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Contents

Introduction	4
Exploring Push-and-Pull Factors	6
Cultural Diversity	10
Aboriginal Peoples	12
Torres Strait Islander Peoples	14
Meet Masoomah	16
Human Rights Issues	18
Meet Andre	20
Asian Immigration	22
International Students	24
Changing Patterns	26
Looking to the Future	28
Timeline	30
Glossary	31
Index	32
Find Out More	32

Words that are printed in bold are explained in the Glossary on page 31.

Introduction

Australia is a nation that has been built on migration. Migration is the movement of people from one nation, place or location to another. Since 1788, people from many nations and cultures have come to Australia to make this land their home. But, many thousands of years before 1788, another wave of people came to Australia. These people are Australia's first inhabitants—the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Why People Migrate

People migrate for different reasons. Some people are forced to migrate because a natural disaster has destroyed their homes and their communities. When people in this situation migrate, they are doing so for environmental reasons. Some people are forced to leave their country because of war or because they are **persecuted** for their political or religious beliefs. These people are moving for political or religious reasons.

Many people move to another country for a better life or to be near family members who have moved. These people are moving for social reasons. Finally, other people move to a different country because they or their employer believes there are better career opportunities for them in that country. These people are moving for economic reasons.

Migration

Migration is either permanent or temporary—that is, people leave their home forever or for only a certain period of time. When a person leaves a country, he or she is said to be *emigrating*. When a person arrives in a country, he or she is said to be *immigrating*.

About This Book

This book explores migration to Australia in the 21st century. Australia is one of the most culturally diverse countries in the world. The living conditions in Australia are generally of a high standard compared to many other countries. Education and healthcare are available to everyone, regardless of their income. People have freedom of speech and the right to live their life in any way they choose, as long as they do not disobey the law. Many people find Australia a country that is easy to live in. Australians have become more tolerant of other cultures than ever before, making Australia a popular country for immigration.

Religious Freedom

Australians have the right to practice their religion in peace. Most major religions are represented in Australia, which reflects the country's cultural mix of people. **Buddhism** is the fastest growing religion in Australia. Increased immigration from South-East Asia has contributed to the growth in Buddhism, as well as interest from other Australians.



Cultural diversity is often celebrated in Australian cities.



Exploring Push-and-Pull Factors

People emigrate from one country to another country for different reasons. The reasons why people emigrate can be related to what are known as push-and-pull factors. Push factors are things that are happening to the person or in their country of origin that make them want to leave. Pull factors are things that draw people to a particular country.

Push Factors

Some people think that migration to another country is their only option for survival, or their only chance to live in peace. War and conflict that threaten people's safety have displaced millions of people around the world. Their own country no longer offers sanctuary for them or their families.

Governments that limit people's freedom to practise their religion or to have freedom of speech push many people to emigrate. Also, a person's country may not allow its citizens the freedom to vote for who they want in government, which can make people feel **oppressed**. Those who protest against the conditions in, or government of, their country may be treated with violence, imprisoned or even killed.

Disasters also push people to migrate to other countries. Natural disasters, such as earthquakes and cyclones, can destroy people's homes and lives. **Humanitarian** situations, such as **famine**, leave thousands of people homeless and hungry every year.

Economic factors can also push people from their home. Countries that experience **depression** leave many people jobless and without the resources to feed and clothe their families. Immigration to another country may offer opportunities that are not available in the home country.

People who are pushed to emigrate often do so under difficult and traumatic circumstances.

Temporary or Permanent

Just as people migrate for different reasons, people also migrate for varying periods of time. People who have been pushed from their homes due to natural disasters, famine or war sometimes choose to return to their home when it is safe. Others migrate to their new country permanently.

Turkey Earthquake

Turkey was hit by a powerful earthquake in October 2011. The earthquake measured 7.2 magnitude and was among the strongest ever to hit the country. Hundreds of people lost their lives, and thousands of homes and buildings were shattered in the quake. Turkey lies on several fault lines, which makes the country vulnerable to earthquakes. Disasters such as this encourage many people to immigrate to safer countries.



It can take decades for a country to recover from a natural disaster, such as an earthquake, flood, cyclone, bushfire or drought, so people leave to find a new life in another country.



Refugees risk their lives to flee from violence and starvation in their homeland. Refugees often leave their home with little or no food or possessions.



