

Unit 3 The globalising world (1945–the present)

Migration experiences

Australia is a nation built on migration. Since the end of World War II, more than seven million new migrants have settled here. Some have come seeking better opportunities. Others have come to escape conflicts, disasters or persecution elsewhere. Major world events, such as the Vietnam War, have influenced the range and number of people arriving in Australia. As a result, government policies have evolved under successive leaders to manage the numbers and types of people wishing to settle here. With time, policies that discriminated on the basis of race have been replaced by a system based on skills and eligibility. With one in four Australians born overseas, migration has made Australia the culturally and ethnically diverse nation it is today.



chapter 15

15A

How have world events influenced migration to Australia since World War II?

- 1 Brainstorm three important world events that have taken place since 1945 and discuss how these events might have affected migration to Australia. Do you know anyone who came to Australia as a result of these events?

15B

How have government policies influenced migration to Australia since World War II?

- 1 At the end of World War II, most Australians supported immigration policies that restricted people's entry based on their race. Today, people from all over the world are accepted. What factors do you think led to this change?

15C

How did the Vietnam War affect migration to Australia?

- 1 What affect do you think the Vietnam War had on the types of people coming to Australia?
- 2 Why do you think so many Vietnamese people risked their lives by travelling on boats to Australia during the Vietnam War?

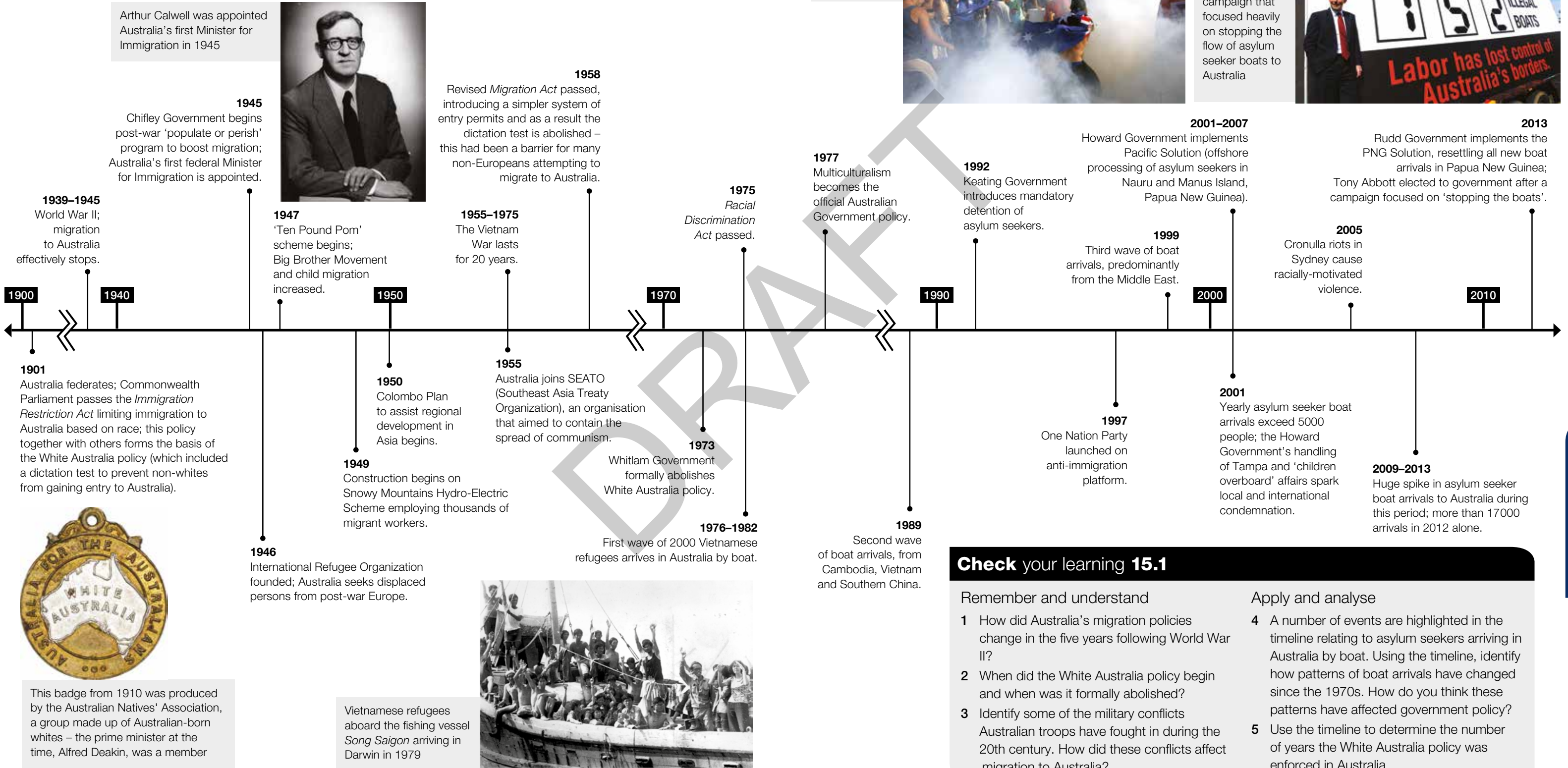
15D

How has migration shaped Australia's identity and global relationships?

- 1 Australia is now a culturally diverse society made up of people from many different cultural, religious and ethnic groups. List some of these groups and think about the contributions they have made to Australian culture in terms of food, art, sport, entertainment and so on

Source 1 Refugees fleeing the war in Vietnam for the safety of Australia during the 1970s often had to escape on cargo boats. Many were forced to wait at sea before disembarking and being sent to refugee camps.

15.1 Migration experiences: a timeline



Source 1 A timeline of some key events and developments regarding migration in Australia

Check your learning 15.1

Remember and understand

- 1 How did Australia's migration policies change in the five years following World War II?
- 2 When did the White Australia policy begin and when was it formally abolished?
- 3 Identify some of the military conflicts Australian troops have fought in during the 20th century. How did these conflicts affect migration to Australia?

Apply and analyse

- 4 A number of events are highlighted in the timeline relating to asylum seekers arriving in Australia by boat. Using the timeline, identify how patterns of boat arrivals have changed since the 1970s. How do you think these patterns have affected government policy?
- 5 Use the timeline to determine the number of years the White Australia policy was enforced in Australia.

15.2 Australia: an immigration nation

Modern Australia has been created and shaped by national and international population movements. From the arrival of the First Fleet in 1788 – loaded with almost 1500 convicts, sailors and soldiers – Australia has been populated by waves of immigrants. First, penal colonies at Sydney, Port Arthur and Fremantle were established. Then large numbers of migrants from Great Britain and Ireland came to establish towns and farms. By the 1860s more than 75 per cent of the population was of Anglo-Celtic origin. This figure remains at about 70 per cent to this day. From the middle of the 19th century, immigrants arrived from across Asia and the Pacific, and new settlers continued to flow from Europe.

During the 1900s, immigrants from Britain continued to dominate. An immigration policy that discriminated against all non-white migrants – known as the **White Australia policy** – was enacted in the first days of the new nation in 1901 and remained in place until the 1970s.

The end of World War II in 1945 saw waves of migrants come to Australia from southern European countries such as Italy and Greece. As immigration policies evolved, these waves were followed by others from the Middle East, Asia and South America.

Because of our history, the Australian population is much more racially and ethnically diverse than other

long-established countries in Europe and Asia such as France and Japan. Just like the United States, Canada, New Zealand and Argentina, modern Australia is a nation of immigrants.

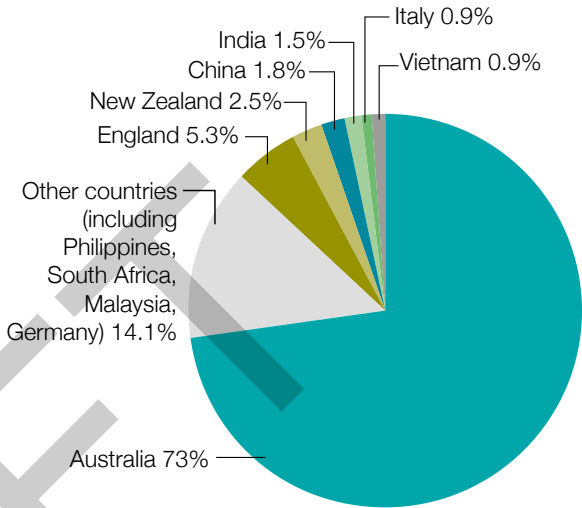
Today, Australia is considered by many to be a **multicultural** country. In fact, Australia has one of the highest rates of immigration in the developed world (see Sources 2 and 3). This description acknowledges that the people of Australia come from a wide range of ethnic and cultural backgrounds. In *The People of Australia: Australia's Multicultural Policy*, released in 2011, the Australian Government states that 'multiculturalism is in Australia's national interest and speaks to fairness and inclusion. It enhances respect and support for cultural, religious and linguistic diversity'. Although this view is shared by the majority of Australians today, it was not always the case. Since the end of World War II in 1945, Australia's immigration policies have changed in response to major world events. In particular, we will consider the impact that World War II and the Vietnam War had on Australian migration and modern culture. Finally, we will look at how migration has helped shape Australia's global relationships and the contributions migrants of all backgrounds have made to our country and modern cultural identity.



Source 1 Today, Australians speak more than 260 languages and identify with more than 270 ancestry groups.

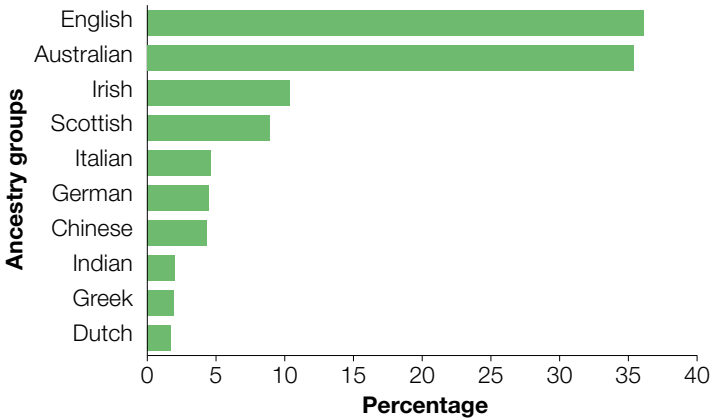
Early migration

The earliest people arrived on the Australian continent around 40000 years ago. By the time the First Fleet arrived in 1788, Australia's population had reached between 350000 and 1 million.

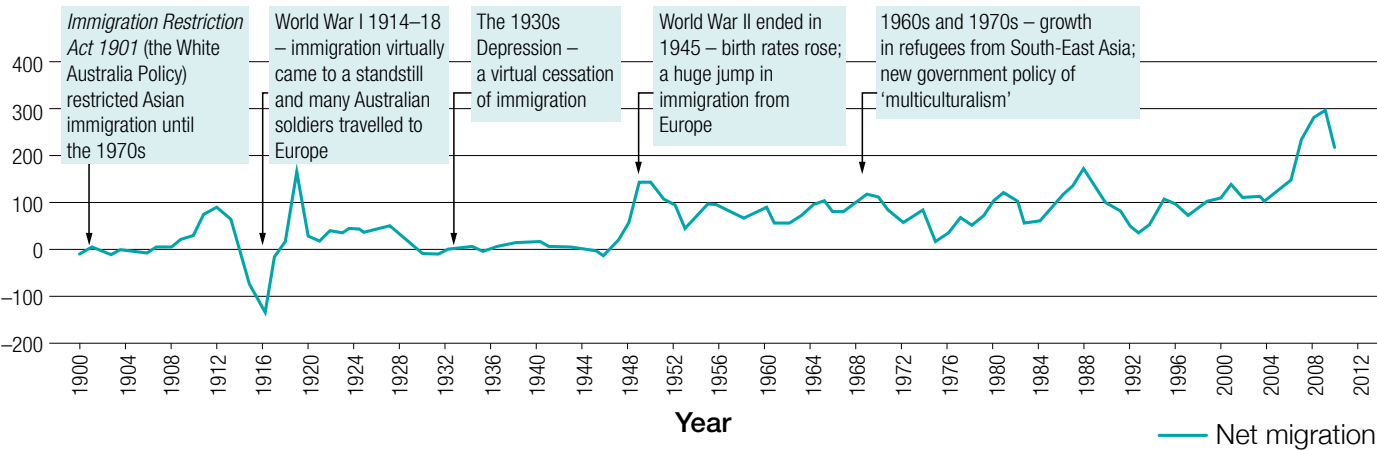


Source 2 Australian citizens by country of birth, 2011: Australia's population today is culturally and linguistically diverse – more than one in four Australian residents were born overseas, with people born in the United Kingdom making up the largest group of overseas-born residents, followed by New Zealand, China, India, Italy and Vietnam

After the British established the first Australian colonies, migration was dominated by arrivals from Britain – both **convicts** and **free settlers**. Migration increased with growth of the wool industry in the 1820s and again during the gold rushes of the 1850s, which saw a major influx of new arrivals. Many people chose to migrate to Australia in search of a better life and greater opportunities. Other events also encouraged people to settle in Australia, such as social changes in Britain brought about by the **Industrial Revolution**, or the disaster of the Irish famine of the 1840s.



Source 4 Graph showing ancestry groups that Australians most commonly identify with, 2011



Source 3 Net migration (total arrivals less total departures) to Australia during the period 1900–2010

keyconcept: perspectives

Defining different types of migration

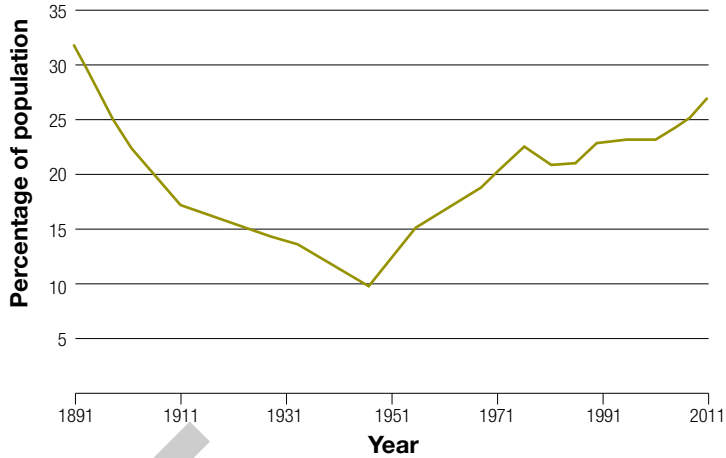
When discussing migration, there are a number of key perspectives that need to be considered. These perspectives are influenced by how different people view different events. In order to appreciate these perspectives it is first necessary to define some key terms:

- **Migrant:** a person who moves from one country or region to another to settle there; includes both **emigrants** (people leaving a country) and **immigrants** (people entering a country)
- **Economic migrant:** a person who migrates for reasons such as seeking employment or an improved financial position
- **Assisted migrant:** a person who migrates under a targeted government assistance program
- **Skilled migrant:** a migrant granted preferential

treatment for their skill or profession

- **Illegal migrant:** a person who enters or remains in a country without a legal right to do so; does not include asylum seekers and refugees
- **Displaced person:** a person forced to leave their home region or country due to war, persecution or natural disaster
- **Refugee:** a person who has fled their home country to another country due to a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons recognised by law
- **Asylum seeker:** a person who has applied for recognition (or sought protection) as a refugee
- **Boat people:** a common term used to describe people who travel by sea to seek asylum, rather than by land, air or via local processing centres.

For more information on the key concept of perspectives, refer to page XX of 'The history toolkit'.



