Modification of the White Australia Policy
The Menzies Govt. cancelled Calwell’s (Mr. Populate or Perish) to deport wartime refugees.

It also allowed Japanese war-brides to come to Australia.

Several thousand Chinese on temporary visas refused to go home after the Communist victory.

They were granted a special status (Liberal attitude Status).
This denied them Australian citizenship.

This policy was challenged by many Liberals, churches and other organisations.

This resulted in many modifications to the White Australia Policy.

1956, the creation of the ‘permanent resident’
1958, the dictation test was replaced with a system of temporary and permanent entry visas. These were selectively applied to different categories of migrants.

The Minister of Immigration would decide who would qualify for permanent residency.

As a result about 40,000 non Europeans acquired citizenship between 1956 and 1971.

Also, the Commonwealth and State Govts. repealed various discriminatory laws against non-Europeans.
1966: Holt government effectively dismantles White Australia policy

The Migration Act 1966 established legal equality between British, European and non-European migrants to Australia.

These changes to immigration policy were some of the most significant steps towards the formation of multicultural Australia.
Under the new legislation, all potential migrants were now subject to the same rules and restrictions surrounding visas, and were eligible to become citizens of Australia after the same waiting period. People were selected based on what they might offer Australian society, rather than their race or nationality.
Multicultural Australia

While the creation of legislative equality for all migrants was a defining moment in the Australian migration story, there was still a way to go to make such equality a reality. The Holt government, despite passing the 1966 Act, did not attempt to establish Australian migration offices in Asian countries or offer assistance for Asian migrants.
In 1973, the Whitlam Labor government definitively renounced the White Australia policy and established in its place a policy of multiculturalism in a nation that is now home to migrants from about 200 different countries.