

Independent Reserve Cryptocurrency Index

IRCI Australia 2026

Record high crypto adoption in Australia

Australia's strong desire for regulation

Tokenised assets are gaining traction

Investors are comfortable with volatility

7th edition. March 2026

The Independent Reserve Cryptocurrency Index (IRCI) is an annual report on Australian attitudes to cryptocurrency, covering awareness, adoption, trust and confidence. It is based on a nationally representative panel of more than 2,000 Australian adults.



IRCI 2026 highlights

Expert contributions

- **Australia's cautious and deliberate path to financial resilience**
By Amy-Rose Goodey, CEO of DECA (page 12)
- **From holding to utility: The rise of crypto-backed lending**
By James Coombes, Director & CCO of Block Earner (page 16)
- **A new generation of SMSF trustees embraces digital assets**
By Olivia Long, Founder & CEO of SMSFai (page 30)

Key stats

- 95%** of Australians are **aware of at least one cryptocurrency**
- 33%** of Australians invested in or **held crypto**
- 71%** of crypto investors **hold Bitcoin**
- 62%** of crypto investors would have **increased confidence in exchanges if they were licensed**
- 32%** of crypto investors put **\$500 or more per month into crypto**
- 57%** of Australian crypto investors report **making a profit**
- 13%** of Australians wanted to invest in crypto, but weren't able to due to the economy
- 41%** of Australians believe crypto will be widely accepted by people and businesses
- 73%** Australians consider Bitcoin to be money, a store of value or an investment asset

Table of contents

About the index	3
Foreword	4
Awareness	6
Bull or bear market?	7
■ Price volatility is un concerning	7
New regulations are coming into play	8
■ Australia’s cautious and deliberate path to financial resilience	12
Aussies need more clarity on crypto tax	14
■ Crypto-backed loans	15
■ From holding to utility: The rise of crypto-backed lending	16
Adoption	18
■ Aussie crypto ownership reaches new highs	18
■ How much do Australians invest?	20
■ Crypto holdings	21
■ Why Australians invest in crypto	22
■ Crypto profits	23
■ Why Australians invest in crypto	25
■ Why Australians don’t invest in crypto	26
Real-world use cases for crypto	27
■ Bitcoin in super: the future of retirement assets	28
■ High level of adoption among SMSFs	29
■ A new generation of SMSF trustees embraces digital assets	30
Confidence and trust	32
■ Crypto is here to stay	32
■ Bitcoin price predictions	33
■ More to crypto than just Bitcoin	34
■ Media enquiries	37



About the index

Now in its **seventh year**, the Independent Reserve Cryptocurrency Index (IRCI) 2026 is an annual cross-sectional survey of over 2,000 Australians conducted by PureProfile. It is not a survey of cryptocurrency users; it is a sample of everyday Australians that reflects the nation's gender, age, and geographic distribution.

The IRCI survey was conducted between January 12 and 20, 2026, and the index moved from 54 in 2025 to 53 in 2026.

The IRCI is a single score out of 100, capturing four dimensions of Australian attitudes to cryptocurrency:

- Awareness
- Adoption
- Trust
- Confidence

A score of 100 would indicate universal awareness, ownership, trust, and optimism about cryptocurrency's future.

Foreword

To sum up 2025 for the crypto industry in a few words, I would say “maturity” and “resilience.”

It’s easy to get caught up in market swings and asset prices, but it’s important to take a step back and look at the bigger picture. While the crypto market ended the year down and investor sentiment leaned toward caution, 2025 has been a pivotal year for the global industry.

The year began with Bitcoin reaching new highs of US\$109,000, but volatility soon set in as US President Donald Trump’s tariff discussions began. Many had hoped for a “Trump effect” to drive the market and Bitcoin to sustained new highs, with some forecasts even suggesting US\$250,000 within the year, yet sentiment quickly fell to extreme lows.

Market aside, the bigger picture in terms of institutional adoption is not to be ignored.

Discussions around nation-state Bitcoin adoption have increased, driven by the US Strategic Bitcoin Reserve executive order signed by Trump. The US GENIUS Act was signed into law in July, offering clearer guidance on stablecoins, while the US CLARITY Act, offering greater regulatory clarity, was also introduced.

Many are anticipating the CLARITY Act’s potential passage in the coming months, and we in the local industry will closely monitor developments.

Locally, the industry received greater clarity in October, with the Australian Securities and Exchange Commission (ASIC) clarifying which crypto products will need to be licensed. This will only encourage further innovation across the sector, and we hope it will lead to more exciting projects launching in Australia in the coming years.

The ASIC chair even said in November that Australia must act on tokenised stocks or risk being “left behind.”

It is with great pleasure that I invite you to read our seventh annual IRCI. The findings show that Australia’s crypto market is maturing significantly. The 2026 IRCI highlights the sector’s resilience and its potential to redefine the financial landscape, provided it continues to navigate the complex interplay of regulation, innovation, and adoption effectively.

Adrian Przelozny

Group CEO

Independent Reserve



Awareness

95%

of Australians are aware of at least one cryptocurrency.

Slow and steady wins the race

General awareness of cryptocurrency among Australians remains unchanged for the third year in a row at **95%**. Over the last seven years, awareness of crypto has steadily **grown from 90%**.

Awareness of **Ethereum remains relatively steady at 38%**, securing its position as the second most recognised cryptocurrency among Australians, closely followed by **Dogecoin at 29%**.

Dogecoin's strong name recognition is a reminder that meme power hasn't faded. Retail investors still gravitate toward familiar, culturally loud assets.

Most familiar cryptocurrencies in Australia

Token	Awareness in 2026
Bitcoin (BTC)	89%
Ethereum (ETH)	38%
Dogecoin (DOGE)	29%
XRP (Ripple)	16%
Solana (SOL)	14%
Tether (USDT)	13%
Cardano (ADA)	10%
Tether Gold (XAUT)	6%
Kinesis Silver (KAG)	2%
Other memecoins	5%
Other tokens & digital assets (not memecoins)	5%

Bull or bear market?

Aussies are split on whether the market is going up or down

Over half of respondents (60%) are uncertain about the current state of the 2026 crypto market, unsure whether it is in a bull or bear market.

Among respondents who have an opinion, sentiment is evenly split: 20% see a bull market, and 20% see a bear market.

These findings suggest that volatile crypto market conditions in recent times have left many respondents unsure of the market's current direction.

