



# Marriage equality 101

## Where is same-sex marriage already legal?

- **Netherlands** 2001
- Belgium 2003
- **Canada** 2005
- Massachusetts (US) 2004
- **Spain** 2005
- South Africa 2006
- **Norway** 2009
- Sweden 2009
- **Connecticut** (US) 2009
- Iowa (US) 2009
- **Vermont** (US) 2009
- Washington DC (US) 2009
- **Mexico City** (Mexico) 2010
- Portugal 2010
- **Iceland** 2010
- Argentina 2010
- **New Hampshire** (US) 2010
- New York state (US) 2011
- **Washington state** (US) 2012

## What is the level of support in Australia?

**62%** of Australians support marriage equality (Galaxy poll, 2012).

**81%** of young Australians (18-24 years of age) support marriage equality.

**75%** of Australians believe marriage equality is inevitable.

**76%** of Coalition voters want Tony Abbott to grant his MPs a conscience vote.

## What are the benefits of marriage equality?

- **Better health outcomes** for same-sex attracted Australians due to removal of stigmatising laws.
- **Greater security** and stability for same-sex couples and their families.
- **Bolsters marriage** by showing it's commitment that counts—not gender.
- **Improvement** to Australia's human rights reputation.
- At least **\$160 million** over three years to small businesses in the wedding industry.

## Who supports marriage equality?

- **Hugh Jackman**, Emmy-winning actor
- **Magda Szubanski**, Actor & comedian
- **Margaret Pomeranz & David Stratton**, TV personalities, 'At the Movies'
- **Olivia Newton-John**, Grammy-winning singer & actor
- **Guy Pearce**, Emmy-winning actor
- **Kristina Keneally**, former NSW Premier
- **David Pocock**, Wallabies Captain
- **Jimmy Barnes**, Aussie rock legend
- **Jeff Kennett**, fmr Victorian Liberal Premier
- **Tasmanian & ACT governments**
- **Stephan Elliot**, Filmmaker & Director
- **Rev Bill Crews** & over 70 faith leaders
- **Nick Greiner**, Former NSW Liberal Premier

## How is marriage equality achieved?

Marriage equality needs a **majority** of federal MPs and Senator to vote in favour of reform. Approximately 53 Lower House MPs support the bill, but we need 22 more. About 30 Senators support the bill, so we need 8 more.

To achieve this, Coalition MPs need to be granted a **conscience vote** on the issue.

## Isn't marriage about procreation?

**No.** Marriage is about affirming loving committed relationships. We allow heterosexuals to marry even when they cannot or chose not to have children. Clearly it's a double standard not to allow same-sex couples to marry on the basis of procreation.

Also, many same-sex couples are raising children and those children will benefit if their parents have the option to marry.

## Isn't marriage a religious institution?

In Australian law, marriage is a **civil institution**. We allow heterosexuals to marry even if they are of different faith or no faith. So, again, it's a double standard to prevent same-sex marriage because some religious people believe same-sex relationships are against the Bible.

Moreover, polls show a majority of Australian Christians (**53%**) support same-sex marriage.

## Won't same-sex marriage lead to polygamy, incest or marriage between people and their pets?

**No.** In none of the places that allow same-sex marriage have any of these things happened.

Marriage equality is about recognising that the love and commitment in same-sex relationships is the same as in heterosexual relationships.

## Marriage has always been between 'a man and a woman'. Why should we change the definition of marriage?

Marriage equality is not about changing the definition of marriage, it's about expanding the current definition to embrace those who have been excluded.

Marriage law has been **reformed in the past** to remove discrimination against interracial couples and discrimination against women. Marriage equality is about removing the last vestiges of discrimination from marriage law.

For more information visit:

**[www.australianmarriageequality.com](http://www.australianmarriageequality.com)**