contributors, including members of the project's Multi-Stakeholder Steering Committee, highlight the depth and breadth of the EU-Australia relationship and draw on some of the outcomes of the project. For example, several emerging leaders from the 2017 EU-Australia Leadership Forum contributed – demonstrating the tangible impact that the project has had on bringing young leaders together to share ideas, forge relationships and develop long-lasting and meaningful collaborations.

With ever increasing cooperation and more and more areas of common interest, the contributions demonstrate that the EU and Australia are indeed moving towards a new era of partnership and mutual cooperation. •

Number crunch

PUBLICATION

1

2

3

108

Pages

34

Contributors

32

Articles

5

Thematic areas





Shining a light on relations: The 2017 EU-Australia Leadership Forum

The inaugural meeting of the EU-Australia Leadership Forum took place in Sydney from 2-6 June 2017.

Experts from each end of the globe represented business, government, academia, media and the not-for-profit sector, with two days of Emerging Leaders' discussions followed by three more of Senior Leaders' meetings.

During the five days of the event, Sydney was in the midst of its annual Vivid festival, where lights illuminate iconic buildings, while music and ideas provide cultural stimulation in the harbourside city. At the Leadership Forum, the ideas were certainly flowing as the bright light of connections and networks illuminated key aspects of the relationship between the EU and Australia.

The event came at a pivotal time. The Framework Agreement between the EU and Australia was poised for signature, with negotiations on the EU-Australia Free Trade Agreement about to begin. Major issues like global shocks and paths to prosperity were on the agenda for both the EU and Australia.

The first part of the event saw 50 Emerging Leaders meet to mingle and exchange ideas. After a series of discussion groups on Science, Technology and Innovation; Climate and Energy; Youth and Education; Foreign Policy, Defence and Security; and Migration and Movement of People, the Emerging Leaders formulated a set of recommendation to present to Senior Leaders.

After Gadigal Elder, Uncle Allen Madden, delivered a Welcome to Country, Senior Leaders took part in a series of roundtable events, covering the topics of Global Shocks, Overcoming the Crisis in Politics, Paths to Prosperity, and Brexit: Implications for Australia. Based on these events, Senior Leaders' recommendations included, among others, closer defence collaboration; greater links between research and industry; and continued dialogue on climate change, cyber security and counter-terrorism.

Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Hon. Julie Bishop, spoke at the Gala Dinner. She emphasised the very close relationship between the EU and Australia and the importance of the continued growth of EU-Australia relations. The drive for the two to collaborate was, she explained, based on mutual values and a similar vision: "We are likeminded countries and, while geography may divide us, our shared values unite us. Australia and the EU, open liberal democracies."

By the close of the event, five days of connections and conversations had helped to shine a light on key aspects of the relationship between the EU and Australia, but even more importantly, had helped to illuminate the path forward. •

Then Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Hon. Julie Bishop, spoke at the Gala Dinner of the 2017 EU-Australia Leadership Forum.

Number crunch

EU-AUSTRALIA LEADERSHIP FORUM

1 2

5 Days

115 Senior Leaders
(40% EU, 60% AU)



52 Emerging Leaders
(50% EU, 50% AU)



A strong, effective and efficient United Nations is considered central to the rules-based international order, as both a concept and approach.

Number crunch

SECTORAL POLICY WORKSHOP

1 2 3

19 Participants
(58% EU, 42% AU)



10 Officials and Observers
(80% EU, 20% AU)



13 Key Recommendations over three thematic areas:

1. Joint action
2. Cybersecurity
3. Initiatives of common interest.



Exploring European and Australian perspectives on threats to the rules-based international order

On 27 April 2018 the EU-Australia Leadership Forum held its second Sectoral Policy Workshop on the topic of the rules-based international order.

The event, based in Brussels, brought together a total of 29 European and Australian participants, including high-level experts, to discuss perspectives on, and threats to global security.

The Sectoral Policy Workshop was chaired by Quentin Peel (Associate Fellow, Chatham House and former international affairs editor, Financial Times) and Dr Carl Ungerer (Former adviser to Minister for Foreign Affairs Senator the Hon. Bob Carr and former head of the Leadership, Crisis and Conflict Management Program at the Geneva Centre for Security Policy).

