

What Queenslanders Really Think About Abortion

55% believe the law should stay the same or be stricter

A new **opinion poll** of a representative sample of **1,001 Queensland voters** by leading market research firm **YouGovGalaxy**, conducted online from **6 to 8 February, 2018**, was commissioned by the Australian Family Association and Abortion Rethink.

The key findings of this comprehensive independent survey are shown in the infographic on this page.

The data from this research is highly reliable, with a 95% probability that the figures are correct within a 3% plus or minus variation.

Seventy-six percent of Queensland voters believe that abortion can harm the physical and/or mental health of women (see more details on the reverse of this page).

Twenty-six percent of Queensland voters know at least one woman who had an abortion as a result of pressure or coercion from another person.

Sixty percent of Queensland voters would not allow abortion after 13 weeks. Almost three-quarters (73%) oppose abortion after 23 weeks of pregnancy. Only 5% support abortion until birth.

Ninety percent of Queenslanders support free independent counselling, and 86% support informed consent requirements - believing that a woman considering abortion should receive information on the development of the unborn child, the nature of the procedure, the physical and psychological risks associated with abortion and the support available should she wish to continue with the pregnancy.

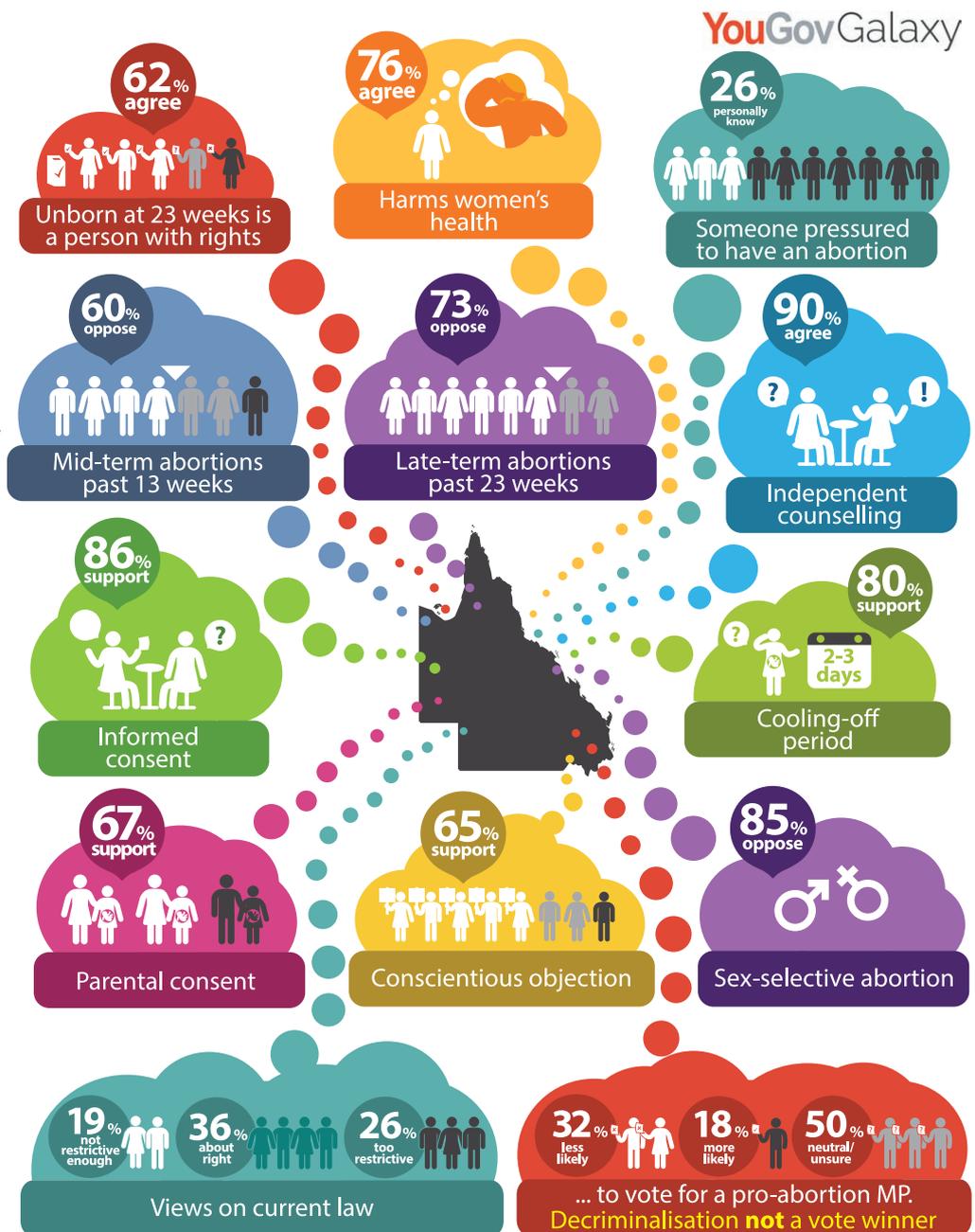
Eighty percent of Queensland voters believe there should be a cooling-off period of several days to ensure the woman is certain of her decision.

