

Australia

Indiana University Lilly Family School of Philanthropy

Country Overview

Population (2018)	24,982,688
GNI Per Capita (2018)	\$54,906
Country Classification by Income Level (2018)	High-income
Number of Registered Philanthropic Organizations (2018)	55,059
Philanthropic Environment Country Overall Score (2018)	4.17
Philanthropic Environment Cross-Border Flows Score (2018)	4.50

Data: Population, GNI Per Capita and Country Classification by Income Level: World Bank, www.worldbank.org

Number of Registered Philanthropic Organizations: Global Philanthropy Environment Index: Oceania, globalindices.iupui.edu

Philanthropic Environment Country Overall Score and Cross-Border Flows Score: Indiana University Lilly Family School of Philanthropy, 2018 *Global Philanthropy Environment Index*. globalindices.iupui.edu

Cross-Border Resource Flows, 2018 (in millions of inflation-adjusted 2018 US dollars)

Total Resource Flows	Philanthropy	Official Development Assistance (ODA)	Remittances	Private Capital Investment
\$17,826.82	\$740.51	\$3,149.00	\$16,887.93	-\$2,950.62
Quality of Data on Philanthropic Outflows			+++	

Data: Indiana University Lilly Family School of Philanthropy, 2020 *Global Philanthropy Tracker* globalindices.iupui.edu

Summary of cross-border philanthropy

Data on cross-border philanthropy are scarce in Australia due to nonprofits' tendency not to file tax returns and the ineligibility of most individual cross-border donations for tax benefits (Silver, 2016). Some data is available through the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID), whose annual reports of the activity of its member NGOs provide some data on the activity of NGOs and other affiliated organizations that operate in the international development sector (Australian Council for International Development, 2019).

SENDING CROSS-BORDER CHARITABLE DONATIONS

Australian NPOs are permitted to send cross-border charitable donations with few restrictions (Indiana University Lilly Family School of Philanthropy, 2018). Per Australian tax code, nonprofits are income tax exempt only if most of their activities are in Australia. Charities can maintain income tax exemption and circumvent this regulation to benefit overseas recipients if the organization conducts its work within Australia but sends funds to a different organization operating overseas. Individuals receive tax benefits only when donations are made to non-profits designated Deductible Gift Recipients. As a small number are permitted to operate overseas, individual cross-border donations to this category are tax deductible.

RECEIVING CROSS-BORDER CHARITABLE DONATIONS

Organizations may also receive cross-border donations with little restriction (Indiana University Lilly Family School of Philanthropy, 2018). Customs duty taxes apply to imported goods, but there are several exemptions.

ESTIMATED CROSS-BORDER GIVING

No central organization collects data on overall cross-border giving. Data collection can be difficult in Australia, as nonprofit organizations typically do not file tax returns (Silver, 2016). The Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) sources its data from the international development NGOs and other affiliated organizations under its umbrella. Each year, ACFID reports a breakdown of the total expenditures for its 121 member organizations' projects.

In the 2018-19 fiscal year, total cross-border giving measured as the total expenditure for international projects was AUD 952 million.¹ The three major recipient regions for project expenditures were Africa (AUD 219 million), Southeast Asia (AUD 198 million), and the Pacific (AUD 142 million). Other recipient regions included South Asia (AUD 99 million), West Asia (AUD 81 million), Latin America (AUD 8 million), and East Asia (AUD 7 million). Data on direct individual cross-border giving is unavailable, but individuals' contribution to the full scope of the activities of ACFID organizations amounted to AUD 846 million (Australian Council for International Development, 2019).

¹ For comparative research purposes, GPT used data for fiscal year 2017-18 in its analysis. In 2017–18, total cross-border philanthropic outflow was AUD 1.051 billion.