The event commenced with welcoming remarks from Gunnar Wiegand (Managing Director for Asia and Pacific, European External Action Service) and Dr Hilde Hardeman (Director and Head of Service, Service for Foreign Policy Instruments, European Commission) during which the need to strengthen bilateral relations and forge strategic co-operation was emphasised.

The first formal session, entitled 'Australia's priorities' featured trigger statements from Emeritus Professor Richard Rigby (Founding Director, ANU China Institute, College of Asia Pacific, Australian National University), Dr Elsin Wainwright (Senior Fellow, United States Studies Centre, University of Sydney) and Professor Shirley Scott (Head of School, School of Humanities and Social Sciences, Australian Defence Force Academy, UNSW Canberra).

Following robust discussion amongst participants, and brief comments from special guest Walter Stevens (Chair of the EU Political and Security Committee), trigger statements on the topic of 'Europe's priorities' were delivered. Speakers for this segment of the program included Professor Marie Mendras (Paris School of International Affairs, Sciences Po), Dr Fabian Zuleeg (Chief Executive Officer and Chief Economist, European Policy Centre) and Isabell Hoffmann (Senior Expert, Projekt eupinions, Bertelsmann Stiftung).

Workshop participants then engaged in the development of 13 key recommendations, under the key themes of: joint action; cybersecurity; and initiatives of common interest. Following the workshop, participants attended a reception, generously hosted by HE Mr Justin Brown PSM, Australian Ambassador to Belgium, Luxembourg, the European Union and NATO.

Further outcomes of the Sectoral Policy Workshop on rules-based international order included the publication of eight long-form articles, authored by some of the workshop's key speakers, on the website of the Australian Institute of International Affairs. Some of these articles were also published in *The EU and Australia: Towards a New Era*, the second official publication of the EU-Australia Leadership Forum. •

◀ ***A strong, effective and efficient United Nations is considered central to the rules-based international order, as both a concept and approach.***



Number crunch

STAKEHOLDER AWARENESS EVENT

1 2 3

15,000

CeBIT Participants

100+

attended the European
Networking Evening



Partnering to promote the EU-Australia relationship

On 16 May 2018, the EU-Australia Leadership Forum project partnered with Business Beyond Borders and EUROCHAMBRES to participate in a European Networking Evening held at the European Pavillion of the high-profile CeBIT business technology solution conference in Sydney, Australia.

The event, organised by the NSW Business Chamber on behalf of the EU-funded Business Beyond Borders project, featured discussion on the future of Europe's economic landscape, and the role of innovation and technology in the growth of bilateral trade. It also provided perspectives from Australian business leaders on emerging markets and successful market access.

The CeBIT conference attracted an estimated 15,000 people and the European Networking Evening attracted around 100 guests with business ties to the European Union. In addition to participating in the expert panel discussion, the EU-Australia Leadership Forum was able to harness the opportunity to promote the project and the call for applications for the 2018 Emerging Leaders Forum. •



Circular economy approaches to addressing the global plastic problem

The third Sectoral Policy Workshop of the EU-Australia Leadership Forum was held in Sydney on 26 September 2018.

The objective of the Workshop, generously hosted by the New South Wales State Office of the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, was to bring together experts and practitioners from the EU and Australia to foster a dialogue around the progression of circular economy transition efforts with a specific focus on the global issue of plastics.

The Sectoral Policy Workshop was chaired by Ms Helen Millicer (Churchill Fellow, GAICD and Principal, One Planet Consulting, Australia) and Dr Mervyn Jones (Director, Sustainable Global Resources, United Kingdom).

The first discussion panel entitled 'The view from Europe' featured three keynote speakers: Joris van der Meulen (Founder and Managing Director, Elum Resource and Waste Management), Isabel Ihde (Policy Adviser, Hamburg Chamber of Commerce) and Máté Kriza (Chairman, Foundation for the Circular Economy).

