

about australia



General

Australia is characterised by political stability, relatively high incomes, an egalitarian culture, and a long tradition of representative democracy. Australians have a high rate of home ownership and value leisure time, especially sports and other outdoor pursuits. Although originally dominated by an Anglo-Celtic culture, Australia has become increasingly multi-cultural in the latter decades of the 20th century.

Australia has one of the most outstanding economies of the world in recent years. As a solid growth, low-inflation, low interest rate economy, it is more vibrant than ever before. There is an efficient government sector, a flexible labour market and a very competitive business sector with unemployment at its lowest in 32 years. As an employment destination it is a spectacular place in which to share and broaden your work experience and expertise.

The population in Australia is nearly 22.5 million with around 50% of the population residing on the eastern sea board of Australia. Sydney is the largest city with a population of approx 4.5 million followed by Melbourne with 4 million and Brisbane with a population of 2 million.

HR in Australia

Areas of demand

The talent shortage in Australia can be beneficial for experienced HR professionals seeking new opportunities.

Specialist HR functions are currently in reasonably high demand in Australia, particularly learning and development. A recent survey concluded that L&D Managers were among the top ten jobs in demand for 2008.

The combination of low unemployment and continued inflationary pressures has also resulted in a demand for remuneration specialists, as businesses in Australia attempt to balance staff retention whilst remaining competitive. Related to this is the issue of talent management, which is becoming a priority for many companies. As a result, there has been a growth in the role of the Resourcing and Retention specialist.

A rise in the number of company restructures and consolidations within various markets has led to an increased demand for HR professionals with change management or M&A experience. Additionally, it is expected that the recent change in government legislation will result in a greater need for industrial relations specialists.



HR in Australia (cont'd)

Remuneration and Benefits

Salaries will vary widely depending on the content of the position and the industry in which the role is positioned. Remuneration is generally made up of base salary, compulsory employer superannuation contributions as well as other cash and non-cash benefits. The following are indicative current salary ranges for HR generalists.

Title	Salary Range (AUD)
Group HR Director	\$230,000 ++
Divisional HR Director	\$170,000 – \$230,000
Head of HR	\$150,000 – \$200,000
HR Manager	\$120,000 – \$150,000
HR Business Partner	\$100,000 – \$140,000
HR Consultant	\$70,000 – \$100,000
HR Advisor	\$60,000 – \$75,000
HR Officer	\$50,000 – \$60,000
HR Administrator/Coordinator	\$40,000 – \$55,000

What to expect working in Australia

Australia has one of the largest groups of workers working regularly over 49 hours a week, and has around 7-8 per cent who work over 60 hours a week.

This however is dependent on the industry and the culture of the company you work for. Make sure you ascertain the expected work hours to provide the best fit.

Documentation to Work

The overall level of immigration has grown substantially during the last decade. Net overseas migration increased to 224,619 in 2008/09. Of them, 5% were from South Africa, 16% from Asia, 14% from Oceania and 21% from Europe, including 14% from United Kingdom. The largest component of immigration is the skilled migration and family re-union programs.

The federal government sets immigration intake numbers on a yearly basis. Australia's immigration policies are non-discriminatory and all applicants to migrate must meet the same selection criteria.

Employer sponsored work visas are an option for skilled people to be employed in Australia on a temporary or permanent basis. Applicants for these visas must be sponsored by their employer. Temporary visas offer a pathway to a permanent visa.

A Temporary Business Long Stay – Standard Business Sponsorship (subclass 457) is the most commonly used program for employers to sponsor overseas workers to work in Australia on a temporary basis. There are also special arrangements for employers in regional areas across Australia. To find out more about the Temporary Business Long Stay 457 visa go to www.immi.gov.au

A new English language requirement was introduced on 1 July 2007. Applicants need to have proficiency in English and detail their language skills on their visa form.



Outside the office

Lifestyle

'The Lucky Country' is a country unlike any other with an amazing variety of landscapes, climate, animals, plants, people, cultures and lifestyles. Australia is one of the driest countries in the world with just 6% of its land considered suitable for agriculture.

Distances are vast and visitors are often surprised at the size of the country and how long it takes to travel from city to city. Australia stretches about 4000 kilometres from east to west and 3700 kilometres from north to south. It takes about five hours to fly from Sydney to Perth.

The belief in a "Fair Go" is a key part of Australian culture and is demonstrated in the existence of strong public health and education systems.

Australians have traditionally had a very strong "underdog" attitude, that they will support those who appear to be at a disadvantage unless Australia is in direct competition with another nation. This underdog attitude is most relevant in sport, which is a large part of Australian culture.