Season investors believe we're in a bear market

Interestingly, investors with more than 10 years of crypto experience hold stronger views. 44% of long-term crypto investors believe the market is in a bear phase, 11% think it's a bull market, and the rest are undecided.

Price volatility is un concerning

Crypto price volatility remains a non-issue for a meaningful share of Australians. 36% of Australians say they are comfortable with crypto volatility, suggesting that for many, sharp price moves are an accepted reality for the asset class.

Comfort levels diverge sharply depending on whether someone already invests in crypto. 72% of crypto investors are very or somewhat comfortable with volatility, compared with just 16% of non-investors. Experience also appears to build confidence over time: only 9% of investors who entered the market in the past 12 months say they are "very comfortable" with price volatility, versus 28% of those who started investing more than 10 years ago.

44%

of seasoned crypto investors believe we've entered a crypto bear market.

New regulations are coming into play

Momentum is building for clear regulation in Australia, and both consumers and industry participants appear ready for it.

Under the proposed framework, crypto exchanges and custodians would be required to meet licensing standards closer to those applied to traditional financial service providers.

The readiness for clearer rules is reflected in the survey findings. 51% of respondents said the proposed regulation would increase their confidence in using crypto exchanges, particularly when operators meet these high standards.

Non-investors want regulation too

Among non-crypto investors, when asked “What would make you more likely to invest in cryptocurrency?”, 30% said “better industry regulation”, and 31% said better consumer protection.

This highlights the need for fit-for-purpose regulations that safeguard consumers and provide the industry with greater operational clarity, showing that regulation isn’t just a policy discussion but something Australians actively want.

ASIC brings clarity to crypto

In guidance under ASIC Information Sheet 225, the regulator has made its position clear: just because something involves crypto doesn’t mean it falls outside existing financial rules.

If a crypto product operates like a traditional financial product, such as an investment fund, trading facility, or certain payment services, the provider may already require an Australian Financial Services License (AFSL) and must comply with established regulations.

Regulation is wanted, not resisted

Respondents indicate that the proposed regulations would not stifle the industry; they would strengthen it.

Among crypto investors, 62% said regulation would increase their confidence in cryptocurrency exchanges if they were licensed, compared to 34% who said their confidence levels would remain the same.

Within this same group, around 23% say they understand the proposed regulatory changes, and 40% have at least heard of them.

Across the broader population, awareness is more limited. Just 9% of respondents said they both knew about and understood the proposed regulations, while 23% had heard of them but did not fully understand the details.

These findings suggest that while awareness of crypto regulation remains relatively low overall, Australians, particularly existing crypto holders, primarily see clearer rules as a positive step that could strengthen trust and legitimacy in the market.



The relationship between banks, investors, and the industry needs to be bridged

30%

of crypto investors report delays or blocks by banks when investing in crypto.

For many Australians, the lack of regulation hits home when a payment to a crypto exchange is delayed or blocked, an issue that has continued to rise for another year.

When asked, “Has your bank ever prevented you from buying crypto or delayed sending money to a crypto exchange?” **Nearly one in three investors (30%) said yes. That is up from one in five investors (19.3%) in 2025.**

Do banks discriminate?

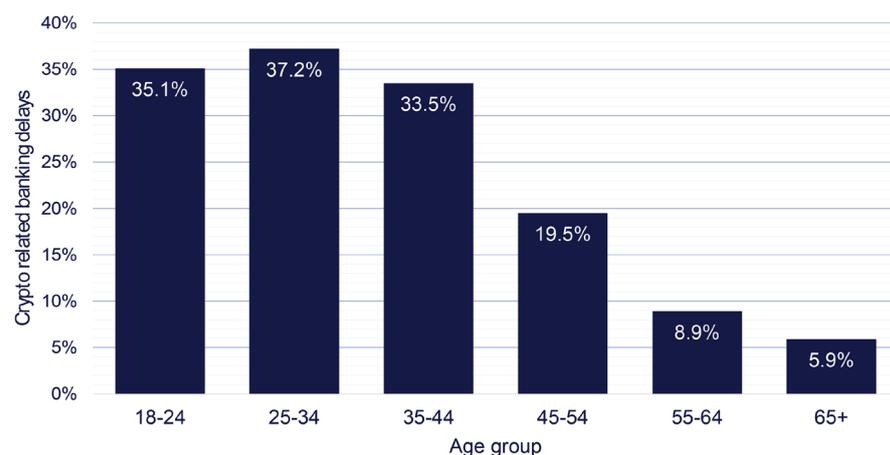
These interruptions affect both consumers and businesses, showing how cautious banks are with crypto when the rules aren’t clear.

Gender differences in these disruptions are narrowing. Crypto-related banking challenges among women are slightly higher (30.6%) than men (29.7%), compared with the stark difference between men (17%) and women (23%) in 2025, suggesting concerns around gender bias are becoming less pronounced.

Surprisingly, **younger investors faced more issues** than older investors. The **25-34** age group reported the highest level of interference at **37%**, up from **28.1% in 2025**, followed by the **18-24** age group (**35%**).

Those aged 55-64 and 65+ reported significantly lower rates at **9%** and **6%**, respectively.

Crypto-related transaction delays by age group



Mid-sized crypto transactions under growing scrutiny

Transaction size no longer appears to be the primary trigger for bank scrutiny, as it was in 2025. In fact, investors who made smaller transactions reported greater interference.

Investors in the \$1,000 to \$10,000 range saw the highest level of interference at 50%. Meanwhile, those making smaller monthly transactions of under \$100 reported an increase to 18% in 2026, up from 12% the previous year.

Among those investing \$10,000 or more per month, 44% reported experiencing scrutiny, down from 56% in 2025. The same percentage (44%) was reported by respondents transacting between \$501 and \$1,000 per month.

A pattern in need of change

The findings suggest that banks have not relaxed their posture toward crypto, and they may be refining how they apply controls.

Rather than focusing on the size of the transaction, as they have in previous years, scrutiny now appears to be based more on user behaviour and transaction patterns. This raises ongoing questions about whether the 33% of Australian crypto investors are being treated fairly and consistently within Australia's banking system.

Regulation may warm the relationship between exchanges and banks

Clear licensing and regulation can help fix this. By setting high standards for crypto operators, banks would have more confidence that transactions are legitimate.

With that trust in place, licensed businesses can access mainstream banking more smoothly, as seen in Singapore, where regulated blockchain companies operate without friction.

