

REPORT ON THE REFERENDUM
ON THE **REGULATION OF**
TERMINATION OF PREGNANCY



An Coimisiún Reifrinn
Referendum Commission



Foreword

The Referendum Commission must, by law, prepare a report for the Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government on the performance of its functions. This report outlines the approach taken and the main elements of the information campaign undertaken.

On 9 March 2018, the Minister established the Referendum Commission for the purpose of the referendum on the Thirty-sixth Amendment of the Constitution Bill 2018. The referendum took place on 25 May 2018. As a consequence, the Referendum Commission had just eleven weeks to prepare and deliver its information campaign. It is the view of the Commission that this was the absolute minimum period in which it would be possible to prepare and run a fully comprehensive information campaign, and that there was no contingency available in the event of an unforeseen occurrence, such as a legal challenge.

The Commission worked hard to ensure that every element of the campaign was delivered and I am very grateful for the dedication of the individual Commission members, the executive team and the advisors for delivering the campaign under such time pressures. However, a significantly longer lead time should be provided for future Commissions.

The Commission received excellent cooperation from all broadcasters in relation to the provision of free airtime at peak viewing and listening periods for its broadcasts. Free to air broadcasts play an important role in providing information, and in particular in encouraging people to vote on the day. We would like to acknowledge that support and express our gratitude.

The Commission received many complaints during the campaign both in relation to the content of posters and the content and funding of social media advertising. The Commission has no role in relation to these matters and was unable to refer complainants to an appropriate agency as referendum advertising is not regulated.

Pursuant to S.14(1) of the Referendum Act 1998 I hereby present to the Minister the report of the Referendum Commission on the performance of its functions in respect of the referendum.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Isobel Kennedy". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end of the last name.

Ms Justice Isobel Kennedy
Chairperson
Referendum Commission
September 2018

Introduction

The referendum on the Thirty-sixth Amendment of the Constitution Bill 2018 was held on Friday 25 May 2018.

Establishment of the Referendum Commission

Under the Referendum Act 1998, on each occasion that a referendum falls to be held, the Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government may, at his/her discretion, establish a Referendum Commission. In the case of a constitutional amendment, s/he may only do so on or after the date the Bill is initiated in Dáil Éireann. The Bill was initiated on 7 March 2018.

On 9 March 2018, the Minister made an order establishing a Referendum Commission. Ms Justice Isobel Kennedy accepted the nomination of the Chief Justice to act as Chairperson of the Commission (who must be a former judge of the Supreme Court, the Court of Appeal or the High Court or a serving judge of the High Court).

The other members of the Commission are ex officio members.

They are:

- **Seamus McCarthy**
Comptroller and Auditor General
- **Peter Tyndall**
Ombudsman
- **Peter Finnegan**
Clerk of Dáil Éireann
- **Martin Groves**
Clerk of Seanad Éireann

Role of the Commission

The Commission's primary functions pursuant to statute are:

- to prepare one or more statements containing a general explanation of the subject matter of the proposal and of the text thereof in the relevant Bill and any other information relating to those matters that the Commission considers appropriate
- to promote public awareness of the referendum and encourage the electorate to vote at the poll
- to publish and distribute those statements in such manner and by such means including the use of television, radio and other electronic media as the Commission considers most likely to bring them to the attention of the electorate and to ensure as far as practicable that the means employed enable those with a sight or hearing disability to read or hear the statements concerned

The Commission must report on the performance of its functions to the Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government no later than six months after polling day and the Commission dissolves one month after submitting its report.

Key features of the referendum

The referendum Bill was passed by both Houses of the Oireachtas on 28 March 2018. On the same day, the Minister made an order setting 25 May 2018 as polling day.

