



MEDIA RELEASE

Senator Amanda Vanstone

Minister for Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs
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Joint Media Release (The Minister for Foreign Affairs Alexander Downer and The Minister for Immigration, Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs Senator Amanda Vanstone)

AUSTRALIA AND FRANCE SIGN A WORKING HOLIDAY MAKER ARRANGEMENT

Australia has today signed a Working Holiday Maker arrangement with France opening up new opportunities for young Australians to experience the French lifestyle and culture.

The program provides young Australians with a chance to gain valuable skills overseas, thereby increasing Australia's competitiveness in the global market. And it encourages young people from France to come to Australia on working holidays.

France is the 17th country to join Australia's reciprocal scheme administered by the Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs.

The program boosts tourism to Australia and benefits industries that rely heavily on casual labour at peak times, especially the hospitality, horticultural and rural industries.

France's inclusion in the program underlines the close relationship between the two countries and creates exciting opportunities for young Australians and young French people to experience each other's culture.

More than 88,750 visas were issued under the scheme last year.

Under the arrangement between Australia and France, people aged between 18 and 30 can apply for working holiday visas for up to 12 months. Work undertaken in Australia must be incidental to the main purpose of holidaying and employment for more than three months with any one employer is not allowed.

Since July 2002, people have been able to lodge applications for an Australian Working Holiday Maker visas on the internet at www.immi.gov.au. Electronic lodgement enables clients to apply for visas 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

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