For Australia's blockchain industry, which has faced banking hurdles for over a decade, effective regulation could finally bridge the gap between exchanges and banks, giving investors and businesses more certainty and reliability.

Australia's cautious and deliberate path to financial resilience

By Amy-Rose Goodey, CEO of Digital Economy Council of Australia

This year's IRCI is more than a set of survey results. It is a clear signal of how Australia is reassessing money, risk, and long-term security.

We are a country under significant economic pressure. A country thinking about how to make itself more secure and stable.

Home ownership, once a sign of financial stability, now seems completely out of reach, particularly for our younger Australians. This is where digital assets like Bitcoin offer an alternative. Unlike property, there is no deposit hurdle and no long-term debt contracts.

Ownership of cryptocurrency has gone up to 33 percent. More than half of Australians aged 25 to 44 are now interacting with cryptocurrency, and what is striking is not just the scale of participation, but also its tone. Adoption among women has almost doubled since 2019, and across both men and women, the approach is more intentional, with investors weighing opportunity against uncertainty rather than rushing in on impulse.

The broader data further reinforces that mindset. Nearly half of respondents with a self-managed super fund report exposure to Bitcoin or crypto, typically at modest levels, reflecting diversification in an economic environment where traditional routes to wealth accumulation feel constrained or completely out of reach.



At the same time, Australians are not naive about what they're getting into. They want rules, consumer protections, and systems that let new ideas grow without putting families in harm's way. This shows that the market is not driven by blind enthusiasm, but by careful thought.

People want to join in. They also want to feel safe. They want to know that if they put their savings into something like an exchange or a retirement fund, the system around that choice is open and responsible.

Aussies need more clarity on crypto tax

59%

of crypto investors generally understand how cryptocurrency is taxed.

59% of crypto owners report they generally understand the tax treatment of crypto, up 4 percentage points since 2024, indicating a gradual improvement in investor literacy and familiarity with reporting obligations.

Understanding varies significantly by age. Australians aged 25 to 54 are the most likely to say they understand how crypto is taxed (62%), while those aged 65 and over are least likely (29%), highlighting a clear knowledge gap that may continue to shape participation and confidence among older cohorts.

Room for improvement

When asked how the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) could improve crypto tax rules, over half of respondents (**53%**) **said they want greater clarity around what is taxed, when tax applies, and why.**

One in three investors (**33%**) believe capital gains **tax should not apply when crypto is used for everyday purchases**, such as groceries or household bills.

Under current ATO guidance, cryptocurrency is treated as property for capital gains purposes, meaning spending crypto counts as a disposal and is subject to capital gains tax.

The number of respondents seeking a change suggests that many find this process overly complicated, which could slow crypto's adoption as a mainstream payment method.

28% of respondents would like a broader reduction in capital gains tax on crypto, while one in five (20%) support capital gains exclusions for certain decentralised finance (DeFi) transactions, highlighting that many investors see current rules as burdensome or complex.

Crypto-backed loans

Borrowing without selling is catching on

Interest in using crypto as collateral for a loan has been rising among Australians, with 22% of crypto-investing respondents reporting they have either received a loan backed by crypto or used their crypto for leveraged trading.

A further 20% of those crypto-investing respondents are considering getting a crypto-backed loan. However, fewer than 1% of crypto owners have a solid plan to secure a crypto-backed loan in the next 12 months. Crypto-backed loans can be an attractive option for holders, as they allow investors to unlock liquidity without triggering a capital gains tax with the ATO.

Instead of selling and realising a gain, investors can continue holding the underlying asset while borrowing against it.

But there's a catch. If prices fall sharply, lenders can issue a margin call. That forces borrowers to either top up their collateral or risk liquidation. And in crypto, downturns can happen quickly.

In summary, crypto-backed loans offer flexibility, but they come with downside risks if the market moves against you.

20%

of crypto investors are considering a crypto-backed loan.

From holding to utility: The rise of crypto-backed lending



James Coombes, Director & Chief Commercial Officer, Block Earner

Australia's relationship with digital assets has matured considerably. Viewing crypto holders as fringe hobbyists is as outdated as claiming a business doesn't need an online presence.

With over 32.5% of Australian adults (roughly 6.3 million people) now holding cryptocurrency, and the domestic crypto market estimated at \$91.43 billion in 2025, the asset class has reached a scale that demands utility comparable to other mainstream investments.

Crypto-backed lending is a natural extension of this growth. It allows holders of Bitcoin, Ethereum, and other digital assets to use their holdings as collateral to access AUD liquidity without selling. For borrowers, the appeal is clear: fast approvals, flexible repayment structures, and access to capital without disrupting a long-term investment strategy. For the industry, it represents a genuine opportunity to serve a segment of Australians whose wealth is real but whose needs are poorly addressed by traditional lending frameworks.

What is equally clear is that this market is still in its early stages. The number of providers operating in Australia that are regulated and compliant with the National Consumer Credit Protection Act (NCCP) remains small, and total loan volumes represent only a fraction of the estimated more than \$30 billion in secured lending capacity that Australian crypto holders could access. Consumer awareness is growing, and more sophisticated investors are entering crypto with the expectation that crypto lending will operate like borrowing against shares, homes, or cars.

Responsible growth in this space requires more than product innovation. It requires a genuine commitment to compliance, asset protection, and transparent lending practices – the same standards that support any well-functioning credit market. Those of us operating under Australian credit licences take that obligation seriously, and it will ultimately determine whether the industry earns the trust required to grow.

Looking ahead, the range of products available to Australian borrowers will expand. Beyond standard collateralised cash loans, we are beginning to see and build structures that address property finance, business lending, and longer-term capital needs. The providers and the regulatory frameworks that establish strong foundations now will shape what this market looks like at scale.

It is our vision that modern and traditional finance continue to converge, and it is an absolute pleasure to innovate at that intersection.

