



# Australian Marriage Equality

Research Report

Prepared by





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## THE SURVEY

1000 Tasmanian adults were interviewed by telephone between the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> of August 2012. Of these, 500 were from the South, 280 were from the North and North East, and 220 were from the North West and West Coast regions. Responses were weighted to reflect the demographic profile of the Tasmanian adult population.

## THE SUMMARY

The results of the survey showed a considerable degree of support from Tasmanians for both allowing same-sex couples to marry and the state enacting its own laws allowing such marriages if the federal government fails to proceed with legislation nationally.

The percentage of respondents who stated they “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree” that same-sex couples should be able to marry was at 61%, with 38% supporting the proposition “strongly”.

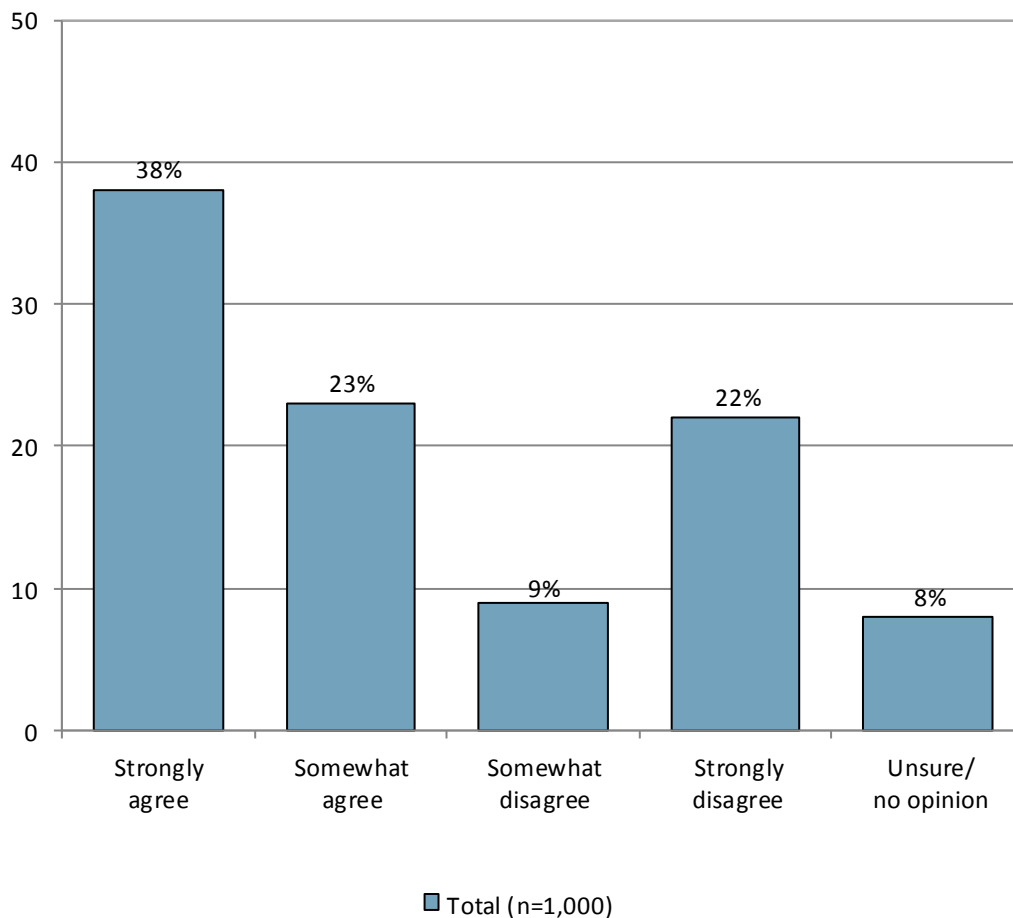
More than one half of all respondents (54%) stated they “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree” that Tasmania should go ahead with its own laws allowing same-sex couples to marry. In this instance too, a high proportion of respondents (37%) indicated that they agreed with this “strongly”.

## The Questions

All participants in the survey were invited to give their views on allowing same-sex couples to marry by responding to two questions. They were first asked:

*Do you agree or disagree that same-sex couples should be able to marry? Do you “strongly agree”, “somewhat agree”, “somewhat disagree”, or “strongly disagree”?*

**Chart 1 – Level of Agreement with Allowing Same-Sex Couples to Marry  
(Percentage of respondents)**



The percentage of respondents who stated they “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree” that same-sex couples should be able to marry was at 61%. Under one in three respondents (31%) said they “somewhat disagree” or “strongly disagree”, while a further 8% indicated that they were “unsure”.

