

EU and Australia launch talks for a broad trade agreement

The aim of the negotiations is to remove barriers to trade in goods and services, create opportunities for small and large companies, as well as setting ambitious rules in line with other trade agreements of the EU, contributing to shape global trade.

The opening of talks with Australia is part of the EU agenda for open and fair trade. It follows the conclusion of negotiations with Japan last year and Mexico this past spring, as well the entry into force of the EU-Canada trade agreement in September of last year. The future agreement between the EU and Australia will further consolidate the EU's engagement in the Asia-Pacific region.

Commissioner for Trade Cecilia **Malmström** said: *"I look forward to adding Australia to our ever-expanding circle of like-minded trade partners. In challenging times, it is heartening to see that Australia shares our commitment to a positive trade agenda, and to the idea that good trade agreements are a win for both sides. The result of our negotiations will be an agreement that offers clear benefits for both the EU and Australia. It will boost economic opportunity for businesses, both big and small, and create jobs."*

Following today's announcement, the first formal round of talks between the respective sides' teams of negotiators will take place in Brussels from 2 to 6 July.

Australia is one of the world's fastest-growing developed economies. It recently negotiated the Comprehensive and Progressive Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) with 10 other countries in the Pacific region. The future EU-Australia agreement will let European companies compete on a level playing-field with businesses from those countries with which Australia already has trade agreements.

The EU is already Australia's second biggest trade partner. Bilateral trade in goods between the EU and Australia has risen steadily in recent years, reaching almost €48 billion last year. The sectors which make up the bulk of EU exports to Australia are transport equipment, machinery and appliances, chemicals, food, and services. Bilateral trade in services is around €28 billion. The agreement could increase trade in goods between the two partners by over a third. Information about the negotiations, including factsheet, examples of small exporters, statistics and other material, is available [online](#).

Commissioner Malmström's visit to Australia

Whilst in Australia, the Commissioner is also meeting Governor General of Australia Peter Cosgrove; Minister for Foreign Affairs, Julie Bishop;

Minister for Agriculture, David Littleproud; as well as members of the opposition. Today, she is also holding the 2018 Schuman Lecture at Australian National University, under the headline *EU-Australia: A Global Alliance for Trade*.

Commissioner **Malmström** participates in a roundtable with Australian businesses and meets European businesses active in Australia. Alongside EU Ambassador Michael Pulch, the Commissioner will also have the opportunity to meet with Australian civil society members, including representatives from climate and human rights organisations, trade unions, and academia.

Whilst in Sydney on Tuesday, she will visit the headquarters of Cicada Innovations, a hi-tech start-up incubator, where she will meet start-ups involved in fields like robotics, next-generation Wi-Fi technology, and medical supplies.

After her visit to Australia, Commissioner **Malmström** will go to Wellington, where she is launching the trade negotiations between the EU and New Zealand on Thursday of this week (21 June).

Background

On 22 May, the Council of the European Union adopted the decision authorising the opening of negotiations for a trade agreement between the EU and Australia.

So far the EU and Australia have been conducting their trade and economic relations under the 2008 EU-Australia Partnership Framework.

For More Information

[Video and photos](#) from the visit, including press conference, meetings & company visits

[The EU-Australia trade negotiations](#) – Dedicated website

[Factsheet](#)

[Exporters' stories](#)