Key themes addressed by the panel included: accountability of businesses as well as government bodies; the importance of a multi-level government approach to the circular economy; the imperative for strong public engagement; and the need for increased infrastructure to meet the pledge recycling targets set by the European Commission.

Key speakers for the second discussion panel called 'The view from Australia' were: Peter Allan (Chief Executive Officer, Sustainable Resource Use), Sophi Macmillan (Chief Executive Officer, Vinyl Council of Australia) and Dr Damien Giurco (Professor of Resource Futures, Institute for Sustainable Futures, University of Technology, Sydney).

It was noted that in Australia, there is a lower level of awareness of circular economy principles, data and recycling priorities. The speakers therefore highlighted the importance of an overarching framework and long-term strategy for the circular economy that unites efforts across cities, states, and the country while mobilising already willing public and industry actors to engage in evidence-based efforts to 'close the loop.'

The workshop also featured a series of engaging lightning presentations from Zdenek Hruska, (Public Affairs Director, VinylPlus), Lauren Heritage-Brand (Policy Adviser, Australian Local Government Association) and Adrian Nicolae (Team Leader – Climate Change, Energy, Circular Economy, Delegation of the European Union for the Pacific).

The presenters highlighted the fact that plastics leakage in the circular economy 'loop' is even more severe in remote locations both within and outside of Australia. These small communities face substantial barriers to engagement and action, including immense physical distances for collection and reprocessing and heavy reliance on grants to cover costs.

The event proved to be an ideal forum for fostering dialogue between like-minded partners to expand on individual and collective efforts to advance the circular economy.

Through the event, a set of 16 recommendations were developed on the themes: Collaboration for global outcomes: Information sharing and knowledge exchange: Research and innovation: and Financing arrangements. •

Number crunch

SECTORAL POLICY WORKSHOP

1 2 3

18

Participants
(44% EU, 56% AU)



10

Officials and Observers
(50% EU, 50% AU)



16

Key Recommendations over four thematic areas:

1. Collaboration for global outcomes
2. Information sharing and knowledge exchange
3. Research and innovation, and
4. Financing arrangements.



The EU's [Strategy for Plastics in a Circular Economy](#) states that global production of plastics has increased twentyfold since the 1960s, reaching 322 million tonnes in 2015. It is expected to double again over the next 20 years.



Momentum peaks at the second EU-Australia Leadership Forum

The 2018 EU-Australia Leadership Forum took place in Brussels from 18-22 November 2018, with key European and Australian leaders from government, business, media, education and civil society gathering to share their expertise on topics such as trade, environment, data protection, science, and women in leadership, as well as ideas for deepening the already strong bilateral relationship.

These Senior Leaders were joined by 50 Emerging Leaders, aged 35 and under, from Australia and EU member states.

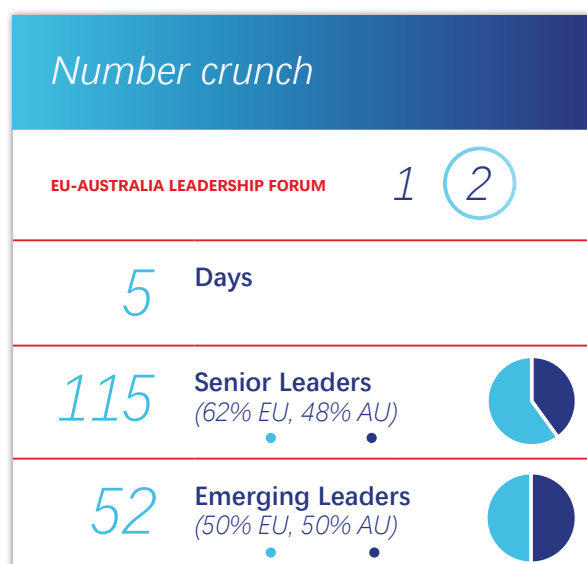
The event took place at a pivotal time for EU-Australia relations. The provisional application of the EU-Australia Framework Agreement had just come into force, and negotiations for a comprehensive EU-Australia Free Trade Agreement were beginning.