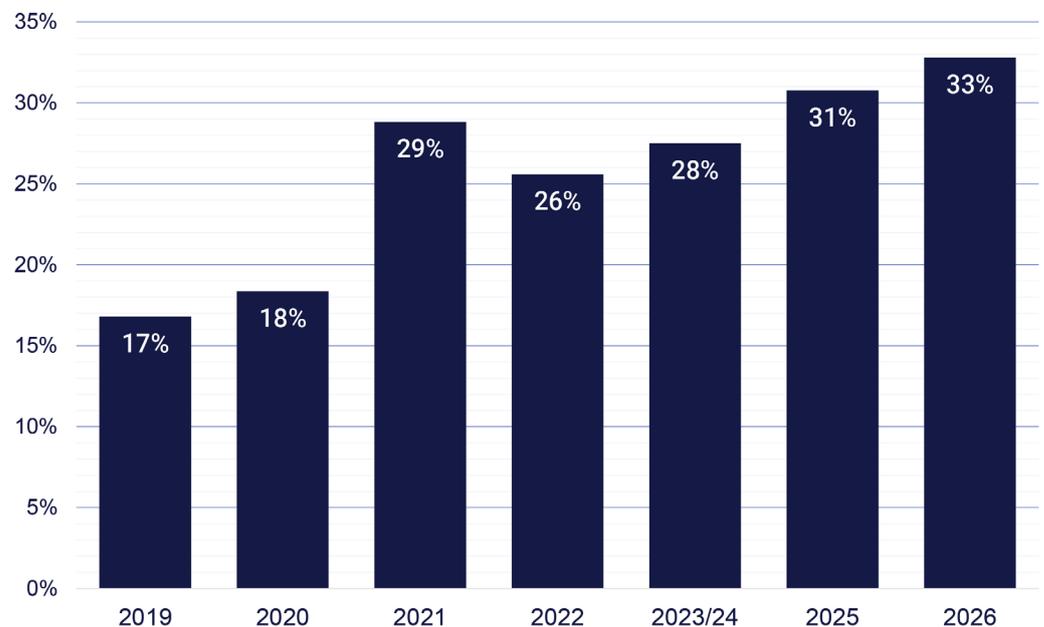
Adoption

Aussie crypto ownership reaches new highs

Cryptocurrency adoption is one of the IRCI's more influential metrics, reflecting Australians' confidence in investing in cryptocurrency as an asset class.

In 2026, adoption soared to its highest levels yet, with **33% of respondents owning crypto**, up from 31% last year. 29% of Australians plan to invest in crypto over the next 12 months. Meanwhile, 9% of respondents who haven't invested in crypto indicated that they plan to enter the market in 2026.

Australian crypto adoption from 2019 to 2026



33%

of Australians own or have owned cryptocurrency

Demographic differences

While crypto adoption among men has held steady at 43% since last year, adoption among women has risen slightly from 22% to 23%.

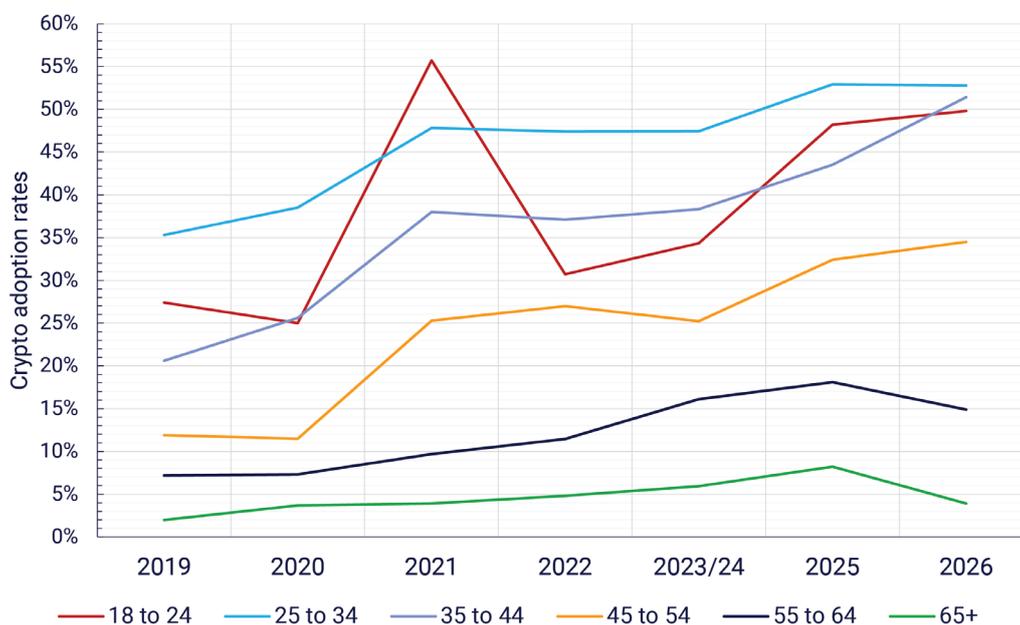
The strongest adoption rates are among younger Australians, with **more than half (53%) of those aged 25–34 owning crypto.**

Baby Boomers' adoption has declined to 4%, down from 8.2% in 2025. Adoption among those aged 55-64 has also declined to 15% from 18% in 2025.

53%

of Australians aged 25-34 own crypto.

Australian crypto adoption by age 2019-2026



How much do Australians invest?

32%

of Australian crypto investors put \$500 or more into crypto per month.

Investment patterns suggest that Australians are becoming more confident in investing larger amounts in the crypto market.

The number of Australians investing **less than \$100 per month has declined (24%, down from 34% in 2025)**, while those investing **\$100 to \$500 per month increased to 28% from 24%**.

The number of Australians investing \$500 or more per month has increased to 13% (down from 8%).

These findings, revealing higher regular investments, suggest growing confidence in the market.

The average investment per month into crypto

Avg. investment per month into crypto	2021	2022	2024	2025	2026
\$0	8%	15%	17%	11%	10%
\$1 to \$100	32%	27%	28%	34%	24%
\$100 to \$500	24%	21%	19%	24%	28%
\$500 to \$1000	12%	10%	14%	13%	19%
\$1000 to \$10,000	8%	6%	8%	7%	10%
\$10,000+	1%	1%	2%	1%	3%
Ad hoc / mixed amounts	15%	21%	13%	11%	6%

Economic pressure prevents greater adoption

18% of Aussies who don't currently own crypto said they want to invest but don't because of economic uncertainty or other pressures.

Crypto holdings

When it comes to portfolio composition, **41% of investors hold just one cryptocurrency**, with women being more likely than men to do so (45% vs 39%).

Nearly half (48%) of crypto investors hold between 2 and 5 cryptocurrencies, while 11% hold 6 **or more**.