Source 6 Graph showing the percentage of Australians born overseas 1891–2011. Migration to Australia increased sharply after the end of World War II and continues to do so today (Source: ABS)

When World War I broke out in 1914, migration to Australia came to a standstill. After the war, the government offered assisted migration programs so British ex-servicemen could immigrate to Australia in large numbers. 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 Jewish people seeking to escape persecution in Europe. However, the **Great Depression** in the 1930s saw an end to government assistance programs (see Source 15.9) and when World War II broke out in 1939, migration effectively came to a standstill again as travel became difficult, if not impossible.

Post-war migration

The end of World War II marked a turning point in migration in Australia. In the aftermath of World War II, Australians reflected on their role in the new world order. The Australian government reassessed its policies on immigration and began to introduce major policy changes that still influence Australian society and culture to this day. The government opened Australia up to a much broader program of immigration – introducing massive increases in assistance packages, establishing Australia’s first immigration department, signing international agreements to begin a regular humanitarian intake program, and accepting displaced persons and refugees from other countries and regions. These changes will be discussed in detail later in the chapter.

Over time and through successive governments, these changes were gradually introduced. Often, they came in response to major world events and as a result of changing needs and attitudes in Australia. As a result of these changes, since the end of the war in 1945 more than 7 million new permanent migrants have settled in Australia, from regions all around the world. Australia’s population has since increased from about 7 million people in 1945, to around 24 million people today.



Source 7 The Great Depression of the 1930s saw an end to assisted migration programs in Australia and a downturn in migration that would continue until 1945.

Although the majority of early migrants came from Britain, migrants did arrive from other parts of the world, including Asia. For example, during the gold rush immigrants from China were the largest non-British group. Labourers were also recruited from Melanesia to work on plantations in Queensland in the 1860s. In the later part of the 19th century, divers from Japan assisted in establishing Australia’s pearling industry. Another important contribution was made by Afghani, Pakistani and Turkish camel handlers in the construction of telegraph and railway lines in central Australia in the early 1900s (see Source 5).



Source 5 Afghan cameleers transporting timber during the construction of the Trans-Australian railway from Port Augusta in South Australia to Kalgoorlie in Western Australia in 1912

Pre-World War II migration

The number of Australians born overseas declined dramatically at the end of the 1800s. This trend continued until the end of World War II in 1945 (see Source 6). After this, immigration rates increased dramatically.

Many factors had contributed to this decline. For example, at the end of the 19th century Australia experienced a major economic depression. Hostility towards Chinese labourers grew because people believed that cheaper labour would decrease jobs and wages for British Australians. This resulted in colonial governments introducing legislation to restrict entry and impose high taxes on any Chinese people arriving in the colonies. More restrictive legislation was introduced upon Australia’s Federation in 1901 with the

Immigration Restriction Act. This Act formed the basis of a number of policies referred to as the White Australia policy. These will be discussed in detail later in the chapter.

Check your learning 15.2

Remember and understand

- 1 According to latest Australian Census statistics, what are the largest groups of overseas immigrants in Australia?
- 2 What were the main factors driving early migration to Australia? How is this different to today?

Apply and analyse

- 3 Using Source 6, comment on how the rate of Australia’s overseas-born population has changed since 1891, 1945 and 2011.

Evaluate and create

- 4 Terms relating to migration are sometimes confused or misused in everyday conversation and in the media. In groups, use the timeline in Source 1 on page XX and the terms listed in the key concepts box to evaluate how world events and government policies have influenced the types of migrants arriving in Australia.

15.3 The influence of world events

World events have had a lasting effect on the types and numbers of people arriving in Australia. World War II had a profound effect on people in Europe and Asia, resulting in large numbers of displaced persons fleeing from conflict, persecution and poverty in the post-war period. This in turn affected migration to Australia in the post-war years, as it combined with a shift in Australia's immigration policies and plans to create a larger Australia.

War and conflict, natural disasters, changing economic and political conditions and other **push factors** have historically driven people to seek a better or safer life elsewhere. Australia's migration programs, including assisted migration and refugee programs, have adapted in response to these events and, together with other **pull factors**, have helped to draw migration to Australia.

Since the end of World War II, there have been many significant world events that have influenced the types of new migrants coming to Australia and the places from which they have come. Some of these major events include the **Cold War** (including the Korean War, the Vietnam War and the fear of communism spreading across parts of Asia in the mid-20th century), conflict and famine in parts of Africa in the 1980s, and the Yugoslav conflicts in the 1990s. All of these events saw a large influx of new migrants from these regions. In more recent years, major events influencing migration have included the US-led 'War on Terror' in Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan, the global financial crisis in 2008 (which has created a new wave of economic migrants) and civil uprisings in the Middle East from 2010 (collectively called the 'Arab Spring'). Again, these events have all resulted in different groups of people seeking to migrate to Australia for a variety of reasons.

The key concept box below sets out some of the main push and pull factors that can affect people's decisions to migrate. Source 4 highlights some of the key world events and changes in Australian government policy affecting migration since 1945.

Source 3 100000 people protest in Ireland during the Irish recession of 2009–13, following the global financial crisis – the recession has resulted in an unprecedented influx of Irish economic migrants to Australia, with 40000 arriving in 2011 alone.



Source 1 Following the Chinese Government's suppression of pro-democracy demonstrators in Tiananmen Square, 1989, the Australian government granted permanent residency to 2000 Chinese students studying in Australia at the time.



Source 2 Refugees fleeing conflict in Afghanistan seek asylum in Australia c. 2001



Source 4 Table of significant world events and Australian Government policies influencing migration since World War II

Significant world events	Key immigration legislation	Key government policies and programs	Prime ministers
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 2010–2012 'Arab Spring' 2012– Civil war in Syria	1901 <i>Immigration Restriction Act</i> (forms the basis of White Australia policy) 1958 <i>Revised Migration Act</i> (introduced a simpler system of entry permits and abolished the dictation test that had been a barrier for many non-Europeans attempting to migrate to Australia) 1975 <i>Racial Discrimination Act</i> (making racial discrimination illegal) 1992 <i>Migration Reform Act</i> (allowing all people not holding valid visas to be held in mandatory detention)	1945 onwards <ul style="list-style-type: none">'Populate or perish program'Assisted migration for British citizensDisplaced persons programMost non-Europeans refused entry 1966 <ul style="list-style-type: none">Holt Government changes migrant entry conditions, effectively ending White Australia policyAbolition of dictation testIncreasing acceptance of non-Europeans 1973 <ul style="list-style-type: none">White Australia policy officially abolished 1976 <ul style="list-style-type: none">Acceptance of Vietnamese refugees arriving by boat and refugee intake program 1989 <ul style="list-style-type: none">Reinforcement of multicultural policy by Bob Hawke 1992 <ul style="list-style-type: none">Mandatory detention of illegal migrants 2001 <ul style="list-style-type: none">The Pacific Solution 2008 <ul style="list-style-type: none">Offshore processing centres closed 2011 <ul style="list-style-type: none">The Malaysia Solution 2013 <ul style="list-style-type: none">Offshore processing centres reopened 2013 <ul style="list-style-type: none">The PNG SolutionOperation Sovereign Borders	1945–49 Ben Chifley (Labor) 1949–66 Sir Robert Menzies (Liberal coalition) 1966–67 Harold Holt (Liberal coalition) 1967–68 John McEwen (Country coalition) 1968–71 John Gorton (Liberal coalition) 1971–72 William McMahon (Liberal coalition) 1972–75 Gough Whitlam (Labor) 1975–83 Malcolm Fraser (Liberal coalition) 1983–91 Bob Hawke (Labor) 1991–96 Paul Keating (Labor) 1996–2007 John Howard (Liberal coalition) 2007–10 Kevin Rudd (Labor) 2010–13 Julia Gillard (Labor) 2013 Kevin Rudd (Labor) 2013–2015 Tony Abbot (Liberal coalition) 2015– Malcolm Turnbull (Liberal coalition)

keyconcept: cause and effect

Push and pull factors

Migration is influenced by a combination of factors that cause people to leave their home country or region (push factors) and factors that draw people to a new location (pull factors). When analysing historical migrations, the historian needs to be able to understand these reasons in context at the relevant time. Some of the main factors are listed below.

For more information on the key concept of cause and effect, refer to page XX of 'The history toolkit'.



Source 5 The effects of famine or drought can be a strong push factor for migration.

Source 6 Main push and pull factors that can affect migration.

Push factors	Pull factors
Lack of opportunities	Safety and security
War and conflict	Family links
Famine or drought	Government incentives
Fear of persecution	Hope of better employment
Unemployment	Shelter, food and money
Lack of political or religious freedom	Better living standards
Natural disasters (earthquakes, floods)	Better medical care
Poor medical care or education	Educational opportunities
Lower standard of living	Political or religious freedom



Source 7 The prospect of better employment opportunities can be a strong pull factor for migration.

15.4 Migration to Australia after World War II

In the years following World War II, the Australian government introduced bold new policies and programs designed to boost Australia's population. These changes would transform the face of Australian society forever. The period saw a massive boost in immigration from Britain and Europe, particularly countries such as the Netherlands, Italy, Greece, Latvia and Estonia. Government policies began to actively encourage and assist migrants wishing to make the journey from Europe, and sought to recruit the skills of migrant workers to begin a number of large-scale construction projects. Despite this increase in migrant numbers, restrictions on migrants from non-European backgrounds remained strictly enforced.



Source 1 The Habets and their eight children, who came out from Holland aboard the HMS Otranto on an assisted passage scheme to Australia in 1954, are seen here having lunch in one of the immigrants' hostels.

Australia after World War II

The threat of Japanese invasion during World War II came as a shock to Australia. Never before had the government and the Australian people felt so vulnerable to a foreign attack. As part of the government's strategy to strengthen the country and recover from the loss and devastation of World War II, it proposed to increase the size of the population and improve military defences. By following a 'safety in numbers' approach, it was believed that Australia would be less vulnerable to any future attacks. As Australia's population was still relatively small, the quickest means of achieving this was to increase Australia's intake of new migrants. Prime Minister Ben Chifley took over as Labor leader in 1945, soon after the death of Australia's war-time Prime Minister John Curtin. In 1946 Chifley was re-elected to lead Australia's post-war recovery. His government decided that a larger population was necessary in order to protect Australia's security and economic future. It developed a slogan to describe this new policy on immigration – 'populate or perish'.

The Chifley Government created Australia's first Department of Immigration in 1945. The first immigration minister was Arthur Calwell who, in his first months as minister, made the government's intentions regarding the size of Australia's population clear (see Source 2). These beliefs were shared by ministers on both sides of politics. As a result, new

policies were implemented by the Labor government in the immediate post-war period and continued under the Liberal Menzies Government from 1949.

Source 2

If Australians have learned one lesson from the Pacific War, now moving to a successful conclusion, it is surely that we cannot continue to hold our island continent for ourselves and our descendants unless we greatly increase our numbers.

Minister for Immigration Arthur Calwell, extract from *Hansard House of Representatives*, 2 August 1945, pages 4911–15

The government began to actively promote Australia as an attractive destination to resettle for people affected by World War II (see Source 3). As part of this plan, the government began offering new incentives for those looking to make a new start away from the difficulties and challenges facing post-war Europe.

Check your learning 15.3

Remember and understand

- 1 How do push factors connect with pull factors to influence migration?
- 2 Looking at the lists of push and pull factors, why do you think the events of World War II so heavily influenced migration to Australia?
- 3 Which world events have created refugees since the end of World War II?

Apply and analyse

- 4 In pairs and using the table in Source 4, research three major world events since 1945. What push

and pull factors, including migration policies, were present at the time? How do you think these events would have shaped migration to Australia?

Evaluate and create

- 5 'Australia's immigration policy has responded fairly to world events.' Write a short argument outlining why you agree or disagree with this statement. To assist, you can use the table of events in Source 4 and the timeline in Source 1 on page xx.



Source 3 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.

Bring out Briton

By the end of World War II, the Australian government had made its intentions for a larger Australia known. Tens of thousands of **displaced persons** across Europe had lost their homes and livelihoods during the turmoil of World War II. While resources and services were overstretched in Britain and Europe, Australia was looking to rapidly grow its population and economy. Even before the end of the war, discussions began between Britain and Australia to establish a large-scale migration program to Australia. Australia’s close ties with Britain made this an obvious first choice for immigrants to boost the population. Immediately after the war, large numbers of people from across Britain set sail for Australia. After the wide-scale devastation of World War II, reconstruction in Europe was a massive task and, in Britain, many felt a fresh start in Australia was the best option for their families.

In 1947, the British and Australian governments launched large programs to subsidise the cost of British migrants’ voyages to Australia – a process known as assisted migration. Travel for children was free and for adults the fare was reduced to just ten pounds (£10), giving rise to the label ‘Ten Pound Pom’. This became a common way of describing British migrants coming to Australia during this period. Assisted migrants were expected to stay for two years. If they did not, they were required to repay their fare and fund their own return home (costing about £120). Although migrants were promised employment and high-quality housing, often the accommodation and circumstances did not meet



Source 4 A family gets information about emigrating to Australia from an official at the Department of Immigration at Australia House, 1953.



Source 5 A British family of 15 disembark from their ship as they arrive in Australia, 2 July 1957

expectations. In 1957 the government also launched a popular campaign called ‘Bring Out a Briton’ (see Source 7). 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 into the 1960s.

Child migrants

Children and young people were also encouraged to migrate to Australia after World War II. Although most children would arrive with their families under the assisted migration schemes, there were many who emigrated alone. This included children who were orphaned or deprived after the war. In some cases these children were taken from families and communities against their will.

Younger migrants were attractive to the government. They were seen as more adaptable and able to provide a long-term contribution to the country. They were also seen as a source of cheap labour. The best interests of the children were often not the first priority.

The emigration of children was controversial and had occurred for years in the former British colonies, including in the US, Australia and New Zealand. It was revived in Australia following the war. In 1944 the acting prime minister proposed to seek out 50 000 children from Britain and Europe in the first three years after the war. This figure proved impossible, with many countries refusing. Nevertheless, thousands of child migrants did arrive from Britain and Malta between 1947 and the end of the scheme in 1967. Although many had positive experiences, there are reports that many others suffered terrible living and working conditions. In a few cases conditions were reportedly worse than those they had left behind. The governments of Australia and Britain recently gave an official apology to children and families affected by these child migration schemes.

Big Brothers and Little Brothers

The migration of teenagers also boomed after the war. One significant government scheme to encourage this was called the ‘Big Brother Movement’. This was based on a similar scheme from the 1920s and 1930s. The scheme allocated boys emigrating from Britain (‘Little Brothers’) with a responsible adult in Australia (‘Big Brothers’) who would provide support and advice to help them adjust to their new life in Australia. This provided reassurance and encouragement to youth migrants and their parents who were reluctant to let them go. The scheme was very successful and saw about 500 youths a year arriving under this arrangement throughout the 1950s and 1960s.



Source 6 Arthur Calwell, Minister for Immigration (1945–49), welcoming the one hundred thousandth British immigrant to Australia in 1949



Source 7 The government’s ‘Bring Out a Briton’ campaign urged Australians to nominate British friends for assisted migration to Australia.



Source 8 A group of migrant children from the ‘Bring Out a Briton’ scheme aboard the SS Oronsay, 1957

Europe: a new source of migrants

As well as attracting new migrants from post-war Britain, the government decided to look toward other areas of post-war Europe to target with new programs of assisted migration for displaced persons affected by the war. The government entered into agreements with many European countries, including the Netherlands, Italy and Greece, to accept post-war migrants. In 1946 the International Refugee Organization (IRO) was also founded as a specialised agency of the new United Nations, with Australia one of its founding members. Part of the IRO’s work was to deal with the vast number of displaced persons that had been affected by the war, and Australia’s membership enabled it to select displaced persons from camps in Europe and offer them passage to Australia. The government would assess and accept people from camps of displaced persons from across Europe if they were deemed suitable for migration to Australia. The Australian government agreed to accept at least 12000 refugees per year from the European camps.

