

## AUSTRALIA - FACT SHEETS

**Official Name** : Commonwealth of Australia

**Geographical location** :

(Latitude) 10° 41' South and 43° 39' South  
(Longitude) 113° 09' East and 153° 39' East

**Area** : 7.7 million sq.km (*coastline 25,760 km*)

**Climate** :

Summer from December to February  
Autumn from March to May  
Winter from June to August  
Spring from September to November  
Conditions vary depending on location

**Population** : 22.0 million (*March 2009*)

**States and Territories** :

**Territories:**

Australian Capital Territory (*349,900*)  
Northern Territory ( *223,000*)

**States:**

New South Wales (*7.0 mn*)  
Victoria (*5.4 mn*)  
Queensland (*4.3 mn*)  
Western Australia (*2.2 mn*)  
South Australia (*1.6 mn*)  
Tasmania (*0.51 mn*)

**Federal Capital** : Canberra (*349,900*)

**Other Major Cities** :

Sydney (*4.4 mn*)  
Melbourne (*3.9 mn*)  
Brisbane (*1.9 mn*)  
Perth (*1.6 mn*)  
Adelaide (*1.2 mn*)

Hobart (210,000)  
Darwin (121,000)

**Religion** : Christianity (13.0 million); Buddhism (0.68 million); Islam (0.44 million); Hinduism (0.153 million); Judaism (0.092 million); other religion groups include Australian Aboriginal traditional religions, Sikhism etc.

**Ethnic groups** : Australia is a country of migrants; around 45% were either born overseas; have a parent who was born overseas. There are over 200 migrant nationalities, among whom are predominantly English, Irish, New Zealander, Italian, Croatian, Serbian, Vietnamese, Greek, Chinese, Indian (*Caucasian 92%; Asian 7%; Aboriginal and others 1%*)

**Time difference** :

NSW, Queensland, ACT, Victoria and Tasmania: IST + 4½ hours  
South Australia and Northern Territory: IST + 4 hours  
Western Australia: IST + 2½ hours  
NSW, VIC, SA, ACT, TAS have Daylight Saving  
Time from October to March.

## AUSTRALIA - POLITICAL

**Polity** :

Federal parliament democracy, based on the constitution of 1901, with Queen as head of State. The Government is headed by a Prime Minister in Cabinet. The Parliament is bicameral: the 150-member House of Representatives (*the lower house*) is directly elected by a preferential voting system for a three-year term; and the Senate (*the upper house*) the 76 Senators (*twelve from each of the six States and two from each of the Territories*) directly elected by proportional representation for six-year terms, with one-half of Senate members retiring every three years, usually to coincide with elections for the House of Representatives. The Senate may not initiate or amend money bills.

**State legislatures** : Five of the six states have bicameral legislatures; that of Queensland is unicameral

**Electoral system** : Compulsory universal direct suffrage over the age of 18

**National government** :

A cabinet, presided over by the Prime Minister, is appointed by the Governor-General on the basis of party strength in the House of Representatives; a Labor government is currently in power.

**Major political parties** : The Australian Labor Party (*ALP*), the Liberal Party, the National Party, the Democrats, the Greens. The Labor Party is in power in all the States and Territories.

**Head of State** : Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, Queen of Australia represented by the Governor General.

**Governor General** : HE Ms. Quentin Bryce AC

**Prime Minister** : The Hon. Julia Gillard, MP

**Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade** : The Hon. Stephen Smith, MP

**Leader of Opposition** : The Hon. Tony Abbott, MP

**Party position Total : 150**

**House of Representatives:**

ALP	:	83
Liberals	:	55
Nationals	:	10
Independents	:	2

**Senate Total : 76**

Liberal*	:	32
Nationals/ Country Liberal Party :*		5
ALP	:	32
Greens	:	5
Family First	:	1
Independent	:	1

*\*(Liberals, National and CLP are in a coalition with 37 seats)*

**Official website links :**

Prime Minister : <http://www.pm.gov.au/>

Foreign Minister : <http://www.foreignminister.gov.au/>

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade: <http://www.dfat.gov.au/>

All Australian Government Departments and agencies : <http://www.directory.gov.au/>  
as well as State Governments and Territories

Government of Australian : <http://www.directory.act.gov.au/>  
Capital Territory (ACT)

Australia-India Council : <http://www.dfat.gov.au/aic/>

## **Australia's Foreign Policy**

The key objective of Australia's foreign and trade policy is to promote its security and long-term prosperity. The three pillars of Australia's **foreign policy** are : active participation in the institutions of global governance, including the United nations and the WTO; enhancing Australia's alliance with the United States; and engaging with the states and institutions of the Asia-Pacific region.

### **Membership of International Organisations**

Australia is a member of UN and the Commonwealth and holds membership in almost all international and regional organisations.

