

# What Queenslanders Really Think About Abortion



Poll Results  
May 2016



THE  
AUSTRALIAN  
FAMILY  
ASSOCIATION

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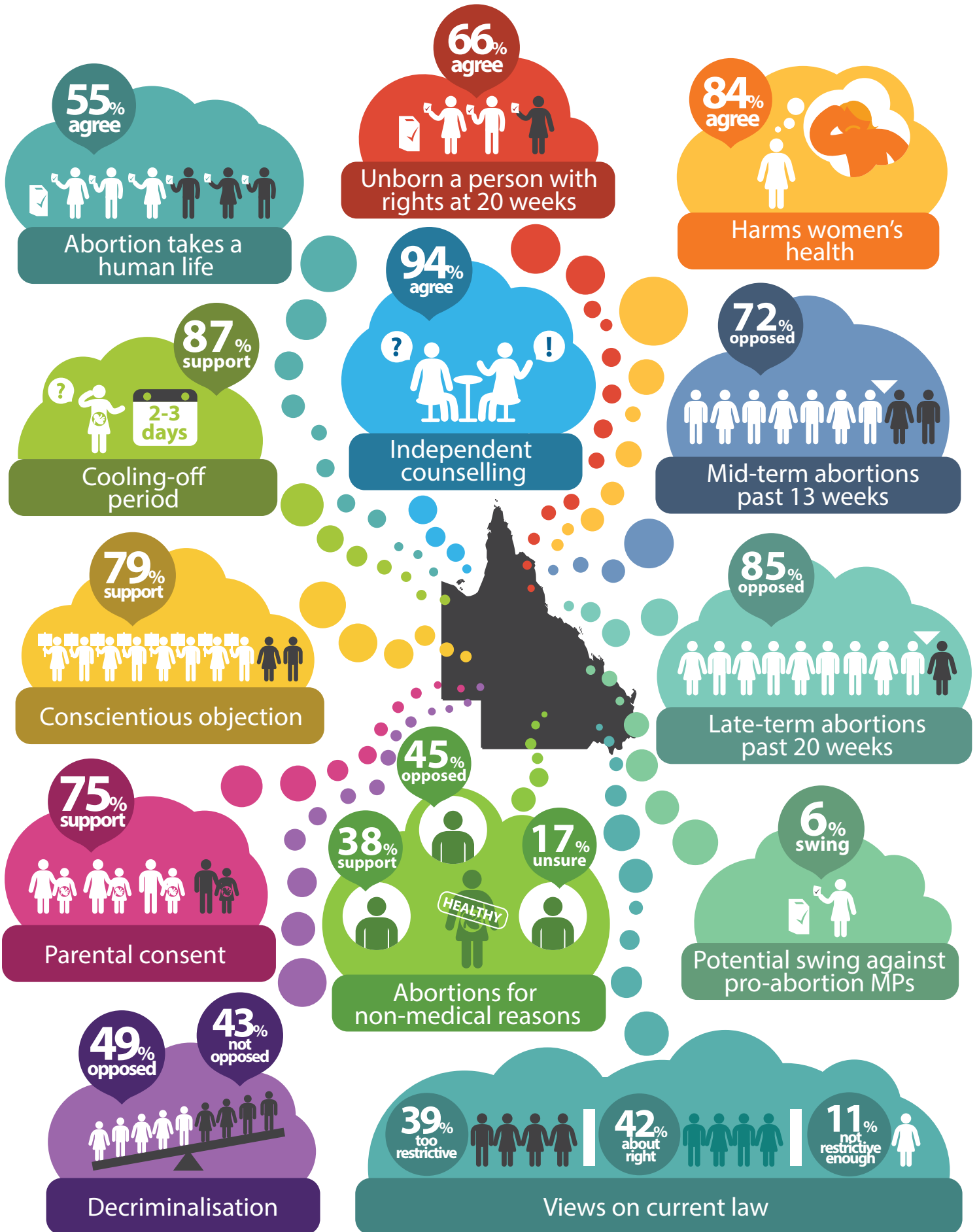
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# Executive Summary

A report on a comprehensive independent market research survey conducted by Galaxy Research, commissioned by the Australian Family Association. This randomised telephone opinion poll of 400 Queensland voters was conducted from 6 to 8 May 2016, with 13 questions in total.