In particular, the government viewed people from the Baltic states of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia as a suitable source of new migrants. These countries had suffered invasion from both Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union during the war, so were viewed kindly by Australians. In addition to filling much needed labour shortages, people from these regions were seen as appealing because, according to Minister Calwell, they ‘were red-headed and blue-eyed [and] there were also a number of natural platinum blondes of both sexes’. These physical characteristics earned them the nickname ‘Beautiful Balts’ (see Source 9). As these groups were Caucasian and often wanted to escape communism, they were the perfect candidates for



Source 9 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’; the women had ‘surprisingly good complexions and figures’ with ‘splendidly formed white teeth’.



Source 10 Snowy Mountains Scheme labourers in 1968 – many of these workers had migrated from countries across war-torn Europe

Calwell’s ‘new Australia’. The government believed these people would more easily fit into the British culture and values of Australia at the time.

In addition to migrants from the Baltic states, large numbers of refugees arrived from Poland, Yugoslavia, Ukraine, Hungary and Czechoslovakia. There was also a large wave of post-war economic migrants from Italy, Greece, Malta, Croatia and Turkey seeking employment and better living conditions. These new migrants were placed in migrant camps across Australia, with allocated huts and often crowded conditions, to undergo training and resettlement. Although circumstances were sometimes difficult, many of these migrants would go on to make significant contributions to post-war Australia.

Post-war construction

As well as being motivated by a fear of invasion, the Australian government was keen to increase the population in order to meet an ambitious post-war building and construction program. Projects proposed by the Australian government required a much larger workforce than was available and the way to increase the workforce and fill the labour shortages was to increase the population. One of these major building projects was the Snowy Mountains Hydro-Electric Scheme, which alone required 10000 new workers. New immigrants from migration camps could be required to work for a period of two years wherever the Australian government decided. As a result, many were sent to work on the large Snowy Mountains scheme and similar projects.

keyconcept: significance

The Snowy Mountains Hydro-Electric Scheme

As part of the post-war development of Australia, the nation’s most ambitious infrastructure project was proposed. The Snowy Mountains Hydro-Electric Scheme proposed the development of a complex series of tunnels and dams to divert the Snowy River in south-east Australia. Hydro-electric power stations would provide electricity from the water flow, and the water would then be used to irrigate inland Australia. This project would require about 100 000 new workers, and the huge amount of labour required would mainly come from the wave of European immigrants the government was proposing to bring to Australia.

In Source 11, journalist, commentator and broadcaster Glenn A Baker gives his perspective on why the scheme, and the people who worked on it, were so important in shaping post-war Australia.

Source 11

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

Today, the scheme is considered significant not only because it remains one of Australia’s largest-ever construction projects, but also because those who worked on it came from a range of different cultural and ethnic backgrounds. These men, their families and their descendants continue to have a significant impact on the cultural diversity of Australian society to this day.

For more information on the key concept of significance, refer to page XX of ‘The history toolkit’.

Check your learning 15.4

Remember and understand

- 1 Who was Australia’s first Minister for Immigration? Which political party did he represent?
- 2 Where did most migrants come from in the immediate post-war period?
- 3 What were the two main requirements to be accepted as a migrant to Australia in the period after World War II?
- 4 In your own words, explain what was meant by the term ‘populate or perish’.

Apply and analyse

- 5 Former Prime Minister Julia Gillard arrived in Australia with her family in the 1960s under the assisted migration scheme. Research some well-known Australians whose families arrived under the ‘Ten

Pound Pom’ assisted migration scheme from Britain. Discuss the impact of this scheme on Australia today.

- 6 What does Arthur Calwell’s speech (Source 2) tell you about immigration policy after World War II? What limits were there on the types of people Australia was willing to accept?
- 7 Explain what you think Glenn A Baker (Source 11) meant when he said that the Snowy Mountains Scheme ‘changed the face of this country’.

Evaluate and create

- 8 Design a poster similar to Source 7 encouraging displaced persons in Europe to emigrate to Australia at the end of World War II. Your poster should include a slogan and use iconic imagery to portray Australia as a land of opportunity.

The census

A census collects evidence about the population of a country. Governments have used censuses since ancient times. Census information is collected for a variety of reasons, including allowing governments to determine taxation amounts and more accurately distribute services. The Australian government conducts the Australian Census every five years. A census can reveal the origins of a population, occupations, beliefs, age and gender. As such, it contains a wealth of detailed information for historians, but this information must be interpreted.

The following evidence allows us to look for continuities and changes in the birthplace of the Australian population during the 20th century.

As an official record collected at a specific time, a census is a primary source. Interpreting the results of a census is always a challenge, however, as two historians can examine the same statistics and come to very different conclusions. The data found in a census also needs to be placed in its historical context in order to interpret it fairly and correctly. For example, the 1901 census indicates that 3.5 per cent of Australian citizens who were born overseas came from China. A historian using only those figures might take this to show that the White Australia policy did not exist. Therefore, we also need an understanding of the new immigration laws that emerged at the time of Federation to be able to view that statistic in its proper context.

Source 1 gives statistics on the birthplace of immigrants living in Australia at three distinct points in 20th-century Australian history: at Federation (1901), post-World War II (1947) and at the end of the 20th century (1996). Since other censuses were also held between these events, the material shown here would only be a starting point for a historian. Nevertheless, it provides an interesting opportunity to take a brief look at the changes in immigration to Australia during the 20th century.

Source 1 Top 10 countries of birth at selected Australian censuses of the 20th century

1901 census				1947 census			1996 census		
Ranking	Birthplace	Number	Percentage	Birthplace	Number	Percentage	Birthplace	Number	Percentage
1	United Kingdom	495 074	57.7	United Kingdom	496 454	66.7	United Kingdom	1 072 562	27.4
2	Ireland	184 085	21.5	Ireland	44 813	6.0	New Zealand	291 388	7.2
3	Germany	38 352	4.5	New Zealand	43 610	5.9	Italy	238 246	5.9
4	China	29 907	3.5	Italy	33 632	4.5	Vietnam	151 053	4.5
5	New Zealand	25 788	3.0	Germany	12 291	1.7	Greece	126 520	3.2
6	Sweden and Norway	9 863	1.2	Greece	9 863	1.2	China	111 009	2.8
7	India	7 637	0.9	India and Sri Lanka (Ceylon)	8 160	1.1	Germany	110 331	2.8
8	USA	7 448	0.9	Poland	6 573	0.9	Philippines	92 949	2.4
9	Denmark	6 281	0.7	China	6 404	0.9	Netherlands	87 898	2.2
10	Italy	5 678	0.7	USA	6 232	0.8	India	77 551	2.0
	Top 10 total	810 113	94.5	Top 10 total	672 736	90.4	Top 10 total	2 359 507	60.4
	Other	47 463	5.5	Other	71 451	9.6	Other	1 548 875	39.6
	Total overseas born	857 576	100.00	Total overseas born	744 187	100	Total overseas born	3 908 382	100.00

1901, 1947 and 1996 census statistics from the Australian Government, Department of Immigration and Citizenship website

skilldrill: continuity and change

Generating questions about the past to inform a historical inquiry

One of the first and most important steps in conducting a historical inquiry is to generate or pose key questions. The questions that you generate will frame or direct the research that you then undertake.

Usually, historians generate one broad, overarching question for their inquiry, for example: ‘What do census results from different times tell us about Australia’s migration policies?’ After that, you need to generate more specific questions that are related to your overall inquiry question. You will need to generate a mixture of:

- **closed** (or simple) questions – for example, ‘When did event X occur?’
- **open** (or probing) questions – for example, ‘Why did event X occur?’
- questions that relate to the **process** of historical inquiry – for example, ‘What evidence is there?’ and ‘What other sources might be needed?’

The first step in generating questions is to think about what you already know about the topic. Use this knowledge as a springboard for questions that will help you understand the topic in more depth. Use a table, similar to Source 2, to brainstorm all the things you know in dot-point form in one column. In the second column, use each dot point in the first column to generate related questions that will help to deepen or build your understanding. Remember to include a mix of the three question types described above.

Source 2

Overarching inquiry question:	
What I already know:	Questions to help me deepen my understanding:
Point 1	Question/s related to point 1
Point 2	Question/s related to point 2
Point 3	Question/s related to point 3

Apply the skill

- 1 Use the process described above and the census data in Source 1 to generate a range of questions related to the overarching historical inquiry question: ‘How does the census reflect key events in the history of migration to Australia?’

- a Copy Source 3 into your notebook.
- b Identify what you already know as a result of reading this chapter and the information in this section. List these ideas in dot points in the first column.
- c In the second column, generate related questions that help to deepen or build your understanding. The first one has been done for you.

Source 3

Overarching inquiry question: ‘How does the census reflect key events in the history of migration to Australia?’	
What I already know:	Questions to help me deepen or build my understanding:
Australia sought to attract more migrants from war-ravaged Europe during the post-World War II recovery.	What countries were the biggest source of migrants in 1901, 1947 and 1996? (Simple or closed question) How did the countries of origin for migrants change from 1901 to 1996? (Open or probing question) What evidence can be applied to the census data to produce an alternative interpretation? (Question related to the process of historical inquiry)
Point 2	
Point 3	

Extend your understanding

- 1 Conduct some research online to find the latest census statistics and use the results to make a table of the top 10 countries of origin for new Australian migrants. Next, use one or two paragraphs to answer the following questions:
 - a What are the major changes in migration that have occurred since the 1996 census?
 - b What continuities does your table reveal about migration to Australia since Federation in 1901?
 - c Which world events of the 21st century can you see reflected in your table?
- 2 Using what you have learned in this chapter, make a new table that features your forecasts of the top 10 countries of origin for new Australians in the next

15.5 White Australia policy

The White Australia policy was not a single policy – the 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. The *Immigration Restriction Act 1901*, along with other pieces of legislation, became the basis of the White Australia policy after Federation. Although the original Act did not specifically ban people based on race, it was designed to exclude migrants who were considered ‘undesirable’.

Since the British colonised Australia in the late 1700s, Australia’s relationship with its Asian and Pacific neighbours had at times been tense. The large numbers of Chinese migrants who arrived during the gold rushes of the 1850s often clashed with the British majority over access to resources and competing claims. A period of severe economic depression in Australia during the 1890s also saw a rise in anti-Asian sentiment. Many in Australia feared that cheap immigrant labour would take jobs away from British Australian workers. Sources from the time provide many examples of the kind of racial prejudice and fear held by many Australians towards foreigners (see Source 1).

This ethnic tension combined with a new sense of **nationalism** that grew in the lead up to Australia’s Federation. One of the first acts of the new federal government in 1901 was to create laws that could grant access to European migrants, mainly British, and exclude all others. Australia’s first Prime Minister, Edmund Barton, expressed this sentiment at a speech in 1902: ‘We can bring in, without delay, our kinsmen from Britain and, if the numbers be insufficient, such other white races as will assimilate with our own. Or we can ... see the doors of our house forced, and streams of people from the lands where there is hardly standing room pour in and submerge us.’

The dictation test

The *Immigration Restriction Act 1901* did not mention race or include any reference to excluding migrants based on their ethnic or racial background. This type of openly discriminatory behaviour was frowned upon by Britain and its allies at the time. Instead, the Act included a less obvious legal mechanism to



Source 1 ‘The Mongolian Octopus – His Grip on Australia’, cartoon by Phillip May in *The Bulletin*, 1886, showing some of the fears Australians had about Chinese migration

ensure immigration officials could exclude migrants they considered ‘undesirable’. A simple ‘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. This was particularly used against Chinese migrants, but other Asian and African migrants were also targeted.

The White Australia policy after World War II

As we have learned, at the end of the World War II Australia began to actively pursue a policy of population expansion under the slogan ‘populate or perish’. New migration policies focused almost exclusively on new migration from Britain and elsewhere in Europe. In line with the White Australia policy, the government’s approach was to target whites from European countries that it believed could assimilate easily into Australian society. In particular, the new program of accepting displaced persons focused on Europe, particularly the Baltic States and Eastern Europe. It deliberately excluded those displaced by the conflict in Asia, Africa or the Middle East.

The threat of Japanese invasion during World War II, together with the threat of communism spreading across Asia, added to the fears of many Australians. The harsh effects of these fears were felt particularly by migrant families who had been granted permission to live and work in Australia during the war as displaced persons or refugees or to assist with the war effort. These included thousands of migrants from Asia, including Malays, Indonesians and Filipinos. Once the war was over, Immigration Minister Arthur Calwell controversially sought to eject migrants who did not meet the strict requirements of the White Australia policy.

In a speech to the House of Representatives on 2 December 1947, Calwell made clear the government’s views on continuing the White Australia policy.

Source 2

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 15000 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 ...

Cited in *Well May We Say ... The Speeches That Made Australia*, Sally Warhaft (ed.), Black Inc., Melbourne, 2004, pages 245–6

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. This will be discussed in the following sections.



Source 3 A poster from King's Theatre c. 1909, promoting the play ‘White Australia or the Empty North’ – the play illustrated the role that race had in creating a national identity after Federation.

Check your learning 15.5

Remember and understand

- 1 In your own words, describe the impact of the *Immigration Restriction Act*.
- 2 What was the legal mechanism used by immigration officials to exclude non-Europeans from entering Australia?
- 3 What reason does Arthur Calwell give for deporting Asian migrants in Australia in Source 2? How does he justify the decision?

Evaluate and create

- 4 Use the Internet to research the well-known story of Egon Kisch and the dictation test. Write a 300-word explanation describing the events and explaining how the dictation test was used by the Australian government to deny entry to ‘undesirable’ migrants. Outline the relevant background, describe how the test was applied (and challenged) and discuss the implications for other migrants.

15.6 The end of White Australia

During World War II and in the years after it ended, the Australian government made its intentions regarding the White Australia policy clear – the policy was and would continue to be central to Australia's migration program. But as time moved on, 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 Australia's growing involvement in Asia was in direct conflict with its policies at home. The years that followed saw the policy gradually dismantled, before finally being abolished in 1973.

Initial steps

In 1949 a new Liberal government was elected under Prime Minister Robert Menzies. Menzies appointed



Source 1 Prime Minister Robert Menzies making a radio announcement c. 1950



Source 2 Japanese war brides and their husbands in the garden of the Parker family home, Ringwood, 1953

Harold Holt as Minister for Immigration, replacing Arthur Calwell. The new Minister for Immigration would oversee a period of change. Shortly after taking office Holt made the historic decision to allow the remaining 800 non-European refugees to stay in Australia. Assisted migration schemes were expanded in parts of Europe including Italy, West Germany, Belgium, Greece and Spain.

Holt also made the historic decision to grant permission to a number of Japanese wives of returned Australian soldiers to settle in Australia. By the end of 1956, more than 650 Japanese women had migrated to Australia as wives and fiancées of Australian soldiers. In 1957, rules were changed to allow non-European residents over 15 years of age to become Australian citizens.

In the following year, the government passed the *Migration Act 1958*. This Act introduced the most significant changes to Australia's migration laws since Federation, replacing the longstanding *Immigration Restriction Act 1901*. Importantly, the Act abolished the dictation test, for so long used as a way of restricting immigration of non-European migrants. The revised Act removed questions of race, instead focusing on qualifications as a primary criterion for selection. This opened the door to highly skilled Asian migrants. As then Immigration Minister, Sir Alec Downer, stated that 'distinguished and highly qualified Asians' could begin to immigrate. In 1959, Australian citizens were also allowed to sponsor Asian spouses for citizenship.

