



## A U S T R A L I A   A N D

# The Italian Republic

### Key engagement

Australia and Italy are two highly developed and complementary G20 economies with robust international engagement and enduring people-to-people ties.

Australia and Italy established diplomatic relations in 1959.

### Outlook

Australia and Italy are pursuing stronger bilateral relations, driven by shared values and strategic interests.

Australia and Italy's trade and economic ties will develop further through the negotiation of a comprehensive and ambitious Australia-EU Free Trade Agreement.

### Bilateral relations

The Australia-Italy relationship is underpinned by close and enduring people-to-people links. The end of World War II saw mass migration of Italians to Australia. The Italian community has greatly contributed to Australian society, and heavily influenced Australian food culture.

Italy and Australia cooperate on security issues, such as counter-terrorism, and help build security capacity in countries like Iraq and Afghanistan.

Australia and Italy are among relatively few countries with the know-how and ambition to collaborate on the world's key astrophysics and space projects, such as the Square Kilometre Array (the world's biggest radio telescope).

### Foreign policy

Italy's foreign policy is centred on a strong North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and European Union (EU).

Italy joined NATO in 1949 and has contributed to NATO-led missions including in Afghanistan, Iraq and Kosovo. NATO's Joint Force Command is based in Naples.

Italy joined the EU in 1958 and became a member of the Eurozone in 1999.

Italy signed the Convention founding the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in 1960.

### FAST FACTS



Italian visitors to Australia (Year ended June 2020) **59,000**



Australian resident returns from Italy (Year ended June 2020) **197,000**



Resident Australian population born in Italy (2016 census) **174,044**



Australian residents of Italian descent (2016 census) **1,076,487**



Italian working holidaymakers (2019-20) **8,219**



Italian student enrolments in Australia (2019) **8,585**

### High level engagement

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|------|---|
| 2018 | Then Governor General, HE Sir Peter Cosgrove visited Italy and met with including His Holiness Pope Francis, Head of State of the Holy See and President of the Italian Republic, HE Sergio Mattarella. |
| 2017 | Then Italian Foreign Minister, Angelino Alfano, visited Australia and met with then Foreign Minister, the Hon Julie Bishop.   |



## Agreements and Arrangements with Italy

Australia has numerous bilateral agreements and arrangements with Italy including:

2004	Working Holiday Visa Arrangement
2000	Social Security Agreement
1988	Health Assistance Agreement
1985	Double Taxation Agreement
1984	Economic and Commercial Cooperation Agreement

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

## Political Overview

Italy is a parliamentary republic with a multi-party system. Executive power is vested in the Council of Ministers, which is led by the Prime Minister. Legislative power is vested in the two houses of Parliament and the Council of Ministers. The Parliament consist of the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate, elected every five years. The president is the head of state.

## Public diplomacy

The Australian Embassy in Rome manages a public diplomacy program that encompasses culture, sport, science and technology and fashion. Activities include events such as the "Wool Wonders" fashion competition, which is designed to promote Australia's wool industry and fashion designers. The event attracts considerable media coverage and builds connections between Australian entities like The Woolmark Company and potential Italian partners including designers, fashion houses and tertiary education institutions.

The Australian Embassy in Rome also actively showcases Australian artistic excellence. Activities have included hosting a performance by the Australian String Quartet and involvement in the Milan Triennale and the Venice Biennale.

## Australian Embassy in Rome



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## Economic diplomacy

In 2019, two-way goods and services trade between Australia and Italy was valued at \$11.1 billion.

Australian merchandise exports to Italy totalled \$692 million. Australia's principle exports were: wool & other animal hair; coal; leather; and beef.

Goods imported from Italy to Australia were valued at \$7.1 billion. Major imports from Italy were: medicaments (including veterinary); travel goods, bags & like containers; passenger motor vehicles; and heating & cooling equipment & parts.

In 2019, the export of Australian services to Italy was valued at \$607 million, while services imports from Italy totalled \$2.7 billion. Services trade was dominated by personal travel.

Australia's stock of investment in Italy in 2019 totalled \$8.0 billion. Investment in Australia from Italy was \$1.3 billion. Australian investment in Italy is focused in areas such as urban redevelopment and energy.

[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 Italy. This work has intensified followed the launch of Australia-EU FTA negotiations in June 2018.

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

## Business

Opportunities for Australian businesses in Italy exist in the areas of renewable energy; agribusiness and food; advanced manufacturing; digital technologies; international health; international education; and infrastructure and rail.

See [Austrade's office in Milan](#) for more information on doing business in Italy.

## Travel



See [Smartraveller](#) for Information on travelling to Italy.