

Session 5

Citizens' Assemblies and other forms of Mini-Publics

Ireland's Constitutional Mini-Publics

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

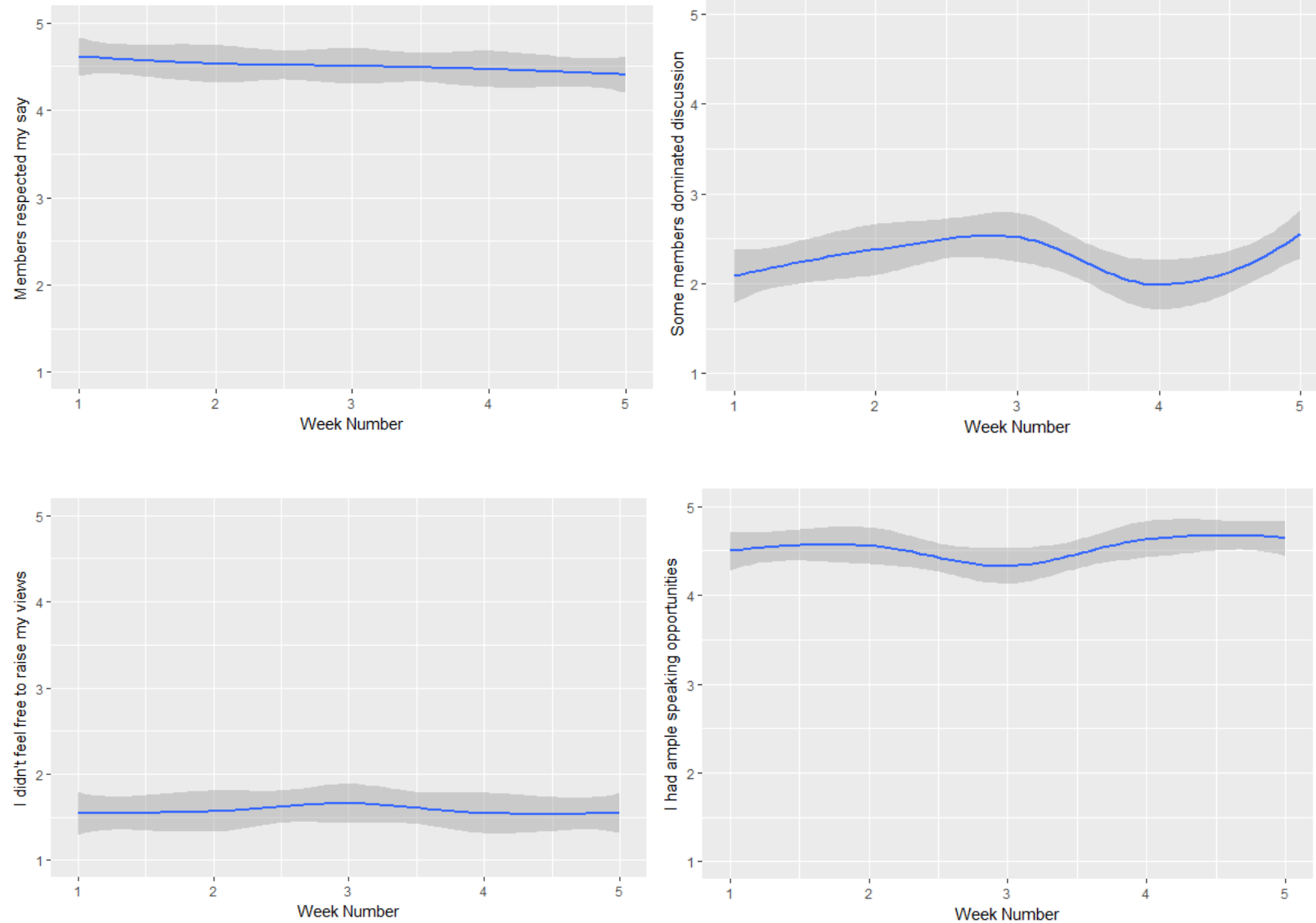


Ireland's Constitutional Mini-Publics

- Random selection
 - Citizen members don't feel they have a 'mandate'
 - 'mirror of society'
- Experts, interest groups and politicians aren't excluded
 - Experts are brought in as expert advisors, not as members
 - Interest groups are also invited to make presentations
 - Politicians may also be in the room as 'fellow members'
- Deliberation (facilitated small-table discussions)
- The agenda and outcomes are decided by the government