Increasing ties with Asia

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 Colombo Plan was an important step towards increasing Australia's ties with Asia and improving stability in the region. 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 to the scheme, in expertise, food and equipment. 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.

Domino theory and the fear 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 Australians 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 on US and Australian foreign policy in the 1950s.

In 1949, fear of China grew when the Chinese Communist Party under Mao Zedong claimed victory after a long civil war, founding the People's Republic of China. The Menzies Government came to power just two months later and its response was to follow the lead of the American government by refusing to officially recognise the existence of China. This was a policy that continued for decades, until Richard Nixon in the US and Gough Whitlam in Australia finally gave formal recognition to communist China in 1972. The Australian government exploited the fear of communism, with post-war propaganda portraying communism as a disease spreading through Asia (see Source 3). Australia's fear of communism was not just confined to events occurring overseas. During the 1950s within Australia, there was a growing fear of communist spies infiltrating the government and union movement. This fear of 'Reds under the bed' resulted in the government attempting to ban the Communist Party of Australia in 1951.



Source 3 The Australian government exploited the fear of communism, with post-war propaganda portraying communism as a disease spreading through Asia.

Communism and conflict in Asia

As the fear of communism spread in the 1950s, Australia became increasingly involved in conflicts across Asia. This would have a significant influence on domestic migration policies as ties across the region increased, leading to the eventual abolition of the White Australia policy in the 1960s and 1970s.

Conflict broke out on the Korean Peninsula in 1950 as tensions boiled over between the capitalist south (which had been aligned with the West since the end of World War II) and the communist north (which was aligned with the Soviet Union). This was the first major war of the larger worldwide conflict known as the Cold War. The Cold War was a political, economic and military contest between the two post-war superpowers, the USA and the Soviet Union. Australia quickly offered military assistance after the United Nations resolved to protect the south from invasion by the north. About 17 000 Australians served in the Korean War from its beginning in 1950 to the ceasefire of 1953, with 339 Australian casualties. At the time, this was Australia's largest military involvement since World War II.

Australia also became involved in a regional conflict known as the Malayan Emergency. This was a **guerrilla war** (a war fought by small, independent groups of fighters) fought between British armed forces and the Malayan National Liberation Army, the military arm of the Malayan Communist Party. Australian military forces were sent to Malaya from 1950 until 1960, to support the British and Malayan governments in

opposing communists, with dozens of Australians killed and wounded.

In 1955, as part of regional efforts to stem the spread of communism, Australia joined the Southeast Asian Treaty Organization (SEATO). This was an alignment of Western powers and Asian countries intending to block communist gains in South-East Asia. The alliance lasted 20 years but achieved very little in practical terms due to internal conflicts, except for its educational programs, which had a lasting effect in the region.

The fear of communism culminated in the Vietnam War, a conflict in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia lasting from 1955 to 1975. Strongly influenced by the domino theory and intending to contain the threat of communism, the US increased its involvement in the war throughout the 1960s. Australia became heavily involved in the conflict between 1962 and 1975, sending about 60 000 troops. In total, 521 Australian soldiers were killed and more than 300 wounded. The war was ultimately unsuccessful and, after 1975, communism arose in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia, but failed to spread any further as had been suggested by the domino theory. The Vietnam War and its effect on Australian migration is discussed in detail later in this chapter.

Abolishing the White Australia policy

Australia's increased ties with the local region and involvement in successive wars inevitably led to the removal of the White Australia policy. After the gradual relaxing of restrictions following the *Revised Migration Act 1958*, the Holt Liberal Government in 1966 introduced major changes to the system of non-European immigration. This changed the criteria for migration to that of suitability as settlers, ability to integrate into Australian life, and possession of qualifications useful to Australia. This was a critical breakthrough because it finally removed race as a determinant when assessing the suitability of a migrant to enter Australia. As a result, non-European settler arrivals rose from 746 in 1966 to 2696 in 1971.

In October 1971, Gough Whitlam made an address 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 (see Source 7).

After winning the election and becoming prime minister in 1972, Whitlam and the Labor Government formally removed the last remnants of the White Australia policy in 1973 when it issued new instructions



Source 4 Korea, 9 June 1953. Men of C company, 2nd Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment (2RAR), at Majon'ni in the trenches of left forward Company position on The Hook after relieving the 1st Battalion King's Regiment



Source 5 Members of 5 Platoon, B Company, 7th Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment (7RAR) preparing to be airlifted by US helicopters after completing a military operation during the Vietnam War, 1967

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' permanent residence. In addition to this, the government ratified (signed) all international agreements relating to race and immigration. In 1975, this was followed by the introduction of the *Racial Discrimination Act* which made the use of racial criteria for official purposes illegal.



Source 6 Mitsuru and Keiko Maeda and their son were among the first Japanese migrants to settle in Australia after changes to immigration laws in 1966.

Source 7

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.

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



Source 8 The Australian Prime Minister, Gough Whitlam (from right third) meets the Chinese Premier, Chairman Mao Zedong, 3 November 1973

Check your learning 15.6

Remember and understand

- 1 Explain the term 'Cold War'.
- 2 What was the name of the Minister for Immigration who allowed the first non-European immigrants to remain in Australia after World War II?
- 3 What changes did the *Revised Migration Act 1958* introduce to Australia's immigration policy?
- 4 What was the Colombo Plan and how did it affect migration?
- 5 In what year was the White Australia policy officially abolished? What did the Whitlam Government do to formally end the policy?

Apply and analyse

- 6 Communism played a major role in Australia's involvement in the region and its immigration policies between the 1950s and 1970s. Discuss how the domino theory, fear of communism and Australia's

military engagements might have affected the development of Australia's immigration policies at the time.

Evaluate and create

- 7 Write a 500-word response arguing for or against the following statement:
'The abolition of the White Australia policy in 1973 is one of the most significant events in Australia's history.'

Your response should include the following:

- a a brief account of how and why the policy was first introduced
- b arguments raised at the time for its continuation
- c arguments raised at the time against its continuation
- d at least two primary or secondary sources referenced appropriately.

15.7 Towards a multicultural Australia

As the White Australia policy was gradually dismantled during the 1950s and 1960s, new policies began to take its place. Initially, a policy of **assimilation** was introduced, followed by one of **integration**. These policies were based around the idea that new migrants should conform to the attitudes, values and beliefs of the wider population and abandon or hide their traditional customs and languages. Over time, it became clear that these approaches were neither possible nor appropriate. As a result, the current policy of **multiculturalism** was adopted. Multicultural policies aim to recognise and embrace different cultures and traditions.

Monoculturalism, assimilation and integration

Immigration policy in the 1950s was based on the concept of assimilation. Broadly, this meant migrants were expected to give up their old culture and adopt Australian culture and customs. Assimilation was part of a push to preserve a single Australian culture by excluding the influence of other cultures and traditions – a practice known as **monoculturalism**. By the 1960s, assimilation gave way to a policy of integration. Under this policy, migrants were encouraged to celebrate their own cultures at home but to adopt mainstream Australian values and customs while in public.

The problem with assimilation as a policy was that it demanded people deny the culture, beliefs and values they had grown up with. This is an inherent part of an individual's identity, not easily changed by government policies that discourage cultural and ethnic diversity. The advantages of a monocultural society over one made up of diverse cultures were also unclear.

Even British arrivals, with similar language and culture, would experience a type of culture shock on arrival in Australia, and could often find it difficult to adapt to new life here. When language and cultural difficulties were added to the mix, it is easy to understand why many migrants struggled to assimilate and integrate. Italian migrant and musician Mario Millo provides a view of assimilation in Source 2. In



Source 1 Sydney's Indian community celebrates the Diwali festival at Parramatta Stadium as part of the Parramasala Festival, 2011

an interview, he shares some of the difficulties he encountered as a new migrant in the school playground in the early 1960s.

Source 2

For me, growing up with the name 'Mario' was a hassle most of the time. I remeber 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 habe been through the same ordeal. I was in fourth class primary school (guess I was about 9 years old) – we lived very close to the public schhol 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 playgroud was, 'Mario Ovaltine eats worms and grass'. From that point on we were no longer friends.

From an interview with musician Mario Millo, whose family emigrated from Italy in 1954

Even integration was difficult where appropriate support was not available. Migrants would often find that their education, skills and qualifications were not officially recognised in Australia. Instead, they had to work in physically demanding labouring jobs in order to earn money. Mario Millo remembered the experience

of his Italian father, who had emigrated to Australia after border changes in Europe after World War II had meant that his home town was no longer in Italy but had become part of Yugoslavia. '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.' This was the reality of assimilation and integration for many migrants in the 1950s and 1960s

The beginnings of multiculturalism

By the mid-1960s there was an increasing awareness of the difficulties migrants faced when adjusting to a new life, new language and new culture in Australia. The end of the White Australia policy and the influx of new migrants to Australia from all parts of the world meant Australians were increasingly exposed to new cultures, traditions and beliefs that challenged the concept of a monocultural Australia.

Multiculturalism involved accepting and embracing the cultural practices and traditions that migrants brought with them to Australia. It was a natural transition from the White Australia and assimilation policies that had rejected other cultures and ignored the importance of culture to individuals and social groups. Multiculturalism allowed Australians to accept diversity and cultural uniqueness, and the benefits of interaction between people of different backgrounds. For migrants, it allowed them to celebrate their cultural origins while still embracing their adopted country.

Multiculturalism was officially recognised by the government in 1973 when the Whitlam Labor Government's Minister for Immigration, Al Grassby (see Source 3), issued a reference paper called 'A multicultural society for the future'. Grassby had been instrumental in formalising the end of the White Australia policy and calling for increased migration



Source 3 Al Grassby speaking at the Griffith Wine Festival in 1973

from non-English speaking countries. Although Grassby's seat was targeted by anti-immigration groups in 1974, causing him to lose his seat, Whitlam appointed him the first federal Commissioner for Community Relations, responsible for administering the new *Racial Discrimination Act 1975*.

Both Prime Minister Whitlam and Opposition Liberal leader Malcolm Fraser embraced the vision of a multicultural Australia in a **bipartisan** manner. This cooperation was significant during one of the most divisive periods in Australian politics and, when the Fraser Government replaced the Whitlam Government in 1975, this approach continued. In 1977 the Ethnic Affairs Council, set up by the Fraser Government, recommended multiculturalism become official public policy. The first official programs were implemented the following year, and in 1979 the Australian Institute of Multicultural Affairs was established by an act of parliament to raise awareness of cultural diversity and promote social cohesion, understanding and tolerance.

Check your learning 15.7

Remember and understand

- 1 Describe the difference between monoculturalism and multiculturalism.
- 2 Who was Al Grassby, and what role did he play in developing a multicultural Australia?
- 3 What evidence does Source 2 provide that the policy of assimilation adopted in 1950s Australia was difficult for new migrants?

Apply and analyse

- 4 Why do you think the Whitlam and Fraser governments introduced and supported a multicultural policy for Australia?
- 5 Create a flowchart to illustrate the different immigration policies implemented in Australia since the 1950s. Include the dates for each and a brief description of what ideas the policies were based around.

15.8 The migration debate since 1980

After the government's acceptance of multiculturalism in the 1970s, migrants of different backgrounds had largely become accepted in Australian life. Officially Australia continued to support a migration policy based on skills and not race, and Australia significantly expanded its intake of refugees and displaced persons from around the world.

The arrival of the first Vietnamese refugees by boat in the late 1970s, following the end of the Vietnam War, marked a turning point in Australia's humanitarian migrant intake. By the mid-1980s Australia was accepting tens of thousands of Vietnamese refugees under international arrangements (refer to section 15C of this chapter on the Vietnam War), and migration from ordinary channels was still increasing. Over the next two decades, the number of asylum seekers arriving by boat each year would also increase as conflicts broke out around the world, reaching 5500 in 2001 and sparking heated public debate in government, the media and society. This would set the scene for a new Australian debate on immigration relating to refugees and asylum seekers that continues to this day.

New political debate

In 1983, Bob Hawke was elected prime minister. The Hawke Labor Government remained in power from 1983 to 1991 and maintained the political and legislative support it needed to keep multiculturalism as a central immigration policy. In 1984, historian Geoffrey Blainey delivered a speech in which he argued that the rates of Asian immigration to Australia were too high, threatening the social cohesion of Australian society. This helped spark a media and political debate that broke the bipartisan support on migration levels that had characterised much of the previous decade. Although the White Australia policy had long since been abolished, the debate on levels of Asian immigration continued. Increasingly it became linked to debate on the acceptance of refugees.

The debate reached its peak at the end of the 1980s, when then Opposition leader John Howard developed a new Liberal Party policy on immigration and ethnic affairs called 'One Australia'. When discussing it on radio in 1988, Howard suggested the rate of Asian immigration should be slowed. He questioned multiculturalism, arguing it meant that it was impossible to have an Australian ethos or common Australian culture under the policy. He also commented that 'multiculturalism suggests that we can't make up our minds who we are or what we believe in'.

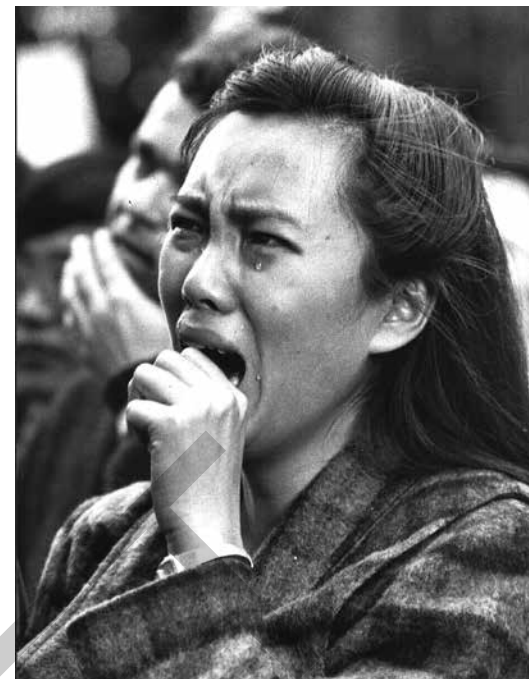


Source 1 Australian Prime Minister Bob Hawke in 1983



Source 2 John Howard in 1988, as Leader of the Opposition

The Hawke Labor Government quickly reacted to this, introducing a parliamentary motion rejecting the use of race to select immigrants. In 1989 the government released a statement titled *National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia*, which defined the principles of multiculturalism based on three rights and three obligations (see Source 4). New initiatives also included a National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition, improved access to government services for all groups, greater support for English language teaching and second language learning, and stronger relationships between government and ethnic communities through a community relations campaign.



Source 3 A Chinese student in Sydney in tears on hearing of the pro-democracy uprising taking place in Tiananmen Square, 1989

Source 4

The right to cultural identity (expressing and sharing one's individual cultural heritage, including their language and religion); social justice (equality of treatment and opportunity, and the removal of barriers of race, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, gender or place of birth); and economic efficiency (the need to maintain, develop and utilise effectively the skills and talents of all Australians).

The obligation to have an overriding and unifying commitment to Australia, to its interests and future first and foremost; to accept the basic structures and principles of Australia; and to accept that the right to express one's own culture and beliefs involves a reciprocal responsibility to accept the right of others to express their views and values.

Australian Government (Office of Multicultural Affairs), *National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia*, Australian Government Publishing Service, July 1989

In 1989, after the Chinese government's brutal suppression of pro-democracy demonstrators in Tiananmen Square, Beijing, Prime Minister Hawke granted permanent residency to 2000 Chinese students in Australia at the time, and refused China's request to force the students to return home.

