

Australia Facts sheet (2018)

Geography

Area: 7,682,300 sq km

This island continent is the world's driest, but there is more rainfall in the east, southeast and southwest coastal regions, where most of the population live in towns and cities.

Borders: Australia is an island and a continent. It shares no land borders with any other country. It borders the Pacific Ocean to the east and the Indian Ocean to the west. Other island countries nearby Australia include East Timor, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Indonesia, and New Zealand.

Highest mountain: Mount Kosciuszko 2,229 m

Population: 22 million

Capital: Canberra

Major Cities: Sydney 4.429 million; Melbourne 3.853 million; Brisbane 1.97 million; Perth 1.599 million; CANBERRA (capital) 384,000 (2009)

People living in cities: 89%

States of Australia: Australia is divided into six states: Queensland, New South Wales, South Australia, Victoria, Western Australia, and Tasmania. The largest state in population is New South Wales with Victoria and Queensland coming in second and third. In the middle of the country is a large territory, called the Northern Territory, which is not a state.

Famous Places: Sydney Opera House, Ayers Rock (Uluru), Bondi Beach, Sydney Harbor Bridge, Great Barrier Reef, Kakadu National Park, Port Authur (Tasmania), Kangaroo Island, 12 Apostles (limestone rocks off the ocean)

Official language: English. 20% of the population use English as a second language.

Largest Religion: Christian: 69.5%

Challenges for Prayer

The Church in Australia faces a mighty challenge. While over two-thirds of Australians identify themselves in some way as Christian, only 10% regularly attend church. There is much criticism of the church for being 'intolerant'. This means that non-Christians criticize the church for standing up for what the Bible says to be true. Church attendance is dropping off in all mainline churches. There is higher attendance, particularly of young people, in the Pentecostal churches such as Hillsong and Planet Shakers.

Economy of Australia

Major Industries: mining, industrial and transportation equipment, food processing, chemicals, steel

Agricultural Products: wheat, barley, sugarcane, fruits, cattle, sheep, poultry

Natural Resources: bauxite, coal, iron ore, copper, tin, gold, silver, uranium, nickel, tungsten, mineral sands, lead, zinc, diamonds, natural gas, petroleum

Major Exports: coal, gold, meat, wool, alumina, iron ore, wheat, machinery and transport equipment

Currency: Australian dollar (AUD)

Government of Australia

Type of Government: federal parliamentary democracy

Independence: 1 January 1901 (federation of UK colonies)