Given this context, it was pertinent that the first of two panel discussions focused on understanding the EU-Australia relationship. Panellists agreed that while relations between the two countries are generally smooth, there are a number of areas that still require attention and where the EU and Australia could develop their relationship further.

The second panel, titled Tools for Collaboration, focused on tradecraft in rapidly changing international environments.

Workshops were held concurrently over the next two days, with participants able to select one to attend each afternoon. On 19 November, these workshops included: Migration and Movement of People; Environment, Climate Change and Energy Transition; Industry 4.0; and Women's Leadership in the EU and Australia. The following day, the workshops covered Risk of War—Views from the Indo-Pacific and the EU; Digitalisation with a Focus on Privacy and Data Protection; Space Cooperation: The Next Frontier; and Civil Society in the EU-Australia Relationship. After the workshops, the Emerging Leaders convened a plenary session with their thoughts and conclusions from the workshops.

"The Forum provides a very useful foundation to bring together experts across different walks of the community, from government, from business, from academia, from thinktanks, from civil society, and not forgetting journalists, to really have a free-flowing exchange on these issues and to identify some ways forward," commented Catherine Raper, First Assistant Secretary, Europe and Latin America Division, Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.





Day four of the 2018 EU-Australia Leadership Forum featured a powerful keynote address from Federica Mogherini, High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Vice-President of the European Commission, on the close ties between Australia and the EU.

Speaking at a gala dinner, former president of the European Council Herman Van Rompuy provided insight into the state of the world economy and growing issues like migration and ageing societies, and what this means for the European Union, along with an explanation of the EU's passionate commitment to free and open trade.

The most important facet of gathering these senior and emerging leaders together was the opportunity to form and deepen relationships. EU Ambassador to Australia, HE Dr Michael Pulch, remarked: "The main achievement of a process like this is to get people together to create a network of contacts, and that is happening. It is happening between the young generation, amongst themselves. It is happening between the senior leaders, and amongst these two groups".

Opportunities for networking and informal discussion abounded, with dinners and other social outings taking place in the evenings. The friendships and linkages forged at these events were perhaps the most valuable aspect of the event, allowing people with common interests to create connections that would last well beyond the event – and the EU-Australia Leadership Forum itself. •



Engaging the European press corps

One of the aims of the EU-Australia Leadership Forum project is to raise awareness of the bilateral relationship, and its importance, within the media.

As such, the organisation of the 2018 Leadership Forum in Brussels presented the perfect opportunity to engage the Brussels-based European press corps and provide media representatives with access to Senior Leaders and Officials to ask questions about issues of relevance to the EU-Australia relationship.

A Media Briefing took place on 21 November 2019, in the margins of the 2018 EU-Australia Leadership Forum.

Key speakers at the briefing included HE Dr Michael Pulch (EU Ambassador to Australia and Chair of the Multi-Stakeholder Steering Committee for the EU-Australia Leadership Forum) Ms Laura Tingle (Member of the Multi-Stakeholder Steering Committee for the EU-Australia Leadership Forum and Chief Political Correspondent, Australian Broadcasting Corporation), Gunnar Wiegand (Managing Director for Asia and Pacific, EEAS), and Catherine Raper (First Assistant Secretary, Europe and Latin America Division, Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and member of the Multi-Stakeholder Steering Committee for the EU-Australia Leadership Forum).

Following the question and answer session, media representatives were granted access to attend the opening plenary session of the Senior Leaders Forum, featuring a keynote address from Federica Mogherini, High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice President of the Commission, as well as the opening remarks by HE Justin Brown, Australian Ambassador to the European Union, Belgium, Luxembourg and NATO. •

Number crunch

STAKEHOLDER AWARENESS EVENT

1 2 3

1,037

European media contacts were made aware of the EU-Australia Leadership Forum

447

Brussels-based media representatives engaged



Shared values do matter: Highlights from the final EU-Australia Leadership Forum event

On 27 September 2019 the EU-Australia Leadership Forum hosted a final networking event and panel discussion in Sydney, exclusive to former participants of EU-Australia Leadership Forum activities.

