

# Tobacco and Vaping Community Survey

Short Report on Australian Attitudes to Nicotine Addiction, Health Harms and Industry Influence

Lung Foundation Australia  
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# Tobacco & Vape -Free Generation (TVFG) National Survey - Short Report

## Background

Tobacco smoking remains one of Australia's leading causes of preventable illness and death, contributing to more than 24,000 deaths each year.<sup>1</sup> Despite substantial progress in reducing smoking rates over recent decades, tobacco use continues to place a significant burden on individuals, families, communities and the healthcare system. According to the latest Australian Institute of Health and Welfare data, 5.6% of Australians aged 14 years and over smoked tobacco daily in 2025, while vaping remains a significant public health concern, particularly among young people.<sup>2</sup>

The health and economic impacts of tobacco use are substantial. Tobacco smoking is estimated to cost the Australian economy \$159.7 billion annually, including healthcare expenditure, lost productivity, reduced quality of life and premature death.<sup>3</sup> Nicotine addiction, whether through tobacco, vaping or other nicotine products, can also have significant health, social and economic impacts.

To support delivery of **Lung Foundation Australia's (LFA) 2026–2030 Corporate Plan<sup>4</sup> Priority 1.3: Reduce tobacco and vaping harm**, LFA is exploring policy approaches that can accelerate progress towards a tobacco- and vape-free generation (TVFG). As part of this work, a national YouGov survey was conducted to examine support for a TVFG and supporting policies.

## What is a TVFG?

A TVFG policy is a public health measure that progressively phases out the commercial sale of tobacco and nicotine products through a permanent, generation-based sales restriction. Under a TVFG policy, people born on or after a specified date can never legally purchase tobacco or nicotine products, including cigarettes, e-cigarettes (vapes) and other emerging nicotine products.

Unlike traditional minimum-age laws, which allow legal purchase once a person reaches a certain age, a TVFG policy creates a permanently tobacco and nicotine-free generation. For example, if the policy applies to people born after 2009, those individuals would remain ineligible to purchase tobacco or nicotine products even after turning 18.

## Survey Aim

To generate high-quality insights by designing, disseminating, and analysing a survey that identifies attitudes, perceptions, and potential impacts of a TVFG policy.

## Methodology

Research was commissioned by The Lung Foundation Australia. It was conducted via an online survey between 2nd Jun 2026 to 9th July 2026, with a nationally representative sample of n = 3551 Australian voters and n = 283 young Australians aged 16-17.

To ensure representativeness, adult sample quotas were set on age, gender, region, education, income and past federal vote. The data were then weighted to the latest ABS population estimates and AEC election results. The youth sample was weighted to age, gender and region.

The poll is compliant with the Australian Polling Council.

At the 95% confidence level, the margin of error is  $\pm 1.65\%$  for the adult sample and  $\pm 5.8\%$  for the youth sample.

## Findings

**Question:** To what extent do you agree or disagree that tobacco and vaping companies should not have influence over public policy in Australia.

**Table 1: Detailed data breakdown**

| Demographic       | NET Agree (%) | Neither agree nor disagree (%) | NET Disagree (%) |
|-------------------|---------------|--------------------------------|------------------|
| Total             | 83            | 13                             | 4                |
| Male              | 85            | 11                             | 4                |
| Female            | 81            | 15                             | 4                |
| 18-24 years       | 77            | 17                             | 6                |
| 25-34 years       | 77            | 17                             | 6                |
| 35-49 years       | 83            | 13                             | 4                |
| 50-64 years       | 84            | 13                             | 3                |
| 65+ years         | 88            | 9                              | 3                |
| NSW               | 84            | 12                             | 4                |
| Victoria          | 82            | 15                             | 3                |
| Queensland        | 83            | 12                             | 5                |
| South Australia   | 83            | 14                             | 3                |
| Western Australia | 80            | 15                             | 5                |
| ACT/NT/TAS        | 85            | 11                             | 4                |

**Question:** To what extent do you agree or disagree that politicians should not be able accept donations of any size from tobacco-related industries.

**Table 2: Detailed data breakdown**

| Demographic       | NET Agree (%) | Neither agree nor disagree (%) | NET Disagree (%) |
|-------------------|---------------|--------------------------------|------------------|
| Total             | 82            | 14                             | 4                |
| Male              | 81            | 15                             | 4                |
| Female            | 82            | 14                             | 4                |
| 18-24 years       | 78            | 16                             | 6                |
| 25-34 years       | 78            | 17                             | 5                |
| 35-49 years       | 81            | 14                             | 5                |
| 50-64 years       | 84            | 14                             | 2                |
| 65+ years         | 85            | 12                             | 3                |
| NSW               | 82            | 14                             | 4                |
| Victoria          | 79            | 18                             | 3                |
| Queensland        | 83            | 12                             | 5                |
| South Australia   | 83            | 14                             | 3                |
| Western Australia | 82            | 13                             | 5                |
| ACT/NT/TAS        | 82            | 14                             | 4                |

**Question:** Generally, how serious of a problem do you believe the following statement is in Australia today? Adults are addicted to cigarettes.

