

Discover your edge

Monday, 26 October 2015

A massive majority of Australians support the legalisation of medicinal marijuana

More than nine out of every 10 Australians (91%) believe the use of marijuana for medicinal purposes should be made legal, according to a special Roy Morgan telephone survey conducted over the three nights of October 20-22, 2015 with 644 Australians aged 14+. Only 7% are against legalisation and 2% can't say.

Although Roy Morgan Research has been asking Australians for many years [whether they believe the smoking of marijuana should be legalised](#), this is the first time we have asked specifically about the medicinal use of marijuana.

The landslide result comes from widespread support for the legalisation of medicinal cannabis among men and women, different age groups, states of residence and federal voting intention.

Analysis by age and gender

Asked the question, 'In your opinion should the use of marijuana for medicinal purposes be made legal or remain illegal?' a staggering 92% of women and 90% of men responded that yes, it should be made legal.

The strongest support for legalisation came from the 50-plus age group: 94% of Australians aged 50-64 and 94% of those aged 65 and older believe medicinal marijuana should be legalised. Least likely to support the idea is the 14-24 year-old age bracket, but even so, an overwhelming majority (85%) are in favour.

Analysis by Sex & Age

	Oct 20-22, 2015	Men	Women	14-24	25-34	35-49	50-64	65+
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Yes, Legal	91	90	92	85	90	90	94	94
No, Not Legal	7	8	6	13	6	7	5	4
Can't say	2	2	2	2	4	3	1	2
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Analysis by state of residence

Of all the states, Western Australia shows the highest rate of support (97%) for legalising the use of cannabis for medicinal purposes, although it should be noted that this is drawn from a smaller sample than the more heavily populated states, NSW and Victoria (92% respectively). Meanwhile, 89% of both South Australians and Queenslanders are in favour of legalisation.

Analysis by States & Regions

	Oct 20-22, 2015	Capital	Country	NSW	VIC	QLD	WA	SA	Tas#
		Cities	Areas						
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Yes, Legal	91	92	89	92	92	89	97	89	82
No, Not Legal	7	6	9	5	7	9	3	9	13
Can't say	2	2	2	3	1	2	-	2	5
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

#Small sample sizes (under 50) should be treated with caution.

Analysis by voting intention

While social attitudes frequently vary depending on an individual's political preference, the issue of medicinal marijuana is not one of them. Support for legalisation is similarly strong among Australians intending to vote for L-NP (92%) in the next federal election and those planning to vote for the ALP (94%), and almost unanimous among Green voters (97%).

	Oct 20-22, 2015	Analysis by Federal Voting Intention				
		L-NP	ALP	Greens	Ind/ Others#	Can't say#
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Yes, Legal	92	92	94	97	85	82
No, Not Legal	5	6	3	3	10	10
Can't say	3	2	3	-	5	8
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100

#Small sample sizes (under 50) should be treated with caution.

Michele Levine, CEO, Roy Morgan Research, says:

"The results of our special telephone survey indicate an overwhelming support for legalising the use of medicinal marijuana. This bodes extremely well for the Federal Government's plan to legalise the growing of cannabis for medicinal purposes.

"Part of the Federal Government's plan is to allow each state's government to decide whether they will allow the drug to be grown. Our results show that a vast majority of residents in each state are in favour of legalisation: this will be of particular interest to Western Australia's Premier, Colin Barnett (not one of the movement's most vocal supporters), whose state has the strongest support (97%).

"Unlike some social issues, legalising medicinal marijuana is widely favoured by electors of different political persuasions and age groups, which really tells us its time has come. Not surprisingly, Australians aged 50+ are the strongest supporters, as this group is most susceptible to several of the conditions that medicinal cannabis can provide relief from: Parkinson's disease, cancer, glaucoma and more. (Obviously, as the government develops the overall framework for medicinal marijuana use, the specifics regarding who qualifies for this kind of treatment will have to be determined.)

"It should also be noted that the special telephone survey found that only one third of the population believes that the smoking of marijuana should be made legal. This

demonstrates that Australians understand that smoking and consuming cannabis for medicinal purposes are two very separate issues.”

For comments or more information about Roy Morgan Research’s health and social data, please contact:

Vaishali Nagaratnam

Office: +61 (3) 9224 5309

Vaishali.Nagaratnam@roymorgan.com

Related research findings

View our extensive range of [Health and Wellbeing profiles](#), including [Illness and Conditions](#), and [Pain Relief](#).

About Roy Morgan Research

Roy Morgan Research is the largest independent Australian research company, with offices in each state of Australia, as well as in Indonesia, the United States and the United Kingdom. A full service research organisation specialising in omnibus and syndicated data, Roy Morgan Research has over 70 years’ experience in collecting objective, independent information on consumers.

Margin of Error

The margin of error to be allowed for in any estimate depends mainly on the number of interviews on which it is based. Margin of error gives indications of the likely range within which estimates would be 95% likely to fall, expressed as the number of percentage points above or below the actual estimate. Allowance for design effects (such as stratification and weighting) should be made as appropriate.

Sample Size	Percentage Estimate			
	40%-60%	25% or 75%	10% or 90%	5% or 95%
5,000	±1.4	±1.2	±0.8	±0.6
7,500	±1.1	±1.0	±0.7	±0.5
10,000	±1.0	±0.9	±0.6	±0.4
20,000	±0.7	±0.6	±0.4	±0.3
50,000	±0.4	±0.4	±0.3	±0.2

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE