

**Australian Parliament
Joint Standing Committee on Migration
Submission No. 33**

I am concerned that you are only looking to "meet the needs of migrant communities". Multiculturalism needs to meet the needs of the people already living here as well.

I am a fourth generation Australian. My ancestors were refugees/boat people too, who came from Wales and Cornwall to find a new life here. They brought their culture with them, but changed it and developed and we consider ourselves 100% Australian now, not Welsh or Cornish.

Certainly we wish to welcome people from across the world and invite them to become Australians and while some of their ways will certainly permeate society, we want our culture to stay basically Australian, underpinned by our Christian heritage and Westminster Legal System.

Not every culture and worldview is equal. Not all traditions from other cultures belong here. A tradition that kills females who are thought (not caught out doing it, simply thought) to have had a relationship outside marriage in so-called "honor killings" does not fit in with Australian values. In Australia a woman must have the same right to build a relationship with any other consenting adult, as does a man.

Underage girls need to be protected from forced marriages to older men (or any man). Such marriages are traditional in some Aboriginal cultures as well as in some overseas cultures and religions. They are not Australian. All girls in Australia need to be protected by law until the age of 18 no matter what their culture, tradition or what the male leaders of that group believe.

Female genital mutilation, and forbidding young girls from staying at school are other traditions that do not mesh with Australian values.

People from all nations should be welcomed into Australia and encouraged to practise their culture. But their culture should NEVER be above Australian law. Everyone in Australia should be protected by Australian law and have freedoms to form relationships, to worship (or not worship) their own religion, to go to school, to choose to marry or not marry, to have control over their own body, and the right to dispose of their own possessions.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input to this Inquiry.

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Save the Frogs Day 29 April 2011

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