

Source 10.1 People from all over the world have left their places of origin to settle in Australia and create a new life for themselves and their families.



MIGRATION EXPERIENCES

Australia has always been a place where migrants have arrived and settled. Indeed, historians argue that tens of thousands of years ago the very first Australians arrived in this country. In the more recent past, convicts, free settlers and goldminers have arrived by boat – either because they were forced to leave their homes or because they sought a new life or fortune.

After World War II, many people left a Europe that was torn apart by war in hopes of finding a peaceful and more prosperous home. Since the 1970s, refugees from the Vietnam War and other lands ravaged by conflicts have risked everything to reach Australia on boats. Australia is full of 'boat people' and their descendants.

Immigration has clearly changed Australia. Your investigation of immigration in this period, and the reactions to those changes, will help you to understand the Australia you live in today.

10.1

SECTION

In this section you will:

- » describe the size and composition of Australia's population in 1945
- » sequence the main waves of migration to Australia in the 40 years following World War II, identifying numbers of migrants and countries of origin
- » identify significant world events which influenced post-World War II migration to Australia

||||| CHECKPOINT 10.1

10.2

SECTION

In this section you will:

- » outline government policies and practices that restricted migration to Australia before World War II
- » explain why the government attempted to attract more migrants to Australia during the 1950s and 1960s, using the slogan 'Populate or Perish'
- » use a range of sources to describe the hardships faced by migrants, with a particular focus on the experiences of one group who came to Australia between 1945 and 1970

||||| CHECKPOINT 10.2

10.3

SECTION

In this section you will:

- » describe the impact of the Vietnam War on Australia's migration policy
- » discuss the response of Australians, including the Australian media, to the arrival of refugees from Indochina in the 1970s and 1980s
- » use a range of sources to describe the experiences of Vietnamese refugees on their journey to Australia and experiences on arrival after 1975

||||| CHECKPOINT 10.3

10.4

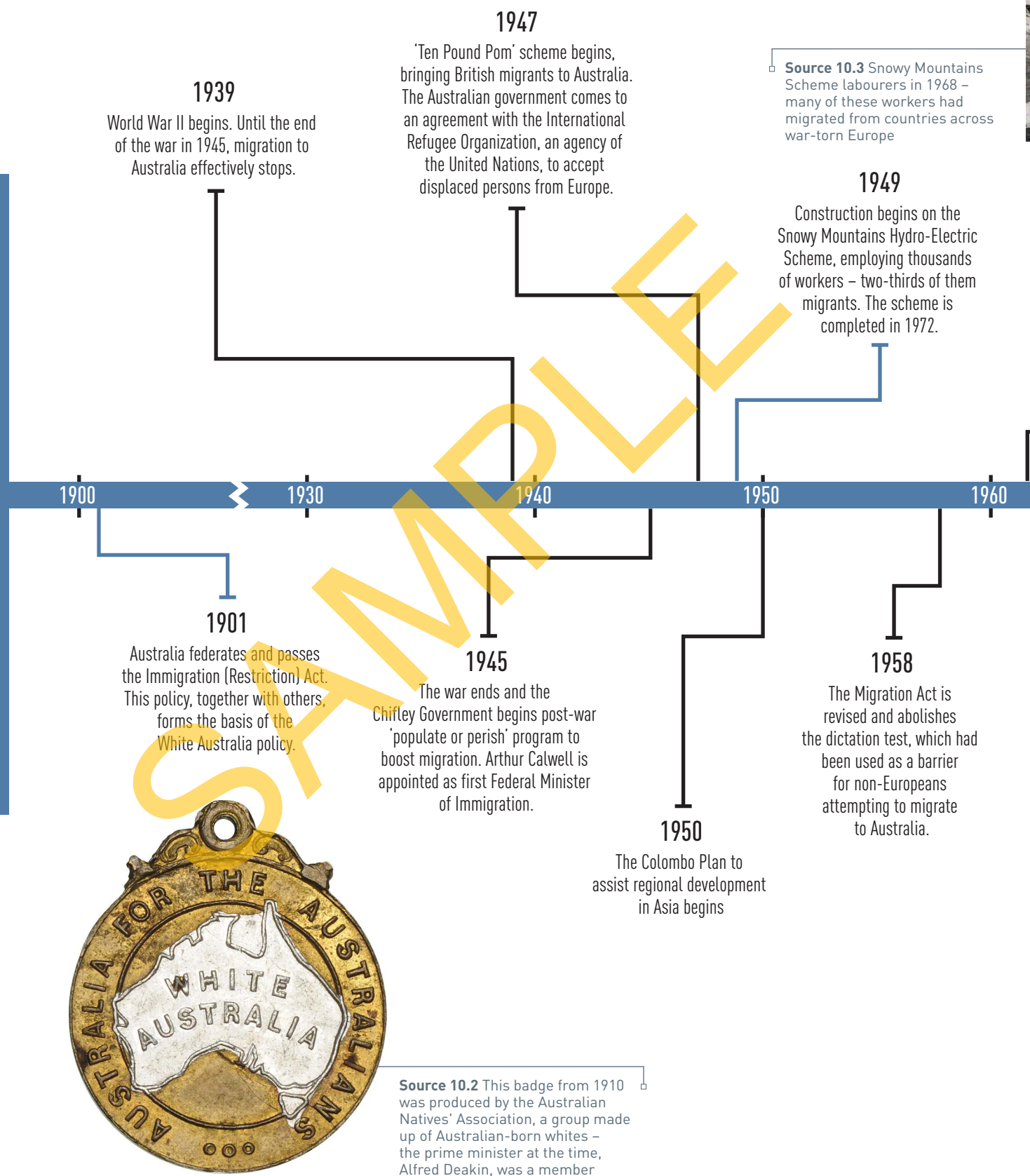
SECTION

In this section you will:

- » assess the contribution of migrant men and women to Australia's social, cultural and economic development and Australia's changing identity

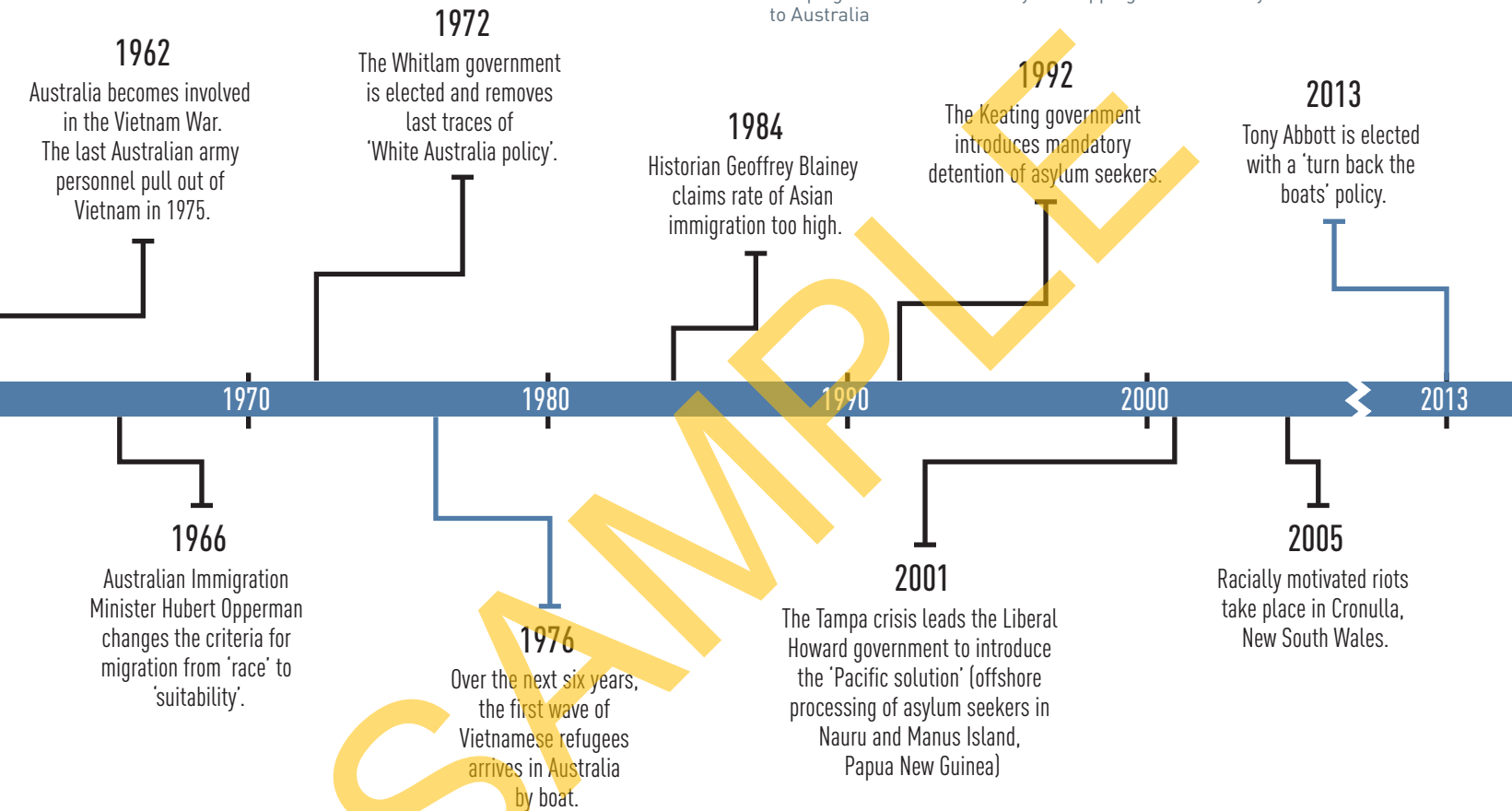
MIGRATION EXPERIENCES – A TIMELINE

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Source 10.5 Tony Abbott was elected Prime Minister of Australia after a campaign that focused heavily on stopping the flow of asylum seeker boats to Australia



Source 10.4 Refugees fleeing the war in Vietnam for the safety of Australia during the 1970s often had to escape on cargo boats, facing dangers from storms, rough seas and pirates.

REVIEW 10.1

- 1 Explain the significance of the Immigration (Restriction) Act being passed in the year 1901.
- 2 Which government abolished the dictation test?
- 3 What did Hubert Opperman do in 1966?
- 4 Who was elected to government with a 'turn back the boats' policy?

10.1

SECTION

HOW HAVE WORLD EVENTS INFLUENCED MIGRATION TO AUSTRALIA SINCE WORLD WAR II?

In this section, you will read about early migration to Australia and migration trends over the course of the 20th century. You will also investigate the impact of major world events on Australian migration in the second half of the 20th century, including World War II and the Vietnam War.

AUSTRALIA: AN IMMIGRATION NATION

Immigrants are the foundation of Australia's population and modern Australia has been created and shaped by national and international population movements. The earliest people arrived on the Australian continent around 40 000 years ago. By the time the First Fleet arrived in 1788 – loaded with almost 1500 convicts, sailors and soldiers from Britain – Australia's Aboriginal population had reached between 350 000 and 1 million.

Early migration

British authorities established penal colonies at Sydney, Port Arthur, Fremantle and Moreton Bay. Following the convict ships were increasing numbers of free migrants from Britain. Migrants were attracted by various factors, such as the promise of wealth from the gold rush in the 1850s, and the prospects of a better life. By the 1860s, more than 75 per cent of Australia's population was of Anglo-Celtic origin. This figure remains at about 70 per cent to this day.

Although the majority of early migrants came from Britain, migrants did arrive from other parts of the world, including Asia. During the gold rush, migrants from China were the largest non-British group. Labourers were also recruited from the South Pacific islands to work on plantations in Queensland in the 1860s.



Source 10.6 Miners in Gulgong, NSW South Wales, during the gold rush



Source 10.7 Tobacco workers in New South Wales, c. 1885

Pre-World War II migration

The number of Australians born overseas declined dramatically by the late 1880s. A major reason for this decline was the major economic depression that Australia experienced at this time. This trend continued until the end of World War II in 1945. Hostility towards labourers from Asia and the Pacific Islands grew because British Australians believed that these cheaper workers would result in fewer jobs and lower wages for themselves.

Colonial governments introduced legislation to restrict entry and impose high taxes on any Chinese people arriving in the colonies. More restrictive legislation was introduced soon after Australia's Federation with the *Immigration Restriction Act 1901*. This Act formed the basis of a number of policies referred to as the White Australia policy, which remained in place until the 1970s. The White Australia policy is discussed in detail later in the chapter.

When World War I broke out in 1914, migration to Australia came to a standstill. Once peace resumed, the government offered assisted migration programs to British ex-servicemen. In the 1920s and 1930s, there was an increase in migrants from Italy and Greece seeking to establish lives in Australia, as well as a rise in Jews escaping persecution in Europe.

The Great Depression in the 1930s saw an end to government assistance programs. When World War II broke out in 1939, migration effectively came to a standstill again as travel became difficult, if not impossible.

Post World War II migration

The close of World War II in 1945 saw waves of migrants reaching Australia. A consistent element of Australian migration from World War II to the end of the 20th century has been the dominance of migrants from the United Kingdom. Additionally, the end of the war saw large groups of migrants arriving from southern European countries, such as Italy and Greece, for the first time. The war had made Australia fearful of an Asian invasion – especially from Japan. Consequently, the government instituted an active policy of 'Populate or Perish'. This entailed encouraging migration from Britain and Western Europe.

Since then, Australia's immigration policies have evolved. Migrants from the Middle East, Asia and South America were welcomed to the extent that Australia has now become a multicultural country. In fact, Australia has one of the highest rates of immigration in the developed world. Its population is much more racially and ethnically diverse than other long-established European and Asian countries, such as France and Japan. Just like the United States, Canada, New Zealand and Argentina, modern Australia is a nation of immigrants.