It is interesting to note that of those respondents who agreed at some level the greater proportion said they “strongly agree” (38%). Similarly, of those that disagreed at some level, a higher percentage indicated they “strongly disagree” (22%).

**Table 1 – Level of Agreement with Allowing Same-Sex Couples to Marry  
by Demographic Group  
(Percentage of each demographic group)\***

Demographic Group	Level of Agreement						
	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	TOTAL AGREE	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	TOTAL DISAGREE	Unsure/ no opinion
<b>Total</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Gender</b>							
Male	29	25	54	11	25	35	10
Female	46	22	68	8	19	27	5
<b>Age</b>							
18-24 years	76	19	95	2	-	2	2
25-34 years	52	26	78	4	11	16	6
35-44 years	36	30	66	10	17	27	7
45-54 years	38	24	62	11	19	29	8
55-69 years	25	24	48	12	29	42	10
70 years or more	19	15	34	12	45	57	9
<b>Region</b>							
South	46	22	68	9	17	25	7
North & North East	31	25	56	10	26	35	8
North West & West	27	25	52	11	28	39	9
<b>Employment Situation</b>							
Employed full-time/ self-employed	40	25	65	10	16	26	9
Employed on a part-time basis	44	26	69	8	17	25	6
Engaged in home duties	34	31	65	7	24	31	4
Retired or on a pension	24	19	43	11	38	49	8
Unemployed**	31	33	65	21	9	29	6
A student**	81	13	94	-	-	-	6
<b>Household Income</b>							
Under \$20,000	31	20	52	11	32	43	5
\$20,000 and under \$40,000	29	22	50	7	35	41	8
\$40,000 and under \$60,000	33	23	57	12	25	38	6
\$60,000 and under \$80,000	40	30	70	8	14	22	8
\$80,000 and under \$100,000	44	24	68	9	16	25	7
\$100,000 and over	47	28	74	9	9	17	8
<b>Household Situation</b>							
Single, never married	57	17	74	9	17	26	-
A couple, no children	43	25	69	5	20	24	7
Family, no children over 16	44	27	71	8	14	22	6
Family, children over 16 at home	48	26	73	6	13	19	7
Married, no children at home	21	21	42	15	33	48	10
Widowed	17	20	36	10	47	57	7
Sole parent	47	27	74	3	14	18	8
Separated or divorced	38	16	54	8	28	36	10
<b>Voting Preference</b>							
Liberal Party	19	23	43	15	34	49	9
Labor Party	49	26	74	7	14	21	5
The Greens	67	21	88	2	6	8	4
Unsure	36	23	59	7	19	26	15

\*Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding. \*\*Care should be taken when interpreting results due to the small sample size.

Most likely to indicate support for same-sex couples being able to marry were respondents aged 18 to 34 years (85%), particularly when compared to those aged 55 years or more (43%).

Other demographic groups showing a higher level of support were females (68%), those respondents residing in the South of the state (68%), and those with an annual household income of \$100,000 and over (74%).

Respondents indicating lower levels of support included males (54%), those in the North West and West (52%), those retired or on a pension (43%), those with an annual household income of less than \$40,000 (51%) and those classified as married with no children at home (42%), or widowed (36%).

