



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

Greece

Key engagement

Australia and Greece have shared interests in relation to international peace and security, multilateralism, democratic values and strong people-to-people links.

Outlook

Australia aims to deepen our economic, cultural and security cooperation building on high-level engagement in 2021, the 200th Anniversary year of the Greek Revolution and the 80th Anniversary of the Battle of Crete.

Bilateral relations

Australia and Greece have a close bilateral relationship based on historical ties, the rich contribution of Greek Australians to Australian society and increasing two-way investment.

During World War I, the Greek island of Lemnos was the base for over 50,000 Australian soldiers, sailors and nurses who fought and served in the Gallipoli campaign. During World War II, in the Battle of Crete, Australian soldiers fought alongside Greek, New Zealand and British troops, including to defend Crete against German invasion. The battle is commemorated annually.

Foreign policy

Greece's foreign policy agenda has traditionally focused on the European Union, the Balkans and its region.

Greece joined the European Union in 1981 and has held the rotating Presidency in 1983, 1988, 1994, 2003 and 2014. It has been a member of the Schengen Area since 2000 and adopted the Euro in 2001. Greece is a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, which it joined in 1952, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development.

FAST FACTS



Greek visitors to Australia (FY21-22) **1191**



Australian resident returns from Greece (FY21-22) **276**



Resident Australian population born in Greece (2021 census) **100,650**



Australian residents of Greek descent (2021 census) **424,750**



Greek working holidaymakers (FY21-22) **<5**



Greek students in Australia (FY21-22) **35**

High level engagement

June 2022	Prime Minister, the Hon Anthony Albanese MP met with Greek Prime Minister Mitsotakis in the sidelines of the NATO Leaders Summit in Madrid.
April 2022	Greek Minister of Culture and Sports, Linda Mendoni, visited Australia to launch the <i>Open Horizons</i> exhibition and met with then Minister for Communications, Urban Infrastructure, Cities and the Arts, Paul Fletcher MP.
December 2021	Then Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister for Women, Senator the Hon Marise Payne met with Greek President Katerina Sakellariopoulou, Foreign Minister Nikos Dendias and other Greek ministers in Athens.

November 2021

Former Prime Minister, the Hon Scott Morrison MP met with Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis in the sidelines of the COP26 Conference in Glasgow.



Agreements with Greece

Australia has numerous bilateral agreements with Greece, including on social security, mutual assistance in criminal matters and cultural cooperation.

In 2021, Greece introduced a law providing for the recognition of Australian drivers' licences in Greece.

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

Public diplomacy

Greece and Australia share strong community ties based on our shared war time history and migration from Greece to Australia.

Annual war commemorations are held in Athens, Lemnos and Crete. In 2022, the Australian Government approved AUD \$4.9 million funding for a Gallipoli commemorative project in Lemnos, which was a key staging point and site for hospitals during the campaign.

There are Greek community and cultural centres, clubs and associations in most Australian cities. Melbourne is a Sister City to Thessaloniki. The Greek Orthodox Church in Australia plays an important role in philanthropic work and education.

The Australian Embassy in Athens actively promotes Australian culture and values in Greece. Activities include promoting Australian art, film-making, literature and promoting gender equality and human rights.

Numerous universities in Australia offer Greek language, history and culture studies. The University of Sydney has a Department of Modern Greek and Byzantine Studies, where students study and research Greek language, tradition and history.

Australian Embassy in Athens



<https://www.facebook.com/AustraliaInGreece/>



<https://twitter.com/AusAmbAthens/>

Economic diplomacy

Australia continues to seek opportunities to promote Australian business and raise awareness of potential benefits of increased trade between Australia and Europe, including Greece. This work has intensified followed the launch of Australia-EU trade agreement negotiations in June 2018 and Double Taxation Agreement negotiations in 2022.

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

The Embassy's economic diplomacy efforts focus on identifying and facilitating business opportunities with Greece, including in key sectors of infrastructure, energy, hospitality, renewables and firefighting services. Its outreach also aims to increase awareness of business opportunities in Australia, including in the education, science, technology and innovation sectors.

[Further economic and trade information.](#)

Business

In 2021, two-way merchandise trade between Australia and Greece was valued at \$395 million. Imports from Greece accounted for \$357 million, primarily in vegetables; medicaments (including veterinary); cheese and curd; and cereal preparations. Australia's principal exports were non-ferrous waste and scrap; starches, inulin and wheat gluten.

In 2020, two-way trade in services was valued at \$783 million. Services imports from Greece accounted for \$700 million, primarily in personal travel and transport services. Australia's principal services exports were in the education sector.

Australia's investment relationship with Greece is growing. In 2021, total stock of investment in Greece was \$345 million. Major Australian companies present in Greece include Macquarie Bank (energy and infrastructure), ResMed (medical equipment), CSL Limited (pharmaceuticals) and Kourispower (hydroelectricity). Greek investment in Australia totalled \$183 million.

In 2021, Macquarie invested EUR 2.1 billion in Greece's electricity network (the biggest privatisation in Greece's history) and announced EUR 1.5 billion investment in renewable energy projects in Northern Greece. Greek company MEKTA has invested in eight solar energy projects in Australia.

The Australian Trade Commission ([Austrade](#)) Milan Office promotes Australian trade and business with Greece.