Source 10.8 Primary school students in Melbourne celebrate their different cultures at a school multicultural day

APPLY 10.1

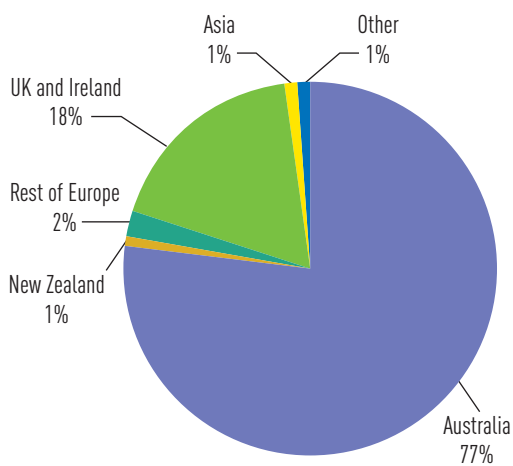
- 1 Conduct research to find out the populations of New Zealand, Canada, the United States and the United Kingdom in 2011. Use the percentages in Source 10.16 to calculate the number of migrants in these countries and present this information in a table. Write a statement using these figures to compare the numbers and rate of immigration to Australia with these countries.

Using census information

Sources 10.9 to 10.14 provide information about the composition of the Australian population at the start and middle of the 20th century, and at the time of the 2011 census.

In 1901, when Australia became a nation at Federation, 77 per cent of the population had been born in Australia. The great majority of foreign-born people had come from the United Kingdom and Ireland. Population figures in 1901 come from census information coordinated between the states and did not include Indigenous Australians. The 1947 census, which still did not include Indigenous Australians, was the first census since 1930s because of the war. It showed an Australian population on the verge of major change.

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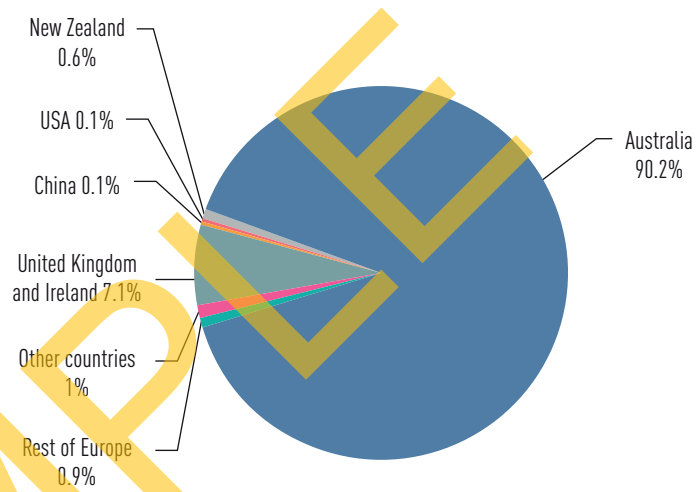


Source 10.9 Birthplace of the Australian population in 1901, Australia's total population that year was 3 788 123

Source 10.10 Birthplace of the foreign-born population of Australia in 1901

Ranking	Birthplace	Number	Percentage
1	United Kingdom	495 074	57.7
2	Ireland	184 085	21.5
3	Germany	38 352	4.5
4	China	29 907	3.5
5	New Zealand	25 788	3.0
6	Sweden and Norway	9 863	1.2
7	India	7 637	0.9
8	USA	7 448	0.9
9	Denmark	6 281	0.7
10	Italy	5 678	0.7
Top Ten Total		810 113	94.5
Other		47 463	5.5
Total foreign-born		857 576	100.00

Data from the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs



Source 10.11 Birthplace of the Australian population in 1947, Australia's total population that year was 7 579 358

Source 10.12 Country of birth of the foreign-born population of Australia in 1947

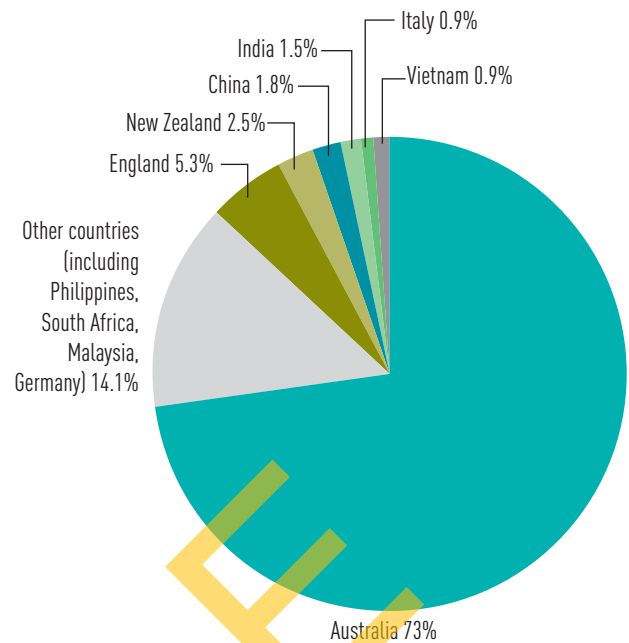
Ranking	Birthplace	Number	Percentage
1	United Kingdom	496 454	66.7
2	Ireland	44 813	6.0
3	New Zealand	43 610	5.9
4	Italy	33 632	4.5
5	Germany	12 291	1.7
6	Greece	9 863	1.2
7	India and Sri Lanka (Ceylon)	8 160	1.1
8	Poland	6 573	0.9
9	China	6 404	0.9
10	USA	6 232	0.8
Top ten total		672 736	90.4
Other		71 451	9.6
Total foreign-born		744 187	100.00

Data taken from the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs

Source 10.14 Birthplace of the foreign-born population of Australia in 2011

Ranking	Birthplace	Number	Percentage
1	United Kingdom	1 101 100	20.8
2	New Zealand	483 400	9.1
3	China	319 000	6.0
4	India	295 400	5.6
5	Italy	185 400	3.5
6	Vietnam	185 000	3.5
7	Philippines	171 200	3.2
8	South Africa	145 700	2.8
9	Malaysia	116 200	2.2
10	Germany	108 000	2.0
Top ten total		3 110 400	58.8
Other		2 183 800	41.2
Total foreign-born		5 294 200	100.0

Data taken from the Australian Bureau of Statistics



Source 10.13 Birthplace of the Australian population in 2011, Australia's total population that year was 21 507 717

Source 10.15

In 1945, Australia's population was around 7 million people and was mainly Anglo-Celtic. Since then, more than 6.5 million migrants, including 675 000 refugees, have settled in Australia, significantly broadening its social and cultural profile.

Extract taken from Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Source 10.16

In the 2011 Census, there were 5.3 million migrants in Australia, which means one in every four (26%) Australian residents was born overseas.

Australia's migrant population is relatively large when compared with other Western nations. Taken as a proportion of the population, Australia has a larger migrant population than does New Zealand (23%), Canada (21%), the United States of America (13%) and the United Kingdom (13%).

Extract taken from Australian Bureau of Statistics

INTERPRET 10.1

- 1 Explain how the graphs and figures in Sources 10.9 to 10.14 help you understand continuity and change in the composition of Australia's population over the period 1901 to 2011.
- 2 Discuss the value of these statistics for a historian studying Australia's 20th century migration policies.
- 3 Discuss whether these statistics support the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade statement that since 1945 Australia has significantly broadened its social and cultural profile.

REVIEW 10.2

- 1 What was Australia's population: at the time of Federation; soon after the end of World War II; and at the time of the 2011 census? What percentage of the Australian population were migrants at these times?
- 2 What is the country of origin of the largest migrant group in Australia over the 20th century?
- 3 When did migrants from southern European countries start coming to Australia in large numbers?

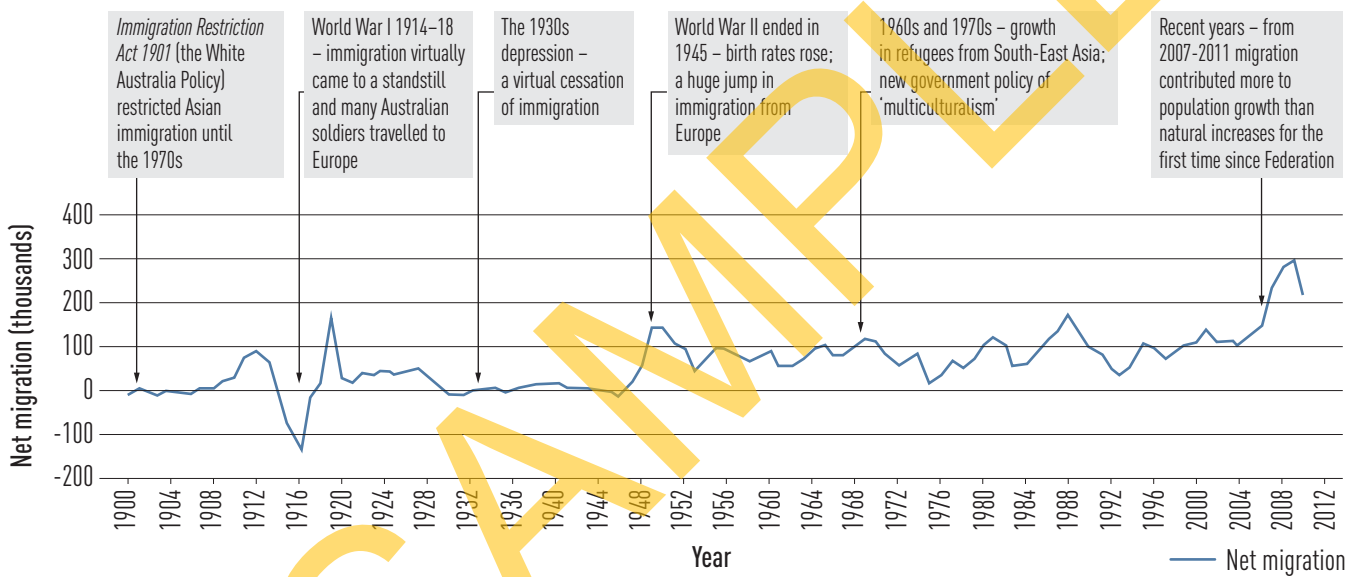
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MIGRATION TO AUSTRALIA SINCE WORLD WAR II

British migrants formed the backbone of Australia's 'Populate or Perish' immigration policy after World War II, which adhered to the White Australia Policy. These immigration policies are discussed in detail in section 10.2. The other significant nation of origin for Australian migrants was New Zealand, which provided nearly half a million migrants.

The initial post-war wave of immigration was boosted by the addition of Europeans leaving countries such as Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Germany and the Netherlands. Italy and Greece were then included in the scheme. The massive wave of European migration continued until the end of the White Australia Policy in the 1970s.

When the Vietnam War ended, the Fraser government allowed a significant number of Indo-Chinese refugees into the country, at a time when Australia opened their doors to refugees from war and persecution. A humane refugee policy, linked to a sense of moral obligation to those who had supported Australia during the Vietnam War, saw Australia emerge as a genuinely multicultural country.



Source 10.17 Net migration (total arrivals less total departures) to Australia during the period 1900-2010/

Australian immigration policies in the post-war boom

In the years following World War II, Australian governments introduced new policies and programs that were designed to boost Australia's population. The period saw a very large increase in immigration from Britain and Europe. Government policies encouraged and assisted migrants from this part of the world to make the journey to Australia, particularly to work on large-scale construction projects. However, there were still restrictions on migrants from Asian backgrounds.

Ambitious post-war Australian government projects also required a much higher population. The Snowy Mountains Scheme, which involved diverting the Snowy River to generate hydro-electricity was going to require 10 000 new workers on its own. Many of those workers were to come from post-war Europe.

In 1945, the Chifley Labor government created the first Department of Immigration, with Arthur Calwell as its first Minister. Europe was full of displaced persons as the turmoil of World War II was replaced with the new Cold War divisions between communist Eastern countries (such as Poland, Bulgaria, Hungary and Czechoslovakia) and the capitalist West.

After years of bombings and ground warfare, reconstruction in Europe was a massive task. Britain had been severely hit, particularly during the Blitz in 1940, and many people felt that making a new start in Australia was a good option. Government propaganda, such as posters promising the excitement of a new life in Australia, created a vision of a peaceful, prosperous Australia that contrasted directly with how many Europeans viewed their war-battered countries.

Immigration policies based on race

As Australia's first Immigration Minister, Arthur Calwell had a very clear view of the type of 'new Australians' he wanted to encourage. In instructions to his department he said, 'no Japanese women, or any half-castes either, will be admitted to Australia ... they are simply not wanted and are permanently undesirable ... a mongrel Australia is impossible.'

More than 6000 Asians had been admitted during the dislocation of World War II, but Calwell was determined to eject them as soon as possible after the war. By 1947, the message was very clear: Australia didn't want anyone from Asia living here.

Instead Calwell turned to Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, which had been invaded by Russia. The big appeal of these peoples was that they were anti-communist, and, according to Calwell, 'were red-headed and blue-eyed ... [with] a number of natural platinum blondes of both sexes.' Thus the two main ingredients of Australia's post-war immigration policy were established: immigrants had to be anti-communist and white. If they conformed to these requirements they were welcome. Former Nazis also found it much easier to enter Australia than other western countries.

STRANGE BUT TRUE

Between September and November of 1940, during the German blitz of London, over 30 000 bombs were dropped on the city.



Source 10.19 World War II bomb damage to the Tower of London



Source 10.18 This 1948 poster encouraging Europeans to relocate to Australia – the 'land of tomorrow' – was displayed in migration and refugee camps across Europe at the end of World War II.

APPLY 10.2

- 1 Discuss how Sources 10.18 and 10.19 could help explain the decision of so many Europeans to migrate to Australia after World War II.

Immigration policies based on race

Source 10.20



Source 10.21 Arthur Calwell, Australia's first Immigration Minister

The government has decided that all persons who came to Australia as evacuees or refugees during the war and who, under our immigration laws, are not eligible to become permanent residents of this country, must leave. We have been very tolerant of these people. We could have asked them all to go immediately the war ended, but we have allowed them to stay for a certain period, in some cases so that they may wind up their affairs here and in other cases so that they might get decent shipping facilities to take them back to their own countries. In all 15 000 evacuees of all nationalities came to Australia during the war. Of that number, 4400 were Asiatics. Most of the evacuees, including the Asiatics, have gone. There are about 500 Chinese, mostly seamen, and about fifty Malays left. All of these people will have to leave Australia ... What this government proposes to do is not unusual. I am carrying out the policy of every Australian government since federation, and, as far as I am concerned, it will not be altered ...

Arthur Calwell, Minister for Immigration in a speech on immigration policy in the House of Representatives, delivered 2 December 1947.

INTERPRET 10.2

- 1 What is the purpose of Calwell's speech to parliament? Who are the target audience?
- 2 How can this source help you understand Australia's immigration policy in 1947?
- 3 What was Australia's immigration policy based on at this time?
- 4 Do you think the audience at the time of the speech would interpret it differently from an audience today? Explain your answer.