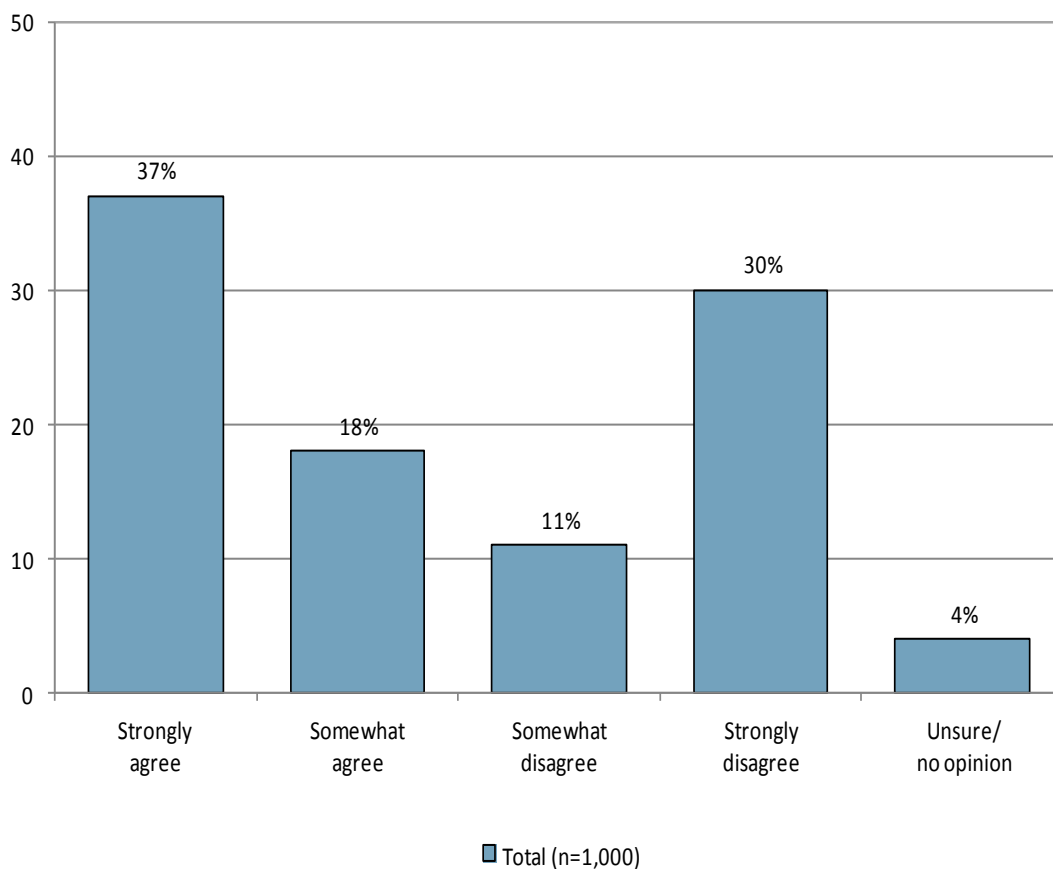
When looking at levels of agreement segmented by the respondents' voting preferences, those supporting the Greens indicated the highest level of agreement (88%) that same-sex couples should be allowed to marry, followed by those supporting the Labor Party (74%).

Over one half (59%) of respondents as yet "unsure" as to their voting preference agreed that same-sex couples should be allowed to marry, while around 2 in 5 respondents supporting the Liberal Party (43%) agreed with the proposition.

Respondents were informed that constitutional experts believe states like Tasmania can enact their own laws allowing same-sex marriages. They were then asked:

*Do you agree or disagree that Tasmania should go ahead with its own laws allowing same-sex couples to marry if the federal parliament fails to allow same-sex couples to marry nationally? Do you “strongly agree”, “somewhat agree”, “somewhat disagree”, or “strongly disagree”?*

**Chart 2 – Level of Agreement with Tasmania Enacting its Own Laws Allowing Same-Sex Couples to Marry (Percentage of respondents)**



More than one half of respondents (54%) stated they “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree” that Tasmania should go ahead with its own laws allowing same-sex couples to marry if the federal government fails to proceed with such laws nationally. Just over two in five respondents (41%) said they would “strongly disagree” or “somewhat disagree” with this. 4% of respondents indicated they had no opinion or were “unsure”.

Responses to this question were again somewhat polarised, with respondents tending either to “strongly agree” (37%), or “strongly disagree” (30%).

**Table 2 – Level of Agreement with Tasmania Enacting its Own Laws  
 Allowing Same-Sex Couples to Marry - by Demographic Group  
 (Percentage of each demographic group)\***

