

# The Port of Melbourne: an education resource

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Visiting the Port of Melbourne education centre and/or using the resources available on the Port of Melbourne website will provide insights that are particularly relevant for students studying VCE Economics Unit 2, 'Australia and the Global Economy'. Port Education Programs Coordinator Simon Upchurch elaborates.

## Introduction

Port of Melbourne Corporation is a Victorian Government agency and operates within the constraints of an inner-city location so it has certain responsibilities to the communities it affects and an obligation to educate people about the business of the port. To fulfil these responsibilities, Port of Melbourne Corporation operates a community education centre close to the heart of the port and an education program run by a qualified teacher. A visit to the centre, known as 'Port Ed', can be used as part of a study program for VCE Economics and related business education studies. Any visit can be tailored to individual class needs, but can be most effectively used in VCE Economics Unit 2 for both areas of study 1 and 2. Classes are free of charge; they usually last for 1.5 hours and can cater for 35 students at a time.

## Briefing notes

The Port of Melbourne has a major effect on both the Victorian and Australian economies. It employs approximately 13 000 people directly and contributes \$5.4 billion of revenue to Victoria with \$1.1 billion flowing on into the greater Australian economy.

The port handles almost 40 per cent of all Australia's shipping containers. The capacity of a container port or container ship is measured in TEU (20-foot equivalent unit) or the number of 20-foot long containers that can be accommodated. In 2006–07, the Port of Melbourne handled 2.094

million TEU (imports and exports) which makes it comfortably the largest container port in the country.

In 2006–07, the 10 main containerised exports, in decreasing quantity, were miscellaneous manufactures, beverages, dairy products, cereal grains, meat, pulp and wastepaper, fruit and vegetables, stock feed, paper and newsprint, and paperboard and fibreboard.

In 2006–07, the 10 main containerised imports, in decreasing quantity, were miscellaneous manufactures, paper and newsprint, furniture, electrical equipment, fruit and vegetables, machinery, vehicle parts, metal manufactures, clothing, toys and sporting goods.

In an average day, the port handles 700 motor vehicles, 550 tonnes of tea and coffee, 750 tonnes of wood and timber, 1300 tonnes of chemicals, 2200 tonnes of fruit, vegetables and nuts, 2400 tonnes of dairy products, 5100 tonnes of cereals and 10 800 tonnes of petroleum, alongside many other raw materials and manufactured goods.

Despite being Australia's largest container port, the Port of Melbourne ranks only 49th on the list of the world's container ports. The Port of Singapore handled 24.792 million TEU and the Port of Hong Kong handled 23.539 million TEU in 2006, making them the busiest container ports in the world. The difference in the number of containers dealt with by these ports and the Port of Melbourne is due to geographical and economic factors. In the case of the Port of Singapore, it is

ideally situated on one of the busiest shipping lanes in the world between the huge markets of China, Southern Asia and the rest of the world, and the Port of Hong Kong serves the huge Chinese economy.

Nevertheless, despite Australia having a relatively small economy, the number of containers handled by the Port of Melbourne is growing at an average of 7.9 per cent per year and is expected to reach approximately 4 million TEU by 2020.

## Education bookings

For education bookings contact:  
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## Resources

**Port of Melbourne business website:**  
<[www.portofmelbourne.com/business](http://www.portofmelbourne.com/business)>

**Port of Melbourne annual reports:**  
<[www.portofmelbourne.com/publications/annualrep.asp](http://www.portofmelbourne.com/publications/annualrep.asp)>

**Port Community Education Centre:**  
<[www.portofmelbourne.com/education/educationcentre.asp](http://www.portofmelbourne.com/education/educationcentre.asp)>

**Port of Melbourne teacher resources:**  
<[www.portofmelbourne.com/education/teachers.asp](http://www.portofmelbourne.com/education/teachers.asp)>

**Statistics for world ports:**  
<[www.iaphworldports.org/world\\_port\\_info/statistics.html](http://www.iaphworldports.org/world_port_info/statistics.html)>