Australians also see themselves as being critical of their political leaders and successful personalities, and tend to be sympathetic to those who are 'being done wrong by' or in strife.

Weather

Australian weather is unique in that the average maximum temperature goes from 16°C (60°F) in winter to 26°C (78°F). The average minimum temperature is from 8°C (46°F) to 18.5°C (65°F).

Generally, the further north you go in the summer months (Dec - Feb) the hotter it tends to get. Conversely, in the winter months (Jun - Aug) it gets colder.



Outside the office (cont'd)

Sport

Australians are passionate about sport and it forms a major part of the country's culture. Most of Australia's patriotism is expressed through sport and thus it is taken quite seriously, especially seen during major international events such as the Olympic Games and Commonwealth Games.

- The most popular sports include Australian rules football (more usually called Aussie Rules, or AFL) is the most popular winter sport in Victoria, Western Australia, Northern Territory, South Australia and Tasmania. As the only sport invented by Australians, Australian rules football holds a special place in Australian culture. It is played in all states and is the most popular football code in the nation. It is also the best attended of sporting codes in Australia.
- Rugby league is the most popular winter sport in the Australian Capital Territory, New South Wales, and Queensland. Rugby league is played in Australia at club level by teams from cities around the nation, as well as at representative level between Queensland and New South Wales in the national State of Origin series, one of Australia's major sporting events. In addition the Australian Kangaroos represent the country in international matches.
- Football (soccer) is the most popular international sport in Australia. The national teams' recent success in the 2006 and 2010 FIFA World Cups provided the team with a huge popularity and following.
- Rugby union is also one of the most popular winter sports within Australia (especially in the Australian Capital Territory), with teams competing in the Super 15, alongside South Africa and New Zealand.
- Australia's premier summer sport is cricket.
- Australians also enjoy many other popular sports such as tennis, netball, soccer, golf, basketball and motorsports.
- Gambling is a pastime of many, and horse racing and greyhound racing are popular sports for this reason.



Accommodation

House Purchase

The median cost of a house in Australia is just over \$AUD486,000. In Sydney that cost rises significantly to \$AUD585,000 and then even more again for a nicer area with more amenities.

How do I find a house for rent in Australia?

Finding a rental property in Australia is relatively straightforward. You can rent houses, units and flats directly from private owners, by looking through the 'To Let' section of newspapers, or through Real Estate agents. Internet sites such as www.domain.com.au have become the most popular tools for finding property to either rent or buy in Australia.

The rental market in most of the capital cities is highly competitive.

Once you've found a property you'd like to rent – what next?

You should arrange to inspect the property you are interested in before making a decision; in some cases you may be competing with other interested families and may not be selected.

To secure a rental property, you will need a security bond (refundable deposit) plus a payment of several weeks' rent which has to be paid in advance.

In most cases you will also be asked to provide two 'references'.

i www.domain.com.au

Childcare

i www.echildcare.com.au

Schooling

To view an online guide to all Australian schools including schools in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Canberra, Adelaide, Perth, Darwin etc visit

i www.australianschoolsdirectory.com.au
www.education.net.au

Transport

i Sydney www.131500.info
Melbourne www.metlinkmelbourne.com.au
Brisbane www.translink.com.au



Money

Australia has a decimal currency. Banks are generally opened Monday to Thursday from 9am to 4pm and on Fridays from 9am to 5pm. Some larger branches in suburban areas may also be open on Saturday mornings.

The top four retail banks are:

i National Australia Bank	www.nab.com.au
ANZ	www.anz.com.au
Commonwealth Bank	www.commbank.com.au
Westpac	www.westpac.com.au

Currency Exchange Rates

i www.currencyconverter.com.au

City Info

The three most populated cities are:

Sydney

There's always plenty to do in Sydney but, in summer, the harbour city really sizzles with great shows, lifestyle and sporting events, with everything being capped off by the renowned New Year's Eve party.

Sydney's distinctly outdoor lifestyle is complemented by the beach culture, stylish boutiques and department stores, waterside restaurants and cocktail bars.

i www.sydney.com.au
www.visitnsw.com.au

Melbourne

Whatever the time of day - or time of year - Melbourne is always buzzing. From dining to nightlife to shopping to sport, there is always something going on - much of it within walking distance of the CBD.

i www.visitmelbourne.com.au
www.visitvictoria.com

Brisbane

Brisbane is one of Australia's emerging cities and has cafés and galleries galore.

i www.visitqueensland.com