

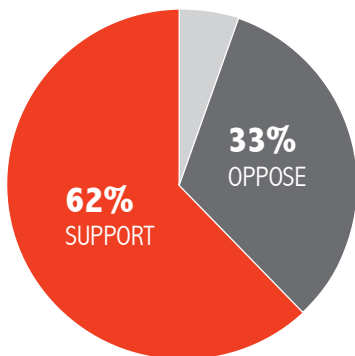


Marriage equality and public opinion

Growing public support for marriage equality

Almost two in three Australians believe that same-sex couples should be able to marry, and the percentage is growing all the time.

Support for marriage equality



Polls on marriage equality began in 2004 when the Marriage Act was amended to preclude the recognition of same-sex marriages.

Except the first poll listed below, all polls asked the same question: Do you agree or disagree same-sex couples should be able to marry?

YEAR	FOR	AGAINST	UNDECIDED
2004	38%	44%	18%
2007	57%	37%	6%
2009	60%	36%	5%
2010	62%	33%	5%

2004: Newspann commissioned by SBS News
2007: Galaxy poll commissioned by GetUp!
2009 & 2010: Galaxy polls commissioned by AME and PFLAG

Similar polls show similar levels of support

- **Newspann:** 65% of Australians 'have no problem' with allowing same-sex marriages (November 2010, 148,000 respondents)
- **Westpoll:** 61% support in Western Australia (December 2010)
- **Neilson:** 57% support nationally (November 2010 & March 2011)

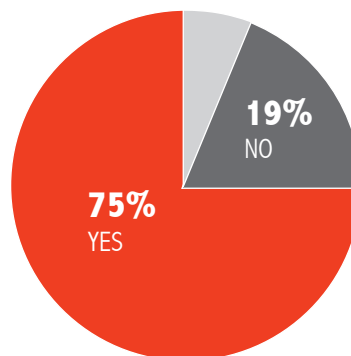
At a glance

- **62%** of Australians believe same-sex couples should be able to marry
- **75%** of Australians believe reform is inevitable
- **78%** believe there should be a conscience vote on the issue
- **74%** of Labor voters and **48%** of Coalition voters support marriage equality
- **72%** of Australians with young children support marriage equality

Most believe marriage equality is inevitable

Three out of every four Australians believe it is inevitable that same-sex couples will be allowed to marry.

Is marriage equality inevitable?



According to a national poll conducted by Galaxy Research in May 2011, 75% believe reform is inevitable and only 19% believe it is not. 6% are undecided.

This suggests that a large proportion of people who oppose marriage equality believe that change to the law is inevitable.

The following believe that marriage equality is inevitable in Australia:

- **80%** of women
- **79%** of people under 50
- **78%** of people with young children

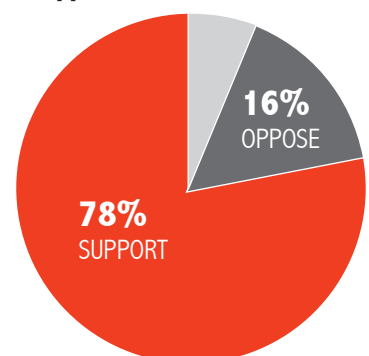
A matter of conscience: support for a free vote

78% of Australians support a conscience vote on marriage equality. This support is uniformly high with a free vote being supported by:

- **80%** of Labor voters, **75%** of Coalition voters and **88%** of Green voters
- **78%** of over 50s and **84%** of under 24s
- **76%** of men and **79%** of women
- **75%** of blue-collar workers and **80%** of white-collar workers

Whatever their views on marriage equality, Australians overwhelmingly want their elected representatives to vote according to their conscience on this issue.

Support for a conscience vote





Where is support the highest and lowest?

Support for marriage equality is:

- **72%** among people with young children
- **80%** among young people under 24
- **81%** among Green voters **BUT**
- Only **46%** among people over 50*

*This is the only demographic in which support for marriage equality is not higher than opposition. That age group is split 46%/46%.

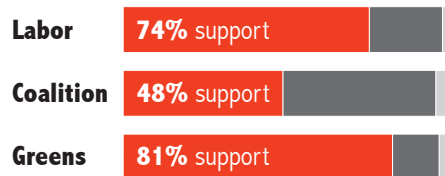
An even spread of support for marriage equality

It is often assumed there is much lower support for marriage equality among men, blue collar workers, country-dwellers and Coalition voters. But the statistics tell a different story.

- **59% of rural and regional dwellers** support marriage equality, only 5 points less than those in capital cities
- **57% of men** support marriage equality, only 10 points lower than women
- **57% of blue-collar workers** support equality, only 9 points lower than white-collar workers
- **48% of Coalition voters** support equality, which is more than the percentage opposed.

Labor most out of step with its supporters

- The **Greens** are the only party whose policy matches the views of a majority of its voters.
- The **Coalition's** opposition to marriage equality is out of step with a majority of its voters.
- But the greatest disparity is between **Labor's** opposition to marriage equality and the fact that **74%** of Labor voters support reform.



Comparisons to public opinion in other countries

In the past, support for marriage equality has been lower in comparable nations where same-sex couples can marry. For example:

- In 2003, when same-sex marriages were first allowed in Canada, only **48%** of Canadians supported the reform.
- In 2011, when five US states allow same-sex marriages, only about **53%** of Americans support the reform.

Australians are not alone in their strong support for marriage equality. :

- In 2010, a national poll in the United Kingdom found **61%** support for allowing same-sex marriages
- In 2011, a national poll in Ireland found **67%** support