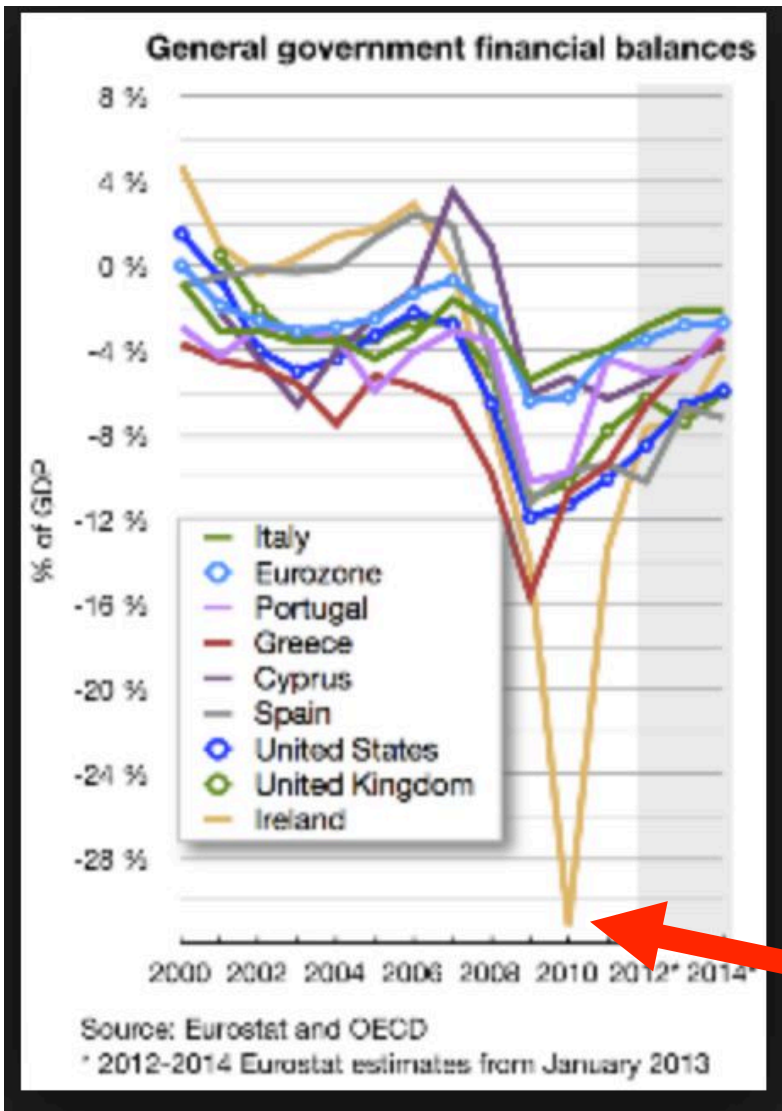


Bringing citizens into the heart of political debate: Ireland's constitutional mini-publics

Alliance Diverse Democracy conference,
Berlin, March 14 2019



David Farrell
University College Dublin
An Coláiste Ollscoil, Baile Átha Cliath



Citizens' Assemblies of British Columbia (2004), Ontario (2006-07) and the Netherlands (2006)





Citizen Assemblies Work!

[FIND OUT MORE HERE!](#)

Ireland's Constitutional Mini-Publics

- Random selection
 - 'mirror of society'
 - No 'mandate'
- Inclusive process
 - Experts are experts not members
 - Interest groups and advocates
 - Politicians as 'fellow members'
- 'Deliberation' (facilitated small-table discussions)



AN COINBHINSIÚN AR AN MBUNREACTH
THE CONVENTION ON THE CONSTITUTION



2012-2014



- 99 members
 - 66 citizens
 - 33 politicians
- Agenda
 - Marriage equality; blasphemy; role of women; electoral reform; parliamentary reform, voting age; votes abroad...
- Outcome
 - 43 recommendations presented to Parliament



- 99 citizen members
- Agenda
 - Abortion; climate change; ageing population; fixed term parliaments....
- Outcome
 - 44 recommendations presented to Parliament