# Methodology

This study was conducted between Friday 6 May and Sunday 8 May 2016.

The sample comprises 400 voters in Queensland, distributed across the state as follows;

Brisbane	200
Rest of Queensland	200

Galaxy Research designed the questionnaire, the questions from which have been included in this report.

Interviews were conducted using CATI (computer assisted telephone interviewing) with telephone numbers randomly selected from telephone lists.

All interviewers were personally trained and briefed on the requirements of the study.

Following the completion of interviewing, the data was weighted by age, gender and area to reflect the latest ABS population estimates.

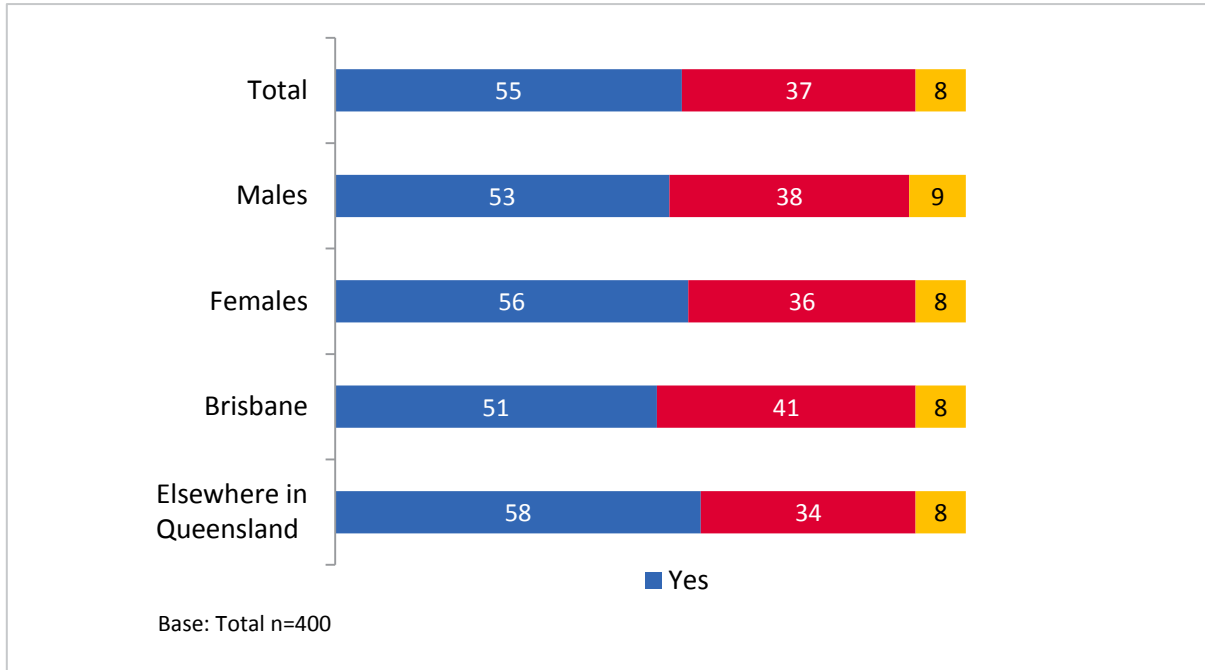
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# Main Findings

