

# ➤ MIGRATION AND ITS EFFECT ON AUSTRALIA

Target Group: **Year 8**

Australian Curriculum Reference: **Geography**

- + The reasons for and effects of international migration in Australia (ACHGK058).
- + Identifying and explaining the main types and patterns of international migration, for example permanent migration, temporary labour migration, student migration, forced migration (including refugees) and family reunion.

## LESSON SUMMARY

This lesson looks at forced migrations to Australia (refugees) and the rise of volunteer organisations that have assisted them.

## LESSON CONTENT AND METHODOLOGY

- + Students look at Worksheet 1 (fact sheet: *More Than 65 Years of Post-war Migration*).
- + Teacher guides class discussion to develop a list of the significant world events that have resulted in migration to Australia. Teacher identifies that some of these migrants were refugees and explains what being a refugee means, using the following definition as a basis for discussion (text from UNHCR website).

*The 1951 Refugee Convention relating to the Status of Refugees is the key legal document that defines who is a refugee, their rights and the legal obligations of State parties. The 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees removed geographical and temporal restrictions from the Convention.*

*Accordingly, the term “refugee” applies to any person who:*

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

- + Students research where people came from to Australia as a result of the events described in Worksheet 1, and from the list of events drawn up by the class.
- + Students research which volunteer organisations have grown to support refugees in particular as a result of these migrations. A sample is provided at Worksheet 2.
- + Students choose one of the refugee-supporting organisations they have identified and prepare a short oral presentation for the class about why the organisation started and how it assists refugees.

## ASSESSMENT

Students will be assessed on their oral presentations for:

- + knowledge about the topic
- + research skills
- + originality of examples.

## RESOURCES

- + Refugee definition (UNHCR website):  
[www.unhcr.org.au/unhcr/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=179&Itemid=54](http://www.unhcr.org.au/unhcr/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=179&Itemid=54)
- + *More Than 65 Years of Post-war Migration* (Worksheet 1: Fact Sheet 4)  
[www.immi.gov.au/media/fact-sheets/04fifty.htm](http://www.immi.gov.au/media/fact-sheets/04fifty.htm)
- + Worksheet 2: Organisations That Help Refugees

### Other references for the history of migration to Australia

- + *Boat arrivals in Australia since 1976* (Parliament of Australia website): [www.aph.gov.au/About\\_Parliament/Parliamentary\\_Departments/Parliamentary\\_Library/pubs/rp/rp1314/BoatArrivals](http://www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/Parliamentary_Departments/Parliamentary_Library/pubs/rp/rp1314/BoatArrivals)
- + *Belongings: Post WW2 migration memories and stories* (Migration Heritage website):  
[www.migrationheritage.nsw.gov.au/belongings-home/about-belongings/australias-migration-history](http://www.migrationheritage.nsw.gov.au/belongings-home/about-belongings/australias-migration-history)
- + *Timeline: Vietnamese Immigration to Australia* (ABC website):  
[www.abc.net.au/news/2012-06-20/timeline-of-vietnamese-immigration-to-australia/4080074](http://www.abc.net.au/news/2012-06-20/timeline-of-vietnamese-immigration-to-australia/4080074)
- + *Objects in Time 1965-1990 Australia and Asia* (Migration Heritage website):  
[www.migrationheritage.nsw.gov.au/exhibition/objectsthroughtime-history/1965-1990](http://www.migrationheritage.nsw.gov.au/exhibition/objectsthroughtime-history/1965-1990)

# WORKSHEET 1

## Fact Sheet 4: More than 65 Years of Post-war Migration

The Department of Immigration and Border Protection has facilitated the permanent migration of more than seven million people since its establishment in 1945. The contribution of migrants to Australian society, culture and prosperity has been an important factor in shaping our nation.

A large-scale program of migration to Australia began at the end of World War II when millions of people in Europe were displaced from their homelands. During this time in Australia, there was a desperate shortage of labour and a growing belief that substantial population growth was essential for the country's future.

These and other factors led to the creation of a federal immigration portfolio in 1945.

By 1947, a post-war immigration boom was underway, with a large and growing number of arrivals including those on government-assisted passage.

We reached agreements with the United Kingdom, some European countries and the International Refugee Organisation (IRO) to encourage migrants, including displaced persons from war-torn Europe, to come to Australia. By 1950, almost 200 000 people had arrived.

One million more migrants arrived in each of the following four decades. Today, approximately one in four of Australia's population of more than 22 million people was born overseas. New Zealand and the United Kingdom are the largest source countries for migrants, however, migration from other regions—notably Asia—has increased significantly.

### Early migration waves

The date of the first human occupation in Australia remains unknown but evidence exists that humans have been on the continent for at least 40 000 years. Consequently, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are regarded as the indigenous people of Australia.

Transported criminals were the basis of the first migration from Europe. Starting in 1788, some 160 000 convicts were shipped to the Australian colonies. From the early 1790s, free immigrants also began coming to Australia.

The rapid growth of the wool industry in the 1820s created enormous demands for labour and sparked an increase in the migration of free people from the United Kingdom. The social upheavals of industrialisation in Britain also resulted in many people emigrating to escape widespread poverty and unemployment.

During the Gold Rush era of 1851 to 1860, early migration peaked with around 50 000 people arriving each year. Throughout this period, Chinese immigrants were the largest non-British group.