Sixty-seven percent of Queensland voters support parental consent requirements for girls under 16.

Sixty-five percent of Queenslanders support conscientious objection provisions for doctors and nurses, including the right not to refer for abortion.

Eighty-five percent of Queensland voters are opposed to sex-selective abortions, with just 6% in favor.

The community is divided over abortion laws, with 19% being of the belief that the law as it currently stands is not restrictive enough and 36% thinking it is about right. This



means that overall **55% of Queensland voters either believe the law should stay the same or be stricter.**

It is clear that the Queensland community is strongly in favor of putting safeguards in place for women. The consensus view also appears to be that the current law should stay in place to allow availability of abortion, but only until the end of the first trimester, that is up to 13 weeks of pregnancy.

It is of interest to note that half of all Queensland voters say that if their local Member of Parliament voted in favor of full decriminalisation of abortion it would influence their vote, and **this issue would be more likely to cost the MPs votes (32%) than be a vote winner (18%).** This suggests a potential average swing of 7% against pro-abortion MPs.

WOMEN DESERVE BETTER THAN ABORTION

WE KNOW THAT WOMEN SUFFER

MENTAL HEALTH RISKS



“When my eyes opened in the [abortion clinic’s] ‘recovery’ room, I was forever a different person – because not only was a baby killed inside me that day, but part of my soul died as well... As the years went

on... I was lost, desperately miserable, struggling with suicidal tendencies and... self-destructing... with alcohol and drugs.”

– **Emma Morris**, now a married mother of three, describing her first abortion as a 16-year-old in *The Courier-Mail* (‘Women don’t need abortions, they just need to be helped’, 24 August 2016).

“There is clear and unequivocal evidence that up to 20% of women suffer measurable, serious, and prolonged mental health adverse effects after abortion, including depression, anxiety and suicide.”

– Debbie Garrett, executive director, Real Choices Australia, www.realchoices.org.au

A large-scale Finnish study published in the British Medical Journal in 1997 showed that **post-abortive women are almost 6 times more likely to commit suicide than women who give birth.**

<https://www.bmj.com/content/313/7070/1431>

A recent US study by Professor Priscilla Coleman of 987 women who sought post-abortion counselling found:

- 67% visited a psychiatrist, psychologist or counsellor after their abortion compared to 13% who had visited one prior to their abortion.
- 51% reported use of prescription drugs for psychological health compared to 6.6% prior to their abortion.

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COERCION/LACK OF CHOICE

The same study by Coleman cited above found:

- 58% of these women reported aborting to make others happy
- **73% experienced at least subtle forms of pressure to terminate their pregnancies**
- 28% aborted out of fear of losing their partner if they did not abort
- 66% said they knew in their hearts that they were making a mistake when they underwent the abortion.



“I got pregnant at 18 and... I am not sure that I made a choice at all because I was not given any options... I was certainly not empowered to make an informed

decision... [and] there was no clear discussion about risks... After the abortion...I suffered years of regret and depression and anxiety and struggled to connect with my own children when I later gave birth.”

– **Madeleine Weidemann**, testifying before the Queensland Parliament Health Committee inquiry on the second Pyne abortion bill on 7 November, 2016.

PHYSICAL RISKS

- **Breast Cancer – post-abortive women have a 30% to 40% greater chance of getting breast cancer.** This is evidenced from statistical data from the USA, France, China, Japan and India (Lanfranchi & Fagan, *Issues in Law and Medicine*, Spring 2014).

The authors explain the reason for this link is that surging pregnancy hormones (mostly estrogen) stimulate breast growth during the first months of pregnancy, leaving the breasts with an increase in cancer-susceptible Type 1 and Type 2 lobules (where most cancers are known to originate), in the case of induced abortion. If the mother carries her pregnancy to at least 32 weeks, her risk sharply declines because she has matured a sufficient number of lobules into permanently cancer-resistant Type 4 lobules.

Early miscarriage does not increase the risk of breast cancer because pregnancy hormones are lower than normal.

- Future infertility issues, miscarriages and/or premature births; uterine perforation; haemorrhage; infection – *Myths & Facts About Abortion*, Real Choices Australia – www.realchoices.org.au

Decriminalisation inevitably would increase the number of abortions and more abortions would hurt more women.

With every abortion, the toll is one dead, one wounded. Women deserve better than abortion - real support and real choices.