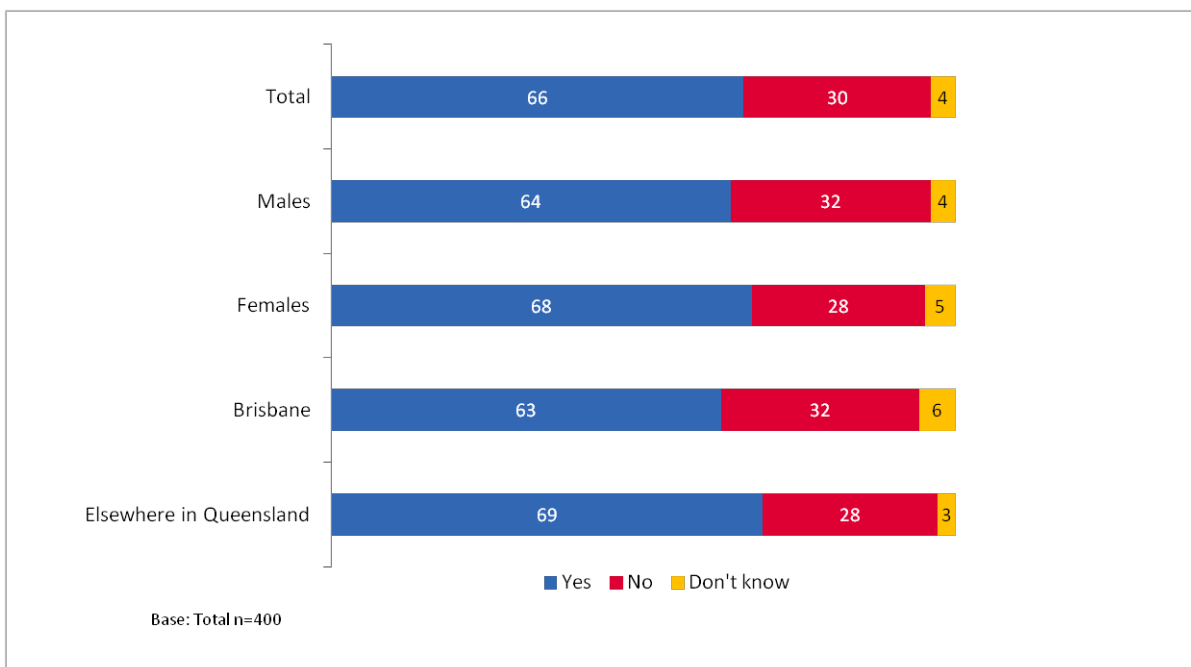
## Definition of human life

**A few questions now about abortion. Abortion is an operation or procedure which involves termination of an unwanted or difficult pregnancy, preventing birth of a live baby. Do you believe abortion involves the taking of a human life?**



Most voters in Queensland (55%) believe abortion involves the taking of a human life. This view is most commonly held by women (56%) and those living in regional and rural Queensland (58%). 37% disagree.

