

National Cultural Policy Submission

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Individual

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Short submission (text box 500 words or less)

From a conservative perspective, many Australians look back on the 1990s as the peak of a confident and unified national culture. It was a time when Australia still felt distinctly Australian in its values, humour, traditions, and social expectations. Communities were more culturally cohesive, national identity was stronger, and people generally shared a common understanding of what it meant to be Australian. Mateship, resilience, respect for the ANZAC legacy, love of sport, backyard barbecues, and a laid-back but proud attitude formed a cultural identity that was widely recognised across the country.

The 1990s also represented a period before globalisation and rapid demographic change significantly altered the social fabric of Australia. While immigration had always been part of the nation's history, it occurred at a pace that many people felt allowed newcomers to integrate into Australian culture rather than reshape it. English language, Australian customs, and shared civic values remained central to public life, helping maintain social cohesion and a sense of national unity.

Critics of modern immigration policy argue that mass immigration over the past two decades has weakened that shared identity. They believe Australia has increasingly shifted toward multiculturalism without placing enough emphasis on assimilation or preserving core Australian traditions. As a result, some feel the country has become more fragmented, with people divided into separate cultural groups rather than united under a common national identity.

There is also a growing feeling among conservatives that modern Australia is less connected to its historical roots. Traditions that once defined Australian life are seen as being diluted by imported social values, corporate globalism, and political pressure to avoid expressions of national pride that were once normal and uncontroversial. For many, this has created a sense that Australia no longer knows exactly what it stands for culturally.

Those who hold this view are not necessarily opposed to immigration itself, but argue that a nation must protect and prioritise its own identity if it wishes to remain culturally strong and socially united. To them, the Australia of the 1990s represented the last era before that identity began to fade.