Mandatory detention

In 1991, Prime Minister Paul Keating took over as leader of the Labor Government and introduced the next major policy change for migration. In response to the increasing number of Vietnamese, Chinese and Cambodian refugees seeking asylum in Australia and the apparent levels of community concern, the Keating Government in 1992 introduced a system of **mandatory detention** of asylum seekers. This meant anyone arriving in Australia without a valid visa would be detained immediately on arrival until they underwent relevant checks and assessments. The government wished to signal that 'migration to Australia may not be achieved by simply arriving in this country and expecting to be allowed into the community'. In 1994, the initial time limit on detention was also removed, meaning asylum seekers could be detained indefinitely.

One Nation

Despite the government's attempts to control the migration debate, the issue continued to grow. It became central to the 1996 federal election, when the Howard Liberal Government was voted into power. Queensland member Pauline Hanson was also elected to federal parliament. Initially a Liberal candidate, she became an Independent after being disendorsed (no longer supported by the party) due to comments she made about the 'special treatment' of Indigenous Australians. In her maiden speech after being elected as the Member for Oxley, Hanson 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'. Hanson went on to form her own political



Source 5 Pauline Hanson and One Nation, 1996

party, One Nation, which attracted support in the late 1990s in her native Queensland. Although never returned to federal parliament, her divisive policies on immigration and ability to play on the fears of some voters permanently affected the political landscape.

Migration during the Howard years

Since his time as opposition leader in the 1980s, Liberal politician John Howard had rejected multiculturalism. Howard saw an ‘Australian tradition’ at the centre of national identity and argued that migrants should embrace that tradition. In 1996, Howard was elected prime minister of Australia. He remained in power until 2007. During his time in office he attempted to implement a citizenship test that required migrants to demonstrate an understanding of Australian

history and sport. He also argued for a new preamble to the Australian Constitution that recognised God and ‘mateship’. Howard summarised his beliefs on multiculturalism in a 2006 Australia Day address to the National Press Club (see Source 7).

Source 7

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.

John Howard, excerpt from address to the National Press Club, 26 January 2006



Source 6 A Nicholson cartoon reflecting on the Howard Government’s immigration policies, *The Australian*, 11 June 2000

keyconcept: contestability

The ‘Children overboard’ affair

On 6 October 2001, the HMAS *Adelaide* intercepted a boat, the *Olong*, carrying Iraqi asylum seekers towards Australia. This event took place the day after Prime Minister Howard had called a federal election in which the question of asylum seekers was to be a key issue.

Two days later the *Olong* started to sink, and some of the *Adelaide*’s crew dived into the water to help rescue the passengers. Confused reports meant that Canberra was originally told that parents on the *Olong* had threatened to throw or actually had thrown their children overboard so they would be rescued by the *Adelaide*.

Prime Minister Howard, Minister for Immigration Ruddock and Minister for Defence Reith all condemned the asylum seekers for such cruel treatment, and used this as a reason to be harsh on all asylum seekers. Investigations indicated that there was real doubt about whether children had been thrown overboard, but the government continued to insist they had. The government also refused to release most photographs from the *Adelaide*, other than those that showed the crew of the *Adelaide* in the water with children.

A Senate committee later found no children had been at risk of being thrown overboard and that the government had known this prior to the election. The government was criticised in the media for misleading the public and cynically exploiting voters’ fears of a wave of illegal immigrants. The sailor shown in Source 8 later had her aunt tell ABC News, ‘at no stage was anybody throwing anyone overboard’.

For more information on the key concept of contestability refer to page xx of ‘The history toolkit’.



Source 8 This picture, taken with a mobile phone, shows Able Seaman Laura Whittle rescuing a mother and son from the water – they were among those who had been on the *Olong* on 8 October 2001

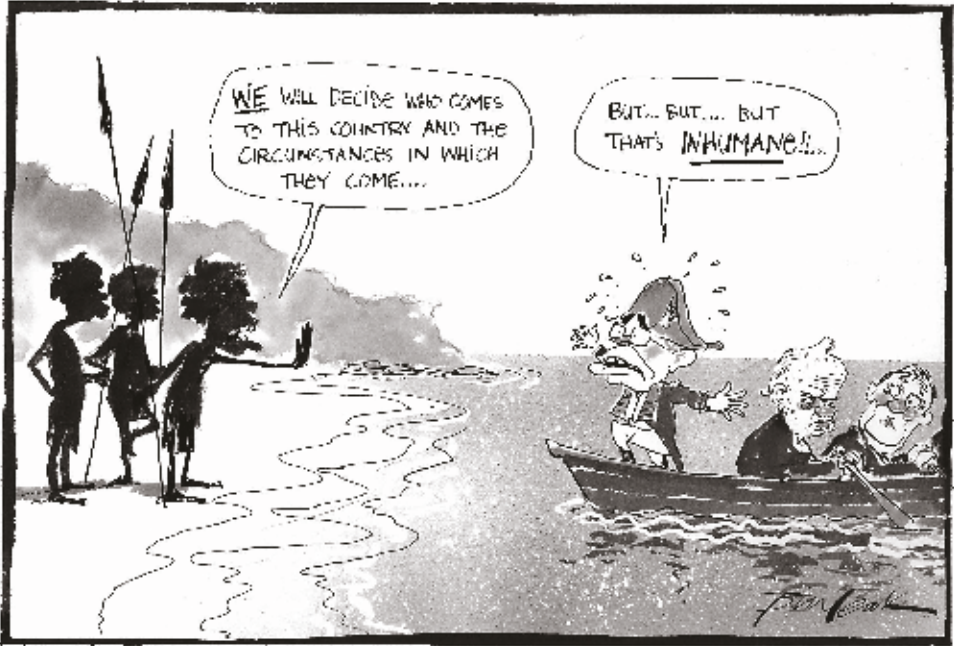


Source 9 Photograph taken by a naval officer of rescued asylum seekers on board the HMAS *Adelaide* after the so-called ‘Children overboard’ incident – West Australian-based Project SafeCom acquired this and other photographs anonymously several weeks after the sinking of the *Olong* on 8 October 2001, and the rescue of the vessel’s 219 passengers (AAP Image/SafeCom)

During Howard's time as prime minister, asylum seekers and refugees became the main focus of Australia's migration debate because the numbers of arrivals continued to rise. During his 2001 campaign for re-election, Howard famously stated 'We will decide who comes to this country, and the circumstances in which they come' in reference to boat people arrivals. Later that year, the issue of asylum seekers became highly controversial during the *Tampa* and 'Children overboard' affairs.

During his first term in office, Howard continued the mandatory detention policy introduced by the Keating Government. The Howard Government took this one

step further by also introducing a tough new approach to 'deter and deny'. Central to this approach was the 'Pacific Solution' – a policy that involved transporting asylum seekers to offshore detention centres set up on the Pacific islands of Nauru and Manus Island (in Papua New Guinea) where their refugee status would be determined. The government also increased border surveillance and patrols. Islands where boat arrivals usually attempted to land (such as Christmas Island) were also legally excluded from Australia's migration zone. This allowed the Australian government to avoid being subject to ordinary legal processes that refugees would otherwise be entitled to by law.



Source 15.55 This cartoon by Bill Leak represents John Howard as Captain Cook arriving in Australia

15.9 The ongoing migration debate

Since the Howard years, 'boat people' and refugees have become the defining feature of the Australian political debate around migration. This is largely because the number of boat arrivals has continued to rise. Discussions around the reintroduction of the White Australia policy – although briefly revived by the One Nation party in the 1990s – have now been consigned to history. In its place is a policy of multiculturalism established in the 1970s by the Whitlam (Labor) and Fraser (Liberal coalition) governments. Despite the commitment to multiculturalism in Australia, debate still continues about the best ways in which to manage the numbers of new migrants arriving each year.

Boat people

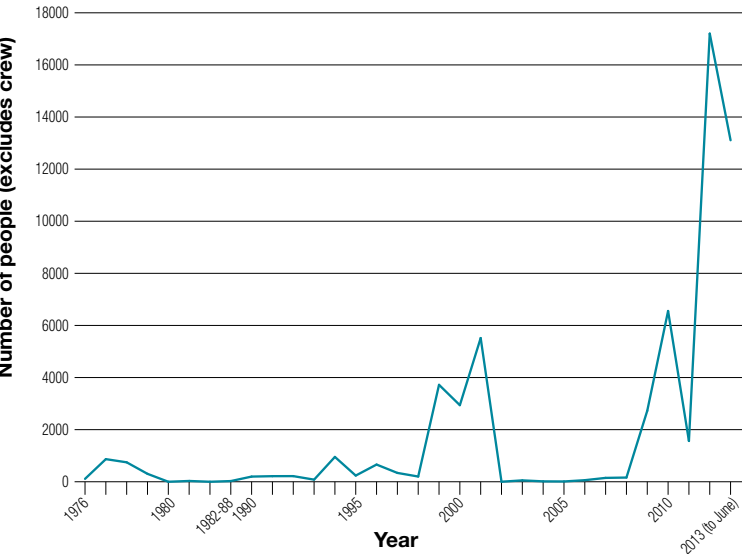
The term 'boat people' was introduced with the arrival of the first wave of Vietnamese refugees in the late 1970s and early 1980s, fleeing Vietnam through neighbouring Asian countries after the end of the Vietnam War. A second wave of asylum seekers arrived in 1989 and in the early 1990s, mainly from Cambodia, Vietnam and Southern China, at the time the Keating Government introduced its policy of mandatory detention. This was followed by a third wave in 1999 and in the early 2000s, mainly from the Middle East. The numbers of arrivals were larger than ever before, triggering the Howard Government's tough response – the Pacific Solution and 'deter and deny' policy described in the previous section. A fourth wave would soon arrive, bigger than any before, reaching 17 000 people in 2012 alone, and triggering another intense political debate. Source 2 illustrates this pattern of boat arrivals and the increase since 1976.

A noticeable difference with the recent waves is that asylum seekers often arrive with the help of intermediary 'people smugglers', people who arrange for refugees to make the voyage in return for a fee. These voyages are extremely dangerous, with overcrowded boats and equipment in terrible condition not fit for high seas, and trips often result in many people drowning. During the third and fourth waves, regular stories arose of tens or even hundreds of people dying from the sinking of a single ship at sea. Many of these

boats sank near the shore of Australia's Christmas Island, close to Australia's maritime border with Indonesia and the most common destination. As these drownings became increasingly visible to the public



Source 1 Children and women on a boat from Vietnam arrive in Darwin, November 1977



Source 2 Boat arrivals in selected years since 1976 (adapted from information at the Australian Parliamentary Library)

Check your learning 15.8

Remember and understand

- 1 How did the Hawke Government respond to the 1989 Tiananmen Square protests?
- 2 What was the main argument of One Nation's Pauline Hanson in her maiden speech to parliament? How does this relate to the White Australia policy of the mid-20th century?
- 3 How did the Howard Government react to the increased number of asylum seekers arriving by boat? Why was the government's reaction to the 'Children overboard' affair controversial?

Apply and analyse

- 4 In pairs, consider how the debate about multiculturalism changed between its acceptance in the 1970s to the position held by the Howard Government. Debate the advantages and disadvantages of the approach promoted by the Hawke Government and the Howard Government.

Evaluate and create

- 5 What was the significance of John Howard's 2001 election statement: 'We will decide who comes to this country, and the circumstances in which they come'? Write a short paper evaluating whether this statement reflected any significant change in Australia's approach to immigration since the time of Federation.

via the media, the political debate became one of deterrence for reasons of safety, as much as slowing the number of arrivals.

Despite regular changes in Australian government policy and repeated attempts to deter arrivals, the issue of boat arrivals is hugely complex. Push factors from source countries are outside the control of Australian policy, and for many people outweigh the risks and dangers of attempting the voyage. Although the number of arrivals has increased significantly since 1976, relative to the rest of the world the number remains comparatively small. The increase in people seeking asylum has raised concerns globally, with many destination countries facing much larger numbers. For example, in 2011 in Italy alone there were more than 61000 irregular boat arrivals, via North Africa, Greece and Turkey. The number of asylum seekers arriving by land, a problem that does not affect Australia, is even higher and often falls on the world's poorest countries. For example, in 2011, Pakistan hosted 1.7 million refugees and Iran almost 900000.

The Malaysia Solution

Successive Australian governments since the Howard years have attempted to address the issue. In 2007, the newly elected Labor Government led by Prime Minister Kevin Rudd set about softening Australia's policies. Soon after taking office, Rudd closed offshore processing centres in Nauru and Manus Island (Papua New Guinea).

As new waves of boat arrivals increased, the Australian government (now under the leadership of Prime Minister Julia Gillard) set about toughening these policies again. In 2011, the government reached a deal with Malaysia to send a quota of boat arrivals to resettle in Malaysia, in exchange for Australia accepting a much larger number from Malaysia through normal refugee processing centres. The 'Malaysia Solution' was soon challenged by refugee advocates in the High Court of Australia. The court ruled by a large majority that the proposed arrangement was legally invalid. In response, the Gillard Government soon reopened detention centres in Nauru and Manus Island and introduced a new 'No advantage' policy in an attempt to deter people from making the voyage.

The PNG Solution

After Kevin Rudd took over from Julia Gillard as Prime Minister in 2013, one of the government's first actions was to announce a new refugee resettlement plan. The plan, which was developed in agreement with

the Papua New Guinean Prime Minister Peter O'Neill, was called the 'Regional Resettlement Arrangement between Australia and Papua New Guinea'. This new plan became known simply as the 'PNG Solution'. Under the PNG Solution, any asylum seeker arriving by boat without a valid visa would be refused settlement in Australia, even if found to be a refugee. Instead the asylum seeker would be resettled in Papua New Guinea. The intent of this plan was to remove any attraction or pull factor for asylum seekers to make the voyage to Australia, and in turn dismantle the business of people smugglers offering voyages.

Both major parties welcomed the PNG Solution in an effort to appear tough on boat people, but the policy was strongly opposed by the Greens and there were several public demonstrations in major cities.

Operation Sovereign Borders

Boat arrivals and refugees were central to the 2013 federal election campaign between the Rudd Labor Government and Liberal Opposition, led by Tony Abbott. During the election campaign, the Liberal Party proposed a range of policies that were even 'tougher' than the PNG Solution. Central to the policy was a promise to 'Stop the boats'. The policy proposed a military-led response, similar to the one proposed by the Howard Government in 2001. It involved either 'towing' or 'turning' back any boats discovered on course for Australia, and included new proposals to buy any boats from people smugglers in Indonesia.

After being elected prime minister in 2013, Tony Abbott set about implementing these new policies under the name Operation Sovereign Borders. During his first days in office, the policy created some diplomatic tensions with Indonesia. Indonesian officials complained publicly that their government had not been consulted on the policy and argued that the plan could interfere with Indonesia's sovereignty as a country.

Commitment to multiculturalism

Even though the political debate on migration in recent years has focused almost exclusively on boat people, Australia's commitment to a policy of multiculturalism has remained strong and is widely seen by Australians as successful. Despite some attempts by the Howard Government to revert to a policy of integration, multiculturalism has remained the dominant migration policy for almost 40 years and has been reinforced by successive governments.



Source 3 People from all over the world have chosen to become Australian citizens.

In 2008 the Rudd Government announced the creation of the Australian Multicultural Advisory Council (AMAC). The council's purpose was to advise the government on 'practical approaches' to overcoming racism and intolerance and promoting diversity. The Gillard Government reaffirmed its commitment to multicultural policy in 2011, as illustrated by the quote in Source 15.59. It remains to be seen how future governments will approach the issue, but the success of multiculturalism in Australia today suggests any going back to the historical policies of the 20th century is unlikely.

