

Australia

1. Industrial Strategy

Australia does not have a single, overarching industrial policy document. Instead, industrial strategy is articulated through a combination of national plans, annual budget statements, and sector-specific initiatives led by the Department of Industry, Science and Resources (DISR).

In 2024, the government launched its ‘Future Made in Australia Plan’ aimed at maximizing industrial benefits of green energy transition so Australia can secure its place in a changing global strategic landscape.¹ The Future made in Australia Plan is focused at making Australia a renewable energy superpower, strengthening economic security, attracting and enabling investment, adding value to Australia’s resources and investing in services and communities that will accelerate national success. The Plan prioritizes certain sectors including, renewable hydrogen, low carbon liquid fuels, green metals, critical minerals processing and clean energy manufacturing.² Other priorities include value-adding in agriculture, fisheries, forestry, medical science and defence industries.³

In 2021, the Australian Government launched the Modern Manufacturing Strategy (MMS) with six National Manufacturing Priorities:

- Resources technology and critical minerals processing
- Food and beverage
- Medical products
- Recycling and clean energy
- Defense
- Space

The MMS aims to build scale and competitiveness in these sectors, encourage private investment, and foster innovation and advanced manufacturing capabilities. The strategy aspires to create a business environment to support manufacturing jobs and encourage investment, support an industry-focused science and technology system to boost productivity, scale and competitiveness, focus on areas of advantage and build national resilience for a

¹ James Carouso, ‘Future Made in Australia’ <<https://www.csis.org/analysis/future-made-australia>> accessed 8 June 2025.

² Budget 2025-26, A Future Made in Australia Fact Sheet < <https://archive.budget.gov.au/2024-25/factsheets/download/factsheet-fmia.pdf>> accessed 8 June 2025.

³ See ‘Australia’s AUKUS Submarine Industry Strategy’ (*Australian Submarine Agency*) <https://www.asa.gov.au/business-industry/australias-aukus-submarine-industry-strategy>; ‘Defence Industry Development Strategy’ (*Australian Government Defence*) <<https://www.defence.gov.au/about/strategic-planning/defence-industry-development-strategy>>.

stronger economy.⁴ The government supports industry through programs such as the Industry Growth Centres Initiative and the Cooperative Research Centres (CRC) Program, which foster collaboration between industry, research organizations, and government.⁵

2. *Digital (Development) Strategy*

Australia's digital strategy is coordinated at the federal level, primarily through the the Digital Transformation Agency (DTA). The Digital Economy Strategy 2030, released in 2021, sets out the government's vision for Australia to be a leading digital economy and society by 2030. Key pillars of the strategy include:

- Building digital skills and inclusion
- Enhancing digital infrastructure (including the National Broadband Network)
- Supporting digital business adoption and innovation
- Strengthening cybersecurity and data protection
- Promoting digital government services

The strategy places digital infrastructure, cybersecurity, digital skills and inclusion at the foundation of digital and economic growth. It focuses on investment in emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), block chain and quantum computing to keep Australia at the forefront of technological innovation. The strategy prioritizes digital government and services, small and medium-sized enterprises and modern industry sectors to promote digital transformation in agriculture, manufacturing and health.⁶ The government has also established the Data and Digital Government Strategy to guide the use, sharing, and protection of data. The Strategy outlines the Australian Government's vision to provide secure, and integrated public services for people and businesses, achieved through exceptional data and digital capabilities⁷. Other important strategies include the Digital Trade Strategy 2022⁸ and the Digital Strategy 2023-2027⁹

⁴ 'Make It Happen: The Australian Government's Modern Manufacturing Strategy' (Australian Government Department of Industry, Science and Resources (DISR), October 2020) <<https://webarchive.nla.gov.au/awa/20220816063643/https://www.industry.gov.au/data-and-publications/make-it-happen-the-australian-governments-modern-manufacturing-strategy/our-modern-manufacturing-strategy>>.

⁵ 'Industry Growth Centres Initiative' (*business.gov.au*, 23 January 2025) <<https://business.gov.au/grants-and-programs/industry-growth-centres-initiative>> accessed 8 June 2025; 'About the CRC Program' (*Cooperative Research Australia*) <<https://cooperativeresearch.org.au/cooperative-research/crc-program-australian-government/>> accessed 8 June 2025.

⁶ Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, 'Digital Economy Strategy: A Leading Digital Economy and Society by 2030.' (2021) <<https://apo.org.au/sites/default/files/resource-files/2021-05/apo-nid312247.pdf>>.

⁷ Digital Transformation Agency, 'Data and Digital Government Strategy' (Australian Government, 2024) <<https://architecture.digital.gov.au/data-and-digital-government-strategy#:~:text=The%20Data%20and%20Digital%20Government,for%20all%20people%20and%20business>>>.

⁸ Digital Trade Strategy 2022 <<https://www.dfat.gov.au/sites/default/files/digital-trade-strategy.pdf>>.

⁹ Parliament of Australia, 'Digital Strategy 2023 -2027' <https://www.aph.gov.au/-/media/05_About_Parliament/54_Parliamentary_Depts/543_DPS/Publication/Digital_strategies/Parliament_of_Australia_Digital_Strategy_2023-2027.pdf>.