Source 10.22 A British family of 17 disembark from their ship as they arrive in Australia, 2 July 1957

Bringing out the Britons

Traditional ties to Britain were politically, culturally and economically strong, and British migrants were always the most favoured. In 1947, the British and Australian governments decided to subsidise British migrants to Australia. The fare was reduced to ten pounds, giving rise to the phrase 'Ten Pound Pom', which became an accepted way of describing British migrants from this period.

In 1957, the government also launched a popular campaign called 'Bring Out a Briton'. This campaign encouraged Australians to nominate British friends and families to come to Australia. Local committees were formed to sponsor and recommend new migrants to the Department of Immigration for assisted passage. The successful campaign continued through the 1960s.

Refugees from international conflicts

War and political oppression have often resulted in mass migration from countries. Until relatively recently, Australian policy has welcomed refugees from international conflicts.

Refugees from Europe after World War II

In 1947, the Australian government came to an agreement with the International Refugee Organization to select displaced persons from camps in Europe who would be settled in Australia. The main groups were Poles (63 394), Yugoslavs (23 543), Latvians (19 421), Ukrainians (14 464), Hungarians (11 919), Lithuanians (9906), Czechs (9142) and Estonians (5329). Because they were white and chose to leave communist countries, they were the perfect migrants for Calwell's 'new Australia'. They were required to work for a period of two years, wherever the Australian Government decided. This was the source of much of the labour for the Snowy Mountains Scheme. Other groups of refugees settled in Australia after the Soviet invasion of Hungary in 1956 and Czechoslovakia in 1968.



Source 10.23 This photograph, taken in 1948, shows a group of 'Beautiful Balts', some of the first displaced persons from Europe to arrive in Australia. Albury's *Border Morning Mail* described the new arrivals as 'attractive, cheery, eager to work and neatly clad', with 'good complexions and figures'.

Refugees from Southeast Asia after the Vietnam War

The next major wave of immigrants into Australia was triggered by the end of the Vietnam War in 1975; Australia accepted around 137 000 Vietnamese refugees. This was the major driver of social and cultural change in the composition of the population. The contribution of refugees from South East Asia is discussed in section 10.4.

The influence of other world events on migration to Australia

Other world events have had a lasting effect on the types and numbers of people arriving in Australia since World War II. Source 10.26 summarises these world events. They include: the military coup in Chile in 1973, after which Australia received over 20 000 refugees; the absorption of Indo-Chinese refugees into the Australian community after the Vietnam War, which was accompanied by the opening of the country to those fleeing from the Indonesian takeover of East Timor in 1975; and the civil war in Lebanon that began in 1975 and led to a dramatic rise in migration to Australia.

The election of Robert Mugabe in the newly independent Zimbabwe in 1980 led to the arrival of a different sort of refugee from southern Africa. These wealthy and white economic refugees flew across the Indian Ocean to start a new life in Australia. They came from both Zimbabwe and South Africa as the days of white superiority and apartheid started coming to an end.

In the early 1980s, conflicts in Iran, Iraq, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Somalia, Sudan and the former Yugoslavia resulted in smaller numbers of refugee arrivals from these countries.

Two thousand Chinese students who were in Australia at the time of the brutal suppression of pro-democracy demonstrators in June 1989 (often referred to as the Tiananmen Square protests) were permitted by Prime Minister Hawke to stay in Australia. Ongoing conflicts in the Balkans in the 1990s saw Australia as a chosen destination for a range of people of various ethnicities escaping the brutal wars in the region.

In more recent years, major events influencing migration have included the US-led 'War on Terror' in Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan. Australia's involvement in the 'coalition of the willing' against Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan in 2001 led to the displacement of large numbers of people. As the US-led coalition fought the Taliban, people fled the country. Many found themselves on boats to Australia, but Australia's 'closed-door' policy at the time was a very different response from that of the earlier Fraser government when confronted by a similar situation after the Vietnam War. The Howard government continued to reject refugees after the invasion of Iraq in 2003 resulted in another surge of refugees. The slaughter of Tamils in Sri Lanka's civil war during this period also saw Australia rejecting people seeking refuge.

The global financial crisis in 2008 created a new wave of economic migrants. The recession that followed the financial crisis resulted in a large number of Irish economic migrants to Australia, with 40 000 arriving in 2011 alone.



Source 10.25
Palestinians in the Shatila refugee camp on the outskirts of Beirut, Lebanon in 1987



Source 10.24 Vietnamese refugees arriving in Darwin

Source 10.26 Significant world events influencing migration since World War II

Year	Event
1945	World War II ends
1947	Cold War begins (fear of communist threat in the West)
1949	People's Republic of China founded
1950–53	Korean War
1950–60	Malayan Emergency
1955–75	Vietnam War
1956	Unrest in Eastern Europe – Hungary
1968	Unrest in Eastern Europe – Czechoslovakia
1973	Unrest in South America – Chile
1979	Unrest in South America – El Salvador
1975	Indonesian take-over of East Timor
1975–90	Civil war in Lebanon
1980	Robert Mugabe Prime Minister of Zimbabwe
1983–2009	Sri Lankan Civil War
1989	Tiananmen Square protests, China
1990–91	Gulf War
1991–99	Yugoslav conflicts
2001–	'War on Terror'
2003–11	Iraq War
2008	Global financial crisis
2010–	'Arab Spring'
2012–	Civil war in Syria

Source 10.29 Following the Chinese Government's suppression of pro-democracy demonstrators in Tiananmen Square, 1989, the Australian government granted permanent residency to the Chinese students studying in Australia at the time.



REVIEW 10.3

- 1 Who was Australia's first Immigration Minister? Which party did he represent?
- 2 What were the two main requirements to be accepted as a migrant to Australia in the period after World War II?
- 3 What was the ambitious building project that required large numbers of migrant workers?
- 4 Where did most migrants come from in the immediate post-war period?
- 5 List places of unrest that have contributed to the waves of migration to Australia.



Source 10.27 Refugees from Somalia



Source 10.28 Refugees fleeing conflict in Afghanistan seek asylum in Australia c. 2001



Source 10.30 One-hundred thousand people protest in Ireland during the Irish recession of 2009–13

10.1

CHECKPOINT

HOW HAVE WORLD EVENTS INFLUENCED MIGRATION TO AUSTRALIA SINCE WORLD WAR II?

» Describe the size and composition of Australia's population in 1945

- 1 How large was Australia's population in 1945? How does the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade describe its composition at that time? (2 marks)
- 2 In 1947, the year of the first census after World War II, what proportion of the Australian population was born in Australia or had migrated from overseas? (1 mark)
- 3 What were the main countries of origin for migrants in Australia in 1947. (7 marks)

» Sequence the main waves of migration to Australia in the 40 years following World War II, identifying numbers of migrants and countries of origin

- 4 Complete the following table in your notebook. The first row has been completed for you. (10 marks)

Group that arrived	Approximate dates	Reason
Lithuanians, Latvians and Estonians	After 1945	Invasion by Soviet Union
British		
Italians		
South Africans and Zimbabweans		
		Fall of Saigon to Communists
	June 1989	

- 4 Use a timeline to outline the major waves of migrants that have arrived in Australia since the end of World War II. Include detailed labels and images from text or your own research. (20 marks)

» Identify significant world events which influenced post-World War II migration to Australia

- 5 Explain how each of these world events contributed to the changing composition of the Australian population: World War II, the Cold War, the Vietnam War, the Gulf Wars and the war in Afghanistan. (10 marks)

TOTAL MARKS [/50]

RICH TASK

Encouraging migration to Australia

You have been given the job of encouraging migration to Australia to the residents of a particular country in the post-World War II period. Produce an advertising campaign to 'sell' the virtues of life in Australia to your nominated audience.

- 1 Select the country and time period that will be your target market.
- 2 Conduct research about life in Australia and your target country at that time to ensure that your campaign is historically accurate.
- 3 Select aspects of Australian life to focus your campaign on and make notes about how and why these aspects could appeal to prospective migrants in the country you have chosen.
- 4 Find sources that could help you illustrate your campaign and plan the approach you wish to take.
- 5 Prepare your advertising campaign, which could be a poster, a radio or television ad (depending on the time period), a print ad or any other medium that is appropriate for the period you have chosen.
- 6 As a class, present your campaigns and discuss which were the most effective and why.
- 7 Write a one-page explanation of why so many people chose to migrate to Australia after World War II.



Source 10.31 The Australian government's 'Bring Out a Briton' campaign urged Australians to nominate British friends for assisted migration to Australia.

In this Rich Task, you will be learning and applying the following historical skills:

- » Comprehension: chronology, terms and concepts
- » Analysis and use of sources
- » Empathetic understanding
- » Research
- » Explanation and communication

For more information about these skills, refer to 'The historian's toolkit'.

CHECKPOINT

10.2

SECTION

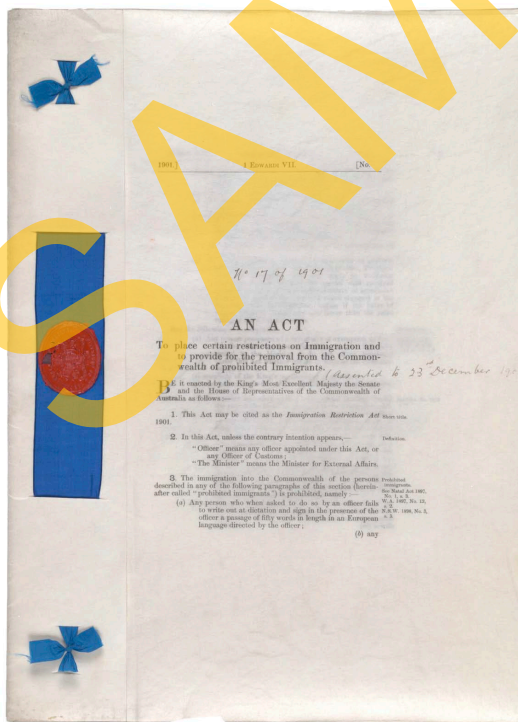
HOW HAVE GOVERNMENT POLICIES INFLUENCED MIGRATION TO AUSTRALIA?

In this section you will find out about the government policies that restricted immigration to Australia before World War II, particularly immigration from Asia. You will also discover why Australia's immigration policies changed after World War II and learn about the contributions of one group of immigrants to Australian society, in particular – the Italians.

THE WHITE AUSTRALIA POLICY

The White Australia policy was not, in fact, a single policy. This term refers to a series of migration policies in Australia that gave favourable treatment to immigrants from Europe, predominantly Britain, and discriminated against those from other parts of the world. It was not until the second half of the 20th century that the White Australia policy finally began to unravel and Australia's modern immigration policies began to take shape.

Immigration (Restriction) Act 1901



The original *Immigration (Restriction) Act 1901* became the basis of a White Australia policy. The Act was one of the first introduced to the new Federal Parliament after Federation, and reflected the priorities of the new nation. Although not barring any race specifically from Australia, the preamble to the Act made its intentions clear: 'to place certain restrictions on Immigration and to provide for the removal from the Commonwealth of prohibited Immigrants.'

Under Section 3(a) of the Act, a dictation test could be administered in any European language to a potential immigrant. The dictation test allowed officials to dictate a 50-word passage in any language they chose for potential migrants to write down. Initially this was any European language, but later it could be given in any language at all. To restrict

access to potential migrants, Australian officials simply chose languages that they knew would be unfamiliar – guaranteeing failure. It was mainly used against Chinese trying to enter the country, but was also used for Africans and other Asians, or any other people regarded as 'unsuitable'.

Source 10.32 The front page of the *Immigration Restriction Act 1901*

The strong anti-Asian sentiments had their origin during the Gold Rushes of the 19th century. European miners were resentful of the Chinese if they were successful, and disliked them because they looked different and had different customs. That resentment was sufficient to spark riots. In 1861 at Lambing Flat in New South Wales, the complete destruction of a Chinese mining camp was accompanied by a brass band playing 'Rule Britannia'. This kind of racism was reflected in much of Australia's 20th century Australian immigration policy.

Pacific Island Labourers Act 1901

A further consolidation of the White Australia policy was the passing of the *Pacific Island Labourers Act 1901*. This was one of a number of pieces of national legislation passed in the first year of Federation, as the first Parliament set out national priorities. The Act said that no Pacific Island labourer could enter Australia on or after 31 March 1904 except under a licence, and that the Minister for External Affairs could order the deportation of any Pacific Island labourer found in Australia after 31 December 1906.



Source 10.33 In mining camps during the Gold Rush, Chinese miners were mistrusted and resented.



Source 10.34 Pacific Islanders who had settled in Australia in the 19th century, after being brought in to work on the cane fields in Queensland, could be deported after the passing of the Pacific Island Labourers Act 1901

EXTEND 10.1

- 1 Discuss whether the Immigration Restriction Act and Pacific Island Labourers Act reflected the fears of a white British colonial outpost on the fringes of Asia or was a justified attempt to protect a way of life.

How effective was the Immigration Restriction Act?

SOURCE STUDY

Source 10.35

But the most astonishing figures are those which record the increase in the coloured and Asiatic population of Australia. I find that during the month of August the increase in the number of departures of Asiatics was 165, whilst the increase in the number of arrivals during the same month was 199. The increase in the number of departures for eight months was 740, and in the number of arrivals for the same period it was 926. These figures have been an eye-opener to me, because I was under the impression that we were gradually reducing the numbers of our Asiatic population.

Extract from William Hedges, Member for Fremantle.
'Question estimates', House of Representatives *Debates*, 13 November 1912, p. 5569.

INTERPRET 10.3

- 1 What perspective do you think William Hedges has on migration? What evidence is there in his speech to support your view?

overmatter

POPULATE OR PERISH



Source 10.36 Caption to come

The threat of Japanese invasion during World War II came as a shock to the government and the Australian people. Australia saw itself as a European outpost on the edge of a teeming, jealous and aggressive Asia. Physical attacks on areas as far apart as Broome, Darwin and Sydney had opened the country's eyes to the potential for invasion. It raised the long-standing fear, which had existed since the Gold Rushes, of a 'Yellow Peril' sweeping down on an Australia. The fall of Singapore to Japanese forces in 1942 made Australia realise that it could not rely on the might of the British Empire for protection.