Source 4

Australia's multicultural policy embraces our shared values and cultural traditions. It also allows those who choose to call Australia home the right to practise and share in their cultural traditions and languages within the law and free from discrimination.

Australia is a multicultural nation. In all, since 1945, seven million people have migrated to Australia. Today, one in four of Australia's 22 million people were born overseas, 44 per cent were born overseas or have a parent who was, and four million speak a language other than English. We speak [more than] 260 languages and identify with more than 270 ancestries. Australia is and will remain a multicultural society.

From *The People of Australia: Australia's Multicultural Policy*, Australian Government, 2011

Check your learning 15.9

Remember and understand

- 1 What was the Malaysia Solution and why did it fail?
- 2 Explain the differences between the Pacific Solution, the PNG Solution and the policy of 'Stop the boats'.

Apply and analyse

- 3 Look at the information provided in Source 2 showing boat arrivals. How does your study of history help you explain the variations in boat arrivals in Australia between 1976 and 2010?

- 4 Looking at this section and the last section, analyse how successive governments since the 1970s have viewed multiculturalism.

Evaluate and create

- 5 Governments since the early 1990s starting with the Keating Government have proposed tougher and tougher measures to deter asylum seekers arriving by sea. Looking at the graph of boat arrivals in Source 2, and considering the push and pull factors looked at earlier in this chapter, evaluate how effective you think these policies have been.

13B rich task

The Tampa crisis

On 23 August 2001, two vessels set sail from different ports. A Norwegian freighter called the *Tampa* left Fremantle headed towards Singapore. The *Palapa* left Java, heading towards Australia. On board the *Palapa* were 438 asylum seekers, most of whom were fleeing the Taliban regime in Afghanistan. The paths of the two vessels would cross in the Indian Ocean, creating an incident that would see Australia attract international criticism for the way it was handled.

On 25 August, the *Palapa* was spotted drifting without power, and the Australian Coastwatch called for shipping to help rescue its passengers. Captain Arne Rinnan on board the *Tampa* diverted his ship to assist the *Palapa*. Australian authorities told Rinnan to take those he had rescued to Indonesia. They informed him he would be prosecuted if he attempted to take the asylum seekers to Australian territory.

Rinnan attempted to turn towards Indonesia, despite Christmas Island being the closest land. However, the asylum seekers on board the *Tampa* became distressed and demanded to be taken to Australia. Responsible for ensuring the safety of his vessel, and with several asylum seekers becoming increasingly ill, Rinnan turned for Christmas Island.

The context of the incident was an impending federal election in Australia. To show firm leadership against asylum seekers arriving by boat, Prime Minister Howard rejected Rinnan’s request to land the refugees. When the *Tampa* refused to leave, the Howard Government ordered troops from the Australian Army’s Special Air Services Regiment to board the vessel. Norway responded by condemning Australia in the United Nations as ‘inhumane and contravening international law’.

Source 1

I have seen most of what there is to see in this profession, but what I experienced on this trip is the worst. When we asked for food and medicine for the refugees, the Australians sent commando troops



Source 2 Many of the asylum seekers on board the *Tampa* feared returning to Afghanistan.

onboard. This created a very high tension among the refugees. After an hour of checking the refugees, the troops agreed to give medical assistance to some of them ... The soldiers obviously didn’t like their mission.

Excerpt of an interview with the *Tampa*’s captain, Arne Rinnan, in *Norway Today*

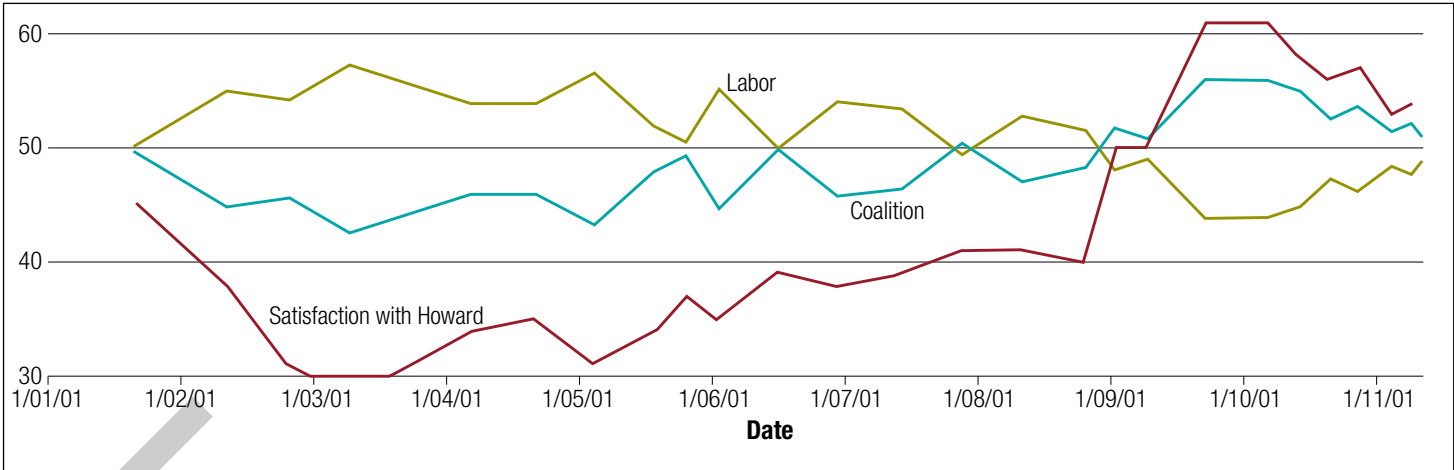
After frantic negotiations, Howard organised a \$16.5 million deal to allow the asylum seekers to land on the tiny Pacific island of Nauru, his ‘Pacific Solution’. A Nielsen poll showed that 74 per cent of Australians approved of Howard’s handling of the *Tampa* affair (see Source 3). On 5 October, Howard called an election for 10 November, and ran on the slogan, ‘We will decide who comes to this country, and the circumstances in which they come’.

From Nauru, New Zealand took 208 asylum seekers. Sweden, Canada and Norway each took 10; a further 179 Afghans, four Sri Lankans and three Pakistanis were convinced to return home. Australia ended up accepting just 28 of the 438 asylum seekers from the *Palapa*.

skilldrill: historical sources as evidence

Process and synthesise information from a range of sources for use as evidence in a historical argument

The primary sources that historians use to form opinions and arguments about the *Tampa* crisis can tell different stories. It is the job of historians to analyse these sources,



Source 3 Newspann showing Prime Minister John Howard’s approval ratings in 2001 – approval increased significantly around the time of the *Tampa* incident (the *Australian*, November 2001)

identify what evidence they provide to support or refute particular arguments, and come to a conclusion about their usefulness and reliability. It is important to identify who created each source and the reason why it was created. That way you can identify any potential bias. Once you have done this, you can write your argument, using the sources as evidence. You should explain why particular sources support your argument, and give reasons why the sources that disagree with you are not as important or valid.

Apply the skill

- 1 Examine Sources 1, 2, and 3 carefully. Copy the table in Source 4 into your notebook.

Source 4	Source 15.60	Source 15.61	Source 15.62
What evidence does this source provide about the Tampa crisis?			
Who wrote or created it?			
Why was the source created?			
Is the source reliable?			

- 2 Once you have completed the table, use the information you have gathered to write a historical argument about the *Tampa* incident, using the plan provided below.
- Title:** Was Australia’s treatment of asylum seekers aboard the *Tampa* justified?

Introduction: The *Tampa* crisis occurred when ... (introduce the context of your piece and focus on the origins of the asylum seekers and the political situation in Australia at the time).

Paragraph 1: Some sources say ... (explain which sources describe the asylum seekers’ background and give examples of some of the conditions they were fleeing in Afghanistan).

Paragraph 2: However, other sources say ... (explain which sources indicate that Australia’s response to the situation was acceptable or necessary and give examples of some of the arguments provided).

Paragraph 3: We have to be careful about which sources we use because ... (explain the problems with some of the sources in terms of reliability and bias).

Conclusion: Overall, the evidence suggests ... (summarise the evidence and give your informed opinion about Australia’s response to the *Tampa* incident).

Extend your understanding

- 1 The treatment of asylum seekers who reach Australia by boat continues to provoke debate and divide public opinion today. Do some research on the Internet to find out more about:
- a how and why the countries of origin for asylum seekers have changed since 2001
 - b how Australian Government policy towards asylum seekers has changed during this period.
- Present a report of your findings in class.

15.10 The impact of the Vietnam War on migration

Before the end of the Vietnam War there were less than 2000 Vietnamese-born people living in Australia. These people were mainly tertiary students, the wives of Australian servicemen or orphans of the war. After the end of the war, when US and Australian troops withdrew and South Vietnam was overtaken by the communist North, people fleeing through neighbouring Asian countries began to arrive in Australia by boat after perilous voyages by sea.

During the war years it is estimated more than half the Vietnamese population was displaced. Huge numbers of Vietnamese would leave Vietnam to seek asylum in countries around the world and Australia

would enter international agreements to accept refugees in large numbers not seen before. Most of the people would remain in Australia and begin new lives here, leaving a permanent impression on Australian culture and making positive contributions to the country. This section will prove a detailed case study of the Vietnam War and how it affected migration to Australia. We will look briefly at the background and how it unfolded, and its affect on Vietnamese migration to Australia. It will also look at some important Vietnamese and the contributions they have made to Australian culture and society today.



Source 1 Refugees from Vietnam land safely at Darwin Harbour, November 1977

Background to the Vietnam War

The Vietnam War was a military conflict fought between North Vietnam and South Vietnam. The conflict broke out in 1955 between pro-communist and pro-capitalist countries and was part of the Cold War. North Vietnam was supported by the USSR, China and North Korea, while South Vietnam was supported by the United States with its allies: Thailand, Australia, New Zealand, and the Philippines. The war was part of the American effort to prevent the spread of communism in Asia. Australia strongly supported this anti-communist stance and became involved in the war in 1962. During the Vietnam War – referred to in Vietnam as the American War – Australia fought alongside the United States, intervening in what was an internal conflict in Vietnam.

Historians have traced the beginnings of Vietnamese society back to as early as 2879 BCE. Since then, the Vietnamese have fought to preserve their independence. A failure of other countries to understand this fundamental element of Vietnamese society was at the root of the Vietnam War. Since the mid-19th century, Vietnam had been part of the French Empire. During World War II, however, Japan invaded Vietnam and treated the Vietnamese very badly. During this time, a Vietnamese communist revolutionary by the name of Ho Chi Minh led a resistance group to fight both the Japanese and the French occupation. In May 1941, Ho Chi Minh founded a communist coalition (known as the Viet Minh) to fight for Vietnamese independence from Japan.

After Japan's surrender in 1945, the Viet Minh formed a government and declared Vietnam's independence. However, British forces sent to Vietnam to accept the Japanese surrender were ordered by the Allies to restore French rule. The Viet Minh saw this as a betrayal, as they had supported the Allies during World War II and now expected to have independence recognised. By December 1946, the French and the Viet Minh were involved in a war that would last for another nine years.

By 1952, Vietnam had become divided. The Viet Minh had control of the north, and the French had set up a rival government in the south under the Vietnamese Emperor Bao Dai. The Soviet Union and China offered support and recognition to the Viet Minh in the north, while the USA and Britain did the same for Bao Dai in the south. With the election of Eisenhower in the USA in November 1952, the war was no longer regarded as a colonial war by the USA. Instead it became seen as a war between the free world and communism.

Bao Dai was ousted from power in the south by a man named Ngo Dinh Diem in 1955. Ngo Dinh Diem



Source 2 Captured Viet Cong member, 27 January 1967

was a corrupt landowner who had little support from the Vietnamese people. However, because he was against communism, he had the support of the USA. Diem's police tortured and killed peasants suspected of supporting the Viet Minh.

In 1957, the Viet Minh in North Vietnam began a guerrilla war (a war fought by small, independent groups of fighters) against South Vietnam in order to reunify their country. The United States, under President Kennedy, sent American advisers to support the anti-communist government of South Vietnam. It also sent military advisers to help train and support the South Vietnamese army.

In December 1960, the National Liberation Front for South Vietnam was formed in opposition to Diem's government in South Vietnam. It allied with North Vietnam and became known as the Viet Cong. North Vietnam dramatically increased its military assistance to the Viet Cong, which then began attacking South Vietnamese military units. The Viet Cong continued to use guerrilla warfare against the government of South Vietnam and the United States through the war.

Australian involvement in the war

Australia's prime minister at the start of the Vietnam conflict was Robert Menzies. He fully supported the United States' anti-communist policy, and was a committed ally throughout the war. Menzies was a strong believer in the domino theory – the belief that, if Vietnam was allowed to fall to communism, then the rest of South-East Asia would quickly follow, just like dominoes falling one after another. In 1962, the Australian government committed its first military advisers to South Vietnam. That initial commitment of 30 men would grow to 60000 over the next decade. It would also lead to the reintroduction of conscription



Source 3 Australian troops during the Vietnam War, 8 June 1965

for overseas military service, an issue that divided Australian society.

Five hundred Australians died during the Vietnam War, including 185 National Servicemen who had been conscripted to fight. By fighting for the South Vietnamese, the Australian military worked closely with many Vietnamese. Until the deployment of Australian soldiers to Afghanistan in 2001, Vietnam had been Australia’s longest war.

How the war ended

Over the years, the Vietnam War became increasingly drawn out. Although it was a guerrilla war, all levels of the armed forces were involved. The conflict is referred to as the ‘first television war’ because television news crews accompanied soldiers into the field. News bulletins reported ever-increasing death tolls. Politicians continued to speak of a ‘light at the end of the tunnel’, while television viewers were becoming depressingly familiar with the sight of body bags and coffins.

In 1968, North Vietnamese and Viet Cong troops launched one of the largest military campaigns of the war against South Vietnam, the United States and its allies. It was known as the Tet Offensive and involved a series of surprise attacks on cities in the

south. Although the offensive was eventually repelled, many troops were killed and any illusions that the war effort was going well for the United States and its allies were shattered. With public confidence and support dwindling in both the United States and Australia, politicians looked for ways to remove themselves from a conflict that looked to have no end.

Australia pulled out of the war in 1972, and the United States followed in 1973. All foreign support personnel and advisers pulled out in 1975 as the North Vietnamese approached Saigon. As the tanks rolled into the former Presidential Palace in Saigon, the USA calculated the cost of involvement in the conflict. More than 58 000 Americans had died.

The final result of the conflict was the collapse of the South Vietnamese government in 1975. That year, North Vietnamese troops gained control of South Vietnam and the country was reunified. In the aftermath of the war, both the United States and Australia opened their doors to refugees from the conflict. As a result, the Vietnam War changed the nature of migration to Australia.

15.11 Vietnamese emigration: moral obligations

While fighting in Vietnam, the US and Australian troops had relied heavily on the South Vietnamese people for supplies and support. They required translators, administrative support staff and guides simply to function as an armed force. There were also a range of support services used to maintain the army in the field, such as shopkeepers, bar owners, taxi drivers and owners of accommodation used by soldiers. When the war ended, many people in the United States and Australia felt they owed a debt to these people and wanted to help them.

Re-education camps

At the end of the war, anyone who had worked with the United States was regarded as a traitor by North Vietnamese and Viet Cong troops. The victorious communists set up re-education camps to force those influenced by the West to change their previous loyalties. Investigations in the USA have concluded that about one million Vietnamese were imprisoned in re-education camps after the end of the war in April 1975, but there are many debates about the actual statistics. It is thought that about 165 000 people died in these camps, and that torture and ill treatment did take place. Generally, people were held in these camps from 3 to 10 years, but some people were locked up for up to 17 years. About 150 camps were built, and in the years following the war around one in three Vietnamese families had a relative in a prison.