Measures of Satisfaction with the Deliberative Process During the Discussions on Abortion



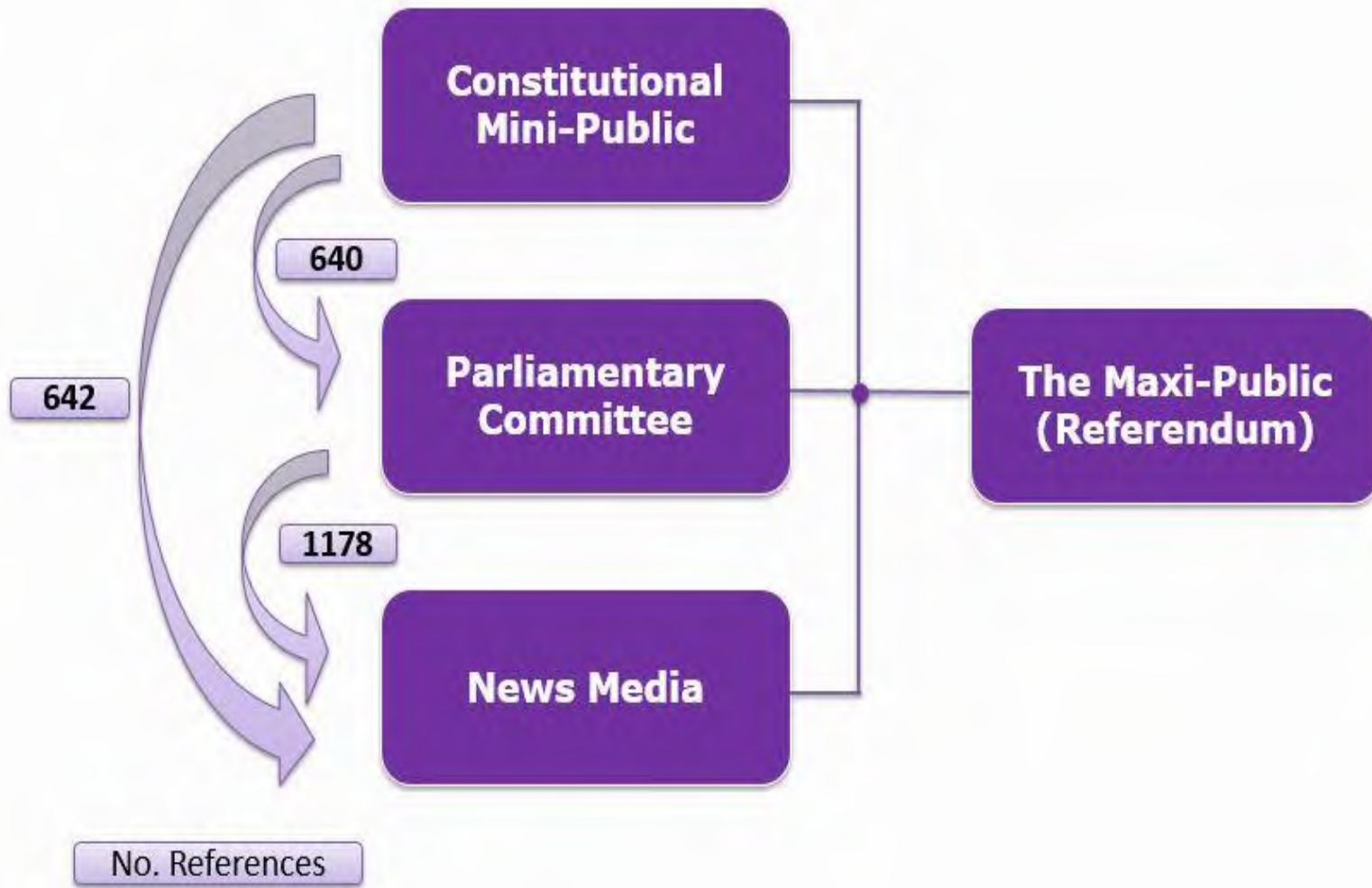
Note: 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree; 3=neither disagree nor agree; 4=agree; 5-strongly agree. The response rates ranged between 76-91 (out of 99 members).