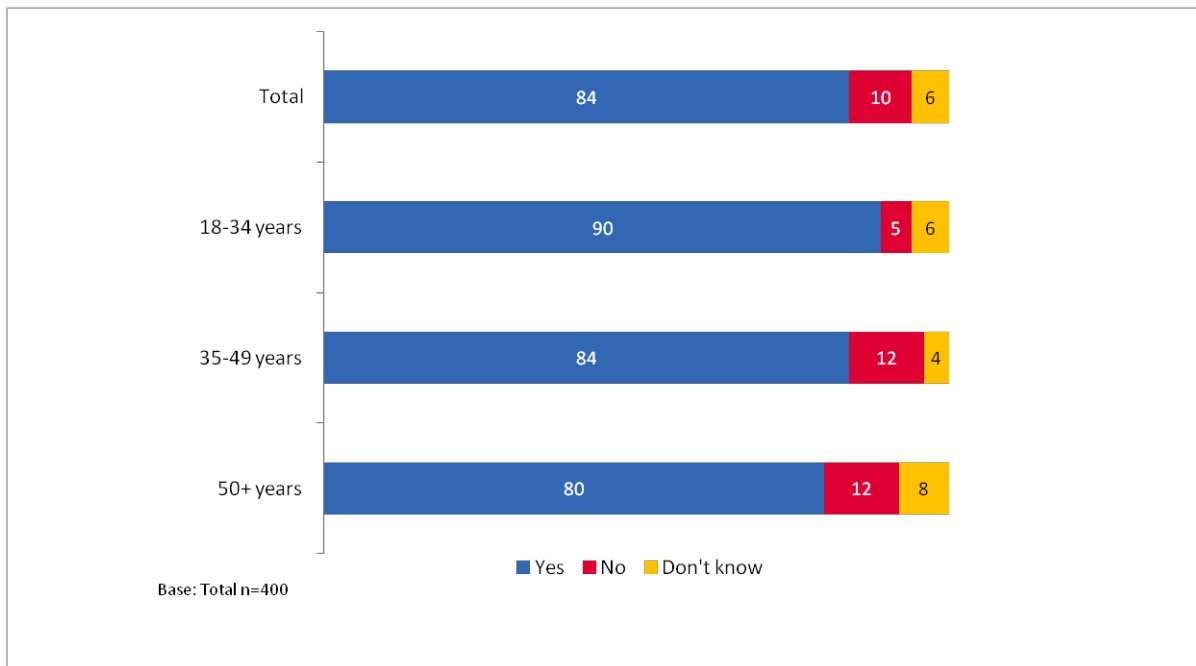
**20 weeks of pregnancy is the earliest point at which survival outside the womb is possible. Do you believe that at that time an unborn baby is a human person with human rights?**



Two-thirds of voters in Queensland (66%) believe that an unborn child at 20 weeks of pregnancy is a human person with human rights. This view is more likely to be held by females (68%) and those living in regional and rural Queensland (69%). 30% disagree.

## Risks to women

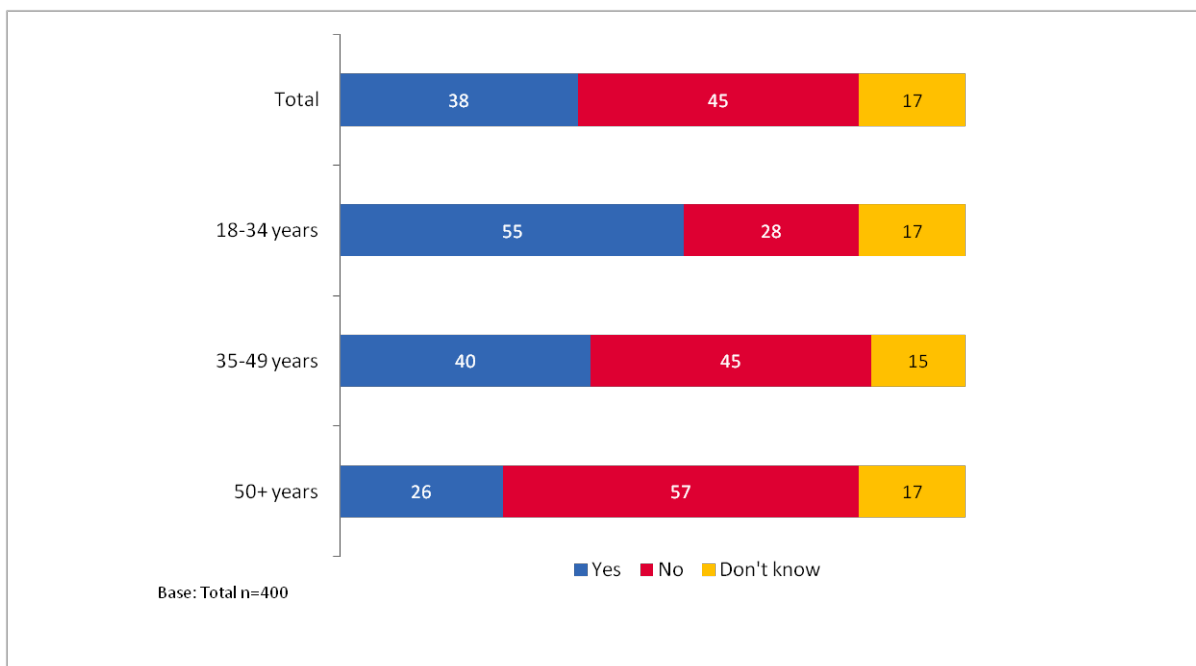
*Do you believe that abortion can harm the physical and/or mental health of a woman?*



