

Australia's relationship with

WEST VIRGINIA

KEY FACTS

- **Population:** 1.85 million (38th most populous state), 2017 estimate
- **Major Cities:** Charleston (Capital and Largest), Huntington, Morgantown and Parkersburg
- **Gross Domestic Product (GDP):** \$74 billion (2017)
- **GDP Growth:** 2.2% (2017)
- **% College Educated:** 28%
- **Median Household Income:** \$73,277 (2017)
- **Key Industries:** Tourism (contributed \$4.1 billion and employed 45,000 people)
- **Known for:**
 - "West Virginian", "the Mountain/Panhandle State"
 - Mountains and rolling hills, over 80% forested, often referred to as "the Switzerland of the U.S."
 - Most karstic areas in the world, excellent for recreational caving and scientific research
 - Known for a wide range of outdoor recreational opportunities
- **National Rankings: (out of 50 states)**
 - Economy: 49th
 - Healthcare: 44th
 - Infrastructure: 50th
 - Education: 45th
 - Tax burden: 18th
 - State size by area: 41st
 - State size by population: 38th
 - Density: 29th

ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIP

- **Two-Way Trade (goods only):** \$47 million (2019)
- **Australia's Exports to West Virginia (goods only):** 6 million (2019)



- **West Virginia's Exports to Australia (goods only):** \$40 million (2019)
 - Pharmaceuticals, Paint, Auto parts, Chemicals

PEOPLE TO PEOPLE LINKS

In 2013, Australian tourists spent \$28 million dollars in West Virginia.

- **Sister Cities:**
 - Bluefield – Lithgow NSW
- **Representation:** Australia's relationship with Alabama is managed by the **Consulate General in Washington DC**

AUSTRALIAN COMMUNITY

- **Australians Living in Alabama:**
 - Angus Davies (Australian punter who played football at West Virginia University and returned to Australia in 2018)
- **Groups:**
 - Aussies Living in WV Facebook Group

POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT

- **Governor:** Jim Justice (R), next election in 2020
- **2016 Presidential Outcome:** Trump 68.7%
- **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.
- **Cardno Limited**
- **Gloria Jean's Coffee**

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**
- **ESMark**
- **Special Metals Corp**

CULTURAL

- **New River Gorge:** 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:** 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 U.S. 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 & 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)
- 