41%

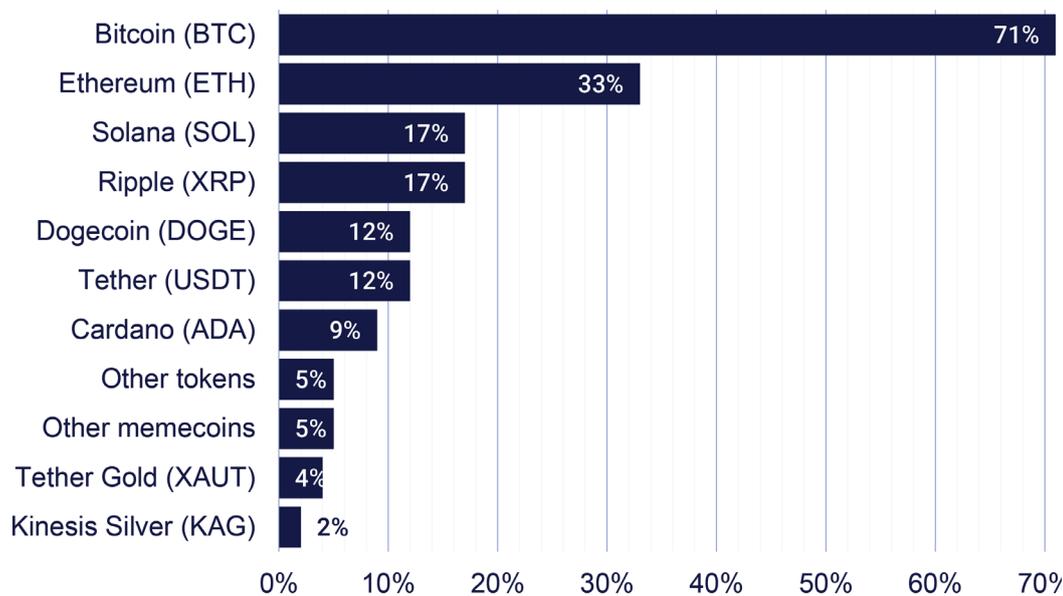
of crypto investors hold just one digital asset.

Bitcoin is still number 1

Bitcoin remains the top choice, owned by 71% of investors, followed by **Ethereum** at 33%, up from 30% in 2025.

Solana (17%, up 4%) and XRP (17%, up 2%) ownership have both increased, while Dogecoin (12%, down 5%) has dropped.

Top held cryptocurrencies by Australian investors



Tokenised assets on the rise

Some Australian investors are avoiding the queues to buy precious metals by investing in tokenised gold and silver. **4%** of crypto investors report holding **Tether Gold**, and **2%** hold **Kinesis Silver**. **USDT** saw a sharp rise, with **12%** of investors reporting holding the cryptocurrency, up from 5% in 2025.

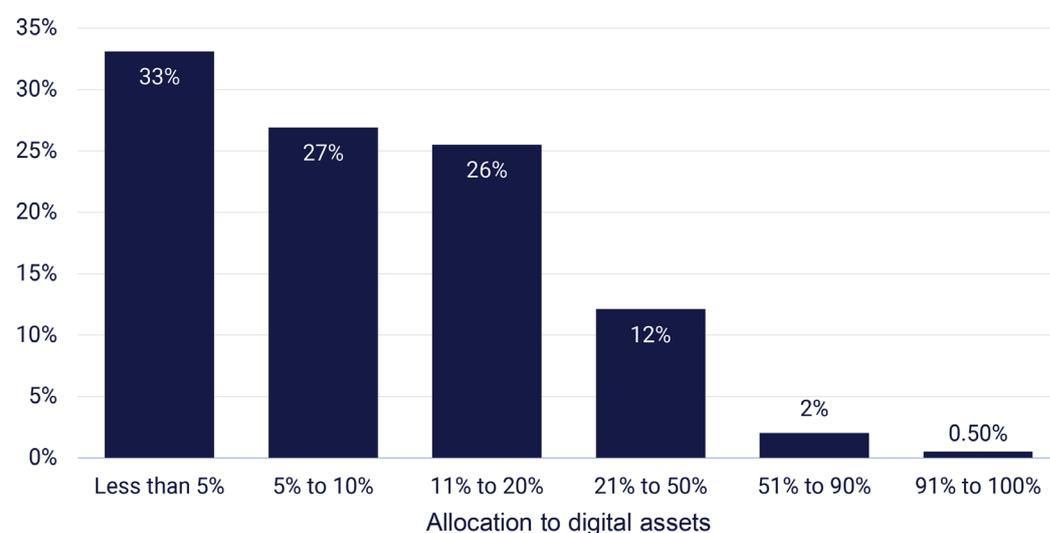
A balanced allocation

Despite rising adoption, crypto remains a relatively small part of Australians' investment portfolios, with **60% of crypto investors allocating less than 10% to digital assets**.

For one in four investors (25.5%), crypto comprises 11–20% of their portfolio. Those allocating over 20% towards crypto have risen to 14.6%, up from 10.30% in 2025.

These results suggest that while crypto is gaining traction, many Australians remain cautious, keeping it as a smaller part of their overall portfolio rather than committing heavily to it.

Digital assets as a percentage of savings and investments



60%

of crypto investors allocate 10% or less of their overall portfolio to crypto.

Crypto profits

Crypto investment profitability remained steady compared to 2025, with **57% reporting gains. 29% of respondents are breaking even** in the crypto market (down from 31% in 2025), while those making a loss rose slightly to 14% (up from 12% in 2025).

Men (58%) are slightly more likely than women (56%) to report profits, and younger investors remain the most successful demographic, with **65% of 35-44 year-olds reporting a profit.**

Location also plays a role. Tasmania boasts the highest profitability at 63%, while the Northern Territory has the lowest at 22%. With an average weekly wage of \$1,784, recently reported as the lowest in Australia, Tasmania's relatively strong crypto returns are particularly notable.

57%

of Australian crypto investors report making a profit.