Demographic Group	Level of Agreement						
	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	TOTAL AGREE	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	TOTAL DISAGREE	Unsure/ no opinion
<b>Total</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Gender</b>							
Male	29	19	48	11	35	47	5
Female	44	16	61	11	25	36	3
<b>Age</b>							
18-24 years	71	17	88	7	5	12	-
25-34 years	50	20	70	9	17	26	4
35-44 years	38	19	57	11	28	39	5
45-54 years	36	19	56	14	27	41	3
55-69 years	23	19	42	12	40	52	6
70 years or more	18	11	29	12	54	66	6
<b>Region</b>							
South	43	20	63	9	24	33	4
North & North East	31	16	47	12	36	48	5
North West & West	31	14	44	14	37	51	5
<b>Employment Situation</b>							
Employed full-time/ self-employed	38	19	57	13	25	38	5
Employed on a part-time basis	40	22	62	11	23	34	4
Engaged in home duties	40	14	54	15	31	46	-
Retired or on a pension	25	13	37	11	48	58	4
Unemployed**	31	36	68	4	22	27	6
A student**	75	15	89	4	5	9	1
<b>Household Income</b>							
Under \$20,000	29	18	47	9	40	48	4
\$20,000 and under \$40,000	32	14	45	9	41	50	5
\$40,000 and under \$60,000	31	16	47	13	35	48	4
\$60,000 and under \$80,000	41	23	64	9	21	30	5
\$80,000 and under \$100,000	40	17	58	15	26	40	2
\$100,000 and over	44	23	66	10	20	30	3
<b>Household Situation</b>							
Single, never married	54	14	68	6	24	31	1
A couple, no children	44	19	62	5	29	34	4
Family, no children over 16	42	19	61	11	24	36	4
Family, children over 16 at home	47	18	65	9	21	31	4
Married, no children at home	20	17	37	15	42	57	5
Widowed	17	12	28	12	53	65	7
Sole parent	45	23	68	13	16	29	3
Separated or divorced	36	16	52	8	35	43	5
<b>Voting Preference</b>							
Liberal Party	20	17	37	14	47	60	3
Labor Party	48	18	66	12	19	30	4
The Greens	64	19	83	3	11	14	3
Unsure	33	19	52	12	26	38	10

\*Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding. \*\*Care should be taken when interpreting results due to the small sample size.



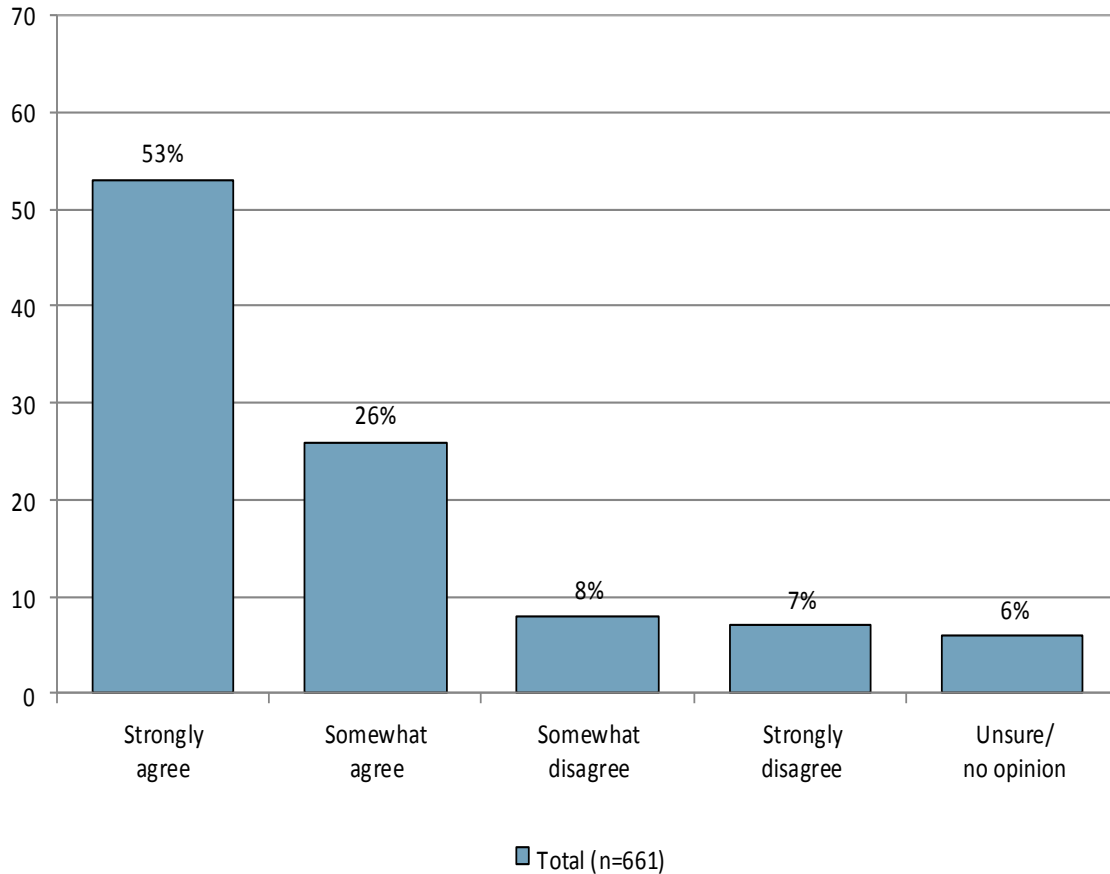
When segmented by demographic group, the levels of support for and opposition to Tasmania enacting its own laws allowing same-sex marriage showed similar trends to those recorded for the previous question.