Ireland's Marriage Equality referendum, May 2015

Turnout = 60.5%

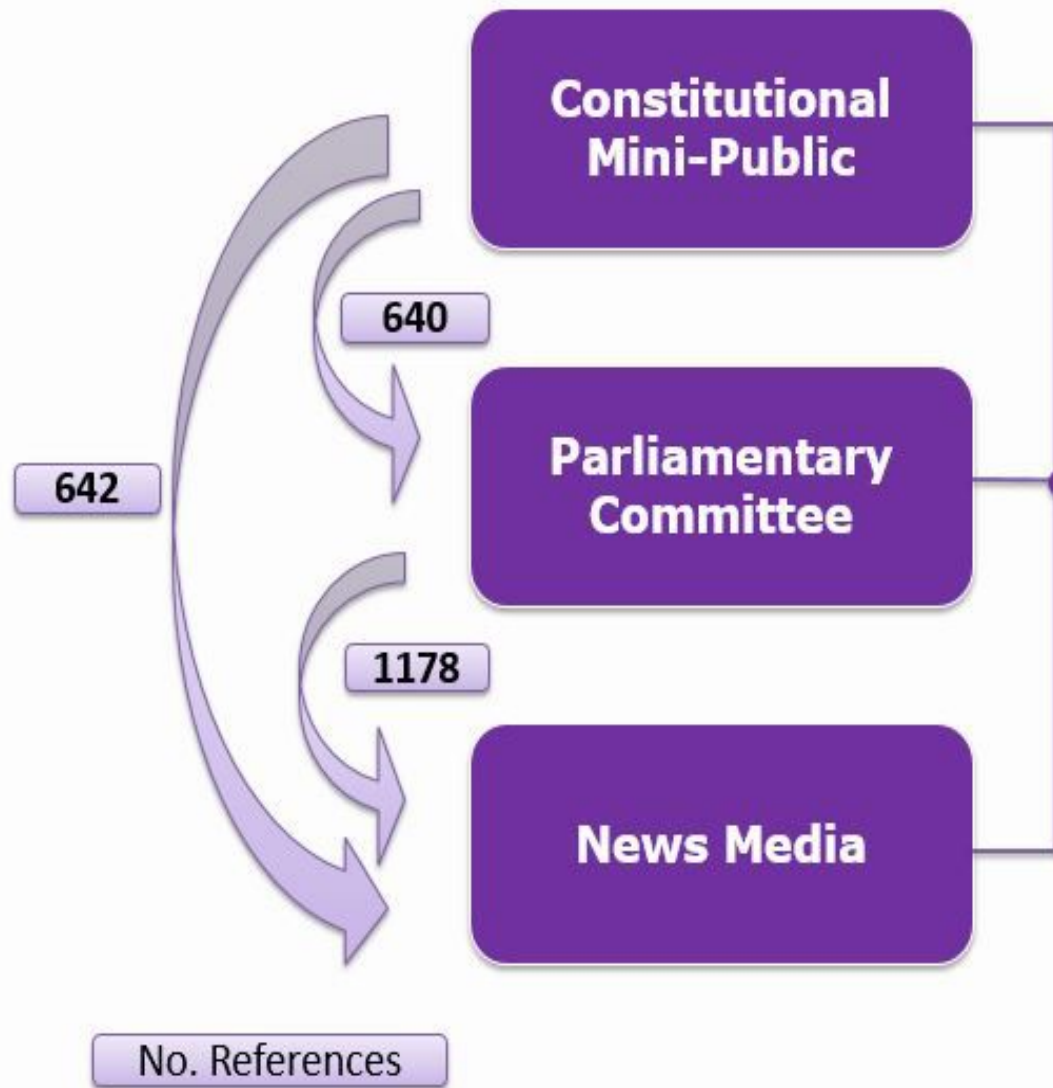
Yes = 62.1%; No = 37.9%



Ireland's Abortion referendum, May 2018

Turnout = 64.1%

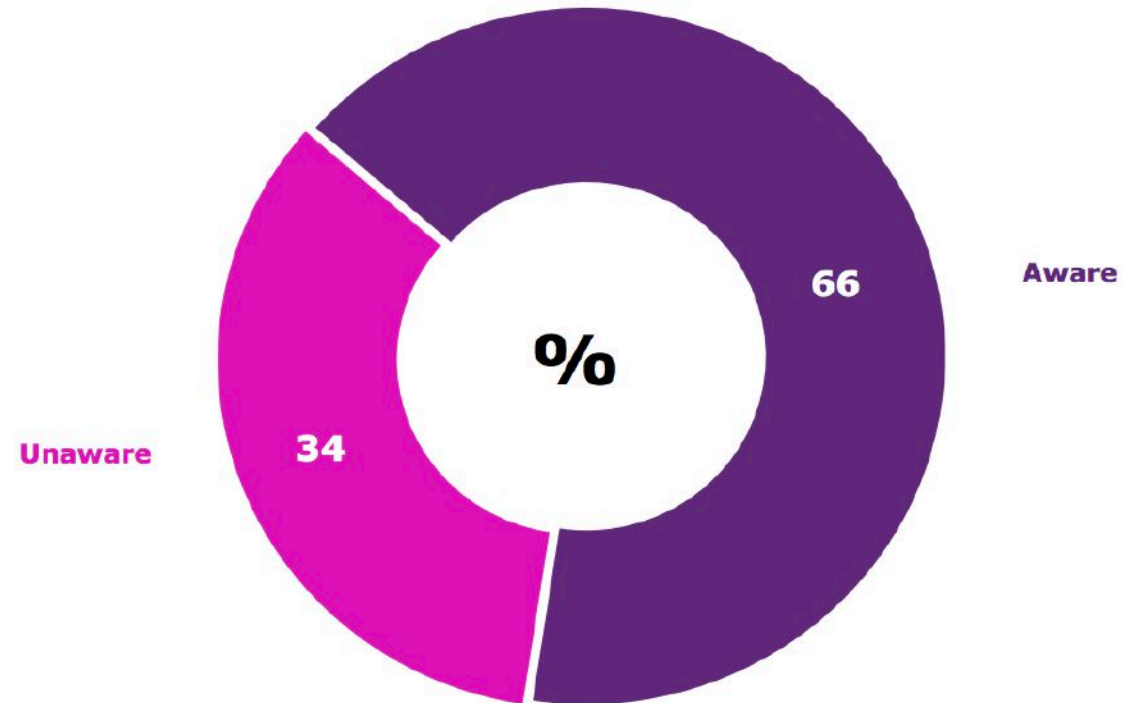
Yes = 66.4%; No = 33.6%



There's more to a referendum than the actual vote...