Source: Sunday surveys of Citizens' Assembly members



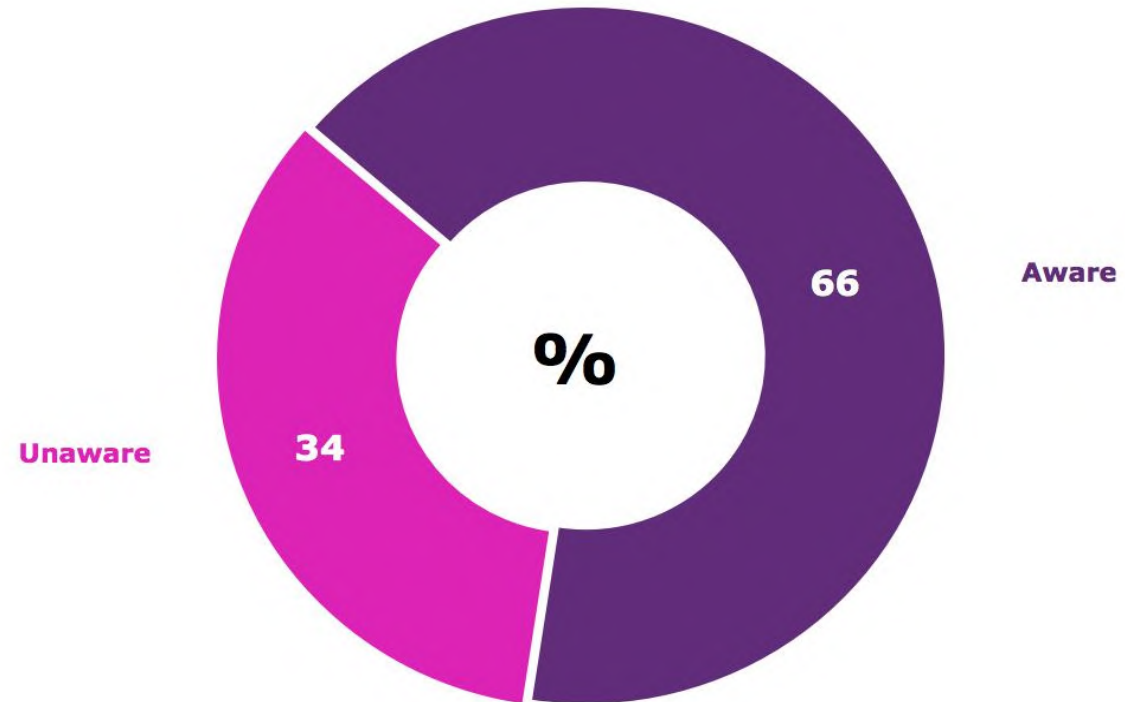
Assessing the ICC in terms of outcomes (as of January 2019)

Topic	ICC output	Government reaction	Action?
1. Reduction of presidential term	3 recommendations	Government accepted 2; rejected 1	Referendum defeated May 2015
2. Reduce voting age	1 recommendation	Government accepted this	Referendum was promised for 2015; now promised within next 18 months (?)
3. Role of women in home/public life	2 recommendations	Ministerial taskforce considered options. Government favoured simple removal of clause.	Referendum likely in 2019
4. Increasing women's participation in politics	3 recommendations	Ministerial task force to investigate further	No update
5. Marriage equality	2 recommendations	Government agreed to referendum and to supporting legislation	Referendum passed May 2015
6. Electoral system	10 recommendations	Government promised to establish an electoral commission and to task it with addressing 4 of the other recommendations; remaining 5 recommendations rejected	Consultations ongoing about establishment of an Electoral Commission.
7. Votes for emigrants/N. Ireland residents in presidential elections	1 recommendation	Ministerial task force considered options	Referendum promised within next 18 months (?)
8. Blasphemy	2 recommendations	Government agreed to principle of referendum	Referendum passed October 2018
9. Dáil (parliamentary) reform	12 recommendations	No formal response from government	The bulk of the recommendations were implemented in June 2016
10. Economic, social and cultural rights	2 recommendations	Government rejected this	Rejected