3. Main Constitutional Provisions

Australia's Constitution does not explicitly reference industrial or digital policy. However, the federal government's powers to legislate on trade, commerce, and corporations (Section 51) provide the basis for national industrial and digital strategies. The government is committed to promoting innovation, investment, and technological progress through legislative and policy frameworks.¹⁰

4. Main Regulatory Provisions and Policy Developments

Certain legislative and regulatory acts have a considerable impact on industrial policy aspects surrounding digital development. These include the:

- Digital ID Act 2024¹¹
- Digital ID (Transitional and Consequential Provisions) Act 2024¹²
- Cybersecurity Act 2024¹³
- Electronic Transactions Act 1999¹⁴
- The Privacy Act 1988¹⁵
- Telecommunications (Interception and Access) Act 1979¹⁶
- Modern Manufacturing Strategy 2021¹⁷
- National AI Action Plan 2021¹⁸
- Digital Trade Strategy 2022¹⁹
- Digital Strategy 2023-2027²⁰
- Digital Economy Strategy 2030²¹

¹⁰ The Australian Constitution < https://www.aph.gov.au/-/media/05_About_Parliament/52_Sen/523_PPP/2023_Australian_Constitution.pdf > accessed 25 June 2025.

¹¹ Digital ID Act 2024 <<https://www.legislation.gov.au/C2024A00025/asmade/text>>.

¹² Digital ID (Transitional and Consequential Provisions) Act 2024 <Digital ID (Transitional and Consequential Provisions) Act 2024>.

¹³ Cybersecurity Act 2024 <<https://www.legislation.gov.au/C2024A00098/asmade/text>>.

¹⁴ Electronic Transactions Act 1999 <<https://www.legislation.gov.au/C2004A00553/latest/text>>.

¹⁵ The Privacy Act 1888 <<https://www.legislation.gov.au/C2004A03712/2015-03-25/text>>.

¹⁶ Telecommunications (Interception and Access) Act 1979 <<https://www.legislation.gov.au/C2004A02124/latest/text>>.

¹⁷ Modern Manufacturing Strategy <<https://webarchive.nla.gov.au/awa/20220816063643/https://www.industry.gov.au/data-and-publications/make-it-happen-the-australian-governments-modern-manufacturing-strategy/our-modern-manufacturing-strategy>>.

¹⁸ Department of Industry, Science and Resources, 'Australia's Artificial Intelligence Action Plan' (*Australian Government*) <<https://webarchive.nla.gov.au/awa/20220816053410/https://www.industry.gov.au/data-and-publications/australias-artificial-intelligence-action-plan>>.

¹⁹ Digital Trade Strategy 2022 < <https://www.dfat.gov.au/sites/default/files/digital-trade-strategy.pdf> >.

²⁰ Parliament of Australia, 'Digital Strategy 2023 -2027 < https://www.aph.gov.au/-/media/05_About_Parliament/54_Parliamentary_Depts/543_DPS/Publication/Digital_strategies/Parliament_of_Australia_Digital_Strategy_2023-2027.pdf >.

²¹ Digital Economy Strategy 2030 <<file:///Users/applepc/Downloads/1.%20Policy%20document.pdf>>.

- Data and Digital Government Strategy²²
- Australian Cyber Security Strategy 2023–2030²³

5. (Regional) Economic Treaties to which Australia is a Signatory

Australia is a signatory to multiple economic treaties. Some of the most relevant ones are the:

- Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP)
- Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP)
- ASEAN-Australia-New-Zealand
- Pacific Agreement on Closer Economic Relations Plus (PACER Plus)
- South Pacific Regional Trade and Economic Cooperation (SPARTECA)
- Australia-European Union Free Trade Agreement (under negotiation)
- Australia – Gulf Cooperation Council Free Trade Agreement (under consideration)²⁴

6. Plurilaterals

Australia is participating in multiple plurilateral initiatives and agreements. Some of the most relevant ones are:

- WTO Agreement on Government Procurement²⁵
- Information Technology Agreement²⁶
- Environmental Goods Agreement²⁷
- Joint Initiative on Services Domestic Regulation²⁸

²² Data and Digital Government Strategy <https://www.aph.gov.au/-/media/05_About_Parliament/54_Parliamentary_Depts/543_DPS/Publication/Digital_strategies/Parliament_of_Australia_Digital_Strategy_2023-2027.pdf>.

²³ Australian Cyber Security Strategy 2023–2030 <<https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/cyber-security-subsite/files/2023-cyber-security-strategy.pdf>>.

²⁴ ‘WTO | Regional Trade Agreements’ <<http://rtais.wto.org/UI/PublicMaintainRTAHome.aspx>> accessed 24 September 2024.

²⁵ ‘WTO | Government Procurement - The Plurilateral Agreement on Government Procurement (GPA)’ <https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/gproc_e/gp_gpa_e.htm> accessed 24 June 2025.

²⁶ ‘WTO | Information Technology Agreement’ <https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/inftec_e/inftec_e.htm> accessed 25 June 2025.

²⁷ ‘WTO | Environmental Goods Agreement’ <https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/envir_e/ega_e.htm> accessed 25 June 2025.

²⁸ ‘WTO | Services Domestic Regulation’ <https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/serv_e/jsdomreg_e.htm> accessed 25 June 2025; ‘WTO | Understanding the WTO - Plurilaterals: Of Minority Interest’ <https://www.wto.org/english/thewto_e/whatis_e/tif_e/agrm10_e.htm> accessed 25 June 2025.

7. Proceedings Initiated Against Australia, or by It, Before International Fora for the Adoption/Implementation of Industrial Policy Measures (e.g., Before WTO Panels, the WTO's AB)

Australia has been involved in several WTO disputes, including those related to tobacco plain packaging, agricultural products, and anti-dumping measures. Australia has not been subject to major international proceedings specifically regarding the adoption or implementation of its industrial or digital policy measures.²⁹

Amna Zaman (Last updated 25 June 2025)

²⁹ 'WTO | Dispute Settlement - Map of Disputes between WTO Members'
<https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/dispu_e/dispu_maps_e.htm?country_selected=AUS&sense=e> accessed 25 June 2025.