



## Australia-European Union Free Trade Agreement

# Benefits for labour and gender equality

Australia and the EU are likeminded partners, with high standards on labour rights and gender equality. The Australia-European Union Free Trade Agreement (A-EU FTA) includes a range of legally-binding commitments to help ensure that our trade and investment reflect these high standards.



## Reinforcing high labour standards

The A-EU FTA contains Australia's most ambitious commitments in a trade agreement on workers' rights and labour standards. It includes a binding obligation to implement the International Labour Organization (ILO) Fundamental Conventions, which relate to:

- ▶ freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining
- ▶ the elimination of all forms of forced or compulsory labour
- ▶ the effective abolition of child labour
- ▶ the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation
- ▶ a safe and healthy working environment.



Australian Government

March 2026. More information on the Australia-European Union Free Trade Agreement is available at

[dfat.gov.au/aeufta](https://dfat.gov.au/aeufta)



The A-EU FTA will signal – in a treaty level document – the importance Australia attaches to upholding broader labour rights, including for the first time in an Australian trade agreement, promoting decent working conditions for seafarers in line with the ILO’s Maritime Labour Convention.

The A-EU FTA will boost our cooperation with the EU on trade and labour issues, including the inter-linkages between trade and employment, labour market adjustment, core labour standards, decent work in global supply chains, social protection, social inclusion, social dialogue, gender equality, and forced or compulsory labour.

### **Trade and gender equality and women’s economic empowerment**

The A-EU FTA will support gender equality and women’s economic empowerment, through our most ambitious commitments ever in a trade agreement on these issues.

Australia and the EU have made a binding commitment to implement our obligations under the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women

and to implement ILO conventions related to gender equality that we have respectively ratified.

We have also agreed to strengthen our cooperation on trade-related aspects of gender equality policies, including data sharing.

### **Dispute settlement**

The A-EU FTA protects the Australian Government’s right to regulate and make policy on labour laws and workers’ rights. The A-EU FTA will not include Investor-State Dispute Settlement, reflecting the confidence we share in each other’s legal systems.

The Trade and Sustainable Development chapter will be subject to the binding dispute settlement framework of the A-EU FTA. The ability to suspend trade preferences under the Trade and Sustainable Development Chapter is limited to serious violations of certain labour or climate obligations under the ILO Conventions and the Paris Agreement, following processes under dispute resolution to try to resolve the issue. Please see [benefits for trade, environment and climate](#) for more information.