

Fiche

1. Basic facts

Official title	the Commonwealth of Australia
Capital city	Canberra
Currency	Australian dollar
Area	7,618,000 km ²
Population	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

40,000 years ago	The Aborigines migrated from Asia and settled in Australia.
1770	Captain James Cook discovered Australia and claimed it for England.
1788-1853	The British transported convicts to Australia. The first white settlers in Australia were convicts, their guards and tradesmen.
1901	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⁽¹⁾ where they worked as servants or farmhands.

The Australian government has since made an official apology.

(1)(familles d'accueil)