Profits and losses in crypto since 2019

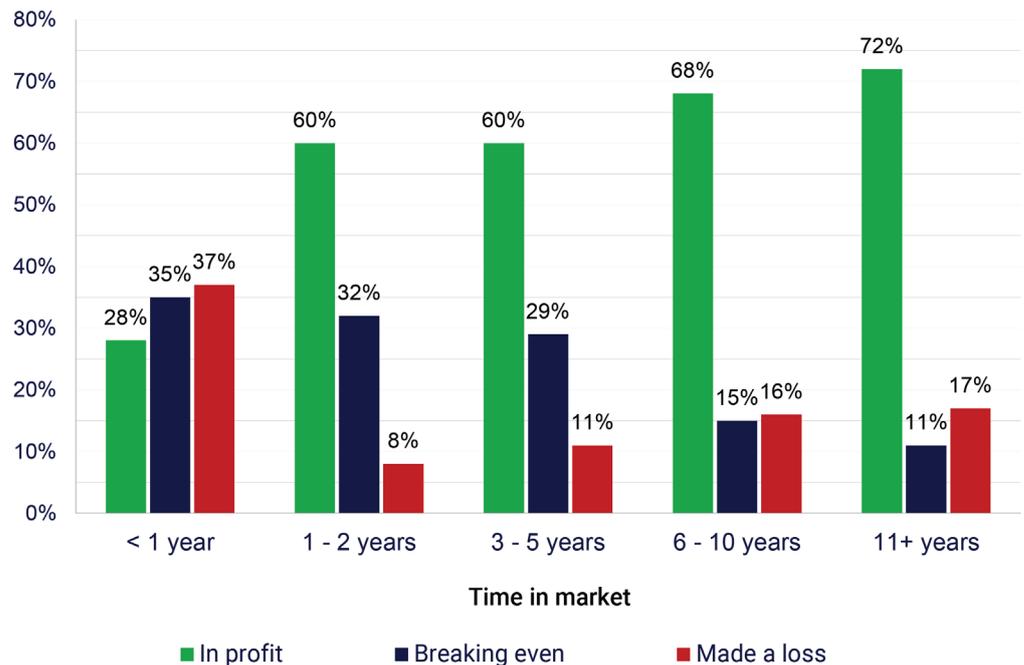
The data was recorded in January 2026.



Seasoned investors cash in

It goes to show that time in the market matters: 72% of those in the market for more than 10 years report profits, compared to just 28% of those with less than a year of experience.

Time in the market vs profits



Additionally, larger monthly investments correlate with higher profitability: **78% of those investing \$10,000+ per month report gains**, down from 89% in 2025.

These findings suggest that sticking with crypto over the long term and investing consistently remain key to making profits, with experienced, regular investors better able to weather market ups and downs.

Why Australians invest in crypto

Family, friends, and media continue to be key drivers of crypto adoption. Though the gap between word of mouth and media is closing.

Almost half (43%) of respondents cited encouragement from family and friends (down from 52%), while 42% were drawn in by curiosity after seeing cryptocurrency in the media (down from 46%).

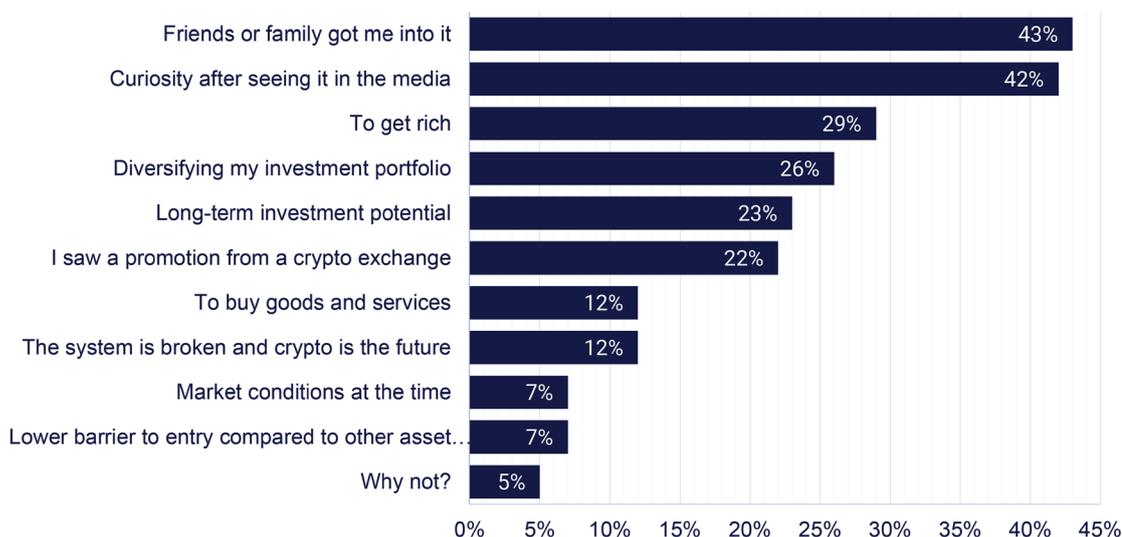
The number of respondents who decided to invest in crypto “to get rich” remained flat year-on-year at 29%.

The number of **Australians investing in crypto to buy goods and services doubled from 6% to 12%**, suggesting more Aussies are viewing crypto as a practical payment method rather than just a speculative bet.

43%

of crypto investors were motivated to invest, thanks to their family and friends.

Factors contributing to why Australians invest in crypto



Why Australians don't invest in crypto

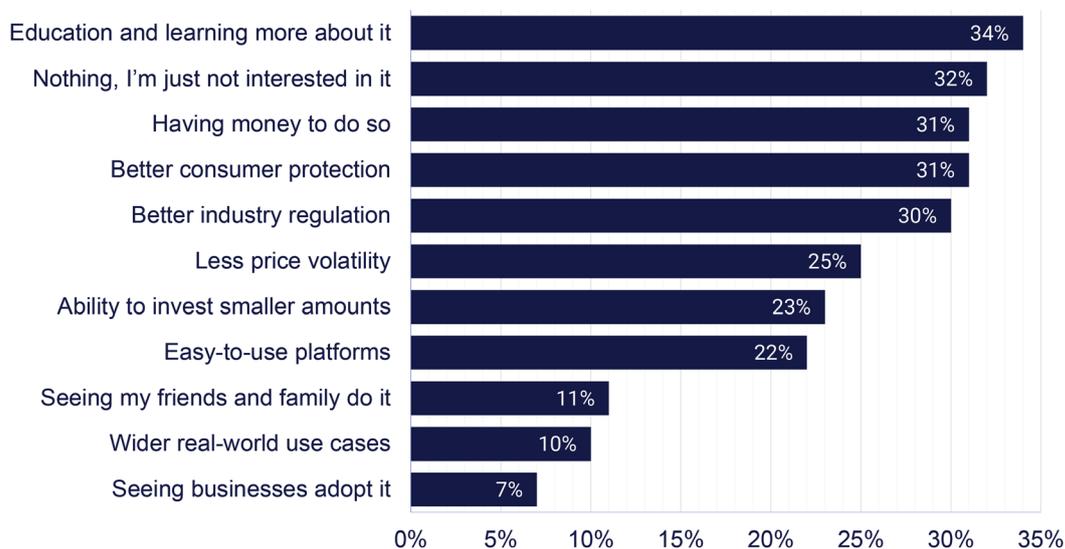
The need for education and regulation

Despite growing adoption, a significant portion of Australians remain on the sidelines when it comes to cryptocurrency investment.