Member of ADB, ANZUS, APEC, ARF, ASEAN (dialogue partner), Australia Group, BIS, FAO, G-20, IAEA, IBRD, ICAO, ICC, ICCT, ICRM, IDA, IEA, IFC, IFRC, IHO, ILO, IMF, IMO, IMSO, Interpol, IOC, IOM, IPU, ISO, ITSO, ITU, ITUC, NAM (guest), NEA, NSG, OECD, OPCW, Paris Club, PCA, PIF, SAARC (observer), UNCTAD, UNESCO, UNHCR, UNMIS, UNMIT, UNRWA, UNTSO, UNWTO, UPU, WCO, WFTU, WHO, WIPO, WMO, WTO, ZC

### **Important Think Tanks on foreign affairs**

1. Australian Institute of International Affairs

Tel.: +61-2-6232 4978

Fax: +61-2-6285 2334

Web: [www.aiia.asn.au](http://www.aiia.asn.au)

2. The Centre for Independent Studies

Tel: +61 2 9438 4377

Fax: +61 2 9439 7310

Web: <http://www.cis.org.au/>

3. Lowy Institute for International Policy

Tel.: +61-2-8238 9130

Fax: +61-2-8238 9005

Web: [www.lowyinstitute.org](http://www.lowyinstitute.org)

4. Australia Asia Centre

Tel.: +61-2-9650 0998

Fax: +61-2-9654 6680  
 Web: [www.asiasociety.org.au](http://www.asiasociety.org.au)

### AUSTRALIA - ECONOMIC

- Composition of GDP** : The Australian economy is based overwhelmingly on services, which account for 80.1% of GDP. The mining sector accounts for 7.6%; manufacturing for 11%; agriculture, forestry and fishery for 2.3%.
- Financial Year** : July 1 - June 30
- GDP (current prices)** : US\$1,219.7billion; (A\$1,219.3bn) (2010)
- GDP Per Capita** : US\$54,869; (A\$ 54,869) (2010)
- GDP Growth** : 3% (2010)
- Foreign Exchange Reserves** : US\$ 32.5 bn. (A\$ 33.8 bn.) (Nov 2010)
- Main natural resources** : Coal, Gold, Iron Ore, Bauxite, Alumina, Uranium, Lead, Zinc, Copper, Nickel, Natural Gas.
- Principal crops** : Wheat, Barley, Oats, Oilseeds
- Currency** : A\$ 1= US\$ 1.01 / Rs. 45.70 (30 Dec 2010)
- Total Merchandise Trade(A\$bn)** : 404.3 (Exports:200.7;Imports:203.6)(2009-10)

#### AUSTRALIA'S PRINCIPAL TRADING PARTNERS (2009-10, Australian\$)

Country	Total Trade	Rank	Exports	Rank	Imports	Rank
China	\$82.8 bn.	1st	\$46.4 bn.	1st	\$36.3 bn.	1st
Japan	\$54.88 bn.	2nd	\$37.10 bn.	2nd	\$17.78 bn.	3rd
USA	\$33.5 bn.	3rd	\$9.5 bn.	5th	\$24.05 bn.	2nd
Republic of	\$23.54 bn.	4th	\$16.49 bn.	3rd	\$7.04 bn.	8th

Korea						
India	\$18.02 bn.	5th	\$16.17 bn.	4th	\$1.85 bn.	21st
Thailand	\$17.14 bn.	6th	\$4.70 bn.	9th	\$12.44 bn.	4th
Singapore	\$15.96 bn.	7th	\$5.03 bn.	8th	\$10.9 bn.	5th
New Zealand	\$15.02 bn.	8th	\$8.03 bn.	7th	\$6.99 bn.	7th
United Kingdom	\$12.98 bn.	9th	\$7.21 bn.	6th	\$5.77 bn.	9th
Germany	\$12.41 bn	10th	\$1.6 bn	18th	\$10.72 bn	6th

**Outward Investment** : ( A\$mn. ) 1,193,768 (As on Jun 30 , 2010)

**Inward Investment** : ( A\$mn. ) 1,957,226 (As on Jun 30, 2010)

**Leading Destination countries** : U.S.A(\$403.6 bn/33.8%)  
U.K.(\$178.7bn/14.9%)  
New Zealand (\$79.59 bn/6.6%)  
Japan(\$31.6bn/2.6%)  
Netherlands(\$26.36bn/2.2%)

**Leading Investing countries** : U.S.A (\$514.30 bn/26.2%)  
U.K.(\$498.5bn/25.4%)  
Japan (\$102.02 bn/5.2%)  
Hong Kong(\$43.1 bn/2.2%)  
Switzerland (\$32.3 bn/1.65%)