Approximately 40 alumni of the 2017 and 2018 Leadership Forums and Sectoral Policy Workshop events, joined representatives from the EU Delegation to Australia, Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the EU-Australia Leadership Forum project at the Hotel InterContinental for an evening of lively discussion.

The event opened with introductory remarks from Ambassador of the European Union to Australia, HE Dr Michael Pulch and Director, Western and Southern Europe Section at the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Ms Stephanie Aeuckens. Following the opening remarks, a panel discussion was hosted by EU-Australia Leadership Forum Team Leader, Dr Bryce Wakefield. The panellists, comprising alumni from both the 2017 and 2018 Leadership Forum events, were Thom Dixon, Anca Velicu, Sarah Vande Velde and Tim Goulain.

Key elements of the discussion, which focused heavily on the impact of the project and ideas around how to maintain the momentum it has generated, were captured through live graphic recording. The formal aspects of the program were closed by Jason Collins from the European Australian Business Council, after which the discussion continued into the early evening. •

Project impact

Changing perceptions of EU-Australia relations

To help gauge the impact of the EU-Australia Leadership Forum project, two surveys were undertaken during the course of the project – one at the mid-term of the project and the other in the final term. For the purpose of this evaluation, the results of both surveys have been combined.

A total of 63 individuals opted to complete the surveys, though in some cases, respondents chose not to answer all questions. The makeup of the survey group was well balanced in terms of gender and nationality, with roughly one third of respondents from Australia, one third from EU member states and one third from both Australia and the EU.

A little over a third of the respondents (37%) hailed from the business/industry sector, followed by civil society and non-government organisations (20%), government (20%), academia (15%), media (5%) and other (3%).

Respondents were asked a variety of questions related to their levels of understanding and interest in EU-Australia relations, their perceptions of the EU and Australia, their level of involvement in the area of EU-Australian relations, and their views on the value of the project.

The findings from each of these thematic areas are discussed in detail over the following pages.

Understanding of, and interest in, EU-Australia relations

The survey results indicate that the project was successful in targeting people that could enrich the EU-Australia relationship into the future, despite not necessarily being engaged in EU-Australia relations before their involvement with the project.

For 43% of respondents, engagement with the project represented their first exposure to, and involvement in, EU-Australia relations. Following their participation in the project, an overwhelming majority of respondents (93%) said that their interest in EU-Australia relations had grown, and a robust 86% said they had developed a deeper understanding of EU-Australia relations.

Almost all respondents declared having a greater interest (93%) and understanding (86%) of the EU-Australia Framework Agreement.

Similarly, 90% of respondents felt better informed about issues related to an EU-Australia Free Trade Agreement and 81% indicated that they were more interested in a Free Trade Agreement than they had been prior to engagement with the project.

These improved levels of understanding and interest also applied to trade relations and the EU-Australia Framework Agreement.

Since becoming involved in the EU-Australia Leadership Forum project...

INTEREST IN EU-AUSTRALIA RELATIONS



INTEREST IN EU-AUSTRALIA FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT



UNDERSTANDING OF EU-AUSTRALIA RELATIONS



INTEREST IN EU-AUSTRALIA FREE TRADE AGREEMENT

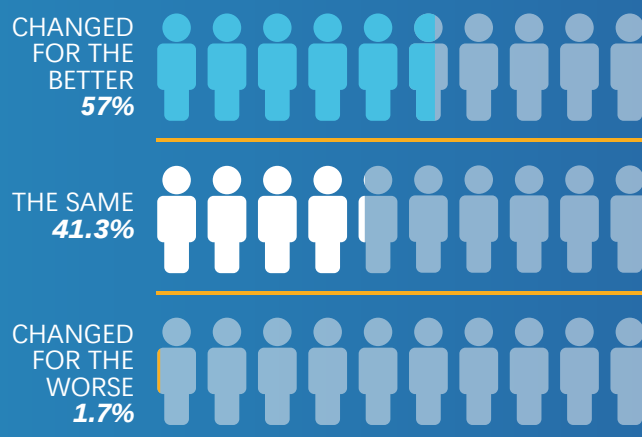


Perceptions of the EU and Australia

As a result of their participation in the project, 57% of respondents indicated that their perception of the EU had changed for the better, while 41% had said that their perception of the EU was unchanged.