ESTIMATED CROSS-BORDER VOLUNTEERING

In Australia, the government-sponsored Australian Volunteers Program (AVP) sends motivated Australians to countries across the Asia-Pacific region. The AVP is a recent initiative that began in January 2018 to replace the Australian Volunteers for International Development program. The program seeks to build volunteers' competencies across a variety of skill sets, including education, community and social development, disaster and emergency management, and engineering.

In partner countries, “long-term partnerships” with Australian organizations promote sustainable development. Volunteer assignments focus on three themes: “inclusive economic growth, human rights, and climate change/disaster resilience/food security.” The program also defines its support of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (Australian Volunteers for International Development, 2019).

Operating under an AUD 37.3M budget, 943 volunteers worked with 633 partner organizations in 26 countries in FY 2018-19. Approximately half of the assignments were in Asia (51%), and a smaller proportion were in the Pacific and Timor-Leste (40%) or Africa (9%). The partner organizations in these countries work in various sectors, from government and civil society (25% of partner organizations) to health (21%), education (16%), and social infrastructure and services (13%) goals (Australian Volunteers for International Development, 2019).

In addition to AVP volunteers, the 121 ACFID member organizations deployed 1558 volunteers internationally in the 2018-19 fiscal year. These projects targeted a variety of development sectors, including health, education, and humanitarian aid and emergency response goals (Australian Volunteers for International Development, 2019). As ACFID organizations are NGOs working in international development, there is likely some overlap with the AVP. Precise data on the overlap is unavailable.

CROSS-BORDER GIVING BY CHARITABLE CAUSES

ACFID members operated 3485 projects in 86 countries in FY 2018-19. The largest cause to which organizations gave was humanitarian aid, with a total of AUD 238.2 million and 28 percent of total funding. Health and education each received 15 percent of cross-border giving at AUD 130 million and AUD 126 million, respectively. Other causes supported include children, agriculture, water sanitation and hygiene, and women's empowerment (Australian Council for International Development, 2019).

KEY DEVELOPMENTS AND TRENDS IN CROSS-BORDER GIVING

In a growing trend, Australian donors' support focuses on Australian-based charities. Three-fifths of Australian givers preferred to support local or national charities in 2019, which rose to 67 percent of givers in 2020 (Renton & McCrindle, 2020; McCrindle, 2019). In both years, only five percent of donors preferred cross-border donations.

Given the slightly higher than average percentage of Gen Y and Gen Z donors that prefer to support organizations outside Australia, cross-border giving is likely to increase as these generations age (Renton & McCrindle, 2020).

Various online technologies have enabled a growth in online giving in Australia as well, and new technology has aided the growth in remittances following an increase in international migration (Silver, 2016). Another trend in cross-border philanthropy, the increased presence of collaborative co-investment funds will allow growth in impact of those funds that operate at the international level (Richards, 2020).

References

Australian Council for International Development. (2019). Annual Report 2018-2019.

Australian Volunteers for International Development. (2019). Australian Volunteers Program Annual Report, July 2018-June 2019.

Indiana University Lilly Family School of Philanthropy. (2018). Global Philanthropy Environment Index: Australia. <https://globalindices.iupui.edu/>

McCrindle. (2019). Australian Community Trends Report.

Renton, S., & McCrindle, M. (2020). Exploring social license, trust, and the next generation of donors.

Richards, N. (2020). *12 Trends in Philanthropy*. Philanthropy Australia. <https://www.philanthropy.org.au/12-trends/>

Silver, N. (2016). Beyond the water's edge: Re-thinking the tax treatment of Australian cross-border donations.

ADDITIONAL READINGS

McGlone, T. (2016, June 15). *Australian international giving in an era of philanthropic globalization*. Giving Australia 2016. <http://blog.bus.qut.edu.au/giving-australia-2016/australian-international-giving-in-an-era-of-philanthropic-globalisation/>

Do you have information to add to this profile?

We greatly appreciate the contributions of researchers, scholars, and leaders around the world to the study of cross-border philanthropy. If you know of any additional information or newly available data that could be included in future editions, please send us an update at indices@iupui.edu.