

Bilateral Social Security Agreements

Australia currently has bilateral social security agreements with Ireland, Italy, Canada, Spain, Malta, The Netherlands, Austria, New Zealand, the UK, Cyprus, Portugal, and Denmark.

For more information on these agreements, and the texts of the agreements themselves, see the website of the Commonwealth Department of Family & Community Services, www.facs.gov.au/dss/dss.nsf

For the EU countries, Australia still has no bilateral security agreements with Belgium, Germany, France, Luxembourg, Finland, Sweden, and Greece.

Negotiations are officially currently underway with Finland, Germany, and Greece, as well as the non-EU countries of Chile, Norway, Switzerland and Slovenia.

The effect of the lack of a bilateral agreement between Australia and Belgium means that Australians who have been legally resident in Belgium, have worked in Belgium, and who have contributed to the Belgian social security system, will have no right to draw a Belgian pension on their retirement unless they are remain resident in Belgium during their retirement.

Possible Action for a New Group:

Lobby both Australian and Belgian authorities in order to open negotiations for an Agreement between Belgium and Australia.

Draw the situations of particular individuals adversely affected at the moment, to the attention of the authorities.