Australia's post-war policy to increase its population

At this time, Australian made the decision to look to the USA for its defence. The government also came to believe that a larger population was essential for Australia's long-term security.

Prime Minister Robert Menzies, as leader of the United Australia Party, led Australia into World War II. Before the war had ended, Labor was in power, and Menzies had formed a new party – the Liberal Party. Labor's Ben Chifley was Prime Minister of Australia at the end of World War II, but it made little difference which party was in power when it came to migration policy.

The war had clearly shown the need for a larger population to help protect Australia from invasion. The Labor Party's post war slogan became 'Populate or Perish'. The baby boom would help the population expand, but a large-scale migration program was also seen as essential to boost Australia's population quickly as fears of a Cold War started to intensify.

Post-war construction projects

As well as being motivated by a fear of invasion, the Australian government was keen to increase the population to meet a post-war construction program. Large infrastructure projects, such as the Snowy Mountains Hydro-Electric Scheme, required a much larger workforce than was available.

The Snowy Mountains Scheme was a complex series of tunnels and dams to divert the Snowy River in southern New South Wales. This would provide electricity from the water flow, and the water would then be used to irrigate inland Australia. Building the tunnels and dams required 10 000 new workers, which made the scheme a major destination for migrants. They would arrive to find their original skills and qualifications irrelevant as they were put to work in physically demanding labouring jobs.

The scheme was instigated by the Chifley Labor government and constructed during the 23 years of Liberal Federal government, from 1949 to 1972. It was a major employer of the European migrants arriving in Australia, and the workplace became multicultural as wave after wave of European migrants found themselves working in the isolation of the Snowy Mountains.

This scheme became a symbol of the assimilation phase of Australian migration policy. Migrants were expected to blend into Australian society, and become 'new Australians'. It was hoped they would abandon their previous cultural attachments and language, and adapt to Australian customs and values. Projects like the Snowy Mountains Scheme actually worked against this policy because migrants were placed amongst other migrants a long way from the very people they were supposed to assimilate with.

Source 10.37 Migrants working on tunnels in the Snowy Mountain Scheme found themselves far from the people they were expected to assimilate with.



Snowy Mountains Scheme

SOURCE STUDY

Source 10.38

Not that many years ago we marked the 50th anniversary of what was the largest engineering project in the world – the Snowy Mountains Hydro-Electric Scheme – which, in ways that had nothing at all to do with power generation, changed the face of this country.

The almost exclusively white Anglo-Saxon character of society was opened up to new ideas, customs, cuisines and celebrations by the men and their families who came from all over the world.

I am, I suppose, a Baby Boomer and, for my generation, the post-war migration surge provided a defining dimension.

Extract from Australia Day ambassador Glenn A Baker, speech given at Lithgow, 2010

INTERPRET 10.4

- 1 Explain what Glenn Baker means when he says the Snowy Mountains Scheme, 'changed the face of this country'.
- 2 What evidence does Baker give to support his view?
- 3 Discuss whether the post-war migration surge did provide a 'defining dimension' for Australia. What other sources could you access to help answer this question?

REVIEW 10.5

- 1 How did World War II change Australia's attitude to migration?
- 2 What slogan did the government adopt after World War II regarding migration?
- 3 What were 'new Australians' expected to do to fit into Australian society once they arrived in this country?

THE END OF WHITE AUSTRALIA

During World War II and in the years after it ended, the Australian government made it clear that the White Australia policy would continue to be central to Australia's migration program. But over time, this position became increasingly difficult to maintain. Dissatisfaction with the policy was growing in parts of Australian society and the international community. The government's attempts to expel displaced persons after the end of the war were not well received and the policy was in direct conflict with Australia's increasing ties to Asia in the decades after World War II. The policy was gradually changed, before being completely abolished in 1973.

Initial steps



Source 10.39 Japanese women and their children on the deck of the *SS New Australia*, on their way to join their Australian husbands

During the Menzies Government (1949–1966), Harold Holt began to dismantle the discriminatory policy after he succeeded Calwell as Immigration Minister in 1949. Holt made the historic decision to allow 800 non-European refugees to stay in Australia, as well as allowing Japanese war brides to be admitted. This started the long process of ending the White Australia Policy.

In 1957, non-Europeans with 15 years' residence were allowed to become Australian citizens. The following year, the Migration Act of 1958 finally abolished the dictation test as a means of keeping non-Europeans out. According to Immigration Minister Sir Alec Downer, it meant that 'distinguished and highly qualified Asians' could immigrate to Australia. It also reflected continuity in the Labor Party's 'Populate or Perish' policy, as the Liberal Menzies government continued to invest heavily in migration, although immigrants continued to be mainly European.

The next major step was a 1966 review of non-European immigration policy by the Immigration Minister, Hubert Opperman. The criteria for migration became suitability as settlers, ability to integrate into Australian life, and having skills and education useful to Australia. This was a critical breakthrough because it finally removed race or ethnicity as a qualification when assessing the suitability of migrants. Non-European settler arrivals rose from 746 in 1966 to 2696 in 1971.

Abolishing the White Australia Policy

The Whitlam government (1972–1975) removed the last traces of the policy in 1973 when they issued instructions to overseas posts to totally disregard race as a factor in selecting migrants. This was supported with legislation that all migrants, regardless of origin, could apply for citizenship after three years of permanent residence.

A policy that had begun to protect jobs for white Australian workers and preserve Australia as a British outpost, had gained Australia an international reputation for racism. Prime Minister Hughes had alienated Japan at the Paris Peace Conference after World War I with his insistence that the treaty not include any mention of racial equality. Herbert Evatt, so instrumental in ensuring the voice of small nations was represented at the establishment of the United Nations, successfully fought to prevent the United Nations being able to act on discriminatory immigration policies. The fact that it remained in place in some form or another for 70 years shows how deeply ingrained it was in Australian life.

Abolishing the White Australia Policy

SOURCE STUDY

Source 10.40

We removed the assertion that a primary national objective must be to increase population. We removed the commitment to expand the immigration program.

We related our immigration needs simply to the capacity of Australia to provide 'employment, housing, education and social services' – in other words a very specific instruction to the incoming

Labor Government that people, the welfare of people, the people already here and the people who may come, must be the prime consideration, not mere numbers.

And thirdly we said unequivocally that there must be no discrimination on grounds of race or colour or nationality.

Extract from G. Whitlam, *The Whitlam Government 1972–1975*, Penguin Books Australia Ltd, Melbourne, 1985, pp. 497–500

INTERPRET 10.5

- 1 Source 10.40 is an extract from an address made by Gough Whitlam in October 1971 to the press, in which he outlined three changes he would be making to the Labor Party's immigration platform ahead of the 1972 Federal election. According to the source, what is the basis of the immigration policy that Whitlam intended to make before his election as Prime Minister in 1972? How does this statement compare with policies and legislation during the time of his government?

Increasing ties with Asia 1945–1975

Australia's increased ties with Asia and involvement in successive wars inevitably led to the removal of the White Australia policy. The Colombo Plan was an important step towards increasing Australia's ties with Asia and improving stability in the region.

The Colombo Plan

STRANGE BUT TRUE

Despite the size and importance of China, Australia didn't officially recognise the country until Gough Whitlam was elected in December 1972. The United States waited until 1 January 1979.

In 1950, the government set up a fund with other countries in the Asian region to help improve the economic and social development of people in need of assistance. This fund became known as the Colombo Plan. The original signatories to the Colombo Plan were Australia, Ceylon (Sri Lanka), India, Canada, New Zealand, Pakistan, the United Kingdom, North Borneo and Malaya.

Australia would donate more than \$300 million in expertise, food and equipment to the scheme. The scheme also provided funding for thousands of Asian students to study or train in Australian universities. Although students were supposed to leave Australia after their studies, many would end up settling in Australia permanently.

Fear of the spread of communism

One of the reasons Australia and other countries gave support to the Colombo Plan was the belief that improving development and stability would help stop the rising spread of communism in the Asian region. The spread of communism was of particular concern to Australia. Many people in the West feared that a communist victory in one country would lead to a chain reaction of communist takeovers in neighbouring states, including Australia. This became known as the **domino theory**. It was highly influential in American and Australian foreign policy in the 1950s.

Australia's fear of China had been made worse in 1949, when the Chinese Communist Party under Mao Zedong won the Chinese Civil War. This was frightening to Australia – a large country in their region that was both Asian and communist. The Menzies government came to power in December – two months after Mao had proclaimed the People's Republic of China. Menzies' response was simple and followed the lead of the American government: he refused to recognise the existence of China.



Australian involvements in conflicts in Asia

In 1945, the Allied forces of World War II decided to divide Korea – without consulting Korea – with the north being administered by the Soviet Union and the south being administered by the USA. After five years, Korea was supposed to once again be independent. However, tensions between communist and non-communist groups in the region boiled over in 1950 in the Korean War (1950–1953). This became one of the

first genuine 'hotspots' of the Cold War. Australia supported the United Nations forces that opposed the Chinese-backed north Korean invasion of the south. The result politically was the official division of the Korean peninsula into a communist north and capitalist south, but for Australia it confirmed deep set fears of engaging with Asia.

The pattern for Australia's engagement with Asia continued in the Malayan Emergency (1950–1963), in which Australian military forces supported the British in opposing

overmatter

Source 10.41 The Australian Prime Minister, Gough Whitlam, meeting the Chinese Premier, Chairman Mao Zedong, 3 November 1973

MIGRANT EXPERIENCES: THE ITALIANS

In 2011, 916 100 Australians identified themselves as having Italian ancestry. This made Italians the fifth largest identified ancestry in Australia behind Australian, English, Scottish and Irish. The 2011 census also showed that over 185 000 of the population had been born in Italy.

Although there was an Italian convict on the First Fleet, the bulk of Italians migrants arrived in Australia between 1945 and 1970. Most were looking for a better life, and they spread throughout Australia. Victoria and South Australia have a greater proportion of citizens of Italian ancestry, but they have been distributed across the country in both rural and urban areas.

Australians of Italian heritage have been major contributors to Australian life and culture. Their contributions have ranged from politics (such as former New South Wales premier, Morris Iemma and former Deputy Prime Minister Anthony Albanese) to the arts (such as comedian Santo Cilauro and musicians Laura and Natalie Imbruglia) to sports (such as former surfing world champion Mark Occhilupo and footballer John Aloisi).



APPLY 10.3

- 1 Conduct research to find a range of sources that can be used to describe the experiences of Italian migrants, or another group of migrants, who came to Australia between 1945 and 1970.

Source 10.42 One of the most famous contributions by Italian Australians: John Aloisi's penalty that took Australia to the 2006 World Cup football finals.

Being Italian in Australia

SOURCE STUDY

Source 10.43

My family are from Trieste, situated up in the north of Italy. My grandfather on my dad's side was a professional trumpet player in his day. My dad played guitar and sang most of his life, non-professionally. However, he had a great love and passion for music. My mother, having a wonderful natural singing ability, had ambitions to pursue a career in opera. This was cut short when the Nazis occupied Trieste soon after World War II began. Some years after the war had ended, the Italian/Yugoslav border was changed. Their house and restaurant fell inside the communist rule of Yugoslavia. Finding themselves with many other Italians in the same dilemma, they chose to leave their homeland and start a new life [in Australia] leaving everything behind. They arrived in Australia in 1954.



Source 10.44
Mario Millo

As far as I know, for a short time Britain was offering free passage by sea to Australia on board the *Oceana*. You can imagine how difficult it would have been, not knowing the language or any of the customs. They arrived in Australia with a couple of suitcases and two daughters, one 14 and the other 3 years old. By that stage the 'wog', 'dago' and 'greaseball' labels were alive and well, and this made it even more traumatic for them to settle in this faraway land. My father was a qualified diesel mechanic, but as a result of not being able to read or write English, spent his working years in Australia as a factory hand on the lowest of wages. In amongst the hardships, however, there were also many humorous stories of things that happened in their early years here. [But] my mum often reminds me that from the time they first arrived in Australia, she has never gone to sleep hungry as she did many times back in Italy.

For me, growing up with the name Mario was a hassle most of the time. I remember my first horrific day at school barely knowing how to speak English. I only knew a few words here and there, taught to me by my older sister Rosanna, who must have been through the same ordeal. I was in fourth class primary school. We lived very close to the public school and one day I invited one of my best friends home for some lunch. It was my mum's day off and she prepared spaghetti and also an Italian native lettuce (radicchio) which looks like leaves. He thoroughly enjoyed the food but a few days later the gossip in the playground was, 'Mario Ovaltine eats worms and grass'. From that point on we were no longer friends.

From an interview with Mario Millo, whose family emigrated to from Italy in 1954. Mario was born in Sydney in 1955.

INTERPRET 10.6

- 1 What forces led Mario Millo's family to migrate to Australia?
- 2 How did migration to Australia affect the lives of the two generations of the Millo family?
- 3 What evidence does this source provide to help historians understand the way migrants were accepted in Australia, and problems they may have faced, in the 1950s and 1960s?

REVIEW 10.7

- 1 How many Australians identified themselves as having Italy ancestry in the 2011 census?
- 2 Identify three Australians of Italian origin who have made a contribution to Australian life.

CHECKPOINT

In this Rich Task, you will be learning and applying the following historical skills:

- » Comprehension: chronology, terms and concepts
- » Research
- » Explanation and communication

For more information about these skills, refer to 'The historian's toolkit'.

HOW HAVE GOVERNMENT POLICIES INFLUENCED MIGRATION TO AUSTRALIA?

» Outline government policies and practices that restricted migration to Australia before World War II

- 1 Outline the intent of the White Australia Policy and explain how it restricted migration to Australia. (5 marks)
- 2 Explain how the White Australia Policy gradually changed after World War II. (5 marks)
- 3 Identify the nature of Australia's relations with Asia in the thirty years after World War II. (10 marks)

» Explain why the government attempted to attract more migrants to Australia during the 1950s and 1960s, using the slogan 'Populate or Perish'

- 4 Explain what the slogan 'Populate or Perish' meant. How was it applied after World War II? (5 marks)
- 5 Explain how the implementation of the 'Populate or Perish' and assimilation policies changed Australia between 1945 and 1975. (10 marks)

» Use a range of sources to describe the hardships faced by migrants, with a particular focus on the experiences of one group who came to Australia between 1945 and 1970

- 6 Explain how Mario Millo's experiences help you identify the difficulties that faced Italian migrants moving to Australia after World War II. (5 marks)
- 7 Describe the experiences of one group of migrants that you have investigated, including the areas in which they settled, common occupations and personal accounts of life in Australia. Refer to a range of sources in your response. (10 marks)

TOTAL MARKS [/450]

RICH TASK

Be the historian

For this task, you are to find and write about someone who has a connection with a migrant group that arrived in Australia between 1945 and 1970. Through an interview, gather historical information about the hardships migrants experienced on arrival in Australia. If you are unable to locate an appropriate person to interview, conduct the same research using published sources.

