



A U S T R A L I A A N D

Austria

Key engagement

Australia and Austria first established diplomatic relations in 1964. Australia and Austria are like-minded countries that cooperate on a range of issues of mutual interest, particularly in multilateral institutions. Austria is Australia's 9th largest European trading partner (excluding UK & Ireland) for total goods and services trade (2019).

Outlook

Total two-way trade between Australia and Austria in 2019 has experienced growth of around 11 per cent per annum over the past five years with scope for further growth. Austria is the 9th largest European Union economy (excluding UK) in 2019 accounting for 2.9 per cent of European Union GDP.

Bilateral relations

Australia has had links with Austria since the beginning of European settlement. In the late 18th and 19th centuries, Austrians visited Australia as members of scientific, diplomatic and religious missions. Most Austrian migration to Australia took place between the end of World War II and 1960.

Foreign policy

Austria's foreign policy is centralised around its support for a strong role of the United Nations, the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe and the Council of Europe. Vienna hosts one of the four major office sites of the United Nations with many UN agencies (including UNODC, IAEA, CTBTO, UNIDO, INCB, UNCITRAL and UNOOSA). Austria has been a European Union Member State since January 1995 (and was President of the Council of the European Union for the third time in 2018). While maintaining its neutral status, Austria joined the NATO Partnership for Peace framework in 1995 and has deployed personnel in various security and peacekeeping operations and missions. Austria prioritises climate policy and sustainable development in international forums.

 **Federal Ministry**
Republic of Austria
European and International
Affairs

[Foreign and European Policy Report 2018.](#)

FAST FACTS



Austrian visitors to Australia (Year ended June 2020) **15,400**



Australian resident returns from Austria (Year ended June 2020) **19,600**



Resident Australian population born in Austria (2016 census) **15,390**



Australian residents of Austrian descent (2016 census) **44,410**



Austrian working holidaymakers (2019-20) **177**



Austrian student enrolments in Australia (2019) **414**

High level engagement

- 2020 Prime Minister Scott Morrison and Austrian Chancellor Sebastian Kurz engaged regularly through the Smart COVID-19 Management Leaders Group.
- 2017 Then Governor-General, General Sir Peter Cosgrove AK CVO MC, met with HE Dr Alexander Van der Bellen, Austria's Federal President, in Vienna.



Agreements with Austria

Australia has several bilateral agreements with Austria, including on social security, double taxation, mutual legal assistance and aviation.

In February 2018, a Work and Holiday Visa arrangement entered into effect.

Texts of bilateral agreements are available at the [Australian Treaties Database](#).

Public diplomacy

Austria is an attractive destination for Australian artists and musicians. In addition to Australians being members of internationally acclaimed music institutions such as the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra and the State Opera, Australian groups such as the Australian Chamber Orchestra perform regularly in Austria. Australian artists and technologists regularly participate in the Ars Electronica Festival which focuses on new media art.

The Australian Embassy in Vienna hosts and supports a number of activities throughout the year to commemorate international days, showcase Australian culture and strengthen people-to-people links between Australia and Austria. In 2019, activities included a two-month Australia film special in Vienna and performances of the Sydney Dance Company and Circa Circus. The Sydney Symphony Orchestra performed in 2018. In 2017, the Australian Gondwana Indigenous Children's Choir (GICC) performed joint concerts with the Vienna Boys Choir in Vienna with a return visit of the Vienna Boys Choir for performances with the GICC in Cairns and Sydney a few months later.

Development Assistance

Austrian Development Cooperation aims to reduce poverty, safeguard peace and human security, and preserve the environment and protect natural resources. In 2019 Austria provided 1.079 billion euros (0.27 per cent of GDP) for official development assistance.

Australian Embassy in Vienna

<https://austria.embassy.gov.au/>

E-mail: Vienna.Embassy@dfat.gov.au



<https://twitter.com/AusAmbVIE>

Economic diplomacy

Two-way trade in goods between Australia and Austria was valued at \$1.9 billion in 2019. Major Australian exports to Austria include: measuring and analysing instruments; gold coin and legal tender coin; pharmaceutical products (excl medicaments); telecommunication equipment and parts; and office and stationery supplies. Major Australian imports from Austria include: arms and ammunition; goods vehicles; passenger motor vehicles; electric power machinery and parts; and motorcycles and cycles.

[More economic and trade information.](#)

Australia continues to seek opportunities to promote Australian business and raise awareness of potential benefits of increased trade between Australia and Europe, including Austria. This work has intensified since the launch of the Australia-EU FTA negotiations in June 2018.

[More information about the Australia-EU FTA.](#)

Business

Many Austrian firms have operations in Australia, including: Andritz (processing machinery); Frequentis (communication and information systems); Fronius (solar energy); Kapsch TrafficCom (traffic management); OMV (gas and oil exploration); Plasser & Theurer; Rhomberg (railway sector); Vamed (hospital management and operations); and Voestalpine (high performance metals). Under an ADF contract, Austria's Rheinmetall subsidiary is supplying a major order of military vehicles.

Some of the larger Australian business operations in Austria include IFM Investors (a major shareholder of Vienna airport); Macquarie Investment Management (major energy provider investment); Cochlear (hearing devices); and European Lithium (a promising lithium mine exploration project).

Austrade's [Frankfurt office](#) is responsible for Austria.

Travel

smartraveller.gov.au

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See [Smartraveller](#) for information on travelling to Austria.