Around 34% of non-crypto investors cited the need for more education about crypto before investing, down from 40.7% in 2025.

Additionally, 31% of respondents expressed the need for better regulation, up from 29.3% in 2025, reflecting concerns about the market's stability and legitimacy.

What would make Australians more likely to invest in cryptocurrency?



Real-world use cases for crypto

Use of cryptocurrency for real-world payments remains selective. Among crypto investors, online shopping is the most common use case (21%), followed by payments for professional or freelance services (16%) and in-game purchases (16%). Notably, 43% say they have never used crypto to pay for goods or services.

57%

of crypto investors used their crypto to pay for goods or services.

Goods and services paid for with crypto

Goods and services paid for with crypto	
NFTs	17%
In-game purchases	16%
Professional or freelance services	16%
Online shopping (i.e. retail, electronics)	21%
Food and beverages	14%
Digital content or entertainment (i.e. music, streaming, online media)	11%
Travel and accommodation	11%
Gambling	7%
Bills and utilities	6%
I've never paid for anything with crypto	43%

Why Australians don't use their crypto to pay for goods and services

The main barrier is intent: over half of respondents (53%) say they are only interested in investing or trading crypto, not spending it. Practical friction also plays a role, with 19% citing that it is too complex to use, and others pointing to price volatility (17%) and a preference for traditional payment methods (14%).



Bitcoin in super: the future of retirement assets

Growing desire for exposure in superannuation funds

Superannuation funds are gaining traction as a potential avenue for crypto exposure. 15% of Australians would like their superannuation funds to include Bitcoin, a decrease from 18% in 2025.

One in four Australians (25%) aged 18–44 want their super fund to invest in Bitcoin, but interest declines with age: 12% of those aged 45–54, 9% of those aged 55–64, and just 3% of those aged 65+ would like their super fund to invest in Bitcoin.

No Australian industry or retail super fund has yet offered a direct allocation to Bitcoin in members' default investment options. While AMP Super became the first to include Bitcoin futures with a small amount of 0.05%, others have yet to follow suit.

15%

of Australians would like their super fund to have exposure to Bitcoin.

High level of adoption among SMSFs

Self-Managed Superannuation Funds (SMSFs) also play a role in crypto investments. Almost half (46%) of SMSF investors are likely to invest in Bitcoin, representing a notable jump from the 36% in 2025. Moreover, **45% of respondents who claim to have an SMSF report having exposure to Bitcoin and crypto.**

In 2019, only 13.6% of SMSFs said they were likely to invest in cryptocurrency through their SMSF.

27% of respondents said they would prefer to use crypto exchanges, up from 22% in 2025, and 19% opted for ETFs, up from 14% in 2025.

Catering to SMSFs

When asked, “What factors are most important when choosing a crypto platform for your SMSF?”, **ease of use** was the top priority for SMSF investors (56%), followed closely by platform **security** (55%), with **tax and accounting** integrations (45%) and **audit-friendly** reporting (43%) also important.

These findings suggest SMSF investors are taking a practical, long-term approach to crypto, focusing on usability and compliance rather than hype or short-term gains.

45%
of SMSFs have exposure to
Bitcoin and crypto.

A new generation of SMSF trustees embraces digital assets



Olivia Long, Founder & CEO of SMSFai

The SMSF sector is entering a new phase, led by younger trustees who are more digitally engaged and proactive about shaping their retirement outcomes.

Recent data reveals record numbers of new fund establishments in the first quarter of FY26, with a continued shift toward Millennial and Gen X trustees. These investors are establishing SMSFs earlier and with lower starting balances than previous generations. This is not accidental. It reflects a growing desire for ownership, transparency, and a hands-on approach to building long-term wealth.

The IRCI findings show digital assets are firmly entering the retirement conversation. With 46% of SMSF investors indicating they are likely to invest in Bitcoin, interest has moved well beyond curiosity. However, what is most encouraging is not just the level of interest, but the mindset behind it.

A significant proportion of new SMSFs continue to be established without formal advice, which heightens the responsibility on trustees to ensure digital asset exposure aligns with their documented investment strategy, risk tolerance, and compliance framework.

Importantly, the IRCI data suggests SMSF investors are approaching crypto pragmatically. Ease of use, platform security, tax integration, and audit-friendly reporting matter more than speculation. This reflects a

maturing sector. Digital assets are increasingly being considered as part of broader portfolio discussions, alongside ETFs, equities, and alternative assets, rather than as reactive allocations driven by headlines.

The opportunity ahead is clear. Digital assets are unlikely to remain on the sidelines of retirement portfolios. The question is not whether trustees are interested but whether the industry can provide the education, systems, and compliance infrastructure needed for responsible participation.

The SMSF sector has always been defined by control, paired with accountability. As innovation accelerates, that principle becomes even more critical. Empowered, well-informed trustees, supported by strong administration and governance frameworks, will determine how digital assets integrate into Australia's retirement system over the coming decade.