- 1 Locate a person who has a connection to people who arrived in Australia as migrants between 1945 and 1970. You can use family, or you may have to move into a broader range of connections.
- 2 Find the country they migrated from, and do some basic research on conditions in the country at the time they left.
- 3 Construct a list of questions you can ask that will allow you to understand why they migrated here, how they got here, and their reaction to arriving in Australia. You will also have to decide whether they felt they experienced hardship on arrival.
- 4 Conduct your interview, making sure you have a record of both your questions and the responses.
- 5 Using your interview material as evidence, write a profile of the person's experience migrating to Australia.
- 6 As a class, compare your profiles and discuss whether migration to Australia in that period was a positive or negative experience.

10.3

SECTION

HOW DID THE VIETNAM WAR AFFECT MIGRATION TO AUSTRALIA?

The Vietnam War is referred to in Vietnam as 'the American War'. Australia sided with the United States, from 1962 to 1975, to intervene in what was essentially a civil war. Both the United States and Australia opened their doors to refugees from the conflict. The Vietnam War changed the nature of migration to Australia and its development as a multicultural society.

THE VIETNAM WAR

The Vietnam War took place in the historical context of the Cold War and was part of the American campaign to prevent the spread of communism, a stance that was enthusiastically supported by Australia.

Background to the Vietnam War



Source 10.45 Caption to come

The Vietnamese proudly point to 2879 BC as the foundation of their society. Since then, they have fought ferociously to preserve their independence. A failure to understand this fundamental element of Vietnamese society was the root of the Vietnam War. Throughout their history they fought lengthy wars against the Chinese and the French. Vietnam had been part of the French Empire since the 19th century. During World War II, Japan invaded Vietnam and a group led by the communist revolutionary Ho Chi Minh fought both the Japanese and the French occupation.

The Vietnamese Communist Party had sided with the Americans in World War II and expected American support for their declaration of independence at the war's end. Worried that any support for Vietnam would encourage communism in the region, the United States instead supported the return of France as the colonial power.

In the French Indochina War that followed this decision, France was finally defeated at the Battle of Dien Bien Phu in 1954, which led to the end of French rule. The United States then demanded a division of Vietnam into a communist north and American-backed south. That artificial division was at the heart of what became the Vietnam War.

In 1956, the United States refused to allow elections to reunify the country. As a result, the North began a guerrilla war in hopes of a reunification. North Vietnamese forces began to infiltrate the south in 1959. In 1961, the United States, under President Kennedy, started sending American advisors to support the south. This support escalated to bombing raids and an increasing number of American forces on the ground.

Australian involvement in the Vietnam War

The Menzies government fully supported the anti-communist policy of the United States, and remained supporters throughout the Cold War. Like Kennedy, Menzies was a believer in the 'domino theory', which held that if Vietnam was allowed to fall to communism, the rest of South East Asia would quickly follow. In 1962, the Australian government committed its first military advisors to South Vietnam. That initial commitment of 30 would grow to 60 000 over the next decade. It would lead to the reintroduction of conscription for overseas military service, which divided Australian society.

Until the deployment of Australian soldiers to Afghanistan in 2001, Vietnam was Australia's longest war. Five hundred Australians died during the conflict, including 185 National Servicemen who had been conscripted to fight.

How the Vietnam War ended

The Vietnam War became a drawn-out guerrilla war in which it was often unclear to Australian and American troops who their actual enemy was. The conflict is often referred to as the first television war because television news crews often accompanied soldiers, and news bulletins reported the growing death tolls. Politicians continued to speak of the 'light at the end of the tunnel', while television viewers were becoming depressingly familiar with the sight of body bags.



Source 10.46 The division of Vietnam into a communist North Vietnam and a non-communist South Vietnam



Source 10.47 Australian troops during the Vietnam War, 8 June 1965

The Tet Offensive in 1968 carried the North Vietnamese to Saigon, the capital of South Vietnam. Although the offensive was eventually repelled, it shattered any illusions that the war effort was going well for the forces of the South. With public confidence and support dwindling in both the United States and Australia, politicians looked to remove themselves from a conflict that appeared to have no end in sight. Australia pulled out of the war in 1972, and the United States followed in 1973. All support personnel and advisors pulled out in 1975 as the North Vietnamese approached Saigon. As the tanks rolled into the former Presidential Palace in Saigon, the USA totalled up the cost of the conflict. Just over 58 000 military personnel had died throughout the American involvement, and the final result was that Vietnam's great cultural pursuit of independence, regardless of obstacles, had triumphed again.

Moral obligations to the South Vietnamese

When South Vietnam eventually fell, many people in the United States felt they had a moral responsibility to those families and individuals who had supported the American forces. This also applied to the Vietnamese people who had supported the Australian war effort. The number of people affected in South Vietnamese society was considerable. Armies required translators, administrative support staff and guides simply to function as an armed force. Then there were all the support services that help supply any army in the field. Shopkeepers, bar owners, taxi drivers or owners of accommodation used by soldiers all became suspect to the North Vietnamese. Added to these were the actual soldiers who fought alongside the South Vietnamese in the field – the USA, Australia, South Korea, New Zealand and others. In total, hundreds of thousands of South Vietnamese had been endangered by associating with what were regarded as invading troops.



Source 10.48 An Australian soldier on duty with a South Vietnamese soldier near Dat Do, Vietnam, 1969

REVIEW 10.8

- 1 Who did the Vietnamese communists fight with during World War II?
- 2 On which side did Australia fight in Vietnam?
- 3 When did Australian and American forces pull out of Vietnam?
- 4 Explain how the Vietnam War created a moral obligation for Australia to support Vietnamese refugees.

VIETNAMESE EMIGRATION AFTER THE WAR

After the North was victorious in 1975, Vietnam started the difficult process of reunifying what had become a divided country. The establishment of 're-education camps' confirmed the fears of many who had fought on the losing side. As the re-education camps were set up, it appeared to many people in the south that the West had simply abandoned them. The lucky ones had managed to secure passage with the Americans during the frantic final hours on the evacuation of Saigon. It was the million left behind that were to be the greatest test of moral obligation for the West.

Re-education camps

Anyone who had worked with, or had some association with the United States and its allies was regarded as a traitor. Investigations in the USA have concluded that about one million Vietnamese were imprisoned in re-education camps after the fall of Saigon in April, 1975. It is thought that about 165 000 people died in these camps, and were subjected to torture and ill treatment. Most terms in the camp ranged from three to ten years, but some people were imprisoned for 17 years. About 150 camps were built, and one in three Vietnamese families had a relative in a prison.

For historians, one of the difficulties in coming to firm conclusions about this period of history is that very few records have survived. Historians have had to build their understanding of the period after the North's victory on oral history testimonies from survivors of re-education camps. These will quite naturally contain bias, and make it difficult for any accounts or figures from the period to be completely objective.

Given the horrors of war and the fear of imprisonment in re-education camps after reunification, many Vietnamese became desperate to leave the country. Some chose to leave because they feared political persecution because of their pro-American beliefs. Others felt their opportunities to prosper in a communist Vietnam would be limited by the new political system.



Source 10.49 A re-education camp in Vietnam

Boat people



Source 10.50 Two-hundred and fifteen orphaned children from Vietnam arrive in Sydney, 1975

The first boat refugees from Vietnam to arrive in Australia landed in Darwin in April 1976, a year after the fall of Saigon. This started a new form of migration to Australia – one driven by fear and desperation. According to government figures, the initial boat was followed by a further 2058 boats from Vietnam, with the final boat arriving in August 1981. Their acceptance into Australia not only signalled the final removal of the White Australia policy, but also changed the composition of the Australian population, and challenged many Australians' ideas about what a 'real Australian' was.

Terminology: refugees and asylum seekers

The two terms that are used most commonly when referring to the people who fled Vietnam after the fall of Saigon are 'refugees' and 'asylum seekers'. These are two terms that have continued to be used in the media as the victims of conflicts throughout the world continue to seek a safer life and more secure future for their families.

Refugee

The United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) cites the 1951 Refugee Protocol to define refugees. A refugee is defined as any person who:

owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it.

This is a straightforward definition that clearly included those fleeing re-education camps in Vietnam.

Asylum seeker

According to UNHCR, an asylum seeker is someone who:

is seeking international protection. In countries with individualized refugee status determination procedures, an asylum-seeker is someone whose claim has not yet been finally decided on by the country in which he or she has submitted it. Not every asylum-seeker will ultimately be recognized as a refugee, but every refugee is initially an asylum-seeker.

Other categories

Other categories that UNHCR refers to include the following:

Stateless People: people who, under national laws, are not legally part of any state (nation or country). That is, people who officially have no country that will accept them.

Internally Displaced People: people who leave their homes because of – or to avoid – wars, general violence, natural or human-made disasters, or violations of human rights but who have not crossed a state border.

Returns: refugees who have returned to their home country, usually with help from UNHCR.

EXTEND 10.2

- 1 What is UNHCR?
- 2 As a class, discuss what you understand by the terms 'refugee', 'asylum seeker' and 'boat person'.

Global response to Vietnamese refugees

There are no clear statistics, but between 250 000 and 500 000 attempted refugees died trying to leave Vietnam. There are terrible stories of robbery, rape and murder by pirates told by survivors. Families typically split up before leaving Vietnam in the hope that at least one family member would survive and reach safety. The refugees survived with very little food and water, and with a voyage to Darwin lasting four weeks, many arrived in Australia near starvation.

The UNHCR recognised the scope of the tragedy that was unfolding and established refugee camps in Malaysia (on Bidong Island; see Source 10.X), Hong Kong, Thailand, the Philippines and Indonesia to try to process the claims of Vietnamese leaving the country. Their work won the UNHCR the Nobel Peace Prize for 1981. From these camps, refugees were processed and resettled in countries willing to house them.

The main countries to accept Vietnamese refugees were the United States with 823 000, Australia and Canada with 137 000 each, France with 96 000, Germany with 40 000, the United Kingdom with 19 000 and Japan with 11 000. It was argued that the United States, Australia and France had a moral obligation after supporting the South Vietnamese directly during the war.



Source 10.51 Thailand gave asylum to over 1.3 million refugees from Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos.

REVIEW 10.9

- 1 Outline the difference between a refugee and an asylum seeker.
- 2 When and where did the first Vietnamese boat refugees arrive in Australia?

EXPERIENCES OF VIETNAMESE REFUGEES



Source 10.52 [Caption to come]

For most Vietnamese boat people the journey was horrendous. Regardless of their final destination, the journey usually involved bribing officials to leave Vietnam on a wide range of boats. From sturdier craft that could hold 400, down to makeshift rafts, Vietnamese took to the open sea in the hope of reaching sea lanes where they could be forwarded on to refugee camps. Some ended up being at sea long enough to make it as far as Australia.

Before leaving Vietnam, families had to sell all their belongings, and any money was usually converted to gold, which was easier to carry and easily converted to cash. Unfortunately, that made the boats a prime target for pirates, particularly from the coast of Thailand. Pirates became a major risk for potential refugees, and added further danger to a voyage that was already highly dangerous because of storms and rough seas.

SOURCE STUDY

Experiences of Vietnamese refugees

Hieu Van Le's story

Hieu Van Le became Lieutenant Governor of South Australia in 2007. He is also the head of the South Australian Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs Commission. He was born in Quang Tri in South Vietnam in 1954, and left Vietnam by boat in 1977.

Source 10.53

If there was a defining moment which said to the world that Hieu Van Le would be a leader, it came in a small wooden fishing boat crammed with more than 50 seasick people three days out to sea from Vietnam in 1977.

Mr Le, just 21 at the time, his wife Lan, and Vietnamese people of all ages and from all walks of life had successfully escaped their war-torn country, but now faced miles of ocean with no maps or navigational aids and a skipper who had reached the limit of the waters he knew.

'The skipper, a local fisherman, summoned us together and said he didn't know which way to go or what else to do,' said Mr Le. 'We were mostly people from cities, many of us had never even been in a boat before. I waited for someone to come up with a solution. Nobody had any practical suggestions, neither the older people we deferred to or the professional people - everyone was arguing. Eventually, with youthful exuberance, frustration and some recklessness under the circumstances, I grabbed some paper and drew a map of Vietnam and the region as best I could remember.'

With roughly sketched map in hand, Mr Le announced that the only way to go was west which should bring them to Malaysia or Thailand. Two days later they saw fishing boats with Malaysian flags and Hieu Van Le was their acknowledged leader.

One major hurdle overcome, the next few days were nightmare material with coastguards turning them away, sometimes at gunpoint, every time they tried to land.

‘When you escape from one country to another in a fragile boat with very limited supplies, water and fuel, the first thing you want to do is to land at the nearest place you can. But it turned out to be quite impossible,’ said Mr Le.

‘Mentally we weren’t prepared for that. Before we left we were told by the so-called skippers and people in the know that once we’d successfully escaped the Vietnamese shore and made it into international waters there would be plenty of ships - a kind of highway of ships - that would pick us up and bring us to shore. It wasn’t happening. Nobody wanted us.’

They tried to land six times at different points along the coastline of Malaysia and Singapore and, every time, the coastguard towed their boat back out to sea.

Eventually, running out of water and supplies, in hopelessness and desperation they all abandoned the boat and swam towards shore, again to Mr Le’s direction and in defiance of the shouts to stop and the weapons being aimed at them.

Ten days after leaving Vietnam, they found themselves in a Malaysian refugee camp of 5000 people. It was overcrowded and the conditions were appalling with disease rife and supplies insufficient. And, perhaps worst of all, there seemed little prospect of settlement in another country.

‘We were out of sight and out of mind and weren’t getting a lot of attention from any other countries,’ said Mr Le.

‘Again with youthful determination we thought we’ve come this far but we haven’t yet reached our goal, so we decided to go again.’

Hieu and Lan were asked to join a group planning to leave for Australia. They were much better prepared for the second boat journey with good maps, lessons in navigation, spare parts for their motor and adequate supplies.