It is widely accepted by 84% of Queensland voters that abortion can harm the mental and/or physical health of a woman. Those aged 18-34 years (90%) are the most likely to have concerns about the harm done by abortion to the physical and/or mental health of the woman.

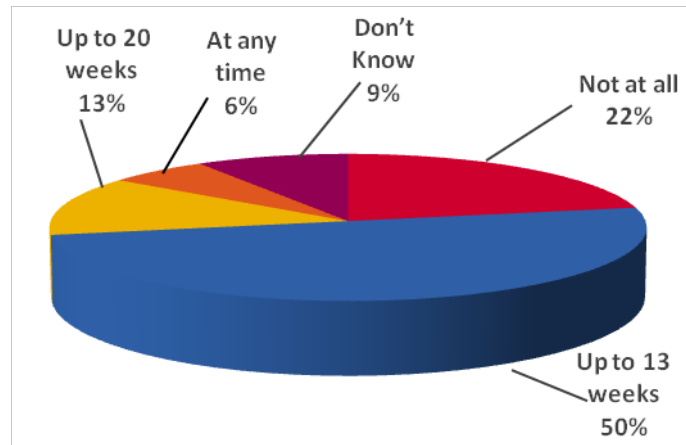
## Circumstances surrounding abortion

*Research shows that the vast majority of abortions in Australia are performed for social or financial reasons. Do you support abortion in cases where a healthy mother is carrying a healthy unborn baby?*



Almost half of Queensland voters (45%) oppose abortion for social or financial reasons, that is in cases where a healthy mother is carrying a healthy unborn baby. This view is most commonly held by those in the 50+ age group (57%). 38% support abortion under these circumstances and 17% are uncommitted.

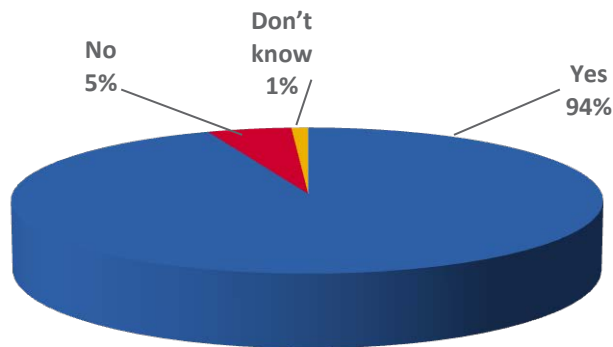
***Up to what stage of pregnancy would you allow abortion, would it be...?***



Most voters in Queensland (72%) would not allow abortion after 13 weeks. This includes 50% that would allow abortion up to 13 weeks and 22% opposed to abortion at any time. 85% of Queensland voters would not allow abortion after 20 weeks. Only 6% support abortion at any time until birth.