Pull Factors

There are many pull factors that draw people to countries like Australia. Laws are the same for everyone and protect people against discrimination related to their race, age, sex, disability or religious beliefs. This freedom of choice is a pull factor for many people, particularly those who live in countries where they have never experienced freedom.

Australia offers a better life for many **immigrants**. It has a relatively low crime rate, particularly for crimes of a violent nature, so most people feel safe.

All Australians have the right to an education and medical care, and the government offers help to people and families in need. While unemployment rates change over the years, Australia generally has jobs available for those who wish to work. The government sets minimum wages, which generally means that employees are paid a fair amount of money. Strict safety guidelines help to ensure that all workplaces have a safe work environment.

Many people choose to study in Australia because the opportunities are better than in their homeland.

Beautiful Country

Australia is a beautiful country with varied landscapes. It has rich rainforests and spectacular mountain ranges, deserts and beaches. Australia has animals and plants that can be found nowhere else on earth. Some people who have visited Australia have loved the country so much that they wanted to immigrate. Even Australia's climate is a drawcard. And Australians have a reputation overseas for being friendly and easygoing. This is a quality that appeals to many people and helps make immigrants feel welcome.

Skill Shortages

The Australian government also encourages people to migrate to Australia when there are specific skill shortages. This helps to resource areas in Australia that may be understaffed or where there are not enough qualified Australians to do the job. This is particularly the case in regional or rural Australia where it can be difficult to attract people with the necessary qualifications. Doctors, for example, can be difficult to find for rural or regional areas as most people choose to live in major cities.

Housing

Housing affordability has drawn migrants to Australia since the days of early settlement. People who would never have been able to afford land or a house have moved to Australia for this opportunity. As housing becomes increasingly more expensive for Australians, particularly in the cities, this pull factor may change.

Family

Family is a big pull factor. People have migrated to Australia for love, marriage and family ties. Some people migrate to be with family members who are old or ill, as there may be no other family to look after them at home.



Most Australians respect other people's right to protest and rally about things they feel passionate about, such as the banning of live exports.



Australia has been labelled "the lucky country", because many people can lead a good life here.

Cultural Diversity

Most Australians today have learnt lessons from the past about racism towards people from different cultures. Australia now embraces its wonderful cultural mix and celebrates the diversity of the people who call Australia home. People from over 200 different countries live in Australia and combined speak around 260 languages. About one-quarter of Australians in 2011 were born overseas. Australia has learnt to become an **inclusive** society, where people respect and support each other's differences and their rights to their own culture, religion and language.

Benefits of a Multicultural Society

Australia's rich cultural diversity benefits everyone. People benefit culturally and socially from engaging with people from a variety of countries. Sharing music, art, literature, language and customs broadens people's lives and teaches tolerance. Many communities around Australia now hold cultural events where migrants share their culture, including food, dance, art and music. Australia has also benefited from migrants' skills, knowledge, education and experiences.

Economic Benefits

Australia's **economy** benefits from immigration because more money is spent as migrants buy food, homes and other goods and services. This increases the demand for supplies and helps to keep businesses successful. People are more willing to invest in businesses when there is an increased demand for extra goods and services. Government services like health, education and welfare services expand, which helps the community and provides extra jobs.

Migrants bring labour and skills to Australia. Sometimes, they bring new skills or knowledge that Australia is lacking. Many migrants have built successful businesses that employ thousands of people.

Make-Up of the Population

Migrants have contributed significantly to the composition of Australia's population. In 2011, Australia's population was estimated at close to 22.8 million people.

The largest numbers of overseas-born residents at June 2010 were:

- 5.3% born in the United Kingdom
- 2.4% born in New Zealand
- 1.7% born in China
- 1.5% born in India
- 1% born in Italy.

Australian Citizenship Day

In September 2011, more than 4000 new citizens were welcomed to Australia in ceremonies held around the country. The new citizens had migrated from 115 different countries. Citizenship Day has been held for 10 years. The ceremonies held on Citizenship Day formally recognise **immigrants** as being Australian citizens.



Population Increase

Australia's population increased from 3.77 million at the beginning of the 20th century to 19.6 million in 2000. Two-thirds of Australia's population growth in the 20th century was related to natural increase, which means there were more births than deaths.

Citizenship Day annually brings together many immigrants from different cultures, in a ceremony officially recognising them as Australian citizens.

