

Australia pledges apology to Aborigines

Australia's government plans to issue a formal apology to the country's indigenous people, a milestone that could ease tensions with a minority once subjected to policies that forcibly removed generations of Aboriginal children from their families and culture



INDICATORS: 2006		<i>Indigenous people</i>	<i>Non-indigenous</i>
Average age		20	37
Average income (A\$/week)		278	471
Life expectancy (years)	Men	59	77
	Women	65	82
% of people aged 15+ with post-school qualification		20	42
Unemployment rate (%)		15.6	5.1

Aborigines number about 450,000 among a population of 21 million. They are the poorest ethnic group and most likely to be jailed, unemployed, and illiterate

"STOLEN GENERATIONS"

► **1910-1970s:** 100,000 mostly mixed-blood Aboriginal children taken from their parents under state-sanctioned ethnic policy of assimilation

► **1979:** National inquiry finds children have suffered adverse psychological effects and urges government apology

► **2008:** Prime Minister **Kevin Rudd** expected to apologise on Feb 13, but government rules out compensation payments

Indigenous people

As % of total population