Notable again was the higher level of support indicated by females (61%) as compared to males (48%), and by those aged 18 to 34 years (78%) when compared with those aged 55 years and over (37%).

By voting preferences, once more those respondents supporting the Greens indicated the highest level of agreement (83%), followed by two-thirds of those supporting the Labor Party (66%).

More than one half (52%) of respondents “unsure” as to their voting preference agreed with the proposition, while the lowest level of agreement was recorded among respondents supporting the Liberal Party (37%).

**Chart 3 – Level of Agreement with Tasmania Enacting its Own Laws  
Allowing Same-Sex Couples to Marry  
(Percentage of respondents who had previously agreed  
that same-sex couples should be able to marry, or were “unsure”)**



The chart above shows the levels of agreement after *excluding* the responses of those who had disagreed with the previous proposition that same-sex couples should be allowed to marry.

Of those respondents who had agreed that same-sex couples should be allowed to marry, or were “unsure”, almost four in five (79%) stated that they “strongly agree” or “agree” that Tasmania should go ahead with its own laws allowing same-sex couples to marry. More than one half (53%) of these respondents who agreed did so “strongly”.

15% of respondents said they “somewhat disagree” or “strongly disagree” that the state should enact its own laws allowing marriages between same-sex couples, while 6% indicated they were unable to give an opinion or were “unsure”.

## Appendix A – The People Interviewed

**Table 3 – The People Interviewed  
(Percentage of those in each demographic group)\*†**

<b>Demographic</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Total</b>	100
<b>Region</b>	
South	50
North and North East	28
North West and West	22
<b>Age</b>	
18-24	4
25-34	11
35-44	19
45-54	22
55-69	27
70+ years	16
<b>Gender</b>	
Male	48
Female	53
<b>Household Situation</b>	
Single, never married	5
Couple, no children	8
Family with no children over 16	24
Family with a child over 16 at home	17
Married, no children at home	29
Widowed	6
Sole parent	5
Separated or divorced	6
Declined to answer	1
<b>Employment Situation</b>	
Employed full-time or self-employed	38
Employed on a part-time basis	19
Engaged in home duties	6
Retired or on a pension	32
Unemployed	2
A student	3
Declined to answer	0
<b>Annual Household Income</b>	
Under \$20,000	15
\$20,000 and under \$40,000	20
\$40,000 and under \$60,000	15
\$60,000 and under \$80,000	12
\$80,000 and under \$100,000	12
\$100,000 and over	21
Declined to answer	6

\*Percentages may not sum to 100, due to rounding.

†Figures are unweighted.

Appendix B – The Questionnaire

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<p><b>Q1. Do you agree or disagree that same-sex couples should be able to marry?</b></p> <p><b>IF AGREE SAY:</b> Is that strongly or somewhat agree? <b>IF DISAGREE SAY:</b> Is that strongly or somewhat disagree?</p>	<p>1. Strongly agree 2. Somewhat agree 3. Somewhat disagree 4. Strongly disagree 5. Don't know/ No opinion - <b>DO NOT READ OUT</b></p>
<p><b>Q2. Constitutional experts believe states like Tasmania can enact their own laws allowing same-sex marriages.</b></p> <p>Do you agree or disagree that Tasmania should go ahead with its own laws allowing same-sex couples to marry if the federal parliament fails to allow same-sex couples to marry nationally?</p> <p><b>IF AGREE SAY:</b> Is that strongly or somewhat agree? <b>IF DISAGREE SAY:</b> Is that strongly or somewhat disagree?</p>	<p>1. Strongly agree 2. Somewhat agree 3. Somewhat disagree 4. Strongly disagree 5. Don't know/ No opinion - <b>DO NOT READ OUT</b></p>