It took over a month of often stormy open seas until they reached Darwin on 21 November 1977 and then by plane to Adelaide just over a week later.

Settling into Australian life was a challenge although they met with unexpected kindnesses like the Schwarz family who heard about them in the media and invited them to Loxton for Christmas.

Hieu and Lan found work at the local Actil factory and then, in 1978 Mr Le started his degree in Economics and Accounting at the University of Adelaide, studying part-time while he worked as a Finance Officer for the Health Commission. He also worked hard to help the growing Vietnamese community integrate into South Australia.



Source 10.54 Hieu Van Le is now Lieutenant Governor of South Australia and chair of the South Australian Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs Commission.

Extract from the University of Adelaide’s magazine *Lumen*, 2008

Anh Do's story



Source 10.57 Author and stand-up comedian Anh Do and his brother, film maker Khoa Do

Anh Do was born in Vietnam in 1977. After leaving Vietnam by boat with his family, he arrived in Australia in 1980 after first spending time in a refugee camp in Malaysia. He wrote about his family's experience in his award-winning book *The Happiest Refugee*. He studied Business/Law at the University of Technology in Sydney, but opted for a career as a stand-up comic.

Source 10.56

I recently found out that my mum's two older brothers were in concentration camps in Vietnam. And they were supposed to be there for two weeks, they were there for three years. And prisoners around them are getting executed randomly. So my father goes and he steals a high-level communist soldier's uniform and paperwork, he walks right through the front door and says, 'I need to take these two with me, right now'. And he pulls my uncles out. We had to go into hiding and make plans to leave Vietnam 'cause if any of those, any of them are captured, then they could be executed.

I find myself using this saying quite a lot. I think it describes how I go about making decisions in my life and it's something I've learnt from my father. There's only two times in life, there's now, and there's too late. I was born in Vietnam, so when the war finished, life for my family was very hard. And we eventually had to leave Vietnam. There were 40 of us on a 9-metre fishing boat. On day four of our journey we spot a boat in the distance. And as the boat gets closer we realise it's a boatload of Thai pirates. Seven men with knives, machetes and guns get on our boat. And they take everything. One of the pirates picks up the smallest child on the boat, he lifts up the baby and rips open the baby's nappy and \$150 worth of gold falls out. And the pirate dangles the kid over the ocean and threatens to throw the kid in. In that moment, for whatever reason, the pirate decides to spare the kid's life. And that's a good thing, cos that's my little brother. Khoa Do, who in 2005 became the Young Australian of the Year. And we were saved on the fifth day by a big German merchant ship which took us to a refugee camp in Malaysia, and we were there for around three months before Australia says, 'Come to Australia'. And we're very glad that happened. So often, we heard Mum and Dad say, 'What a great country. How good is this place? And the other thing – kids, as you grow up, do as much as you can to give back to this great country and to give back to others less fortunate'. And so, that's how Mum and Dad taught us to fit in.

Anh Do speaking on the ABC's 'Talking Heads' program

APPLY 10.4

- 1 Discuss how the stories of Hieu Van Le and Anh Do show any benefits or problems from abandoning the White Australia policy.

INTERPRET 10.7

- 1 Compare and contrast the perspectives in the two accounts shown here.
- 2 Explain how the two accounts differ as historical sources.
- 3 Do you think there is any difference in the reliability of the two accounts?
- 4 In what ways do the two accounts confirm or challenge the information given in the text?

REVIEW 10.10

- 1 Outline common experiences of Vietnamese refugees on their journeys to Australia..

AUSTRALIAN RESPONSES TO THE ARRIVAL OF REFUGEES

The term 'boat people' is a highly charged term in Australian politics. In an island nation with a relatively small population and long, open borders, security has become a key political issue. Politicians have usually overlooked the historical origins of boat people in Australia when using the term to score political points. Australia has been settled by people who arrived by boat, from the first humans that arrived in Australia in ancient times, to the British and other settlers well into the 20th century.

One of the long-term implications of the acceptance of Vietnamese boat people has been the change in the political environment in Australia. One way historians can measure this change can be to investigate polls over a period of time.

- In June 1979, a Morgan poll of Australians found that 53 per cent said that Australia should accept the refugees arriving by boat. Only 28 per cent said that the boats should be put back to sea, and 19 per cent were undecided.
- In September 2001, a similar poll found that 68 per cent of Australians wanted boats put back to sea. Only 20 per cent wanted Australia to accept the refugees, and 12 per cent were undecided.

The decrease in indecision indicated that this was an issue that was polarising people. In other words, people were developing firm opinions on it, and most were hostile to refugees arriving in Australia.

The question for historians to ponder was what caused this change of attitude. Politicians would argue that it was a result of the Australian people developing a clear vision of what sort of country they want Australia to be. Refugee advocates could argue equally as strongly that poor political leadership had helped create a selfish Australia with a strong 'us and them' mentality. Neither of these perspectives is entirely true, and it is the job of historians to recognise perspective when building an understanding of the past.



Source 10.58 World Refugee Day protest in Fitzroy, Victoria, June 2013

APPLY 10.5

- 1 Use the figures in the text to construct a graph that allows people to see visually the difference between Australia's acceptance of refugees with Pakistan and Iran.

What is clear is that since the first wave of Vietnamese boat people from 1976, Australia's policies and attitudes have changed. What has not been part of the debate over migration in Australia has been the numbers of refugees that actually try to reach Australia. In 2000, for example, approximately 3000 boat people arrived in Australia. By contrast, in that same year, Iran and Pakistan each accepted over 1 million Afghan refugees. An Australian Government Parliamentary Note from 2011 made the point that 'the burden of assisting the world's asylum seekers mostly fell, and still falls, to some of the world's poorest countries'. In 2009, Pakistan accepted 1.75 million refugees, Iran 1.07 million, and Syria 1.05 million. In 2008, Australia accepted 8742.

There were 6170 applications for asylum in Australia in 2009. By comparison, there were 49 020 asylum applications in the United States, 41 980 in France and 33 250 in Canada. What is clear is that the number of boat people arriving in Australia is not particularly large by world standards, and the number of asylum seekers is nowhere near that experienced by similar countries. Yet it is a major political issue here, and challenges the outstanding achievements of the Australian migration program in creating a multicultural country.

Refugee policies since the 1990s

Introduction of mandatory detention

When Labor leader Paul Keating replaced Bob Hawke as Prime Minister in 1991 he was responsible for the next major policy determining migration to Australia. In 1992 he introduced mandatory detention of asylum seekers. This policy meant that any asylum seekers arriving in Australia would be held in detention. This policy was developed as a response to the increasing number of Vietnamese, Chinese and Cambodian refugees seeking asylum in Australia. It was introduced with bipartisan support. In 1994, the Keating government removed the 273 day limit on detention, meaning asylum seekers could be detained indefinitely.

From the Pacific solution to 'turn back the boats'

Since 2001, most of the asylum seekers have come from conflicts in Afghanistan, Iraq and Sri Lanka. Prime Minister John Howard's solution to the arrival of asylum seekers was called the 'Pacific solution'. This meant that any asylum seekers would have their claims assessed away from Australia so that they could not have access to Australia courts and the Australian legal system.

The Rudd and Gillard governments maintained mandatory detention, and in 2011 the Gillard government negotiated a deal with Malaysia. Malaysia was to accept refugees attempting to come to Australia. In return, Australia would accept refugees who had been living in Malaysia. This was to be called the 'Malaysian Solution.'

The 'Malaysian solution' was the first immigration policy of the 21st century to be challenged in the High Court. On 31 August 2011, the High Court effectively rejected the 'Malaysian solution' by a vote of 6 to 1. While a political blow for a government narrowly holding onto power, it also ensured that immigration would remain a political issue into the future.

The 2013 Federal election led by Prime Minister Kevin Rudd and opposition leader Tony Abbott again had a focus on dealing with refugees and asylum seekers. Both major parties advocated a tough line after the Rudd government had instituted a 'New Guinea solution' that involved all boat refugees being sent immediately to a centre on Manus Island. In many ways, this was Howard's 'Pacific solution' being reintroduced.

In 2013, the newly installed Abbott government indicated that they would continue this hard line after being elected on a policy that included proposals to turn all boats back to Indonesia and buying up Indonesian fishing boats used for people smuggling. Shortly after election they reduced the flow of information regarding attempts to reach Australia. Controversy over the secrecy of the government's actions ensured that naval breaches of Indonesian borders while carrying out the government's 'turn back the boats' policy attracted significant publicity.

EXTEND 10.3

- 1 In 2001, the Norwegian freighter *Tampa* rescued 438 asylum seekers from Afghanistan after their boat was spotted drifting without power. The freighter was then refused entry into Australian waters by the Howard government. Conduct research to find out more about the *Tampa* crisis in 2001 and its consequences.
 - a Discuss whether you consider Australia's treatment of asylum seekers aboard the *Tampa* was justified.
 - b Why was the Tampa Crisis significant in the history of Australia's treatment of refugees?

Responses of Australia to the arrival of refugees

SOURCE STUDY

Source 10.60

Australia has rarely had a humane refugee policy and the idea that the Fraser government compassionately welcomed Vietnamese asylum seekers is amiss.

...For many, that government's treatment of the Vietnamese boat people is a proud period in Australia's long immigration history. Between 1976 and 1982, more than 2000 Vietnamese boat people were admitted to Australia. None was detained in a camp. None was issued with a temporary protection visa. The story, reinforced by the media, that Vietnamese refugees were welcomed with open arms is an enticing narrative, tempting us to believe that this country has demonstrated a willingness to treat asylum seekers humanely and with compassion. But it is not the whole story.

Initially, the Fraser government resettled only a small number of Vietnamese refugees. By the end of 1977 - 2½ years after the end of the Vietnam War - 2753 refugees and 979 boat people had been resettled. Yet at this time the government estimated that 5600 Vietnamese refugees were emigrating every month.

During the 1977 federal election campaign, six boats carrying Vietnamese asylum seekers arrived in one day. In the political frenzy that followed, the Fraser government tried to reassure voters that they were tough on border enforcement. Fraser warned that "some Vietnamese [boat people] who landed in Australia might have to be deported." Fraser's minister for immigration, Michael MacKellar, said that boat people would not necessarily be permitted to stay. This was similar to the current Coalition policy of "turning back the boats."

After re-election, the Fraser government changed its refugee policy. It realised that by increasing the formal refugee program, this would dissuade desperate asylum seekers from taking to rickety fishing boats in an attempt to reach Australia. This policy - increasing the refugee intake to reduce unauthorised immigration - was effective. But in increasing the Vietnamese refugee intake, the Fraser government was also reacting to external pressure. In late 1978, three large ships each carrying more than 2500 Vietnamese boat people appeared in the South China Sea. Previously, boats typically carried 100 passengers.



Source 10.59 Malcolm Fraser in 1976

The escalation in the Vietnamese exodus was shocking. It was also troubling for the United States and the Asian nations that had admitted the majority of Vietnamese refugees to this point. These countries were reluctant to admit more refugees and put pressure on Australia to expand its intake. So, the Fraser government did open its arms briefly to the Vietnamese, but it was motivated principally by external factors.

In the early 1980s, the government increasingly became suspicious of Vietnamese asylum seekers. In parliamentary debates, Vietnamese boat people were portrayed as duplicitous [dishonest] economic migrants wanting to circumvent immigration laws to secure a better way of life:

The fact that Australia struggled with the arrival of these asylum seekers was symptomatic of an insecure nation threatened by Asian penetration, an anxiety that has influenced the national psyche since the mid-19th century. Unfortunately, this anxiety continues to inform asylum seeker policy today.

Rachel Stevens, 'No, the Fraser era was not a golden age for asylum seekers', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 2 February 2012

Source 10.61

Kevin Rudd and Tony Abbott are proving there are no depths to which they will not sink to persuade the Australian people they are the toughest in relation to asylum seekers. The demonising of asylum seekers continues apace.

The Foreign Minister, Bob Carr, has tried to suggest they are now all economic refugees. If they are, they are sent back, and Carr knows that. He had no information which would have justified that comment. When the Gillard government stopped processing in August of last year, more than 90 per cent of those processed up to that point were genuine refugees.

What we did in the past worked. It could work again. Why has nobody ... tried to adapt that to today's circumstances?

The fact remains that, however unpleasant the Australian government tries to be, it cannot match the terror from which those who are genuine refugees are fleeing. That remains the fundamental flaw in the policy of deterrence.

On his visit to Indonesia, Prime Minister Rudd emphasised the importance of a regional solution and welcomed the fact that President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono had announced Indonesia would chair a meeting to discuss regional solutions to the problem. That decision, to work through the so-called Bali process, did not last very long and then Rudd came out with his Nauru and Manus Island solution... It was, again, a knee-jerk reaction giving the impression of fixing a problem, in a way that will likely only create many more problems.

We have all now been told what was happening on Manus Island and on Nauru. Again, it appears no one is responsible, but it is clear enough the most terrible conditions prevailed. Asylum seekers were abused and, for a long while, families were in an intolerable position.

...Our two major political parties should be congratulated on one thing: they both seem to have found new ways of taking Australia's approach to this problem to new depths, to new lows.

Malcolm Fraser, 'Vietnamese refugees were a boon, not a burden', *Sydney Morning Herald* 29 July 2013

INTERPRET 10.8

- 1 Create a table with two columns headed 'similarities' and 'differences' and compare the perspectives of the two authors towards Australia's decision to admit people fleeing from Vietnam after 1975.
- 2 Explain why the author of the Source 10.61 could be regarded as biased.
- 3 Discuss whether one source is more reliable than the other.
- 4 What points are the authors of each source trying to make about:
 - a Australia's policy towards people fleeing from Vietnam, and
 - b Australia's policy towards people fleeing conflict at the time they were writing?
- 5 Explain how the context of the time they were writing impacts on each source.

Response to refugees in Australian media

SOURCE STUDY

Source 10.62

... since the first boatload of refugees turned up under their own steam in Darwin harbour in early 1976 with five Vietnamese men on board fleeing the Communist regime, both Labor and the Coalition have shared the one objective: stopping the boats.

They worked shoulder to shoulder on this until a couple of years ago. Nearly every tough new strategy, from mandatory detention in 1992 to the blocking of the Tampa in 2001, had bipartisan support. Both sides used the damning rhetoric of "queue jumpers" and "illegals"; no leader of either side ever stood up for boat people, and none has called in any effective way for calm on this issue.