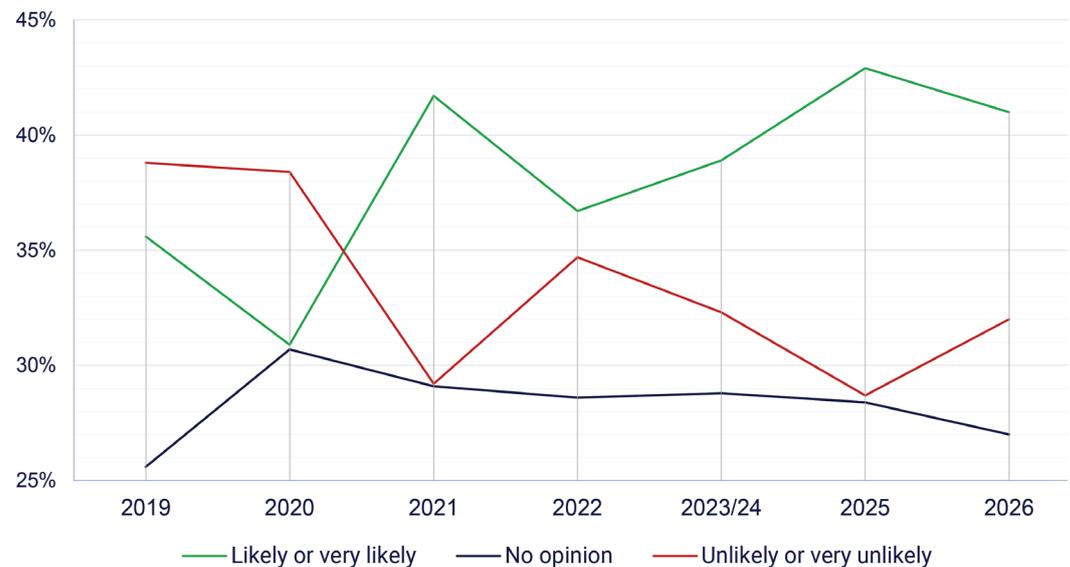
Confidence and trust

Crypto is here to stay

41% of Aussie respondents think cryptocurrencies are **likely or very likely to become widely accepted by businesses and everyday people** in the future, down slightly from 42.9% in 2025.

These findings suggest that despite the recent ups and downs in the crypto market in 2025, Australians still see crypto becoming widely accepted in the future.

Will crypto be widely accepted in the future (by age)



41%

of Australians believe crypto will be widely accepted in the future.

Bitcoin price predictions

Australians are bullish on Bitcoin

Australians have become slightly more sceptical about Bitcoin’s future value. By 2030, 27% of respondents expect the price of Bitcoin to soar above US\$250,000, down from 33% in 2025.

A slightly larger share (40%, up from 39% in 2025) expects the price to land between A\$100,000 and A\$250,000 in 2030.

Fewer see extreme highs: just 7% predict A\$500,000–A\$1 million, and 2% expect A\$1 million or more.

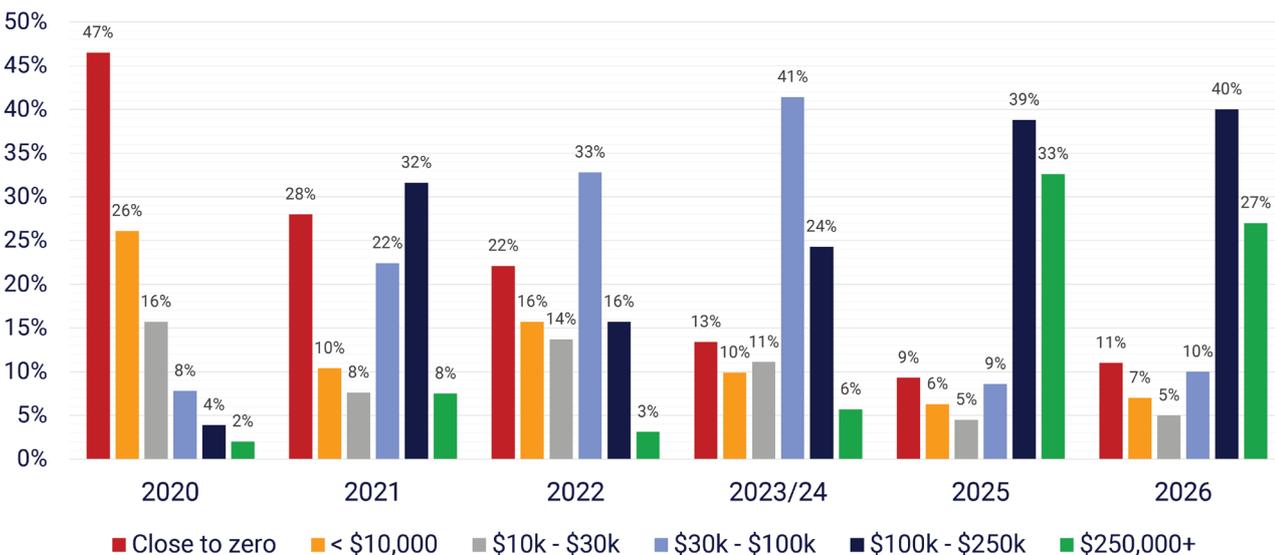
These views come as prominent industry figures, including Coinbase CEO Brian Armstrong and Ark Invest CEO Cathie Wood, forecast that Bitcoin could hit \$1 million by 2030.

\$100k+

67% of crypto investors believe Bitcoin will remain over A\$100,000 by 2030.

Bitcoin price predictions: 2020-2026

In 2020, only 6% of Australians believed Bitcoin could reach over A\$100,000. In 2026, that number has risen to 67%.



More to crypto than just Bitcoin

While Bitcoin remains the most recognised and trusted cryptocurrency among Australians, the broader crypto market is also gaining traction. 33% of respondents still named Bitcoin as their preferred digital asset, making it the clear leader.

Among crypto investors, preference towards Bitcoin declined slightly to 56% (down from 58% in 2025). Among non-crypto investors, the percentage also declined to 21% (down from 32% in 2025).

Interest in other cryptocurrencies is rising, with 12% of respondents favouring Ethereum and 7% for XRP, while the rest are undecided or have no particular preference.

These findings suggest that Australians are becoming more educated about the crypto asset class and increasingly open to diversifying their digital asset portfolios.

Shifting perceptions of Bitcoin

Australians increasingly view Bitcoin as a legitimate financial asset, with 67% categorising it as either **money** (10%), a **store of value or digital gold** (24%), or an **investment vehicle** (33%).

Scepticism towards Bitcoin has increased slightly year-on-year, with 13% now considering it a scam, up from 12% in 2025.

This sentiment varies across age groups: 28% of those aged 65+ hold negative views of Bitcoin, compared to just 15% of 45–64-year-olds, and only 8% among 18-24-year-olds.

Additionally, the proportion of respondents with **no opinion on Bitcoin has stayed flat at 16%**.

41%

of Australians want more education before investing in crypto.





Media enquiries

For media enquiries, please contact
media@independentreserve.com.



Australia's trusted cryptocurrency exchange

www.independentreserve.com/au