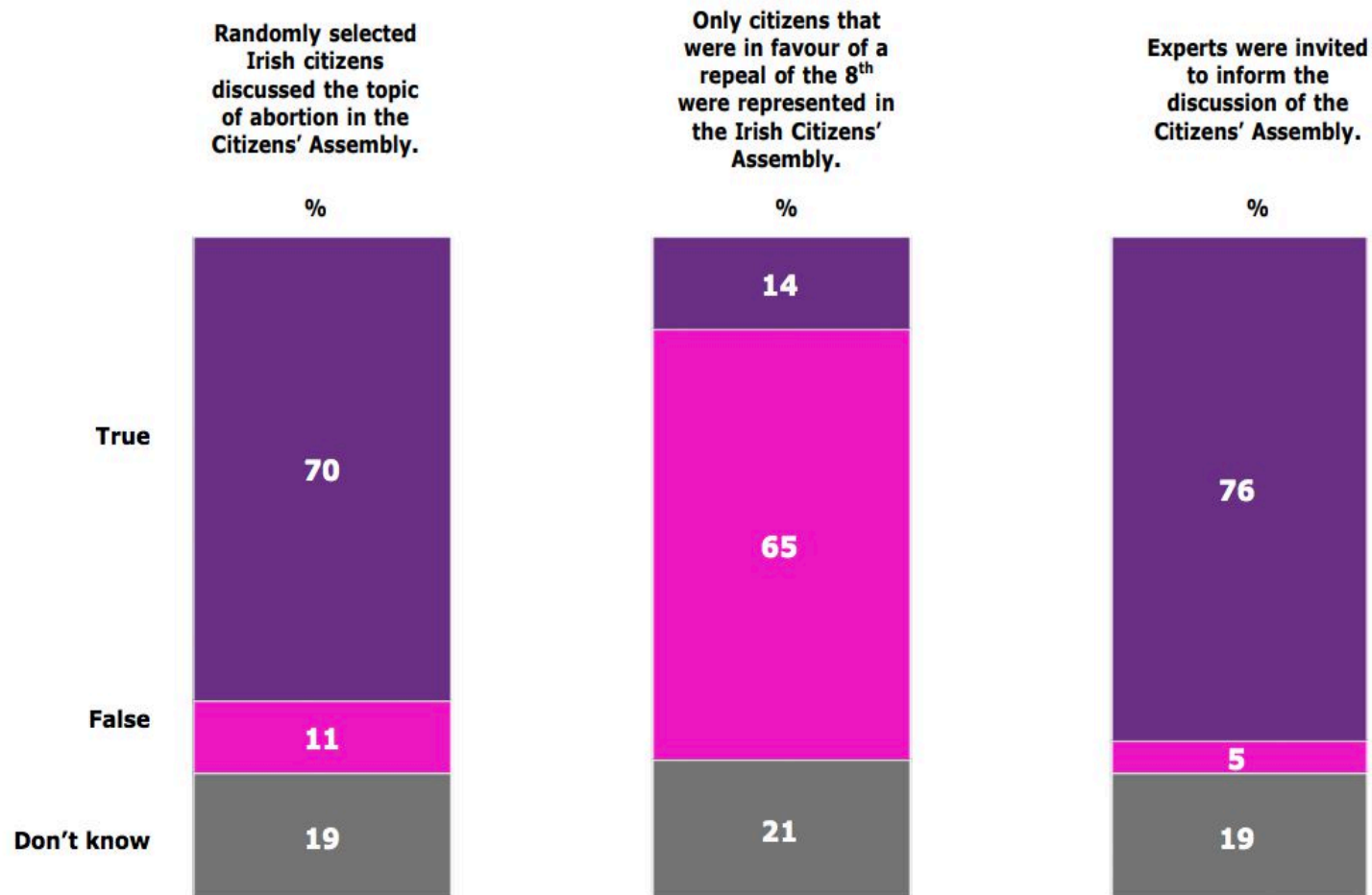
Awareness of Citizens' Assembly

Base : All Referendum Voters 1264

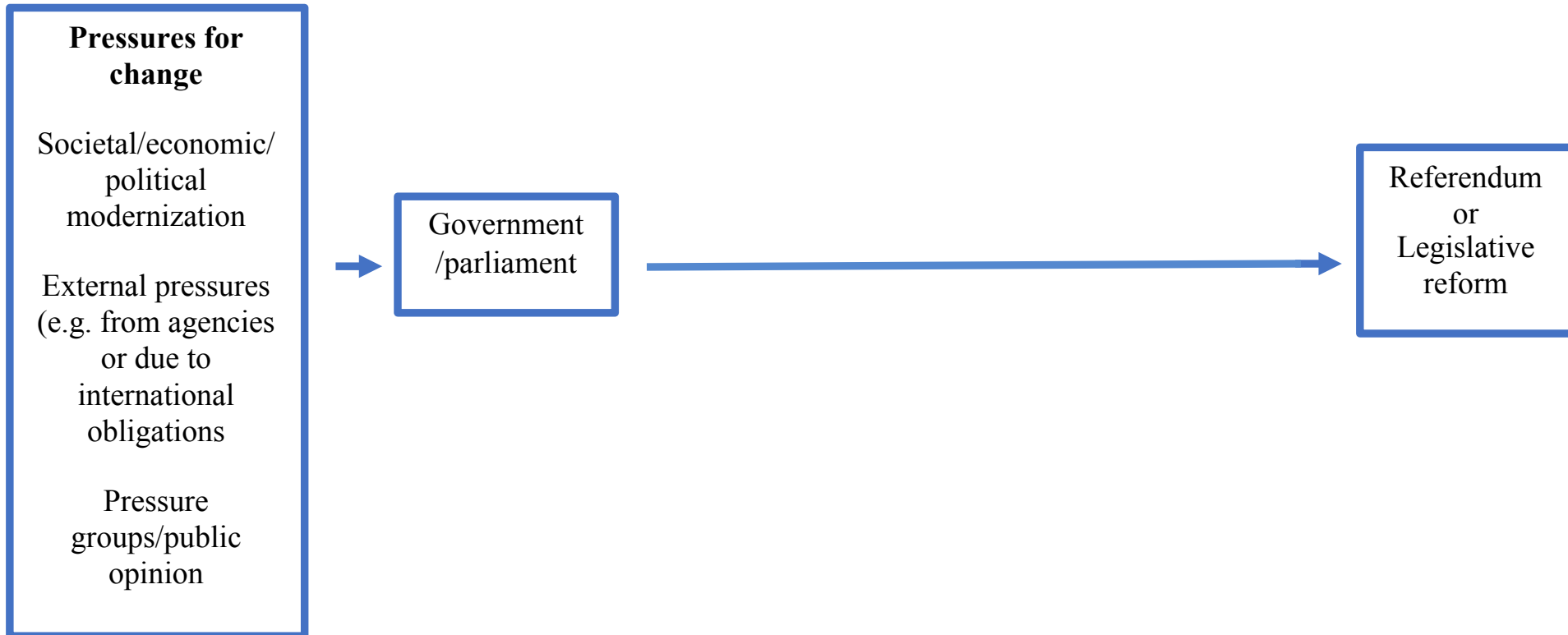


Citizens' Assembly Statements – True or False

Base : All aware of Citizens' Assembly 830



Irish process of mixing representative and deliberative democracy



- Thank you!



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