

## Fiche

### 1. Basic facts

|                       |                               |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------|
| <b>Official title</b> | the Commonwealth of Australia |
| <b>Capital city</b>   | Canberra                      |
| <b>Currency</b>       | Australian dollar             |
| <b>Area</b>           | 7,618,000 km <sup>2</sup>     |
| <b>Population</b>     | 22,620,600                    |

### 2. Significant characteristics

- the sixth largest country in the world;
- one of the most sparsely populated countries;
- one of the most urbanised countries: most people live and work in a city or town;
- comprises the mainland of the Australian continent, the island of Tasmania + numerous smaller islands.

### 3. Key dates

|                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| <b>40,000 years ago</b> | The Aborigines migrated from Asia and settled in Australia.  |
| <b>1770</b>             | Captain James Cook discovered Australia and claimed it for England.  |
| <b>1788-1853</b>        | The British transported convicts to Australia.<br>The first white settlers in Australia were convicts, their guards and tradesmen. |
| <b>1901</b>             | the six Australian colonies federated to form a single Commonwealth.   |

### 4. Key concepts

The 'Stolen Generation' is the term used to refer to the tens of thousands of aboriginal and half-caste children who were forcibly removed from their families by the Australian government between 1900 and 1972. The aim was to 'civilize' them by raising them in white foster families<sup>(1)</sup> where they worked as servants or farmhands.

The Australian government has since made an official apology.

(1)(familles d'accueil)