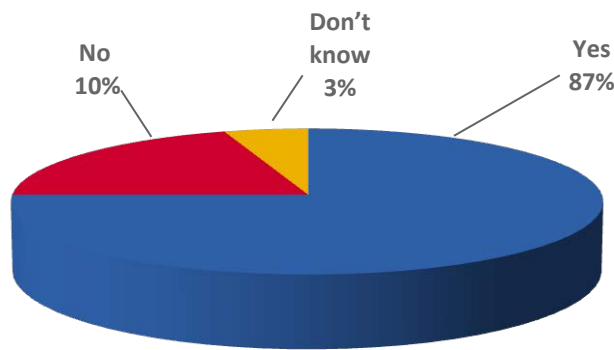
***Decision Making***

***Do you believe that before having an abortion, a woman should receive free independent counselling and information on the development of her unborn baby, the nature of the procedure, the physical and psychological risks of the operation and the alternatives of keeping the baby or adoption, so that she can make a fully informed decision?***



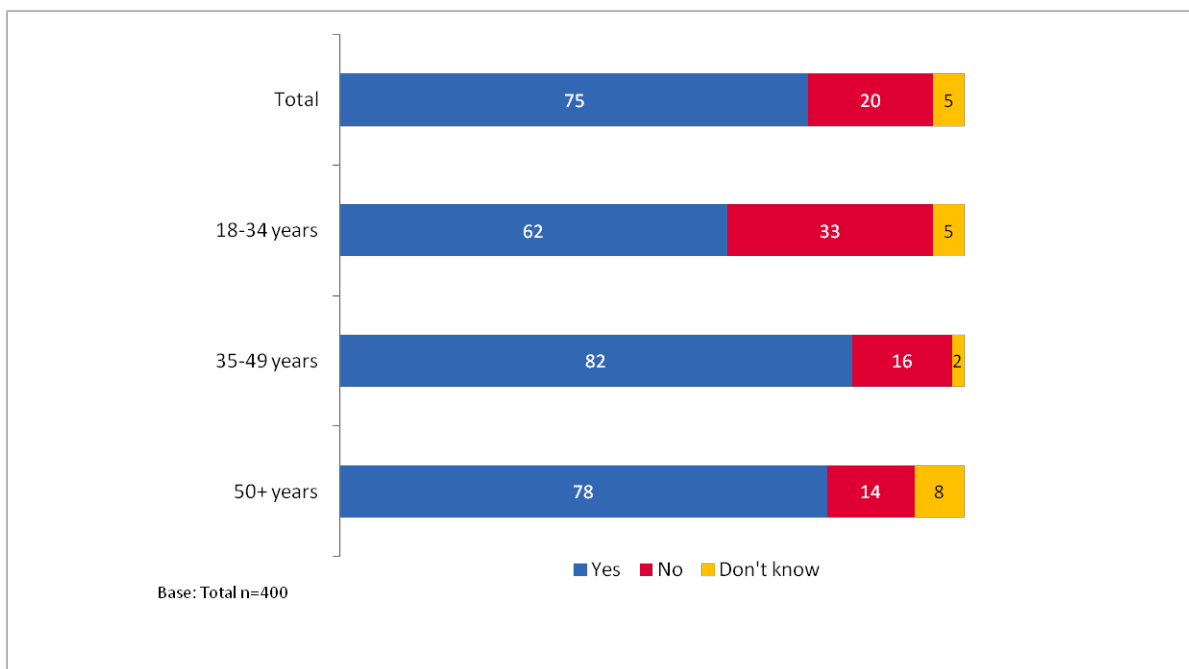
There is widespread belief in Queensland (94%) that before having an abortion a woman should receive free independent counselling and information so that she can make a fully informed decision. Only 5% disagree.

***Do you believe there should be a cooling-off period of several days between making an appointment to have an abortion, and the actual operation?***



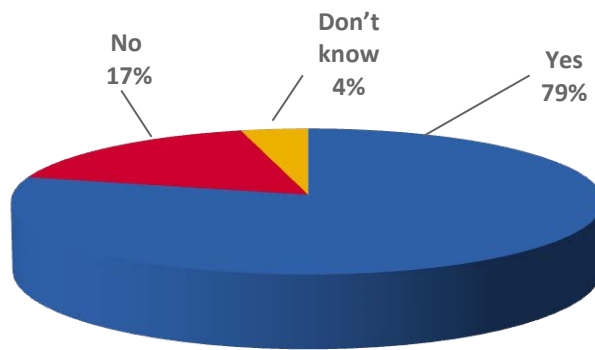
There is also strong support (87%) for a cooling-off period of several days between making an appointment for an abortion and the actual operation. Only 10% disagree.