The migration program has reflected economic or social conditions in Australia and elsewhere. For example:

- + during the 1840s a large number of Irish immigrants came to Australia to escape famine in their homeland
- + from the 1860s to the late nineteenth century, labourers from Melanesia were recruited to work on Queensland plantations

- + from the 1860s to the 1920s concerns about population imbalance resulted in deliberate efforts to attract women to Australia
- + during the second half of the nineteenth century, Afghani, Pakistani and Turkish camel handlers played an important part in opening up the continent's interior, facilitating the construction of telegraph and railway lines
- + Japanese divers were instrumental in the pearling industry in the late nineteenth century.

The two world wars also influenced Australia's migration program. The resettling of ex-servicemen, refugees and young people were significant chapters in Australian immigration history.

### Post-war developments

The most ambitious phase of Australia's migration program followed the end of World War II. Australia negotiated agreements with other governments and international organisations to help achieve high migration targets.

The agreements, which are no longer in force, included:

- + a system of free or assisted passages for United Kingdom residents
- + an assisted passage scheme for British Empire and United States ex-servicemen, later extended to ex-servicemen or resistance fighters from The Netherlands, Norway, France, Belgium and Denmark
- + an agreement with the IRO to settle at least 12 000 displaced people a year from camps in Europe
- + formal migration agreements, often involving the grant of assisted passage, with the United Kingdom, Malta, The Netherlands, Italy, West Germany, Turkey and Yugoslavia
- + informal migration agreements with Austria, Greece, Spain, Belgium and other countries.

Economic and political events and circumstances around the world subsequently influenced the size and source countries of the Australian program. At various times in the 1950s and 1960s, the Netherlands, Germany, Italy, Greece, Turkey and Yugoslavia were important migrant source countries.

There were also significant intakes of:

- + Hungarian and Czech refugees following unrest in those countries in 1956 and 1968 respectively
- + Chileans following the overthrow of the Allende Government in 1973
- + Indochinese after the end of the Vietnam War in 1975
- + Polish after martial law was declared in December 1981.

Today the migration program is global, using one set of criteria for applicants anywhere in the world, with migrants originating from more than 185 countries.

## THE IMPACT OF IMMIGRATION

The post-war immigration program has benefited Australian life in many ways.

### Economic

Immigration is an important contributor to Australia's economy. It affects the demand side of Australia's economy through:

- + migrants' own spending (food, housing and leisure activities)
- + business expansion (investment to produce extra goods and services)

- + expansion of government services (health, education and welfare)
- + increased travel and tourism in Australia, including by overseas friends and families of immigrants.

It also affects the supply side of the economy through:

- + labour, skills and capital introduced into Australia
- + new businesses developed by migrants
- + migrant contributions to technology
- + increased access to and knowledge of international business markets.

Like all Australians, migrants pay taxes to, and receive benefits and goods and services from the government. Research shows that overall, migrants contribute more in taxes than they consume in benefits and government goods and services.

### Population composition

Migration has had a very significant effect on Australia's population. At the end of World War II, Australia's population was over seven million, with around 90 per cent born in Australia.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics estimated resident population (ERP) at June 2011 was 22.32 million people.

Of these people, more than one quarter were born overseas (6.03 million). This continues the historical trend of a high proportion of overseas-born among Australia's population. People born in the United Kingdom were the largest group of overseas-born residents (1.18 million people at 30 June 2011), followed by those born in New Zealand (564 920), China (391 060), India (343 070) and Vietnam (212 070).

### Population growth

Natural increase has been the main source of population growth over the past hundred years, contributing two-thirds of the increase in population between 1901 and 2001. Immigration has also been a significant contributor to Australia's population growth. Since September 2005, net overseas migration has overtaken natural increase as the main component of population growth.

Immigration's contribution to population growth is likely to increase during the next 30 years as the aging of Australia's population leads to deaths catching up with births.

*Fact Sheet 4. Produced by the National Communications Branch, Department of Immigration and Border Protection, Canberra.*

*Last reviewed August 2013.*

*(From: [www.immi.gov.au/media/fact-sheets/04fifty.htm](http://www.immi.gov.au/media/fact-sheets/04fifty.htm))*

## WORKSHEET 2

### Organisations that help refugees

#### **Red Cross**

[www.redcross.org.au/migration-support.aspx](http://www.redcross.org.au/migration-support.aspx)

#### **Australian Refugee Foundation**

[www.refugeefoundation.org.au](http://www.refugeefoundation.org.au)

#### **Australian Refugee Association (ARA)**

[www.australianrefugee.org/volunteer](http://www.australianrefugee.org/volunteer)

#### **AMES**

[www.ames.net.au/volunteering.html](http://www.ames.net.au/volunteering.html)

#### **The Refugee Council of Australia**

[www.refugeecouncil.org.au](http://www.refugeecouncil.org.au)

#### **Amnesty International**

[www.amnesty.org.au/refugees/?&gclid=CMW5hJzIMUCFYgrvQodlhkAwQ](http://www.amnesty.org.au/refugees/?&gclid=CMW5hJzIMUCFYgrvQodlhkAwQ)

#### **St Vincent de Paul Society**

[www.vinnies.org.au/page/Our\\_Impact/Asylum\\_Seekers\\_Migrants\\_Refugees](http://www.vinnies.org.au/page/Our_Impact/Asylum_Seekers_Migrants_Refugees)

#### **The Coalition for Asylum Seekers, Refugees and Detainees (CARAD)**

[www.carad.org.au](http://www.carad.org.au)

#### **Australians supporting the UN Refugee Agency**

[www.unrefugees.org.au](http://www.unrefugees.org.au)

#### **Volunteer Refugee Tutoring & Community Support**

[www.refugeetutoring.org](http://www.refugeetutoring.org)