... Decades of abuse by both sides of politics have, naturally, left Australians with a low view of boat people. A June 2010 poll for the Scanlon Foundation found that less than a third of us believe they are fleeing persecution or fear for their lives. A Lowy Institute poll this year found that 88 per cent of Australians believe they are queue jumpers and 86 per cent believe they "pose a potential security threat to Australia." Poll after poll over the years shows most of us wildly overestimate their numbers. **Verso**

Even so, mainstream Australia does not want to shut out boat people. Except in the wild panic whipped up over the Tampa, most Australians have thought it best to allow most of them to land here. Clear from polls going back to the late 1970s, this view was confirmed last week in a Nielsen poll that showed 53 per cent of us believe boat people should have their claims for refugee protection processed here.

... [From 2009] Abbott demanded the return of the "Pacific solution." All the old language was brought back into play: of queue jumpers and illegals and invasion. His argument was - and is - that every boat brought to Christmas Island represents proof of Labor's loss of control. Australia is in peril.

... The fundamentals haven't changed: whatever most of us might want, Labor and the Coalition are as determined as ever to play to the fearful and do what it takes to stop those boats.

David Marr, 'All-out assault over issue of boat people', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 22 August 2011

Source 10.63

Well, the people-smugglers have called Kevin Rudd's bluff. Seven more boats carrying 522 people have arrived since Rudd announced his PNG 'arrangement' on Friday.

This deal never had any capacity to deliver what it threatened. It assumed threats alone would deter asylum-seeker boats. But the people-smugglers know threats without substance are just hot air. Six of these seven boats which have arrived since Rudd's PNG announcement set out on their journeys after his announcement. Two more boats are apparently now on their way to Christmas Island. Under the PNG policy, the 522 people who have arrived since Friday are supposed to be sent to Manus Island.

But that is more people than the Manus Island facility can take even if you clear out everyone currently there. In other words, the people-smugglers know the Government can't back up its threats and they have called its bluff.

The only way a Government can turn this disaster around is to start turning boats around. Back up the threat of being settled elsewhere with real action – like turning boats around – and you get real results and send a real message where it counts.

Tony Burke says turning boats around is dangerous because people-smugglers and asylum-seekers create 'safety at sea' situations. But boats may even turn around willingly if told their passengers will not be settled in Australia and given the option of turning around.

This Government must go – issue the writs today.

Alan Jones comments, 2GB broadcast, 25 July 2013

INTERPRET 10.9

- 1 Identify the main point of view in each media piece.
- 2 Explain what bias you can find in each piece. Identify the evidence that allows you to claim it is biased.
- 3 Discuss how the pieces help you understand the way the media has reacted to the arrival of refugees in Australia.

EXTEND 10.4

- 1 As a class, research and create a portfolio of media presentations of refugees to Australia since 1975.

REVIEW 10.11

- 1 How do polls help historians identify changing social attitudes in Australia?
- 2 Compare Australia's acceptance of refugees with Pakistan and Iran.
- 3 When was mandatory.

10.3

CHECKPOINT

In this Rich Task, you will be learning and applying the following historical skills:

- » Comprehension: chronology, terms and concepts
- » Analysis and use of sources
- » Research
- » Explanation and communication

For more information about these skills, refer to 'The historian's toolkit'.

CHECKPOINT

HOW DID THE VIETNAM WAR AFFECT MIGRATION TO AUSTRALIA?

» Describe the impact of the Vietnam War on Australia's migration policy

- 1 Describe the impact of the Vietnam War on Australia's migration policy. (2 marks)
- 2 Explain why Australia responded in the way that it did. (2 marks)

» Discuss the response of Australians, including the Australian media, to the arrival of refugees from Indochina in the 1970s and 1980s

- 3 Identify the response of Australian governments to the arrival of refugees from Indochina in the 1970s and 1980s. (5 marks)
- 4 Explain why immigration changed so dramatically in Australia in the 1970s. (2 marks)
- 5 Discuss whether the Australian media has reflected government attitudes towards refugees. (4 marks)

» Use a range of sources to describe the experiences of Vietnamese refugees on their journey to Australia and experiences on arrival after 1975

- 6 Describe the experiences Vietnamese group of refugees to Australia since 1975 travelling to Australia, and when they arrived. In your answer you should refer to a range of primary and secondary sources. (10 marks)

TOTAL MARKS [/25]

RICH TASK

Impact of the War on Terror on Australian migration

This section has dealt with the impact of the Vietnam War on Australian migration. As a class your task is to compare that impact of the Vietnam War with that of the War on Terror that was the result of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attack on the United States.

- 1 Divide into groups to research the following aspects:
 - a the context of September 11.
 - b the War on Terror.
 - c Australia's role in the War on Terror
 - d the impact of the War on Terror on the populations of: a) Afghanistan, and b) Iraq
 - e the increase in attempts to reach Australia by boat from 2001
 - f the conditions asylum seekers and refugees endured to reach Australia
 - g the reaction of Australian governments to the asylum seekers and refugees
 - h press coverage of the issue
- 2 As a class, discuss your findings, and use the material to create an alternative textbook chapter that uses the War on Terror instead of the Vietnam War.

10.4

SECTION

HOW HAS MIGRATION SHAPED AUSTRALIA'S IDENTITY AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS?

In this section, you will read and reflect on the changes that have taken place in Australia's immigration policies and in the attitudes of its citizens. You will find that from the time of the White Australia policy when this country first emerged as a nation in 1901 – not too long ago – Australia has emerged as a multicultural country that now is home to people from all over the world.

A MULTICULTURAL AUSTRALIA

The move to multiculturalism in the 1970s was a reaction to the previous assimilation policy. A policy of assimilation had required migrants to reject their original culture and become 'Australian'. This policy ignored the depth and significance of culture as a defining feature of a person's identity. Multiculturalism allowed new Australians to celebrate their cultural origins while embracing the values of their adopted country. It meant increasing diversity in all aspects of life, and the start of a national redefining of what it meant to be 'Australian'.

Whitlam and Fraser



Source 10.64 Al Grassby, the first Commissioner for Community Relations, with Gough Whitlam at the proclamation of the *Racial Discrimination Act* 1975.

Two great political rivals of the 1970s, Gough Whitlam and Malcolm Fraser, were the fathers of multiculturalism in Australia. Whitlam's appointment of Al Grassby as Minister for Immigration was the start of rapid change. Although the White Australia policy had effectively finished, Grassby formalised its removal. He called for increased migration from non-English speaking countries, ended racially-selected sporting teams (a move designed to differentiate Australia from apartheid South Africa) and removed the legal requirement for Indigenous Australians to seek permission before they travelled overseas.

Grassby lost the 1974 election after his seat was targeted by anti-immigration groups. Whitlam responded by appointing him the first federal Commissioner for Community Relations, responsible for administering the Racial Discrimination

Act. It was a clear signal that despite the lobbying of conservative, race-based groups, the government was not going to deviate from a policy of multiculturalism.

When Fraser replaced Whitlam in 1975, the bipartisan approach to matters of immigration continued. It was a characteristic of politics until late in the 20th century that immigration was rarely an election issue. Fraser continued to advance multiculturalism, through legislation such as the Ethnic Affairs Commission, and the acceptance of Vietnamese refugees in the aftermath of the Vietnam War.

The Fraser government's adoption of a National Multicultural Festival in 1980 was the start of official community celebration of multiculturalism. It raised the status and identity of the cultures that by 1980 reflected the diverse origins of Australian society.

The combination of legislative and political support for multiculturalism as an important part of Australian society was maintained by Hawke and Keating governments.



Source 10.65 The National Multicultural Festival was adopted in 1980 and remains a popular festival each year in Canberra.

Clashes and debates

The first major sign of trouble in Australia's approach to multiculturalism came in 1984. In 1984, during a speech to members of a Rotary group, historian Geoffrey Blainey complained that the rates of Asian migration to Australia were too high, and threatened the social cohesion of Australian society. It made migration a priority issue in the media, and started a debate that broke the bipartisan approach that had characterised so much of the previous decade.

One Australia

Since Blainey's 1984 speech, immigration policy has become a major political issue. In 1988, John Howard (leader of the Opposition at the time) developed the Liberal Party's policy on immigration and ethnic affairs, which he called 'One Australia'. When discussing it on radio on 1 August 1988, he commented that he thought the rate of Asian migration needed to be slowed. For the first time since the ending of the White Australia policy, a politician had made race and migration a political issue.

The Labor Party sought to score political points with Howard's remarks. They introduced a motion into parliament that rejected the use of race to select immigrants. Howard opposed the motion, and three members of his own party crossed the floor to vote against him. Howard also criticised multiculturalism. His argument was that it showed that it was impossible to have an Australian ethos or common Australian culture.

Howard's 'One Australia' policy was never put into practice because he was replaced as Opposition leader in 1989. He had, however, highlighted the emergence of race as a potentially divisive issue in Australian life.

National identity and the immigration debate under the Howard government

When he came to power in 1996, John Howard changed the Department of Immigration, Multiculturalism and Indigenous Affairs to the Department of Immigration and Citizenship. Perhaps more controversially, he failed to challenge Pauline Hanson's first speech to Parliament. Hanson had been a Liberal candidate until shortly before the election, and criticised multiculturalism in her first speech after being elected as an Independent. In her speech, she said: 'I and most Australians want our immigration policy radically reviewed and that of multiculturalism abolished. I believe we are in danger of being swamped by Asians'. She also went on to say that 'Arthur Calwell was a great Australian and Labor leader', in a clear reference to his support of the White Australia policy. Howard simply responded by saying this was an example of the new freedom of expression in the country.

Hanson is yet to be returned to any parliament since 1998. However, her position on immigration and Indigenous affairs has had an impact on the Australian political landscape. Immigration became a topic of division in society, and politicians were quick to translate fears and jealousies into votes.

Howard saw an ongoing Australian tradition at the centre of national identity, and expected migrants to embrace that. It was reflected in his attempts to create a citizenship test that required knowledge of Australian history and sport, and an attempted preamble to the constitution that celebrated 'mateship'. He summed up his ideas in his 2006 Australia Day address to the National Press Club: 'Most nations experience some level of cultural diversity while also having a dominant cultural pattern running through them. In Australia's case, that dominant pattern comprises Judeo-Christian ethics, the progressive spirit of the Enlightenment and the institutions and values of British political culture. Its democratic and egalitarian temper also bears the imprint of distinct Irish and non-conformist traditions'.

Challenges

Contested views of national identity were made most obvious on 4 December 2005, when the Sydney beachside suburb of Cronulla experienced a riot that shook Australia. The friction had started with a conflict between youths of 'Middle Eastern appearance' and lifesavers on Cronulla Beach in New South Wales. There had been ongoing local resentment at the influx of visitors to the Cronulla beaches on weekends. The resentment was a bomb waiting to explode.

Sydney media played a role in encouraging a response to an assault by Lebanese youths on one of Australia's icons – surf club lifesavers. Leading the media reaction was Sydney announcer Alan Jones. On his popular breakfast show, he called for 'a community show of force', calling the group responsible for the attack on the lifesavers 'Middle Eastern grubs'. When a listener complained that he was making derogatory remarks, Jones responded saying: 'We don't have Anglo-Saxon kids out there raping women in Western Sydney'. It was this kind of hysterical racial stereotyping that fanned the flames of hatred in Cronulla the following weekend.



Source 10.66 A
police officer trying
to separate two men
fighting at Cronulla

A series of SMS texts were widely circulated during the week calling on 'Aussie Pride' to come to a 'Leb and wog bashing day' at North Cronulla on Sunday 11 December. A crowd of about 5000 had assembled at North Cronulla Beach wearing clothing and chanting slogans that were racially offensive. Young men were bashed, and beer bottles smashed, as police moved to restore order. The news of what had occurred at Cronulla circulated through western Sydney, and gangs of youths assembled to drive to Cronulla and Maroubra Beaches. Incidents continued for the next three nights as groups on both sides of the divide made claims and counter claims.

The aftermath

Police investigating the riot arrested 51 people as a result of the original Cronulla riot, and 53 from the retaliation riots. However, the Cronulla Riots also had wider impacts, affecting Australia's international reputation. Authorities in Great Britain, Canada and Indonesia issued travel advisory warnings to their citizens about the dangers of travelling to Australia. The years of patient development of closer cultural, political and economic ties with Asia since the ending of the White Australia Policy were strained.

Prime Minister Howard refused to see a racial element in the riots, calling them basically a law-and-order issue. He restated that he didn't think Australia was a racist country, and that Australia's international standing wouldn't be harmed. The New South Wales Government invested \$250 000 into a tourism campaign to try to fix the damage they felt the riots had done to Australia's image as a holiday destination.

EXTEND 10.5

- 1 In January 2014 it was revealed that the Australian Navy had accidentally breached Indonesian waters while turning asylum seeker boats back. Conduct research on the media coverage of the event and discuss whether it has had an impact on Australia's international relations.

Embracing diversity

In 2011, the Labor Government launched a new policy called *The People of Australia: Australia's Multicultural Policy*. The policy was designed to reaffirm the importance of a culturally diverse and socially cohesive nation. As an indication of the changes in Australia since 1945, it was released in 11 languages: English, Arabic, Chinese, Dinka, French, German, Greek, Hindi, Italian, Spanish and Vietnamese. The geographical and cultural spread of these languages represents the history of Australian post-war immigration. In a speech at the time, Prime Minister Julia Gillard acknowledged her own immigrant roots. Gillard was the sixth Australian prime minister to have been born overseas.

Source 10.67

Australia is a multicultural country. We sing 'Australians all' because we are. Our country's story is the story of our people in this place. Australia has provided a new home and a chance at a better life for millions of people. I am a migrant. My family embraced the sense of opportunity and community that they found in Australia and the possibilities for their children that this multicultural country offered them. I remember the debates in the family home as my parents decided to become citizens of this nation. And having chosen this country, my family have loved it with a fierce determination and passion ever since.

Prime Minister Julia Gillard in the foreword to The People of Australia: Australia's Multicultural Policy, Australian Government, 2011

REVIEW 10.12

- 1 What is 'multiculturalism'?
- 2 How did political leaders support multiculturalism in the 1970s and 1980s?

