

Australia

Main indicators and characteristics of collective bargaining

This note presents the main indicators and characteristics of collective bargaining in Australia for 2019 or the latest year available. The purpose of this note is to provide a snapshot of the functioning of collective bargaining in Australia that can be used for comparisons with other countries in the database. Therefore, this note does not provide a precise description of the legal provisions or standard practices in Australia but only a general summary.

The first version of the OECD and AIAS, Institutional Characteristics of Trade Unions, Wage Setting, State Intervention and Social Pacts (ICTWSS) database has been released in February 2021 and has been produced with the financial assistance of the European Union Programme for Employment and Social Innovation “EaSI” (2014-2020), VS/2019/0185. The views expressed herein can in no way be taken to reflect the official opinion of the European Union.

The OECD/AIAS ICTWSS database together with its codebook, a note on methodology and sources and a glossary is publicly available at www.oecd.org/employment/ictwss-database.htm. For any information or correction, please contact CollectiveBargaining@oecd.org.

Please cite as: *OECD and AIAS (2021), Institutional Characteristics of Trade Unions, Wage Setting, State Intervention and Social Pacts*, OECD Publishing, Paris, www.oecd.org/employment/ictwss-database.htm.

Version: 17 Feb 2021

The actors and scope of collective bargaining

<i>Trade union density (% of employees)</i>	13.7% (in 2018)
<i>Adjusted bargaining (or union) coverage rate (% of employees with the right to bargain)</i>	61.2% (in 2018)
<i>Employer organisation density (% of employees)</i>	54.5% (in 2018)

Wage setting

<i>The predominant level at which wage bargaining takes place (in terms of coverage of employees)</i>	Intermediate or alternating between sector and company bargaining
<i>The combination of levels at which collective bargaining over wages takes place</i>	Sectoral (separate branches of the economy) and company, with company agreements that specify, or deviate from, sectoral agreements, guidelines or targets
<i>Reach or incidence of additional enterprise bargaining</i>	No additional enterprise-bargaining
<i>Favourability</i>	Lower-level agreements must by law offer more favourable terms, but derogation is possible under defined conditions
<i>Opening clauses in sectoral collective agreements</i>	Agreements contain no opening clauses
<i>Crisis-related, temporary opening clauses in collective agreement</i>	Agreements contain no opening clauses
<i>Mandatory extension of collective agreements to non-organised employers</i>	Extension is used in many industries, but there are limitations (e.g. thresholds or the government can (and sometimes do) decide not to extend (clauses in) collective agreements)
<i>Is there a statutory minimum wage in your country?</i>	Yes, there is one or more statutory minimum wage rate(s) that cover(s) all or most employees

Wage co-ordination

Coordination of wage-setting

Some coordination of wage setting, based on pattern setting by major companies, sectors, government wage policies in the public sector, judicial awards, or minimum wage policies

Type of coordination of wage setting

Government sets signals (public sector wages, minimum wage)

Works councils and employee representation in the enterprise

Status of works council

Works council or similar (union or non-union) based institutions of employee representation confronting management do not exist or are exceptional

Involvement of works councils (or similar structures) in wage negotiations

Not applicable (no works councils)

Social pacts and agreements

A social pact or central agreement is signed in specified year

No

Existence of a tripartite council for the purpose of negotiation, consultation or information exchange over social and economic policies

No permanent council