**Table 3: Detailed data breakdown**

| Demographic       | NET Serious (%) | Not sure (%) | NET Not serious (%) |
|-------------------|-----------------|--------------|---------------------|
| Total             | 79              | 3            | 18                  |
| Male              | 75              | 3            | 22                  |
| Female            | 82              | 3            | 15                  |
| 18-24 years       | 76              | 2            | 22                  |
| 25-34 years       | 71              | 3            | 26                  |
| 35-49 years       | 74              | 3            | 23                  |
| 50-64 years       | 81              | 3            | 16                  |
| 65+ years         | 87              | 3            | 10                  |
| NSW               | 80              | 2            | 18                  |
| Victoria          | 80              | 3            | 17                  |
| Queensland        | 77              | 2            | 21                  |
| South Australia   | 77              | 6            | 17                  |
| Western Australia | 77              | 3            | 20                  |
| ACT/NT/TAS        | 80              | 3            | 17                  |

**Question:** Generally, how serious of a problem do you believe the following statement is in Australia today? Children aged 12-17 years old are addicted to vaping or other nicotine products

**Table 4: Detailed data breakdown**

| Demographic       | NET Serious (%) | Not sure (%) | NET Not serious (%) |
|-------------------|-----------------|--------------|---------------------|
| Total             | 84              | 7            | 9                   |
| Male              | 82              | 6            | 12                  |
| Female            | 87              | 7            | 6                   |
| 18-24 years       | 92              | 2            | 6                   |
| 25-34 years       | 81              | 6            | 13                  |
| 35-49 years       | 85              | 7            | 8                   |
| 50-64 years       | 82              | 7            | 11                  |
| 65+ years         | 85              | 9            | 6                   |
| NSW               | 86              | 6            | 8                   |
| Victoria          | 85              | 7            | 8                   |
| Queensland        | 83              | 8            | 9                   |
| South Australia   | 82              | 11           | 7                   |
| Western Australia | 82              | 6            | 12                  |
| ACT/NT/TAS        | 87              | 5            | 8                   |

**Question:** Generally, how serious of a problem do you believe the following statement is in Australia today? Young people aged 18-24 years old are addicted to vaping or other nicotine products

**Table 5: Detailed data breakdown**

| Demographic       | NET Serious (%) | Not sure (%) | NET Not Serious (%) |
|-------------------|-----------------|--------------|---------------------|
| Total             | 86              | 4            | 10                  |
| Male              | 84              | 3            | 13                  |
| Female            | 89              | 5            | 6                   |
| 18-24 years       | 90              | 2            | 8                   |
| 25-34 years       | 84              | 3            | 13                  |
| 35-49 years       | 86              | 3            | 11                  |
| 50-64 years       | 87              | 3            | 10                  |
| 65+ years         | 89              | 5            | 6                   |
| NSW               | 87              | 3            | 10                  |
| Victoria          | 86              | 5            | 9                   |
| Queensland        | 89              | 3            | 8                   |
| South Australia   | 85              | 7            | 8                   |
| Western Australia | 82              | 4            | 14                  |
| ACT/NT/TAS        | 88              | 3            | 9                   |

**Question:** Generally, how serious of a problem do you believe the following statement is in Australia today? Adults are addicted to vaping or other nicotine products

**Table 6: Detailed data breakdown**

| Demographic       | NET Serious (%) | Not sure (%) | NET Not Serious (%) |
|-------------------|-----------------|--------------|---------------------|
| Total             | 81              | 3            | 16                  |
| Male              | 77              | 3            | 20                  |
| Female            | 85              | 4            | 11                  |
| 18-24 years       | 77              | 2            | 21                  |
| 25-34 years       | 75              | 3            | 22                  |
| 35-49 years       | 79              | 3            | 18                  |
| 50-64 years       | 84              | 3            | 13                  |
| 65+ years         | 85              | 5            | 10                  |
| NSW               | 82              | 3            | 15                  |
| Victoria          | 82              | 4            | 14                  |
| Queensland        | 80              | 3            | 17                  |
| South Australia   | 79              | 6            | 15                  |
| Western Australia | 79              | 4            | 17                  |
| ACT/NT/TAS        | 82              | 3            | 15                  |

**Question:** To what extent do you agree or disagree that the rise of vaping is increasing nicotine addiction among Australian children, including many who may never otherwise have used tobacco products.