As the re-education camps were set up, it appeared to many in the former South Vietnam that the West had simply abandoned them. The lucky ones had managed to secure passage with the Americans during the frantic final hours of the evacuation of Saigon. It was the million left behind who were to be the greatest test of moral obligation for the West.

Vietnamese displaced persons, refugees and asylum seekers

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.

The United Nations Human Rights Commission (UNHCR) places people who flee from their country in various categories. Internally displaced persons are those who have been forced to flee their residence because of armed conflicts while they were still living within their country. Stateless people are those who are not considered a citizen of a particular state. Vietnam in the late 1970s had people in both these situations.

The greatest number who fled, however, were refugees (see Source 1) and asylum seekers (see Source 2). The UNHCR is regarded as the authority in determining the status of people after armed conflicts. These two definitions are still used today when assessing the victims of conflicts throughout the world who seek safer lives and more secure futures for their families.

Source 1

[A refugee is someone 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.

UNHCR guidelines

Check your learning 15.10

Remember and understand

1 Who did the Vietnamese side with during World War II?

2 When did Australia pull out of Vietnam?

3 In what ways did the South Vietnamese provide support to the Americans and Australians during the Vietnam War?

4 In what year did the North finally overtake the South?

Apply and analyse

5 Why was the Tet Offensive of 1968 so important in the Vietnam War?

6 What was the ‘domino theory’? Do you think it provides an appropriate justification for Australian involvement in the Vietnam War?

Source 2

[An asylum seeker is] an individual 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.

UNHCR guidelines

Boat people

As discussed earlier, the term boat people, has become highly politicised in Australian society since the 1970s. Border security has long been a concern for our island nation with a relatively small population. Boats have been arriving in Australia since first settlement, but the arrival of Vietnamese refugees began a new era of foreign migration.

The first boat refugees from Vietnam to arrive in Australia landed in Darwin in April 1976. This was a year after the end of the Vietnam War, and these new arrivals were 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. The composition of the Australian population was changing, and the stereotype of a 'real Australian' was being challenged.



Source 3
This boat containing Vietnamese refugees was moored in Darwin Harbour on 5 October 1981.

The journey to Australia

For most Vietnamese boat people the journey was horrendous. After bribing local officials, they took to dangerous seas, often on makeshift boats and rafts. The main hope was to drift into open sea lanes, and be picked up by a vessel that could take them to a safe destination. Sturdier vessels did make it as far as Australia, but many only made it as far as neighbouring countries such as Thailand.

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

There are no clear statistics, but estimates suggest 250000 to 500000 refugees perished in their attempts to leave Vietnam. There are graphic accounts by survivors of robbery, rape and murder by Thai pirates. Families were typically split before leaving Vietnam in the hope that at least one would survive and reach safety. Those fleeing survived on very little food and water, and with a voyage to Darwin lasting four weeks, many arrived in Australia in an emaciated condition.



Refugee camps

The UNHCR recognised the scope of the tragedy that was unfolding and established refugee camps in Malaysia, Hong Kong, Thailand, the Philippines and Indonesia to try and process the claims of the fleeing Vietnamese. Their work won the UNHCR the Nobel Peace Prize for 1981. From these camps, refugees were processed and resettled in countries willing to accept them.

The main countries to accept Vietnamese refugees were the United States (823000), Australia and Canada (137000 each), France (96000), Germany (40000), the United Kingdom (19000) and Japan (11000).

Check your learning 15.11

Remember and understand

- 1 When did the first boat refugees from Vietnam arrive in Australia?
- 2 Why might it be so difficult to get accurate historical information on the 're-education' period in Vietnamese history?
- 3 In what countries did the UNHCR establish camps for the Vietnamese who were fleeing?

Apply and analyse

- 4 In what ways can Australia be seen to have had a moral obligation to accept Vietnamese refugees at the end of the war?
- 5 What is the difference between a refugee and an asylum seeker? How are they similar? How are they different? Use a Venn diagram to organise your ideas.

Source 4 A refugee camp in Asia for Vietnamese refugees

15.12 Significant individuals: the contribution of immigrants to Australia

One of the great achievements of Australia's acceptance of Vietnamese boat people has been the number of outstanding young Australians of Vietnamese heritage that have gone on to contribute to Australian life. Two Young Australians of the Year were Vietnamese refugees, and Vietnamese Australians have made major contributions to Australian culture.

Vietnamese immigrants have spread throughout Australia, enriching local communities when they start businesses. They have introduced new flavours with traditional Vietnamese cooking and brought new ideas to Australian thinking. The Vietnamese immigrants have established a reputation for hard work and an enthusiasm for community life.

A study of the significant contributions that talented young Australians of Vietnamese background have made reveal the true value Australia has gained from accepting the first 'boat people'.

Tan Le

Tan Le was named Young Australian of the Year in 1998 for her work in the community as well as outstanding contributions to telecommunications and business. Born in Vietnam in 1977, she arrived in 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. In 2000 she was admitted as a barrister and lawyer, and in 2003 co-founded Emotiv, the neuro-engineering 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 Le 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.

Source 1 Tan Le was named Young Australian of the Year in 1998.

Anh Do

Anh Do was born in Vietnam in 1977 and arrived in Australia in 1980 after leaving Vietnam on a fishing boat and reaching a refugee camp in Malaysia. 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. His acceptance into mainstream Australia is reflected by his popularity. He has made appearances on television shows such as *Dancing with the Stars* and *The Footy Show*. The popular and critical success of *The Happiest Refugee* showed the Australian public's willingness to engage with refugee stories.



Source 2 Anh Do and Khoa Do

Khoa Do

Khoa Do is Anh Do's brother, and was born in Ho Chi Minh City in 1979. He has a passion for drama, and this was the vehicle he used to reach other Vietnamese youths in Sydney's western suburbs. His first short film, *Delivery Day*, looked at the problems for a Vietnamese girl of balancing demands in Australian society. It 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 experience of Rugby League as a comedic bridge across cultures and featured his brother in the starring role. 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 in Melbourne.

Nam Le

Nam Le was born in Vietnam in 1977, and came to Australia by boat as a 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 Law. He worked briefly in law, but discovered his passion for writing. In 2004, he attended a writing workshop in Iowa, and completed a Masters degree in Creative Writing. His first book, *The Boat*, dominated literary awards in 2008. It is a collection of short stories, ranging from material that echoes his memories



Source 3 Nam Le at the Melbourne Writer's Festival, 24 August 2008

of Vietnam 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 writers of his generation.

Check your learning 15.12

Remember and understand

- 1 How did each of these four people reach Australia?
- 2 What contribution has each made to Australia?

Apply and analyse

- 3 What do you think would happen to each of these people if they arrived in Australia the same way today?
- 4 Watch Khoa Do's film *Footy Legends*. How does it help you understand the experiences of migrant groups when they come to Australia?

Evaluate and create

- 5 Do you think these successes justify the post-Vietnam War immigration policy?
- 6 Undertake some further research and do some reading on the Internet about other significant Vietnamese Australians. Prepare a one-page profile including a photograph, outlining this person's achievements and contribution to society.

SBS and the *Thoi Su* controversy

A large proportion of Vietnamese Australians are either refugees or related to the refugees who fled to Australia after the collapse of the South Vietnamese government. Many of them are still haunted by the ill treatment and persecution they received from the communist government before they escaped. This issue came back into public attention in October 2003 when Australian multicultural broadcaster SBS began screening a Vietnamese-language news service, *Thoi Su* (which translates as Current Affairs).

The 35-minute bulletin was produced by the state-controlled VTV4 and broadcast by SBS as part of its WorldWatch line-up of news and current affairs from around the world. On 16 October 2003 the Melbourne *Herald Sun* published an opinion piece by Vietnamese Community in Australia (VCA) national president, Trung Doan, who criticised SBS for acting as a mouthpiece for state propaganda.

Source 1

SBS TV's target audience are Vietnamese Australians, the great majority refugees or their reunited relatives. Many were among the one million put into labour camps when Saigon fell, or the millions whose houses and other properties were confiscated by the regime. They do not have to go far to see their former tormentors' faces and propaganda – it's right there, in their home.

... I have met and heard of scores of non-viewers around Australia who have lost sleep or had nightmarish flashbacks just because they know the program is there.

Extract from 'Every Day SBS Twists the Knife', Trung Doan, *Herald Sun*, 16 October 2003

Over the following two months, thousands of Vietnamese Australians protested outside SBS's offices in Melbourne and Sydney to demand an end to the *Thoi Su* broadcasts.



Source 2 Members of the Vietnamese community protesting outside the SBS office in Sydney, 2003

SBS Television initially resisted the complaints. Appearing before a Senate estimates committee, SBS managing director Nigel Milan argued for editorial independence and suggested that VCA did not represent the majority of the Vietnamese community.

Source 3

Mr Milan: It is a bit hard to say in terms of individuals because the no campaign is highly organised. There are coupons to cut out on the front of the Vietnamese language newspapers and send in to SBS, whereas the yes campaign is –

Senator Conroy: Are you suggesting that this is like TV Week – one person is cutting out 10 coupons and sending them in? Is that what you think is happening?

Mr Milan: Yes. The switchboard identified 23 calls from the same person on one evening. So it is quite an organised campaign. Up until this week, the numbers have been running substantially in favour of the no vote, probably on a 10 to one ratio, but since the demonstration and the issue getting broader community awareness, the yes vote is beginning to increase.

Extract from a meeting of the Senate Environment Communications Information Technology and the Arts Legislation Committee, 3 November 2003

The campaign against *Thoi Su* was well organised and had the support of high profile media commentators, including Alan Jones and Andrew Bolt. VCA delegations visited the offices of at least 20 MPs, including Communications Minister Daryl Williams and Labor's spokesman Lindsay Tanner.

In December 2003 SBS conceded to pressure and withdrew *Thoi Su* from broadcast. It also amended its

code of practice 'to provide guidance for future additions to the WorldWatch line-up'.

Source 4

[SBS] Television really acted very much as a broadcaster, you know: 'We will determine what goes to air based on quality and our charter', and they never really talked directly to people. What the Vietnamese were trying to say was, 'We'd really like to talk before you put something like that on the air!' They're not saying, 'Never, ever put this on, or else!' They were trying to have a conversation with us.

SBS Radio presenter Olya Booyar. Quotation from *The SBS Story: The Challenge of Cultural Diversity*, Ien Ang, Gay Hawkins and Lamia Dabboussy, 2008, page 43

skilldrill: historical sources as evidence

Identify the origin, context and purpose of primary and secondary sources

Historians use primary and secondary sources to gather evidence about the past. Both primary and secondary sources are useful, but sources will almost always reflect the perspective of the person who created them, as well as the attitudes and beliefs of the time in which they were created. All sources are affected by the author's own point of view, and in some cases an author may have been paid or forced to write in a particular way or persuaded to ignore certain facts. This is why historians must carefully analyse and evaluate sources. Historians need to identify:

- **origin** – what a source is and where it came from
- **context** – what life was like when the source was created
- **purpose** – why the source was created.

Follow these steps to identify the origin, context and purpose of a source:

Step 1: Identify the origin

To identify the origin of a source, ask yourself:

- What type of source is it?
- Who wrote, produced or made the source? What do I know about their age, gender, occupation, position in society or religious background?
- When was the source written, produced or made?
 - How old is the source?
 - Is it an eyewitness account or is it written by someone at a later date?
 - Is the source complete?

Step 2: Identify the context

To identify the context of a source, ask yourself:

- What was life like when this source was created?
- What other events may have been happening at the time that might have influenced the author or source?
- What was the political environment like at the time the source was created?
- What sort of common prejudices and social norms existed at the time which may have influenced the author or the source?

Step 3: Identify the purpose

To identify the purpose of a source, ask yourself:

- Why was the source written or created?
- Was it designed to entertain, persuade or argue a point of view?
- Does the author have anything to gain personally from the source?
- Does it give a detached, balanced account?
- Were there political reasons for the creation of the source?

Apply the skill

- 1 Write a 400-word report analysing two of the sources that appear in this section. For each source, make sure you explain:
 - a what the source is and who was responsible for creating it
 - b the political environment in Australia at the time the source was created
 - c the reason why the source was created.
 Be sure to work through each of the questions listed above while conducting your research.
- 2 Conduct some further research into the history of Australia's relationship with Vietnam since the end of the Vietnam War and add anything you consider relevant to your original report.

Extend your understanding

- 1 The *Thoi Su* controversy spread outside the Vietnamese–Australian community and led to arguments within the public at large both for and against its continued broadcast. Write a letter to the editor presenting your opinion on the issue. Your argument should take into account the perspectives presented by both sides.

15.13 The changing face of Australia

Australia has always been a culturally diverse continent. Before the arrival of the British, it is estimated that there were around 700 Indigenous cultural groups speaking more than 250 different languages across Australia. When the First Fleet arrived in Sydney Cove in 1788, there were around 60 different nationalities among

the crew and convicts. Although the White Australia policy of the early 20th century sought to promote a monocultural Australia by restricting entry to non-Europeans, this was ultimately unsuccessful. Over time, Australia opened up and embraced a diverse society made up of many cultures, backgrounds and traditions.

