How Australia Compares is a fascinating reference that compares Australia with 17 developed countries across a wide range of social, economic and political dimensions. It gives not only snapshot comparisons from the present, but charts trends over recent decades or even longer.

Encyclopaedic in scope, this book provides statistics for a huge range of human activity, from taxation to traffic accidents, homicide rates to health expenditure, interest rates to internet usage.

Countries compared are:
- Austria
- Belgium
- Canada
- Denmark
- Finland
- France
- Germany
- Ireland
- Italy
- Japan
- Netherlands
- New Zealand
- Norway
- Sweden
- Switzerland
- United Kingdom
- United States of America

This new edition is fully revised and updated, and includes new or expanded sections on the impact of the Howard years, advertising, broadband internet access, childcare, income inequality and crime rates.

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The aims and strategy of this second edition are essentially the same as the first. However, several changes have been made, a few due to necessity because of the unavailability of recent data, but mainly through our efforts to improve the book and its usefulness. Not only have we tried to update all chapters, but we have often extended and restructured our efforts to try to bring more enlightening information and such analysis.

We have added two new chapters. The first, The search for scoreboards, concentrates on some of the ambitious attempts to produce more encompassing composite indicators. The last chapter, The Howard impact, brings together data and analysis on the comparative performance of the Howard Government.

Some readers of the first edition wanted more graphs as well as tables, while others said they wanted comparisons with other countries as well as the 18 advanced democracies. While the basic format and approach of the book have remained the same, we have accommodated these suggestions to a limited extent. In addition to the 329 tables in the book, there are also now 31 graphs, and while the bulk of the tables still concentrate on the 18 democracies, 19 tables now present global data.

Many of the tables and sections from the first edition which are not included in this edition can be found at the website Australia Policy Online: www.apo.org.au. In addition, that website contains the detailed tabular data behind the graphs in the book, plus some other discussions of our findings. Any errata that come to light will also be noted there.
For this edition, we are again pleased to be working with Cambridge University Press, and thank especially Kim Armitage, Susan Hanley and Jodie Howell.

Again we have drawn extensively on the resources of Sydney University’s Fisher Library. In addition, we would like to acknowledge the professionalism and assistance of several researchers in the organisations from whose data we have drawn, especially Max Ladique, Michael di Looper and Taylor Reynolds at the OECD and of Sue Thomson at ACER.

Rod gratefully acknowledges the excellent research assistance of Erin Kelly. Erin’s work on this book was made possible through a collaborative ARC grant to the website Australia Policy Online, directed by the Institute of Social Research at Swinburne University of Technology. We thank the ARC and the APO team at Swinburne, especially Peter Browne.

Our deepest acknowledgements are unrevised. Once again, we dedicate this book to our families with love and thanks – to Kathryn, Paul and Ruth and to Claudia, Sandy and Katie.
**Rankings.** When tables are not presented in alphabetical order, they are ordered according to one of the data columns in the table to facilitate comprehension. Most often this is according to the final column because this represents data for the most recent year. More occasionally, it is by the first date column.

**Mean.** All means given in the tables are unweighted arithmetic means. That is, all 18 countries contribute equally to calculating the mean, and it takes no account of the differing sizes of countries. Because our central purpose is comparison, this is the appropriate measure.

**Mean D18.** The term ‘Mean D18’ is used, especially in graphs, to designate the mean of the 18 selected democracies that we are comparing. Often the Australian figure is compared with the D18 mean, and then it should be remembered that Australia contributed 1/18 to the D18 value. We always simply use the expression ‘D18’ even when there is data missing for one or two countries.

**Germany.** All 18 countries have had fairly stable boundaries over the last half century or more except for Germany. West and East Germany formally re-united on 3 October 1990. At that time, West Germany’s population was 62 million and East Germany’s was 16 million. As is the custom in most international statistics, in this book, unless otherwise indicated, figures for Germany up until 1990 are for West Germany and figures after 1990 are for the whole of Germany.

* ... Two dots in a table indicates missing data. NA indicates that data would not be applicable for that country for that category.*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABC</td>
<td>Australian Broadcasting Corporation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABS</td>
<td>Australian Bureau of Statistics</td>
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<tr>
<td>AGPS</td>
<td>Australian Government Publishing Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AIHW</td>
<td>Australian Institute of Health and Welfare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANU</td>
<td>Australian National University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATM</td>
<td>automatic teller machine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BBC</td>
<td>British Broadcasting Corporation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BMI</td>
<td>Body Mass Index</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BPI</td>
<td>Bribe Payers’ Index</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAT</td>
<td>computer assisted technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIA</td>
<td>Central Intelligence Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DCI</td>
<td>Christian Democratic Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECEC</td>
<td>early childhood education and care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EFTPOS</td>
<td>electronic funds transfer at point of sale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EIRO</td>
<td>European Industrial Relations Observatory</td>
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<tr>
<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAO</td>
<td>Food and Agriculture Organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>FDI</td>
<td>foreign direct investment</td>
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<tr>
<td>GATT</td>
<td>General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade</td>
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<td>GDI</td>
<td>Gender Development Index</td>
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<tr>
<td>GDP</td>
<td>Gross Domestic Product</td>
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<tr>
<td>GEM</td>
<td>Gender Empowerment Measure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GNI</td>
<td>Gross National Income</td>
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<td>GNP</td>
<td>Gross National Product</td>
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<td>goods and services tax</td>
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<td>HMSO</td>
<td>Her Majesty’s Stationery Office</td>
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<td>Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission</td>
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<td>ICT</td>
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<td>ICVS</td>
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<td>International Energy Agency</td>
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<td>IT</td>
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<td>LIC</td>
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<td>LIS</td>
<td>Luxembourg Income Study</td>
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<td>least developed countries</td>
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<td>magnetic resonance imaging</td>
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<td>OECD</td>
<td>Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development</td>
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<td>OPEC</td>
<td>Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries</td>
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<tr>
<td>PAC</td>
<td>pollution abatement and control</td>
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<td>PBS</td>
<td>Public Broadcasting Service</td>
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<tr>
<td>PC</td>
<td>personal computer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PISA</td>
<td>Programme for International Student Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPP</td>
<td>purchasing power parity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PR</td>
<td>proportional representation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PYLL</td>
<td>Potential Years of Life Lost research and development</td>
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<tr>
<td>R&amp;D</td>
<td>Special Broadcasting Service</td>
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<tr>
<td>SIPRI</td>
<td>Stockholm Institute for Peace Research Incorporated</td>
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<tr>
<td>SME</td>
<td>small- and medium-sized enterprise</td>
</tr>
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<td>TI</td>
<td>Transparency International</td>
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<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
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<td>UNHCR</td>
<td>United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees</td>
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<td>WHO</td>
<td>World Health Organization</td>
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