



Australia's relationship with

WEST VIRGINIA

KEY FACTS

- **Population:** 1,792,147 (2019)
- **Major Cities:** Charleston (Capital and Largest), Huntington, Morgantown, Parkersburg
- **Gross Domestic Product:** \$78.86 billion (2019)
- **Key Industries:** mining (coal, natural gas, petroleum, salt), chemical manufacturing, agriculture, tourism
- **Known for:** nick named "The Mountain State"; Mountains with over 80% forestation, often referred to as 'the Switzerland of the US'; Most karstic areas in the world, excellent for recreational caving and scientific research; Historically significant logging and coal mining industries
- **National Rankings:** (out of 50 states)
 - Economy: 50th
 - Healthcare: 48th
 - Infrastructure: 50th
 - Education: 44th
 - Tax burden: 18th
 - State size by area: 41st
 - State size by population: 37th
 - Density: 29th

ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIP

- **Two-way Trade:** \$37 million
- **Value of Australian exports to WV:** \$6 million
- **WV exports to Australia:** \$31 million
- **WV goods exported to Australia:** paint, pharmaceuticals, auto parts, chemicals

PEOPLE TO PEOPLE LINKS

- **Sister Cities:** Bluefield, WV and Lithgow, NSW
- **Representation:** Australia's relationship with West Virginia is managed by the Consulate General in Washington DC

POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT

- **Governor:** Jim Justice (R), incumbent
- **2020 Presidential Outcome:** Trump 68.6%
- **Senators:** Joe Manchin (D), Shelley Moore Capito (R)
- **House:** 3 Republicans

AUSTRALIAN BUSINESS

- **Constellium:** Industrial engineering firm that is now the largest employer in the state formed from Rio Tinto's sale of the Alcan Aluminium plant in 2011
- **Gloria Jean's Coffee:** Specialty coffeehouse chain offering gourmet blends in a variety of flavours, plus tea and pastries

GLOBAL BUSINESS

West Virginia is home to more than 130 businesses representing 27 countries. Germany is the leading foreign employer in the state. Since 1986, the recruitment of Japanese investment has been a key part of West Virginia's economic development strategy. The state maintains trade offices in Japan and Switzerland.

- **Kanawha Scales and Systems:** Maintains a Sydney office
- **MedExpress:** Headquartered in Morgantown
- **Special Metals Corp:** A world leader in the invention, production and supply of high-nickel alloys for critical engineering

UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIPS

West Virginia University has student exchange programs with a number of Australian universities, including the Australian Catholic University, Bond University, and RMIT.



CULTURAL

- **New River Gorge:** The most photographed landscape in the state. The park offers hiking, biking, rafting and amazing views of one of the oldest rivers in North America and is home to one of the highest bridges on the continent.
- **The Greenbrier:** An 18th century resort that is now a national historic landmark. The resort has hosted 26 presidents, foreign dignitaries and royalty. During the Cold War, an underground shelter was built to house the entire US Congress in case of nuclear attack.
- **Harpers Ferry:** Quiet, historic community and a national historic site that sports museums, battlefields and outdoor recreational activities.
- **Italian Heritage Festival:** Largest festival in the state. It has won the prestigious 'Top 100 Events in North America' by the American Business Association several years in a row.
- **The International Water Tasting Festival:** Award-winning competition involving participants from across the world to determine who has the best tasting tap, bottled and purified water.

SCIENCE AND INNOVATION

- **Entrepreneurship Ranking:** 44th (based on new firm births as a share of total businesses in the state, rank out of 51)
 - **Tech Jobs Ranking:** 47th (based on share of engineers and computer scientists in the workforce, rank out of 51)
 - **BERD Intensity Ranking:** 44th (based on business expenditure on R&D per dollar of state output, rank out of 51)
 - **New Economy Index Ranking:** 48th (based on composite index that reports on the innovation-driven economy, rank out of 51)
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