

Monday, 14 October 2019

A growing number of Australians want marijuana legalised

New research from Roy Morgan shows increasing numbers of Australians across all age groups want to legalise marijuana – although 49% remain opposed.

Overall, 42% of Australians now support legalisation of marijuana, up 9% points in just four years. The percentage who say marijuana should remain illegal is down 7% over the same period to 49%. A further 9% are undecided.

Australians aged 18 to 34 years old are the most likely to support the legalisation of marijuana. This is also the segment of the population where opinion has shifted to the greatest degree over the last four years. In 2015 only 36% of 18 to 24 year-olds supported legalisation, now 50% do. The next age-group up, 25 to 34 year-olds, has also seen a dramatic rise in support, from 34% in 2015 to 46% now. These are the two age groups in which support for legalisation is higher than opposition to the idea.

These are the latest findings from the Roy Morgan Single Source survey, derived from in-depth face-to-face interviews with over 50,000 Australians each year in their homes.

“The ACT Legislative Assembly’s decision to legalise the possession, use and cultivation of small amounts of cannabis has brought Australia’s laws surrounding marijuana firmly back into the national spotlight,” says Roy Morgan CEO Michele Levine. *“The decision certainly reflects the evolving mood of the ACT electorate: 47% of ACT residents want to see marijuana legalised – up 14% points from 2015 and a higher level of support for legalisation than in any of Australia’s six States. At 40%, those ACT residents who don’t support the legalisation of marijuana are in the minority.”*

“The changing attitudes towards marijuana use in Australia follow well-publicised legislative changes in the US in which the use of cannabis is now fully legal in 11 States and the use of medicinal cannabis is allowed in 33 States. The trend towards legalisation of the use of cannabis in the US is continuing and the ACT’s legislation marks a step in that direction in Australia” said Levine.

Perhaps surprisingly the two groups most opposed to the legalisation of marijuana are the youngest and oldest Australians. Only a little over a quarter of 14-17yr olds (26%) and a third of those aged 65+ (33%) support such a move.

Proponents of marijuana legalisation are young, Socially Aware and progressive

A quintessential supporter of legalising marijuana is a younger man living the single life without any children. He’s most likely to be part of the [Socially Aware](#) Roy Morgan Values Segment – *‘With a strong sense of social responsibility and a propensity for convincing others of their opinions, they often become involved in pressure groups. Common occupations include public servants, politicians and researchers.’*

Those advocating for legalising marijuana are more likely than other Australians to agree with environmental concerns such as *‘At heart I’m an environmentalist’* and *‘If we don’t act now we’ll never control our environmental problems’*.

They are also more likely to share progressive views such as *‘Homosexual couples should be allowed to adopt children’*. In addition they are more likely to be *‘always ready to try new and different products’* and *‘more interested in their job than their house’*.

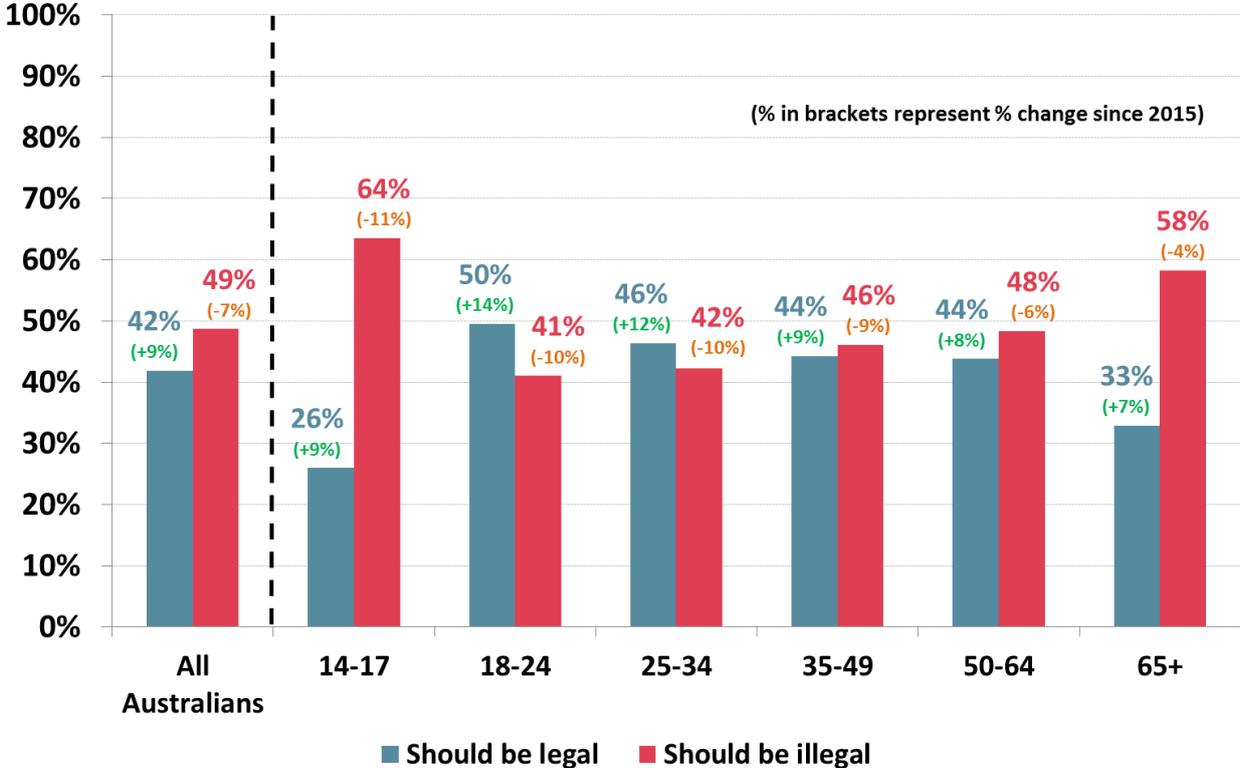
Those against legalising marijuana are older and with more traditional views

A quintessential supporter of leaving marijuana illegal is an older woman who has already retired. She’s a light spender and when it comes to the Roy Morgan Values Segments likely to be a part of [Traditional Family Life](#) – *‘With a strong focus on family they spend time and energy getting the family to visit them, babysitting, weekend BBQs and buying lollies for the grandkids when their parents won’t let them have any.’*

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She's more likely than the average Australian to agree that 'Crime is a growing problem in her community' and 'Globalisation brings more problems than it solves' but also more likely to give the Government the benefit of the doubt and agree that 'The Government is doing a good job running the country'.

Attitude towards marijuana legalisation by age in 2019



Source: Roy Morgan Single Source Australia, Jul 2018-Jun 2019, n=14,383 and Jul 2014–Jun 2015, n=15,867.
Base: Australians aged 14+.

The Roy Morgan Single Source survey collects detailed quantitative and qualitative data across a range of attitudes and demographics including profiling [Australians who would like to see marijuana legalised](#) and [people who would prefer that marijuana remains illegal](#).

About Roy Morgan

Roy Morgan is Australia's largest independent Australian research company, with offices in each state, as well as in the U.S. and U.K. A full-service research organisation, Roy Morgan has over 75 years' experience collecting objective, independent information on consumers.

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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%
15,000	±0.8	±0.7	±0.5	±0.3