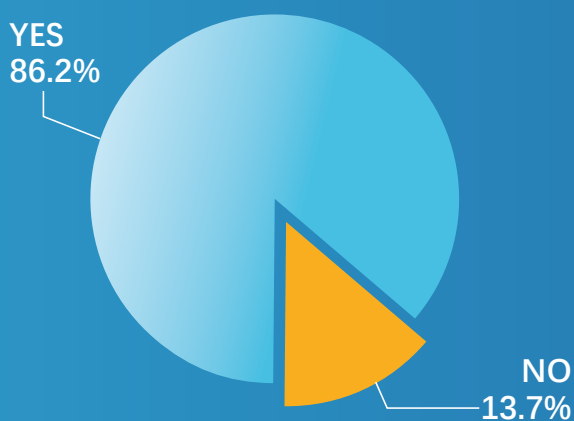
A smaller percentage of respondents (43%) said their perception of Australia had changed for the better following their participation in the project and 48% indicated no change in perception.

Due to the phrasing of this question and its responses, it is unclear as to whether the unchanged perceptions were positive or negative, so it is difficult to draw further conclusions on this front.



Participant perceptions of the EU

Engagement in EU-Australian relations



Since becoming involved in the EU-Australia Leadership Forum project have you engaged further on the topic of EU-Australian relations by your own initiative?

As noted previously, 43% of respondents indicated that they were not actively involved in EU-Australia relations prior to their first contact with the project.

By contrast, an impressive 86% of respondents engaged further on the topic by their own initiative, after becoming involved with the EU-Australia Leadership Forum project.

Additional information provided by respondents for this question showed that these engagements ranged from exploring new business opportunities to conducting academic research, and becoming part of new networks. A significant number of respondents (82%) indicated that this extra engagement was at least partly as a result of their involvement in the project.

Usefulness of the initiative

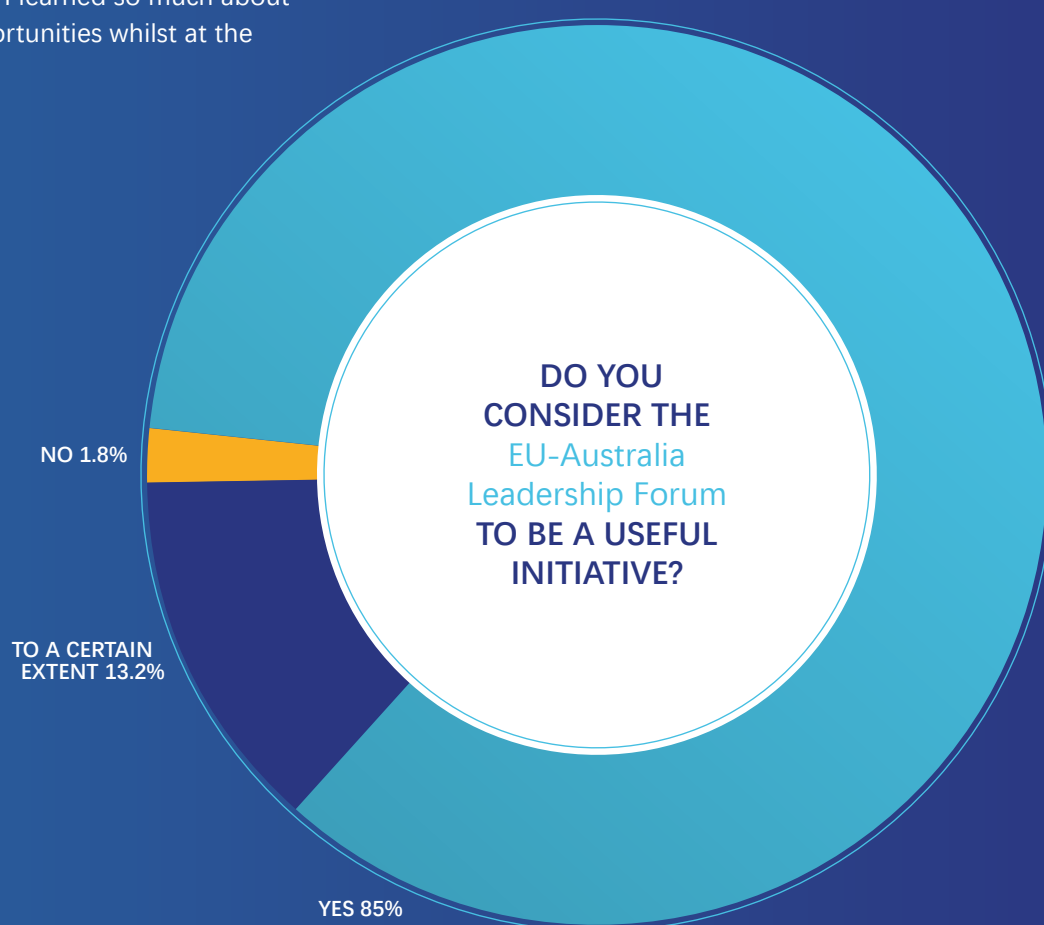
When asked whether they believed the project to be a useful initiative, 85% of respondents indicated in the affirmative.

Of the 13% who indicated a partial response, all respondents commented that they agreed that the project was useful, but that they wanted more engagement.

This desire for more engagement came out very strongly through many of the survey questions and in relation to almost all elements of the survey. Many participants wanted more engagement before events (“more advanced notice of the conference program and format” and “more communication in the lead-up to the event”). Many expressed a desire for more engagement with and between participants at the project’s events (“I learned so much about EU markets and opportunities whilst at the

forum, it would have been great to have an extra day or two or follow up trip to convert those connections into business opportunities” and “It would be great if it continued in some form, so the momentum created is not lost”) while others would have liked “additional follow up and engagement with attendees post forum”.

These results suggest a significant deepening of engagement was achieved as a result of the project activities – and that further engagement was, and remains, much desired on the part of former project participants.



Satisfaction with services and materials

The level of satisfaction with the services provided by the project team was high, with a total of 83% rating the service with either five stars (66%) or four stars (17%).

Similarly, participants were overall satisfied with the quality of materials provided at the events, with 62% assigning five stars and 18% four stars.

Comments included “Terrific work from the team, both in the lead up and during the event” and “Very well organised, great communication with participants.” When prompted to recommend areas for improvement, some respondents suggested the need for earlier engagement, such as providing reading materials well in advance, and providing opportunities to connect with other participants prior to events.

*EU-Australia Leadership Forum events
Average star rating.*

...for service received prior to and during.

4.4



...for materials distributed at.

4.2



Conclusion: Greater awareness, understanding and deepened engagement

Overall, the survey data demonstrates an overwhelmingly positive response to the EU-Australia Leadership Forum.

The project came at a meaningful time in EU-Australia affairs and coincided with some very important developments in the bilateral relationship. The data shows that the project was able to capitalise on these events to increase understanding and engagement on many key

issues. As well as increasing awareness and interest in the EU-Australia relationship, the project would appear to have encouraged participants to further their own involvement in EU-Australia relations.



Thank you

A relationship is an ongoing, evolving and living process. The EU-Australia Leadership Forum created new platforms through which the EU-Australia relationship could be deepened, as well as new actions through which it could be expressed.

These will strengthen the relationship in myriad ways – sparking new ideas, providing new ways to cooperate, and allowing information, trade and goodwill to flow through new channels. While the EU-Australia Leadership Forum project may have come to an end, it is our hope that its impact will live on in a deeper, stronger relationship between Europe and Australia.

The EU-Australia Leadership Forum team would like to thank all the participants of the EU-Australia Leadership Forum project, and the Members of the Multi-Stakeholder Steering Committee, for their support and engagement – past, present and ongoing.

Members of the Multi-Stakeholder Steering Committee

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