THE CONTRIBUTION OF MIGRANTS IN AUSTRALIAN SOCIETY



Source 10.69 Aston Agar



Source 10.70 Israel Folau



Source 10.71 Fiona Wood was named Australian of the Year in 2005 for her work in developing new technologies to treat burns victims



Source 10.72 Frank Lowy migrated to Australia after surviving World War II in Nazi-occupied Hungary.

Migrants have contributed to all aspects of Australian society. Migrants, or the children of migrants, who have achieved in sport are often in the public eye. For example, cricketer Ashton Agar's parents migrated from Sri Lanka, and rugby union star Israel Folau's family is from Tonga. Socceroos team members have come from a diverse range of backgrounds, including Italian, German, Anglo-Saxon, Croatian and Lebanese.

However, the contribution of migration to Australia extends well beyond sport. Migration has also contributed to the country economically and culturally. Businessman Frank Lowy escaped Nazi Europe to found Westfield shopping centres, now a thriving international business. In politics, Treasurer Joe Hockey and New South Wales transport minister Gladys Berejiklian have migrant parents of Armenian descent. In the field of medicine, Hong Kong-born heart surgeon Victor Chang, New Zealand-born eye surgeon Fred Hollows, and British-born plastic surgeon Fiona Wood (developer of a new technique for treating burns victims) have all transformed peoples' lives with their work.

Source 10.68

One in two exporters are born overseas, two thirds of our entrepreneurs, one in four Australians. Just look at a city skyline and you see Westfield, Myer, Bing Lee. Everyone who's come here has been a migrant who's created great jobs for everyone.

Excerpt of an interview with UNSW economist Tim Harcourt, on ABC's Radio National's 'Mongrel Nation' program, 4 August 2013

Rock'n'Roll – a multicultural success story

The Beatles tour of Australia in 1964 sparked an explosion of popular culture in Australia. Virtually every suburb and town boasted a rock'n'roll band in what has been referred to as the second wave of Australian rock'n'roll. What was extraordinary was the role of migration in this period. Arguably Australia's greatest musical export of the period, The Easybeats, formed in Villawood migrant hostel and comprised Scottish, English and Dutch migrants. Their close rivals The Twilights were also of English extraction. Keith Potger from The Seekers reflected the extent of the British Commonwealth by being born in Ceylon, and New Zealand provided Max Merritt, Ray Columbus and Dinah Lee.

The contribution of migrants to Australian popular culture has been immense, and reflects the strength of Australia's migration policies in attracting talented, ambitious and dynamic people to enrich the country.

Source 10.73

Dear Mr Brodziak,

We're wondering whether you would be interested in the possibility of cooperating in a publicity idea intended to assist us with our immigration publicity overseas. We thought we might be able to link the visit of the Beatles to Sydney with the impressive story of British migration to Australia...

... It is obvious we would get widespread publicity in the United Kingdom, and since we have an urgent need for more skilled workers it is the Department's wish to exploit every opportunity.

The idea ... would be for us to select, say, about a dozen impressive families who have settled here successfully ... and have some members of these families introduced to the Beatles...Possibly we could arrange a meeting on the top of the Commonwealth Centre in Sydney, which gives a commanding view of the Sydney Harbour...

Extract from a letter written by Mr Aub Williams, New South Wales Public Relations Officer for the Department of Immigration to Mr Kenn Brodziak, the promoter who brought the Beatles to Australia in 1964

INTERPRET 10.10

- 1 Explain whether this source is useful in establishing links between migration and rock and roll in Australia in the 1960s.
- 2 What does this letter reveal about official government policy on migration in 1964?
- 3 Discuss why an Australian Federal Government department would want to use The Beatles in this way.
- 4 What do you think the term '*impressive families*' means? How could you judge this?
- 5 Although the proposed idea never proceeded, create a publicity campaign that shows how the Department of Immigration could have used footage of a proposed meeting between The Beatles and British migrants to Australia in 1964.

The contribution of Vietnamese migration to Australia

One of the great achievements of Australia's acceptance of Vietnamese boat people has been the number of Australians of Vietnamese heritage that have gone on to contribute to Australian life in a variety of areas. Two Young Australians of the Year have been former Vietnamese refugees, and Vietnamese Australians have started making a major impact on Australian culture.

Tan Lee

Tan Lee was named Young Australian of the Year in 1998 for her work in her community as well as outstanding contributions to telecommunications and business. Born in Vietnam in 1977, she migrated to Australia as a refugee in 1982. By the time she was 18 she was president of the Vietnamese Community of Footscray, finding jobs for Vietnamese Australians.



Source 10.74 Tan Le was named Young Australian of the Year in 1998.

In 2000, she was admitted as a barrister and lawyer, and in 2003 co-founded Emotiv, the neuroengineering company that developed a breakthrough interface technology for digital media, taking inputs directly from the brain. It is regarded as technology that utterly transforms the way we interact with computers. By 2011 Tan Lee was named by Forbes Magazine as one of 50 names to watch because of her work on a headset that takes orders directly from the brain.

Khoa Do

Khoa Do was born in Ho Chi Minh City in 1979, and arrived in Australia in 1980 after leaving Vietnam on a fishing boat and reaching a refugee camp in Malaysia. With a passion for drama, this was the vehicle he used to reach other Vietnamese youth in Sydney's western suburbs. He also graduated in Arts/Law while developing his skills as a film maker. His first short film, *Delivery Day*, looked at the problems of balancing demands for a Vietnamese girl in Australian society and was nominated for an AFI award in 2001. He was named Young Australian of the Year in 2005 for showing 'leadership, compassion, a will to inspire and inform Australians on issues that affect our communities'. In 2006, his film *Footy Legends* used his western suburbs experience of Rugby League as a comedic bridge across cultures. He has continued to use film to focus on Australian life, and his 2011 film *Falling For Sahara*, details the lives of Ethiopian and Somali refugees to Melbourne.

Anh Do

Anh Do, Khoa Do's older brother, was born in Vietnam in 1977. Do chronicled the family's journey from Vietnam to Malaysia crammed aboard a fishing boat in his award winning memoir *The Happiest Refugee*. After a degree in Business/Law, Anh Do decided that life as a stand-up comedian was preferable to the corporate world, and he developed a reputation on Sydney's comedy circuit as a witty observer of life as an immigrant. In 2006, he was the star of his brother's breakthrough film *Footy Legends*. His acceptance into mainstream Australia is reflected by his popularity from appearances on television shows such as *Dancing With Stars* and *The Footy Show*. The success of *The Happiest Refugee*, which won several awards, confirmed the acceptance of the Do family into Australian life.

EXTEND 10.6

- 1 Watch Khoa Do's film *Footy Legends*. How does it help you understand the experiences of migrant groups when they come to Australia?

Nam Le

Nam Le was born in Vietnam in 1977, and came to Australia as a boat refugee when he was less than a year old. He grew up in Melbourne, graduating from the University of Melbourne with Honours in Arts and Laws. He worked briefly in law, but discovered his passion in writing. In 2004, he attended a writing workshop in Iowa, and completed a Masters degree in Creative Writing. His first novel, *The Boat*, dominated literary awards in 2008. A collection of short stories, it ranged from material that echoes his memories of Vietnam through to stories of a Hiroshima orphan and a 14-year-old Colombian assassin. Among the host of international awards Le received, was the Dylan Thomas Award for Writers under 30. It confirmed his arrival as one of the most exciting novelists of his generation.



Source 10.75 Nam Le at the Melbourne Writer's Festival, 24 August 2008

Migration and Australia's international relations

Throughout Australian history, migration has been closely tied to its relationships with other countries around the world. Australia's history as a British colony and maintenance of close political ties has seen Britain retain its position as Australia's dominant source of migrants.

Australia's close historical, political and cultural links to New Zealand, together with its close proximity, has seen a rise in the number of New Zealand immigrants – now second only to Britain as a source of Australia's migrants.

Australia's historical relationships with countries in the Asian region such as Vietnam and China have also influenced the numbers of migrants choosing to settle here. The influence of migration on foreign relations has also been two-way – close foreign relations have encouraged certain groups of migrants to travel to Australia, but the arrival of certain migrant groups has had the effect of understanding and better international cooperation, strengthening ties between the two countries. For example, Australia's close ties with Britain have allowed it to take advantage of its membership of the Commonwealth of Nations, an international organisation of 53 countries with ties to the former British Empire. This relationship has permitted close links on trade, travel, foreign policy and encouraged other cooperation.

The arrival of large numbers of migrants has also improved Australia's relations with other countries around the world. The close familial and community bonds between people in Italy, Greece, China and Vietnam and migrant families from those countries in Australia have led to closer trade ties, cultural understanding and international cooperation. Informal estimates quoted by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade suggest Australia's Greek community could be as large as 600 000, with Melbourne often described as the third largest 'Greek city' in the world after Athens and Thessaloniki.

APPLY 10.6

- 1 Create a multimedia presentation that assesses the contribution migrants have made to Australia since World War II.

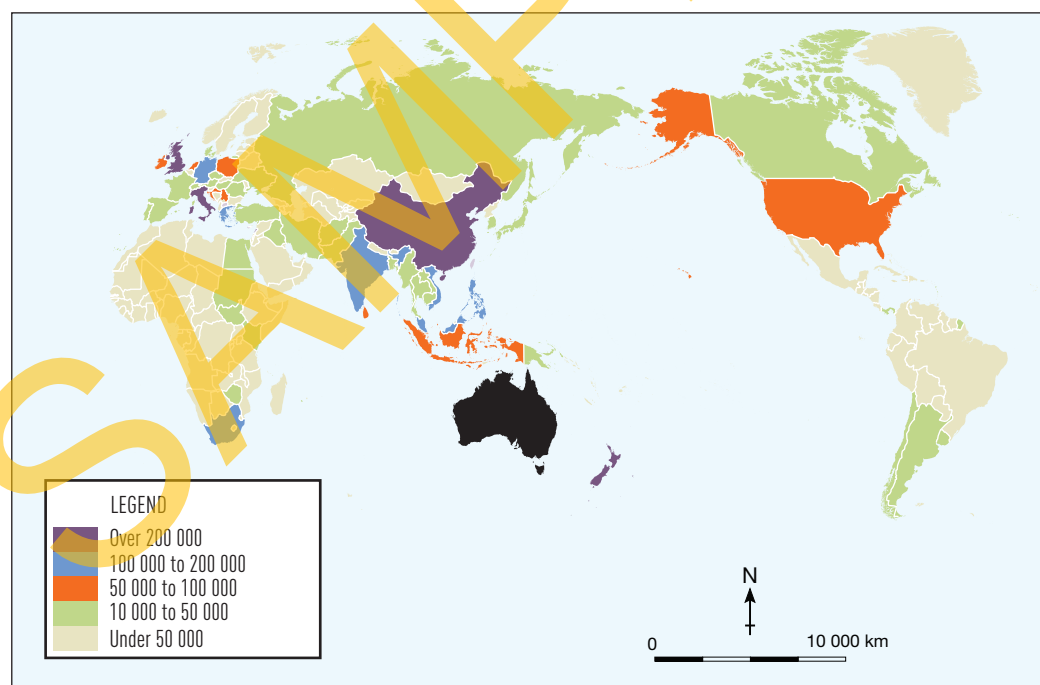
Australia today

In its most recent census, conducted in 2011, the Australian Bureau of Statistics found that:

over a quarter (26%) of Australia's population was born overseas and a further one fifth (20%) had at least one overseas-born parent. Throughout the 100 years since the first National Census in 1911, migrants have made up a large component of the Australian population. Historically, the majority of migration has come from Europe, however, there are increasingly more Australians who were born in Asia and other parts of the world (see Source 10.76). This pattern of migration is evident in the make-up of the richly diverse society which has been recorded in the 2011 census.

Although Great Britain has consistently been the major source of migrants to Australia, and in 2011 accounted for 21 per cent of Australia's foreign-born population, the top five was rounded out by New Zealand (9.1 per cent); China (6 per cent); India (5.6 per cent) and Italy (3.5 per cent). These figures help to reveal the changing composition of Australia's population which had reached nearly 22.5 million in 2011.

The impact of migration on Australia is clear statistically. What continues to be a rich field of historical investigation is the impact of those statistical changes on Australia's sense of identity and relationship with the world. Just as World War II and Vietnam led to changes in Australia's population, so too has our involvement in conflicts in the Middle East. Migration remains a critical element in understanding continuity and change in Australia.



Source 10.76 Number of permanent residents in Australian in 2011 by country of birth

REVIEW 10.13

- 1 Identify individuals with migrant backgrounds who have contributed to Australian society and outline their background and achievements.
- 2 Which are the five largest migrant groups in Australian based on the percentage of the population born overseas in the 2011 census. How do these figures represent continuity and change in migration to Australia in the 20th century?

10.4

CHECKPOINT

In this Rich Task, you will be learning and applying the following historical skills:

- » Comprehension: chronology, terms and concepts
- » Research
- » Explanation and communication

For more information about these skills, refer to 'The historian's toolkit'.

CHECKPOINT

HOW HAS MIGRATION SHAPED AUSTRALIA'S IDENTITY AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS?

» Assess the contribution of migrant men and women to Australia's social, cultural and economic development and Australia's changing identity

- 1 Outline the contribution migrants have made to Australian social, cultural and economic development since World War II through the use of specific examples to support your outline. (10 marks)
- 2 Explain how migration has contributed to Australia's changing national identity. (3 marks)

» Explain how Australia's changing migration policies have affected our relationships with other nations

- 3 Create a timeline of Australia's links with different countries since World War II through migration. (7 marks)
- 4 Explain how changes in Australia's migration policies since World War II have affected our relations with the nations mentioned on the timeline. (5 marks)

TOTAL MARKS [/25]

RICH TASKS

Australia without migration?

As this depth study has shown, migration has transformed Australia since World War II, and many migrants have made outstanding contributions to Australia and the world.

- 1 Select a migrant or child of migrants to Australia that you believe has made a major contribution to Australia.
- 2 Research their life and achievements.
- 3 Summarise what you believe they have done for Australia.
- 4 Describe what Australia would have missed if the migrant and/or their family hadn't been accepted into Australia.
- 5 As a class, discuss your findings and construct a description of Australia if it had not encouraged migration since 1945. This could be illustrated with some examples of high achieving migrants to Australia such as Frank Lowy (business), Tan Lee (technology), Anh Do (entertainment), Gurinder Singh (cricket) or John Aloisi (football).