***Do you believe that parental consent should normally be required for girls under the age of 16 to have an abortion?***



Three-quarters of Queensland voters (75%) believe parental consent should normally be required for girls under the age of 16 to have an abortion. Support is strongest in the 35-49 age group, with 82% agreement. Just 20% of all voters disagree.

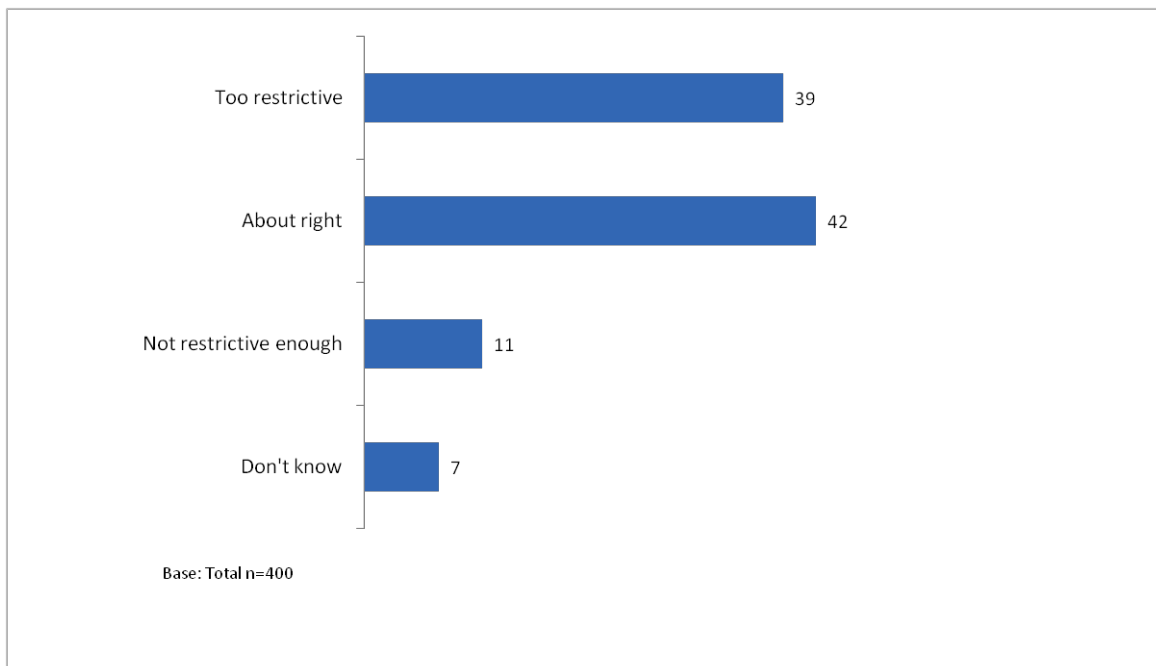
**Do you support conscientious objection provisions to allow doctors and nurses to opt out of having to perform abortion operations against their will?**



Eight in ten voters (79%) support conscientious objection provisions allowing doctors and nurses to opt out of having to perform abortion operations against their will.