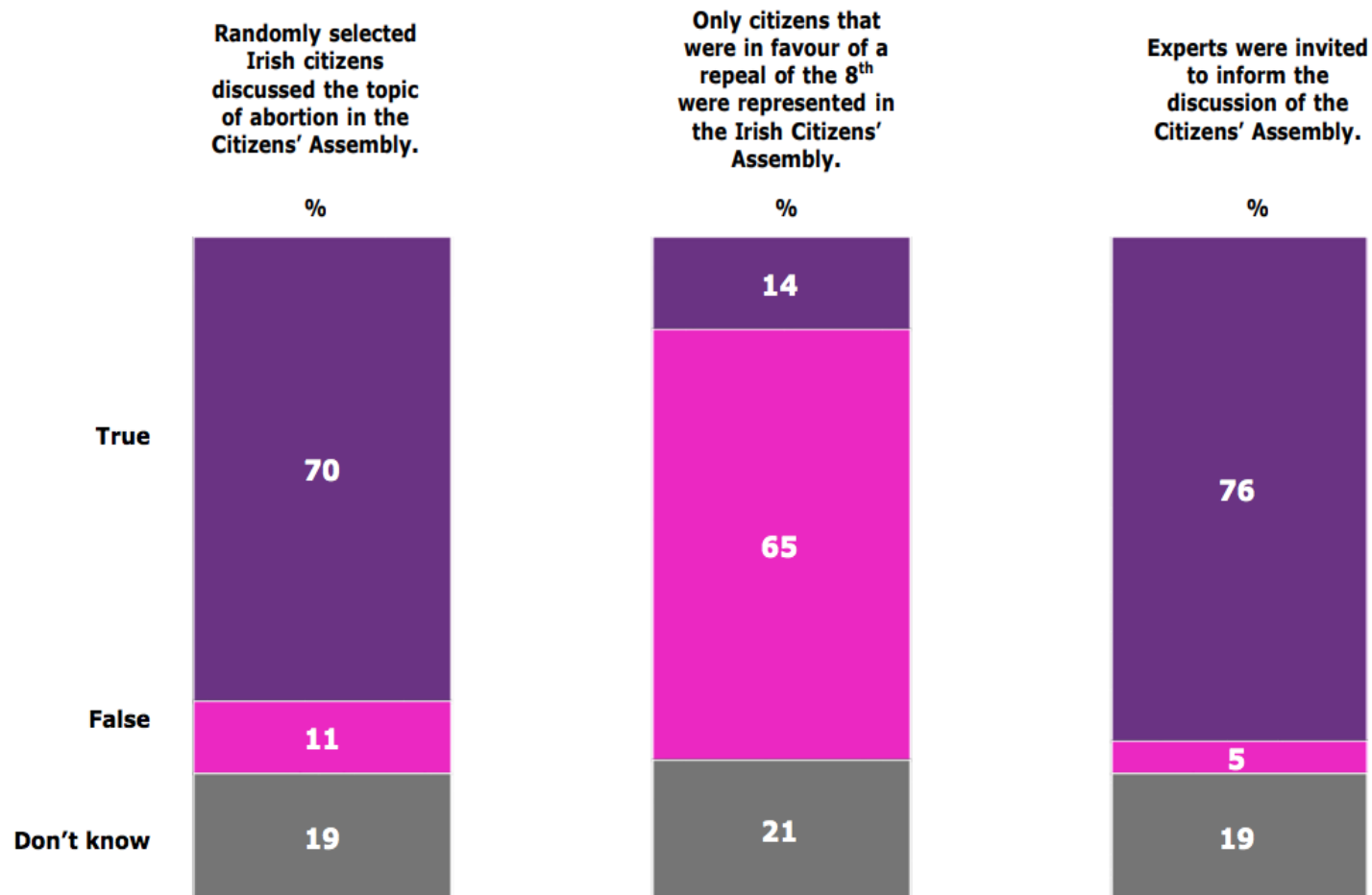
Awareness of Citizens' Assembly

Base : All Referendum Voters 1264

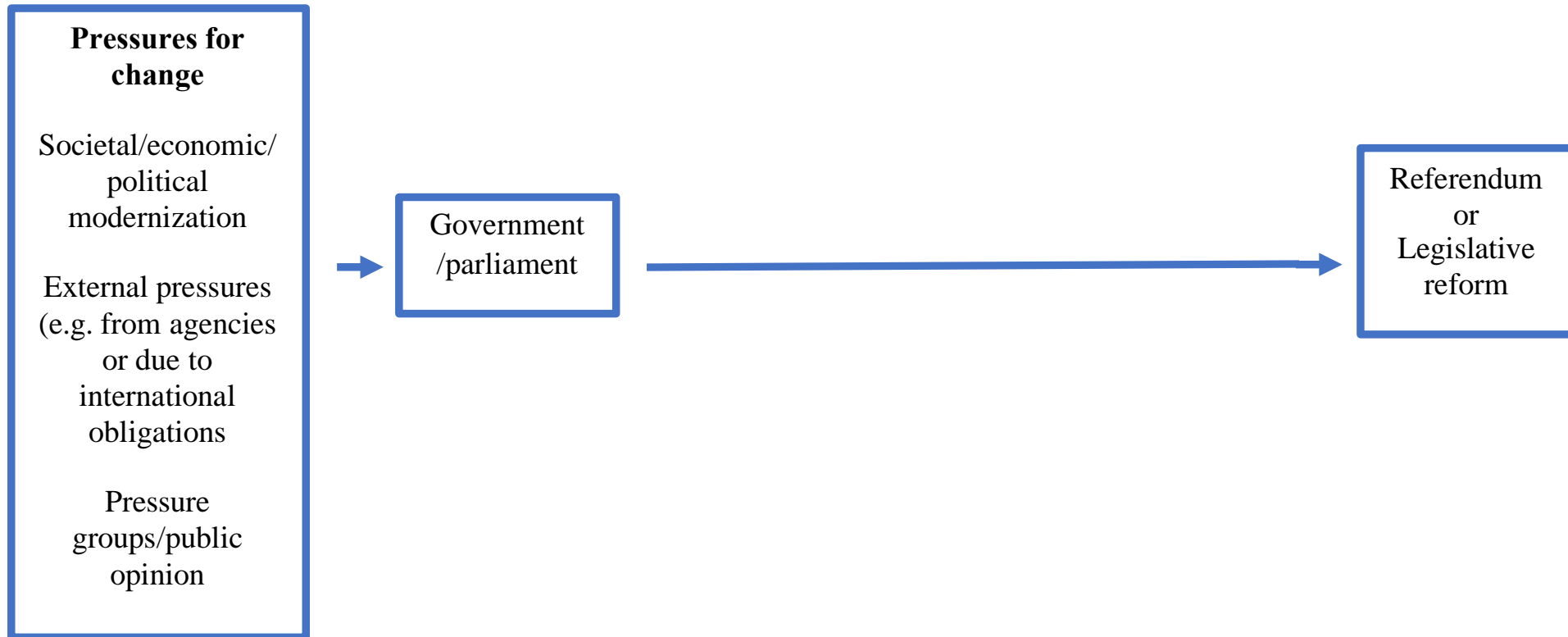


Citizens' Assembly Statements – True or False

Base : All aware of Citizens' Assembly 830



Irish process of mixing representative and deliberative democracy





- Thank you!
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