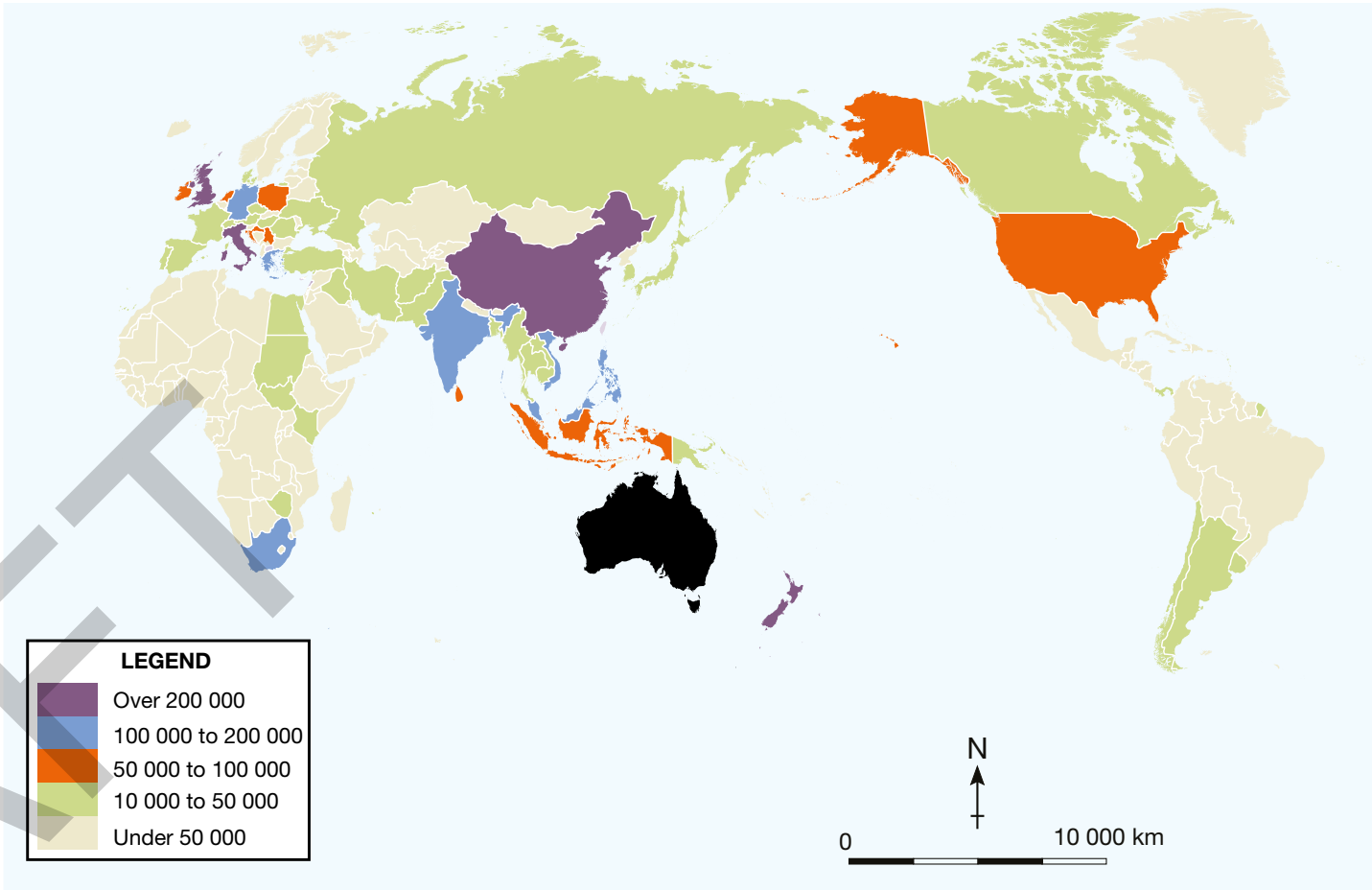
Multiculturalism at work

Source 2 shows the origins of people who make up the population of modern Australia. As we have seen, the countries of origin of Australia's migrants have changed continuously since the time of Federation in response to world events and changes in government policies. For example, in the 1960s around 45 per cent of all immigrants to Australia were born in Great Britain and Ireland. Although British-born immigrants were still the largest group in 2011, this number had declined to about 19 per cent. In addition to people from Britain, significant numbers of migrants now also come from New Zealand, China, India, Italy and Vietnam to settle in Australia. More recently, the Philippines, South Africa, Malaysia and Germany have also become major sources of migrants to Australia. These changes represent a significant departure from previous eras of Australian immigration history. As the White Australia policy was dismantled, other groups of non-European migrants increased. For example, Vietnamese immigration after the Vietnam War increased and Chinese and Indian immigrants also began to arrive. After the migration reforms of the 20th century and the establishment of multiculturalism, refugees from various trouble spots around the world, including Lebanon, Somalia, Sudan, Iraq and Afghanistan, began to arrive, making Australia their home.

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

NUMBERS OF AUSTRALIAN PERMANENT RESIDENTS IN 2011 BY COUNTRY OF BIRTH



Source 2

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics

since 1945, it was released in 11 different languages: Arabic, Chinese (simplified and traditional scripts), 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 3

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



Source 4 As a young girl, Julia Gillard came to Australia with her family from Wales.



Source 1 Australian cricketer Usman Khawaja – one of many Australian sporting personalities born overseas

Migration and global 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 strengthening ties between the two countries. For example, Australia's close ties with Britain

have enabled 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.



Source 5 Close familial ties between people in Italy, Greece and other countries with migrants who live in Australia have led to deeper understanding and better international cooperation.

keyconcept: significance

The Indian student controversy

Although Australia's international ties have been strengthened through migration, these ties can also result in new challenges. In 2009 the Australian and Indian media published reports of crimes and robberies against Indians living in Australia (particularly in Melbourne and Sydney). Australia has close ties with India and a significant Indian population (more than 1.5 per cent of all Australians). India is also the second largest source of international students for Australian institutions, and in 2009 there were more than 120 000 Indian students enrolled to study in Australia.

Although police evidence suggested that a number of crimes may have been racially motivated, a number were also opportunistic. Although it does not appear that any of the crimes were linked, the Australian and

Indian media reported them all as racially motivated. This led to an Indian government investigation into the attacks. The investigation concluded that out of the 152 reported assaults against Indian students in Australia that year, 23 incidents had involved 'racial overtones'.

The findings received widespread media coverage and resulted in a strong negative reaction in India against Australia. As a direct result of these events, there was a 46 per cent drop in Indian students applying to study in Australia. As international education is Australia's second largest export after mining, the events had significant consequences for the Australian Government and Australian educational institutions.

For more information on the key concept of significance refer to page XX of 'The history toolkit'.



Source 6 There were 152 assaults against Indian students reported in Australia in 2009. Of those, 23 were believed to have 'racial overtones'.

Check your learning 15.13

Remember and understand

- 1 How many different Indigenous cultural groups are estimated to have lived in Australia before the arrival of the British in 1788?
- 2 Which countries are the largest sources of migrants to Australia today?
- 3 How did Australia's close immigration ties affect the Indian student controversy of 2009? What effect did the incident have on Australia's economy?

Apply and analyse

- 4 Research the background of one wave of migrants arriving in Australia since 1975. What are the push factors that caused the group to leave their homes for Australia? How were they received in Australia and what influences has the group had on Australia's culture today?

15.14 Challenges and positive developments

Any migrant attempting to build a new life in an unfamiliar country will inevitably face challenges. Trying to adapt to a new language, culture, laws, values, food and other ways of life can be difficult. But the reverse can also present challenges – the arrival of new or unfamiliar people and customs into another group's culture can lead to misunderstandings, or in some cases suspicion and tension. While multiculturalism aims to embrace these differences, sometimes community tensions can arise and increase. While some see such tensions as a sign of failure on the part of multicultural policy, others see these problems as an opportunity to look closely at ourselves and draw strength from our differences.

One such event that drew widespread media attention and polarised certain sections of the community took place in the Sydney suburb of Cronulla in 2005.

Embracing diversity

The ability of Australia to openly discuss issues and adapt to the changing cultural mix of its citizens is a sign of its success as a multicultural nation. The following examples show how two of Australia's well-known institutions are making concerted efforts to be inclusive of other cultures and more representative of their communities.

After the Cronulla riots a program called 'On the same wave' was established to encourage Muslims to train as lifesavers. It was run by Surf Life Saving Australia in partnership with Sutherland Council (where Cronulla is located) and the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs. Lifesavers are an iconic part of Australian beach culture and this program was designed to make surf lifesaving clubs more inclusive and multicultural.

Surf Life Saving Australia has more than 300 clubs and around 115 000 lifesavers patrolling the country's beaches. Young volunteers from the Muslim community were asked to complete a three-month training course in summer before obtaining bronze medallions and commencing patrols.

keyconcept: significance

The Cronulla riots

In December 2005, Australia was shocked by a series of riots that erupted in the Sydney beachside suburb of Cronulla.

Conflict broke out on 4 December mainly as a result of a large influx of visitors to Cronulla beach. The riots first began as a result of a dispute between a group of young men of 'Middle Eastern appearance' and volunteer lifesavers patrolling Cronulla beach. The week after the 4 December incident saw increasing tensions, partially fuelled by talkback radio programs in Sydney.

A series of SMS texts was 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 assembled at North Cronulla beach chanting slogans and wearing clothing with racially offensive messages. A number of people were injured in violent attacks and beer bottles smashed, as police moved to restore order.

For more information on the key concept of significance refer to page XX of 'The history toolkit'.



Source 1 A police officer trying to separate two men fighting at Cronulla



Source 2 Mecca Laalaa on Cronulla Beach in 2007 wearing a 'burqini'

But for Muslim girls, there was an additional barrier. The outfits worn by female lifesavers were too revealing and were against traditional Muslim beliefs. So a local designer, who is of Lebanese background, came up with the 'burqini'. It is a full-length lycra suit, which is loose enough to fulfil Muslim dress requirements and light enough to enable Muslim lifesavers to swim. It comes with a built-in hijab (headscarf).

Mecca Laalaa is one of the female volunteers who completed her training to qualify as a lifesaver. Like many others, she grew up hanging out at the beach with her friends and wanted to contribute by becoming a lifesaver. She received worldwide attention when she went on patrol in her burqini (see Source 2).

Victoria Police is also actively looking at ways to attract recruits from a range of cultural backgrounds into the police force. The state of Victoria is one of Australia's most multicultural, and Victoria Police is keen for its recruits to reflect the mix of groups in the community. In 2011, the first officer of the Sikh faith was inducted into Victoria Police.

Constable Amitoj Singh wears a newly designed police-issue turban, featuring the service's checkerboard pattern (see Source 3).

Multicultural broadcasting

In 1975, the government launched two multilingual radio stations (2EA in Sydney and 3EA in Melbourne). Following their success, the government announced a new television channel that would provide programs aimed specifically at the growing number of Australian citizens for whom English was not their first or native language. This new television channel, operated by the Special Broadcasting Service (SBS), would also be a reflection of Australia's multicultural society.



Source 3 Constable Singh in his adapted police uniform

The new television service made its first broadcast in April 1979 with a test transmission broadcasting a compilation of special multicultural programs on the ABC. On 24 October 1980, SBS (then called Network 0/28), made its debut with its first program, a documentary called *Who are we?*

SBS's charter is to 'provide multilingual and multicultural radio and television services that inform, educate and entertain all Australians and, in doing so, reflect Australia's multicultural society'. Since its launch, SBS has provided news programs and other shows in many different languages as well as special interest programs, including sports telecasts, for cultural minority groups.

SBS now broadcasts in more languages than any other broadcaster in the world: more than 68 on radio, more than 60 on television, and more than 50 online.

Check your learning 15.14

Remember and understand

- 1 What evidence is there that the Cronulla riots were motivated by racism?
- 2 What program was started after the Cronulla riots to promote multiculturalism on Cronulla beach?
- 3 How is Victoria Police attempting to ensure a police force that is representative of multicultural Australia?
- 4 In what year did SBS start broadcasting?

Apply and analyse

- 5 What evidence is there that technology played a role in the Cronulla riots? What problems does this pose for future historians researching the riots?

Big Australia

Australia has undergone tremendous change since the Chifley Government announced its ‘populate or perish’ immigration policy at the end of World War II. Our population has grown from less than 8 million in 1947 to nearly 22 million by the time of the 2011 census. As the first ‘baby boomers’ born in the decade after World War II enter retirement, Australia has relied on an influx of younger skilled migrants to help replace the ageing workforce. An increasing proportion of these migrants are from China and India.

In 2009, Treasury forecasts showed that Australia’s population was likely to increase to more than 35 million by 2050. Much of this growth was expected to come from high rates of immigration. Labor Prime Minister Kevin Rudd stated his support for high immigration and population growth and used the term ‘Big Australia’ to describe the policies needed to react to it.

Rudd’s support for high population growth built on high immigration was controversial. Many agreed that support for Big Australia was vital to drive innovation and the economy. However, some high profile Australians, including Greens leader Bob Brown and entrepreneur Dick Smith, questioned the sustainability of a big Australia. Others believed high immigration would damage Australian culture.

Source 1

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

Source 2

[M]uch of southwest Sydney and the suburbs of Dandenong, Sunshine and Broadmeadows in Melbourne, are now dominated by low-income NESB (non-English speaking background) migrant communities.

This is not a pretty picture. Social divisions are becoming more obvious and geographically concentrated. NESB areas are being overlain by an ethnic identification ...

Australia is being transformed. We are losing core elements of what was once shared. Almost all could once aspire to a house and land – living in gardencity settings different only in scale from their better-off counterparts, and sharing a common language, sporting culture, and heritage.

Once we go down the high-migration pathway, there may be no going back.

Sociologist Bob Birrell in an article, ‘The Risks of High Migration’, *Policy*, Autumn 2010

After winning the Labor leadership in June 2010, Prime Minister Julia Gillard publicly distanced Labor from Rudd’s endorsement of a high migration intake. However, the government resumed its support for rapid population growth after the 2011 election.

Source 3

[Dry Liberal says: 03:32pm | 28/09/12]

I’m sick of this xenophobia masquerading as Chicken-little doomsday-ism. Whenever this topic gets raised, we have all the negative-nellies coming out of their crank-hovels to shake their heads and tut-tut about the ‘dire predicament’ of having a larger population in our country ...

We ought to be proud our Country is growing healthily like it is! What these negative-nellie chicken-little dooms-day shrieksters inexplicably fail to understand is that every new addition to our population adds net potential to our wealth and power ...

So we’ll have more migrant workers ... Awesome! Now we can undertake big projects like the Snowy river hydro scheme again, perhaps a network of Dams in the tropical north and a series of pipes running inland into the interior to create a huge inland sea and irrigate the desert.

Online comment responding to an article titled ‘We’re Hurling Down the Track to a Big Australia’

skilldrill: historical sources as evidence

Writing historical discussions that use evidence from a range of sources

Historians study the past to figure out what happened, why things happened, and how specific events and developments affected individuals and societies. The more we know about the past, the better we can understand how societies have evolved into what they are today.

The answers historians offer are all more or less educated guesses about the past, based on interpretations of various primary and secondary sources of information. Historians also revise earlier explanations of the past, adding new information.

Historical discussions present different opinions about particular historical questions or issues. They consider evidence from a range of sources, and outline different possible interpretations of that evidence. This involves considering not only various primary sources (such as newspapers, photographs or political and legal documents from the period being studied), but the ideas of other historians, presented in secondary sources such as textbooks and on websites. Historical discussions conclude with the writer’s own point of view on the question or issue, and include a bibliography which references all sources used in the discussion.

Source 4 Summary of the structure of a written discussion

Introduction	Introduces the topic, question or issue Outlines why the topic, question or issue is important
Main body	A series of paragraphs that outline different arguments or opinions about the topic, question or issue Each opinion or argument that is presented should also refer to the evidence which supports it
Conclusion	Sums up the issue and gives the writer’s opinion

Any sources that you have used in your written discussion must be referenced. First, you need to mention in your writing where information is coming from. Some examples of how you can do this include:

‘According to the economist Tim Harcourt ...’

‘The depiction of migrants from non-English speaking backgrounds in the article ‘The Risks of High Migration’ shows that ...’

You then need to include any sources you have referred to in your discussion in a bibliography. When citing a book in a bibliography, include the following information, in this order:

- author surname(s) and initial(s)
- year of publication
- title of book (in italics)
 - edition (if relevant)
 - publisher
 - place of publication
 - page number(s).

Example: Easton, M and Saldais, M, 2011, *Oxford Big Ideas Geography/History 9 Australian Curriculum*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, pp. 18–19

When citing an online source in a bibliography, include the following information, if available:

- author surname(s) and initial(s) or organisation name
 - year of publication or date of web page (last update)
 - title of document (article) enclosed in quotation marks
 - date of posting
 - organisation name (if different from above)
 - date you accessed the site
 - URL or web address enclosed in angle brackets.
- Example: Birrell, B, 2010, ‘The Risks of High Migration’, accessed 30 March 2016, <<http://www.cis.org.au/images/stories/policy-magazine/2010-autumn/26-1-10-bob-birrell.pdf>>

Apply the skill

- Write a 500-word discussion tracking the history of arguments for and against high immigration and population policies in Australia. Some points to consider:
 - When planning your essay you should use the information and sources included in this section.
 - You will also need to conduct your own research to locate a range of primary and secondary sources of information that provide evidence about other factors, events and attitudes that contribute to the debate.
 - Make sure you include a bibliography that references all your sources using the conventions outlined above.

Extend your understanding

- Consider how Sources 1, 2 and 3 in this section present quite different perspectives on the contribution that migrants have made to Australian society. Does one of the perspectives seem more reliable to you than the others?
 - Write a paragraph explaining what evidence would be needed to support the source you have chosen.
 - Prepare a presentation for your class in which you defend the source you identify with. Your presentation should take into account the points raised by the competing perspectives included in this section.