### **Legal Aspects**

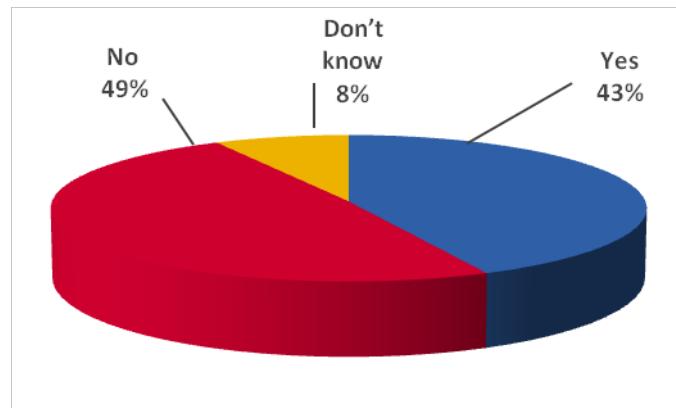
**Under the current law about 10,000 abortions are performed each year in Queensland. The Queensland law on abortion, as has been interpreted by the courts, is that abortion is legal only for medical reasons where there is a serious risk to the physical or mental health of a woman. Do you believe the law as it stands is....?**



The community is divided over abortion laws in Queensland with 39% of the opinion that the law as it currently stands is too restrictive but 42% thinking it is about right. A further 11% do not believe the law is restrictive enough.



Recently there have been calls for abortion to be decriminalised in Queensland. This would mean that abortion would be legal for any reason until birth. Do you believe that abortion should be decriminalised?

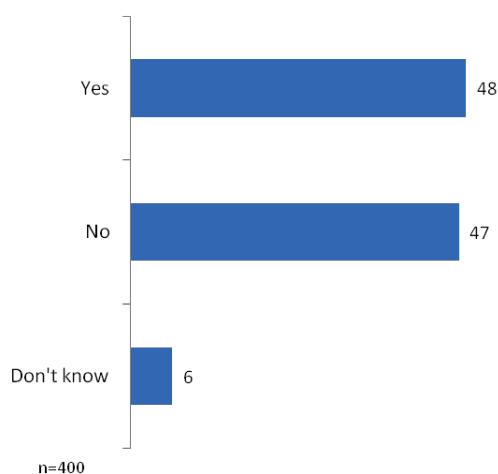


Those that believe abortion should not be decriminalised (49%) outnumber those in favour of the decriminalisation of abortion (43%).

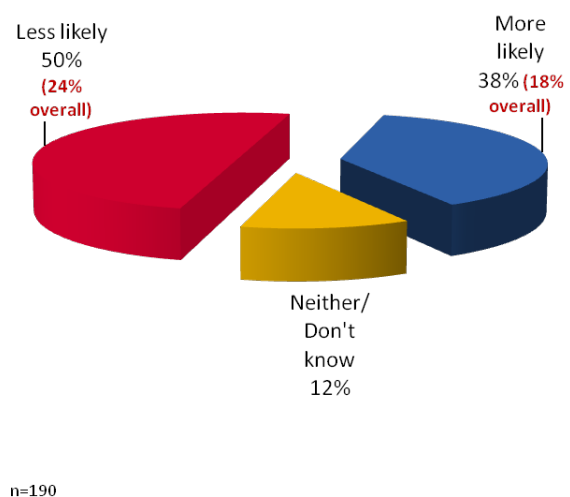
### Voting Intentions

**If your local Member of Parliament voted in favour of decriminalising abortion, would this influence the way you vote at the next state election?**

**If your local Member of Parliament voted in favour of decriminalising abortion would you be more likely or less likely to vote for your Member of Parliament?**



If your local Member of Parliament voted in favour of decriminalising abortion, would this influence the way you vote at the next state election?



If your local Member of Parliament voted in favour of decriminalising abortion would you be more likely or less likely to vote for your Member of Parliament?

Around half of all Queensland voters (48%) say that if their local Member of Parliament voted in favour of decriminalising abortion it would influence their vote. Half of these voters (i.e. 24%) would be *less likely* to vote for their MP, and 38% (i.e. 18%) would be *more likely* to vote for their MP. This suggests a potential average swing of 6% against MPs who vote for decriminalisation of abortion.

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