

Media Release

Steve Dimopoulos MP

Minister for Environment

Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events

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MELBOURNE WELCOMES ANOTHER MAJOR GLOBAL AIRLINE

Thousands more international visitors are set to choose Victoria, with European carrier Finnair launching new daily services to and from Melbourne – boosting capacity to and from the state in a big win for tourism and trade.

The daily flights will add an extra 203,000 seats between Victoria and Europe each year – with services from Helsinki to Melbourne via Bangkok starting in October 2026, aboard the modern and spacious Airbus A350 Aircraft.

To the year ending June 2025, there were 534,000 visitors from Europe to Victoria. These visitors spent \$1.4bn, up 28 per cent year on year, or 29 per cent on 2019 levels.

The new services will be supported by the Labor Government's Industry Partnership Program with fresh marketing campaigns across Europe rolling out to showcase the route and drive demand.

An initiative from the Economic Growth Statement, it sees industry partners match government investment dollar-for-dollar for destination marketing, creating demand amongst visitors to come to Victoria.

Since the inception of the program, more than 60 new partnerships have been secured with partners such as Accor, Alpine Resorts Victoria and Trip.com.

Finnair's new route will offer passengers connections to around 90 destinations across the airline's European network out of its Helsinki hub, plus additional options for those travelling to Asia via its Bangkok stopover.

The flights will also create competition, offering more choice for overseas visitors and Victorian families.

Melbourne Airport is expecting a record summer for international travel, with more than 2.5 million people expected through the international terminal across December and January.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events Steve Dimopoulos

"This shows once again that Melbourne is a destination in demand, with more choice and capacity making it easier for people to visit and stay longer."

"Our visitor economy supports 288,000 jobs and it's booming."

"The Industry Partnership Program is another way we are promoting the best of our state to tourists around the world, who can now fly here on one of the world's best carriers."

Quote attributable to Visit Victoria CEO Brendan McClements

"Partnering with Melbourne Airport and Finnair through this program will help convert interest into visitation and build on Victoria's record \$43.7 billion visitor economy."

Quotes attributable to Melbourne Airport CEO Lorie Argus

"These new flights will help bring thousands of extra people to our state each week, which will help support Victoria's world-class tourism, dining and hospitality venues."

“Additional flights to Europe and Thailand will help give Australian holiday makers looking for either a cosy European winter or a warm beach getaway even more choice.”

Quotes attributable to Finnair General Manager, Greater China and Southeast Asia Tamas Hanyi

“Melbourne is not only a popular holiday destination for Europeans, but also home to a large European diaspora, foreign students, and expatriates – making this route an attractive choice for these customer segments as well.”

“We are excited to launch service to a new continent, offering seamless connections from Melbourne to Northern Europe and beyond.”