

UNDERSTANDING REFUGEES



Australia becomes a signatory to the UN Convention on the Status of Refugees

Thousands of refugees enter Australia following the Vietnam War.

Immigration Minister Michael MacKellar reassures the public that the “boat people” are not “illegal immigrants”.

Mandatory detention is introduced under the Howard government for those who arrive to Australia



Protests occur at detention centres across Australia over slow processing and poor conditions, including hunger strikes and lip sewing. Examples surface of detainees with

A series of parochial measures introduced by the Liberal government formalise the Pacific Solution of offshore processing.

The UN High Commissioner for Refugees expresses concerns about the vilification of refugees in Australia.

The ALP Government abolishes the Pacific Solution.

The government abolishes Temporary Protection Visas, on the grounds that they are

Australia stops charging refugees for their time spent in detention. Refugees were previously charged up to \$100 a day for their own detainment.

New arrangements in the Asia-Pacific region result in offshore processing centres on Nauru and Manus Island, raising concerns due to the human rights commitments of these states.

20th anniversary of mandatory detention.

1954

1973

1975

1977

1978

1989

1992

1999

2000

2001

2002

2007

2008

2009

2010

2011

2012

2013?

The Whitlam government abolishes the White Australia Policy.

Australia’s first formal refugee policy is enacted, stating firstly that Australia

The Migration Legislation Amendment Act is introduced by the Hawke Government to intimidate “illegal entrants”. This harsh legislation is a step backward, forcing asylum

Temporary Protection Visas are introduced, subjecting refugees to an ongoing state of limbo and exclusion from basic welfare. Australia is the only country to introduce TPVs for genuine refugees as a form of penalty.

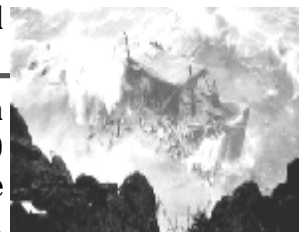
The Tampa Crisis occurs, in which 439 Afghan refugees are rescued by a Norwegian ship and then refused entry to Australian waters, sparking a dispute between Australia, Norway and Indonesia.

A UN Report on Mandatory Detention argues that Australia’s practices contravene human rights agreements.

Christmas Island detention facility becomes operational, and includes measures for the long-term detainment of children.

Prime Minister Gillard announces the intention to work towards a regional

SIEV 221 crashes on Christmas Island, 50 asylum seekers are believed to have died.



Protests, hunger strikes and unrest in many detention centres, as well as five deaths in just over six months.

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO SEE IN THE FUTURE OF IMMIGRATION TO AUSTRALIA?

Make an informed choice in this election year.