



Otázka: Australia

Jazyk: Angličtina

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Australia

Is the Earth's **smallest continent** (it covers the area of about 7,687, 000 km) lying in the southern hemisphere between the Indian and Pacific Oceans. It is one of the oldest landmasses on earth, originally breaking away from the super continent **Gondwana** and settling its current position about 15 million years ago.

And it is also **the flattest** (*nejplošší*) and youngest of all continents.

HISTORY

Australia was discovered by Portuguese, Spanish and Dutch navigators, but prior (*před*) to the arrival of the Europeans, dark-skinned people were living there, we call them aborigines, however they did not originate (*vzniknout*) there – they came here from Asia about 40,000 years ago; they were divided into approximately 650 tribes, each tribe usually has its own dialect and customs.

In 1770 the Captain James Cook of the British Navy landed in Botany Bay with his ship Endeavour with several scientists and botanists.

The discovery of gold in the middle of the 19th century attracted many immigrants and the population increased rapidly.

GEOGRAPHY

It's about as large (*skoro stejně velká*) as the USA, but vast areas, especially in the interior and in the tropical north are completely uninhabited (*neobydlený*), the population is concentrated on the coast. – The western part of Australia is a **flat plateau** (*plošina*) – the Great Western Plateau.

- In the east there is a chain of highlands known as **the Eastern highlands or Great Diving Range**, then there is an area known as **the Australian Alps**, there are the highest in the Southern Part and there is also the highest peak of the continent – **Mt. Kosciusko** (2,230 m), the Australian Alps are covered (*pokryté*) in snow even during the summer
- Between the Great Western Plateau and the Great Diving Range there are low-lying (*nízko položené*) plains known as the Central-Eastern Lowlands

RIVERS AND LAKES

- The largest river is the Murray (1,600 km long), with its tributaries (*přítoky*) the Darling, the Murrumbidgee and the Lachlan
- Most Australian rivers are small creeks (*potoky*) when there is not enough rain (*když není dost deště*)
- In Australia there are about 760 lakes, the largest of them is Lake Eyre

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

- Australia is situated in the Southern hemisphere, it means that the seasons are opposite to those in the Northern hemisphere (there is summer, when we have a winter in our country)
- **The Northern part** of the continent lies in **the tropical climate** zone, the rest of the continent in the **sub-tropical or temperate zone**, but there are great differences between individual regions, depending on the distance from the coast (*pobřeží*) and on the altitude (*nadmořská výška*)
- There are **areas** in Australia where **it doesn't rain for years at a time** (*kde někdy neprší po celé roky*)
- There are often hurricanes.

FAUNA AND FLORA

- Australia was isolated for more than 55 million years, so there are **unique** (*jedinečný*) **kinds** of animals and plants found nowhere else in the world.
- There live animals like **kangaroo, koala, emu, kiwi, dingo, wombat**, etc. One of queerest (*nejpodivnější*) animals is **platypus** - it is a mammal, but it has a beak (*zobák*) and webbed feet (*s plovacími blánami*) and lays eggs.
- Typical plants of this country include **eucalyptus** and national flower **wattle** (*akácie*)

ENVIRONMENT

Australia has more than 2,000 national parks and nature reserves. No less than **13 areas** are inscribed on the **UN's World Heritage List**.

POLITICAL SYSTEM

- Australia is a dominion (*samosprávná kolonie*) of the United Kingdom
- The official **head of the state is Elizabeth II** in Australia represented by the Governor General
- **The Commonwealth of Australia** is a **federation of six states** - New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, South Australia, Western Australia and Tasmania and three territories - the Northern Territory, Coral Sea Islands Territory and Australian Capital Territory
- There is a Federal Government for the whole of Australia and **each state has its own government and institutions** (so it's similar to the American pattern)
- The **Federal Parliament** consists of two Houses: **the Senate** (64 senators altogether) and **the House of Representatives** (elected from each state in proportion to population (*jejich počet tedy záleží na počet obyvatel v každém státě*))

TRANSPORT

- Although Australia is a vast (*rozlehlý*) country it is easy explored by plane, rail and coach (*dálkové busy*).
- To Australian airlines belong Qantas, Ansett Australia and many smaller regional airlines. Scheduled domestic services carry more than 18 million passengers a year.
- Long Straight - 478.4 kilometers long straight stretch (*úsek*)



COMMUNICATION AND MEDIA

- There are more than **120 magazine titles** and several national, metropolitan and regional daily newspapers. **The oldest daily newspaper** in the southern hemisphere is **the Sydney Morning Herald**, founded in 1831. The national newspaper is The Australian.
- There are 41 commercial TV stations and 3 satellite stations across the country.

PLACES OF INTEREST

- **Canberra** - capital city; name of aboriginal origin meaning "meeting place"
- **Sydney** - the oldest city of Australia is famous for its **Sydney Opera house** that looks like a ship and the Harbour Bridge.
- **Melbourne** - one of the most beautiful cities, second largest city
- **Uluru** - the **highest monolith** in the world, it's situated in the middle of the desert and now it's owned by the Aboriginals

FLAG

Australian flag consists of **a small Union Jack** in the top left corner on a blue background and the Southern Cross constellation.

Seven-pointed star - represents the six states and one is for the territories

TASMANIA

Tasmania is an island south of Australia. It is named after the explorer Abel Tasman. It is sometimes called also "The apple island". It is home to a rare animal - Tasmanian devil - a carnivorous (*masožravý*) marsupial.

AUSTRALIAN ENGLISH

- lot of shortenings - Oz = Australia
- Aussie = Australian



Roo = Kangaroo