**Table 7: Detailed data breakdown**

| Demographic       | NET Agree(%) | Neither agree nor disagree (%) | NET Disagree (%) |
|-------------------|--------------|--------------------------------|------------------|
| Total             | 77           | 20                             | 3                |
| Male              | 77           | 19                             | 4                |
| Female            | 78           | 20                             | 2                |
| 18-24 years       | 85           | 14                             | 1                |
| 25-34 years       | 76           | 20                             | 4                |
| 35-49 years       | 76           | 21                             | 3                |
| 50-64 years       | 76           | 19                             | 5                |
| 65+ years         | 78           | 21                             | 1                |
| NSW               | 78           | 19                             | 3                |
| Victoria          | 76           | 22                             | 2                |
| Queensland        | 82           | 15                             | 3                |
| South Australia   | 75           | 24                             | 1                |
| Western Australia | 73           | 22                             | 5                |
| ACT/NT/TAS        | 77           | 19                             | 4                |

**Question:** To what extent do you agree or disagree that protecting public health should be prioritised over government tax revenue from tobacco and vaping products.

**Table 8: Detailed data breakdown**

| Demographic       | NET Agree(%) | Neither agree nor disagree (%) | NET Disagree (%) |
|-------------------|--------------|--------------------------------|------------------|
| Total             | 84           | 13                             | 3                |
| Male              | 85           | 11                             | 4                |
| Female            | 84           | 14                             | 2                |
| 18-24 years       | 79           | 20                             | 1                |
| 25-34 years       | 80           | 16                             | 4                |
| 35-49 years       | 81           | 16                             | 3                |
| 50-64 years       | 86           | 9                              | 5                |
| 65+ years         | 90           | 9                              | 1                |
| NSW               | 84           | 13                             | 3                |
| Victoria          | 84           | 14                             | 2                |
| Queensland        | 85           | 12                             | 3                |
| South Australia   | 83           | 16                             | 1                |
| Western Australia | 83           | 12                             | 5                |
| ACT/NT/TAS        | 83           | 13                             | 4                |
| ALP               | 84           | 14                             | 2                |
| LNP               | 88           | 9                              | 3                |
| Greens            | 87           | 12                             | 1                |
| PHON              | 83           | 10                             | 7                |

**Question:** All tobacco, vaping and nicotine products, regardless of type, can cause serious health harms.

**Table 9: Detailed data breakdown**

| Demographic       | NET Agree(%) | Neither agree nor disagree (%) | NET Disagree (%) |
|-------------------|--------------|--------------------------------|------------------|
| Total             | 92           | 6                              | 2                |
| Male              | 91           | 6                              | 3                |
| Female            | 92           | 7                              | 1                |
| 18-24 years       | 91           | 6                              | 3                |
| 25-34 years       | 89           | 8                              | 3                |
| 35-49 years       | 91           | 7                              | 2                |
| 50-64 years       | 92           | 6                              | 2                |
| 65+ years         | 94           | 5                              | 1                |
| NSW               | 94           | 5                              | 1                |
| Victoria          | 92           | 7                              | 1                |
| Queensland        | 91           | 8                              | 1                |
| South Australia   | 93           | 6                              | 1                |
| Western Australia | 86           | 7                              | 7                |
| ACT/NT/TAS        | 89           | 9                              | 2                |

## Key messages

- **A nationally representative survey commissioned by Lung Foundation Australia found overwhelming public support for prioritising health over tax revenue** from tobacco and vaping products and for limiting industry influence on public policy.
- **Australians are highly concerned about the health harms of tobacco, vaping and nicotine products**, particularly nicotine addiction among children and young people, and indicate support for policies that reduce rather than increase access to these products.
- **Australians want governments to prioritise health over tax revenue from tobacco and vaping products**, with 84% agreeing that protecting public health should take precedence over government revenue from these products.
- **Australians strongly support protecting public policy from tobacco and vaping industry influence**, with 83% saying these industries should not influence public policy and 82% supporting a ban on political donations from tobacco-related industries.
- **There is widespread recognition of the harms of tobacco, vaping and nicotine products**, with 92% agreeing these products can cause serious health harms and strong concern about nicotine addiction among children and young people.
- **The survey findings do not support proposals to reduce tobacco excise or expand access to vaping products**. Instead, the results suggest Australians are more concerned about preventing nicotine addiction and reducing health harms than increasing the affordability or availability of these products.
- **Support for prioritising public health over government revenue from tobacco and vaping products was strong across all political affiliations.**

- **Tobacco use already costs Australia an estimated \$159.7 billion each year** through healthcare expenditure, lost productivity, ill health and premature death. Any policy changes that increase smoking uptake risk creating even greater health and economic costs over time.
- **Australians expect governments to strengthen safeguards against tobacco and vaping industry interference.** Lung Foundation Australia recommends banning political donations and lobbying by the tobacco, vaping and related industries, increasing transparency, and strengthening monitoring and enforcement of industry interference.

## References

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