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## Trends in Australia

### Facts from the *Renewables 2021 Global Status Report*

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#### Australia's Top Highlights in 2020

- Australia announced a renewable hydrogen strategy in 2020. The government committed AUD 70 million (USD 54 million) to support new renewable hydrogen projects and established a new AUD 300 million (USD 230 million) fund to invest in the country's renewable hydrogen industry.
- For the first time, Australia produced more than 20% of its electricity generation from solar and wind power, and, for the second consecutive year, it saw records for both wind power installations and output. Wind power again was the largest renewable source of electricity (9.9% of the country's electricity generation). Renewable capacity under corporate power purchase agreements also achieved a new record in 2020.
- In 2020, Australia was one of the leading countries for cumulative solar PV<sup>1</sup> capacity per capita, along with Germany and Japan, and it continued to be the largest market by far in the South Pacific, ranking seventh globally for both additions (4.1 GW) and total capacity (20.4 GW). Rooftop solar continued to contribute most of the capacity added in Australia in 2020, with new records for additions and contributing 6.5% of electricity generation.
- The rapid increase in the number and capacity of large wind and solar power projects and their output continued to challenge the grid. In early 2020, frustration over grid congestion led Victoria to break away from national electricity market rules in order to enact legislation to upgrade transmission infrastructure and ensure a resilient energy system.<sup>2</sup>

#### Where does Australia stand among G20 countries?

The figure below shows that renewable energy made up around 10% of Australia's total final energy consumption (TFEC) and was ahead of all member countries of the G20 within the Asia-Pacific region, except India. Australia is a leading region in the use of renewables in mining.

Australia did not set a target for the share of renewables by 2020. Only five of the world's largest member economies in the G20 – the EU-27, France, Germany, Italy, and the United Kingdom – had set 2020 targets to achieve a certain share of renewables in final energy use, as seen in the figure below.

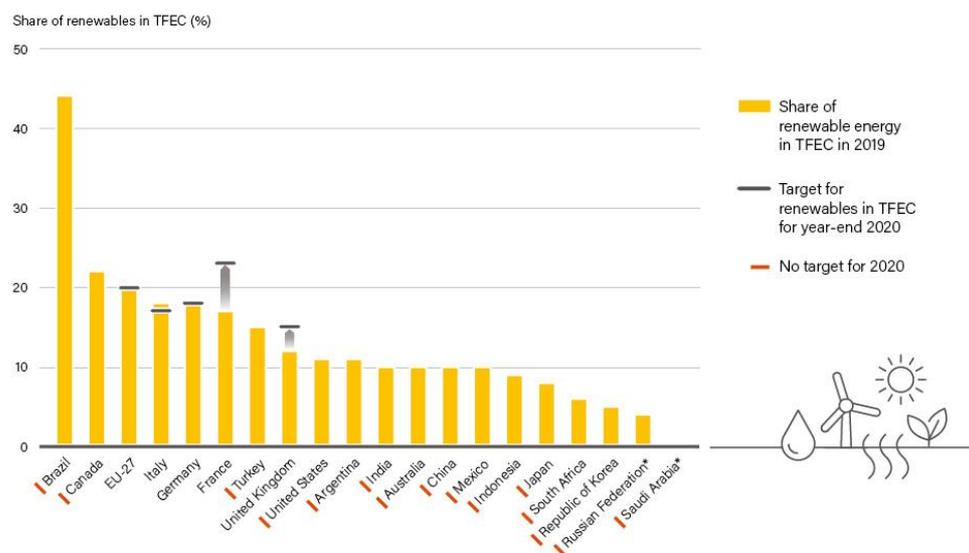
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<sup>1</sup> Solar PV capacity data are provided in direct current (DC).

<sup>2</sup> See B. Matich, "Small-scale utility solar thriving on path of least resistance", pv magazine, 28 February 2020, <https://www.pv-magazine-australia.com/2020/02/28/small-scale-utility-solar-thriving-on-path-of-least-resistance>; M. Maisch, "Victoria decides to go it alone on transmission to unlock more large-scale renewables and batteries", pv magazine, 19 February 2020, <https://www.pv-magazine-australia.com/2020/02/19/victoria-decides-to-go-it-alone-on-transmission-to-unlock-more-large-scale-renewables-and-batteries>.

Do net zero targets<sup>3</sup> or targets for renewable shares actually support the uptake of renewables? Targets are needed, as they are binding objectives that can be used to hold countries accountable. Setting net zero targets alone does not necessarily lead to greater attention to renewables or to success in meeting renewable energy targets. Alongside any kind of target, robust policies and regulations are needed to ensure these targets are met.





Note: TREC = total final energy consumption. Data for Russian Federation and Saudi Arabia are for 2018 and 2017 respectively.

## Global rankings

Total renewable power capacity, end-2020 (Gigawatts)

1. China (908)
2. United States (313)
3. Brazil (150)
4. India (142)
5. Germany (132)
- ...14. **Australia** (50)

Renewable power capacity per person, not including hydropower, end-2020 (kilowatts per person)

1. Iceland (2.1)
2. Denmark (1.7)
3. Sweden (1.6)
4. Germany (1.5)
5. **Australia** (1.1)
6. Spain (0.9)

Solar PV capacity added in 2020 (Gigawatts)

1. China (48)
2. United States (19.2)
3. Vietnam (11.1)
4. Japan (8.2)
5. Germany (4.9)
- ...7. **Australia** (4.1)

The *Renewables 2021 Global Status Report* material is available here: <https://www.ren21.net/gsr>

**Questions?** Please contact [press@ren21.net](mailto:press@ren21.net) or +33 1 44 37 50 99.

<sup>3</sup>Click here to read REN21’s brief overview of net zero targets: <https://www.ren21.net/net-zero-basics/>