Time available to the Referendum Commission

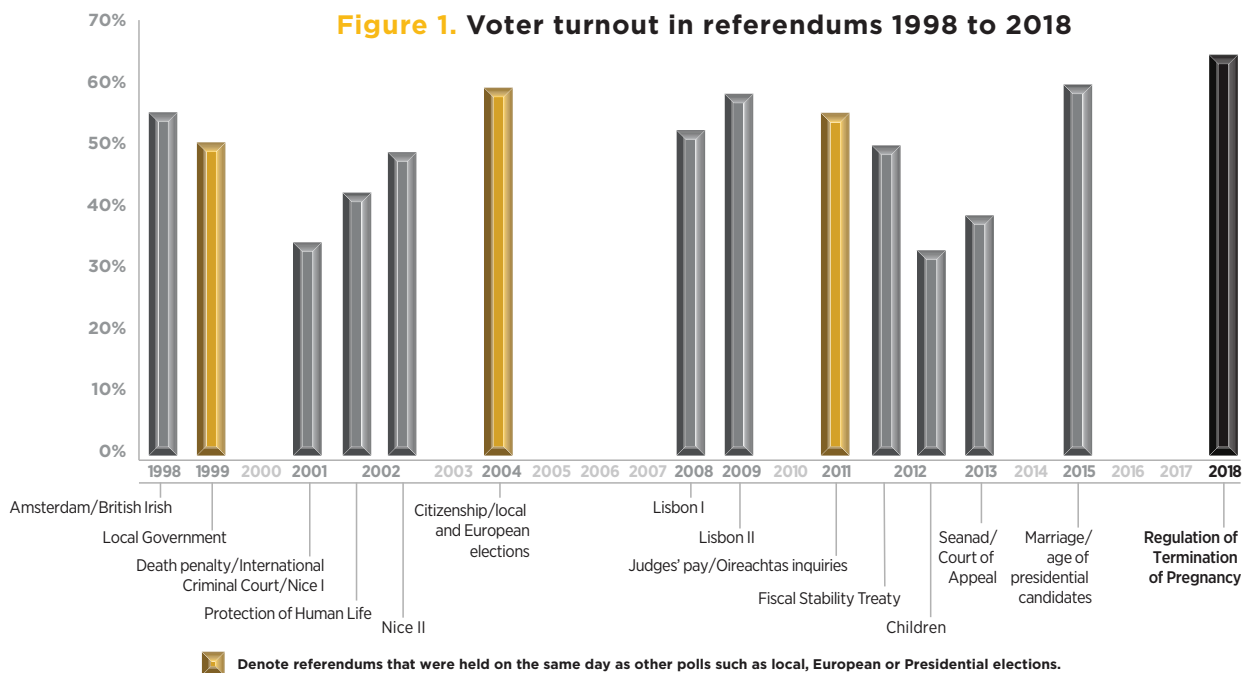
The Commission had just 11 weeks until polling day to plan and execute its campaign. The Commission met on 20 occasions prior to polling day. This relatively short period

presented considerable challenges to the Commission in properly carrying out its functions, particularly with regard to timely distribution of the printed independent guide.

Voter turnout

At 64.13%, voter turnout for the referendum was the highest since the first Referendum Commission was established in 1998. Figure 1 shows a significant degree of variability in the rate of voter turnout. Encouraging people to vote is one of the central functions of the Referendum Commission. Accordingly, the Commission is pleased that there was such a high turnout.

Other contributors to turnout are the level of public awareness of the referendum proposal, the nature of the campaigns for and against the proposal and the extent of the public debate on the issues. On this occasion, it is evident that the electorate was very engaged with the subject matter of the referendum.



The Commission's information campaign

The Commission's information campaign was designed to fulfil its functions as set out in law: to explain the referendum proposal, to promote awareness of the referendum and to encourage people to vote.

1

Promoting awareness: The subject matter of the referendum had been discussed and debated to a considerable extent and for a considerable period before the formal decision to hold a referendum was made. Accordingly, when the Commission began its campaign, there was already good awareness of the fact that a referendum was to take place and what it was about.

The advertising produced by the Commission focussed heavily on drawing voters' attention to the polling date and subject matter of the referendum.

2

Encouraging voting: The Commission ran a high profile campaign in advance of the referendum encouraging voter registration. The message from each channel of activity was to visit the website **checktheregister.ie** where voters could check their registration status, and then download the forms required either to register or to amend their details. The Commission also explained the voting process and encouraged voters to make plans to vote on polling day.

3

Explaining the proposal: The Commission, as is required by law, published an independent, accurate and neutral account of the referendum proposal. It included an explanation of the law as it stood before the referendum, an account of the proposed change, the effects of a Yes vote and the effects of a No vote.

This was published in a booklet that was distributed to all 2.2 million homes in the State. The Commission amplified its explanation through interviews given by the Commission Chairperson in various media and through a substantial advertising and social media campaign. The guide was also published on the website refcom2018.ie, along with other background information on relevant legislation and court judgments, and practical information on voting.

Campaign elements

The key communications elements used by the Commission to fulfil the three objectives were:

Guide

- > A guide to the referendum delivered to 2.2 million homes giving the core explanation of the proposal.

Website

- > A website, www.refcom2018.ie, which used written and video content to explain the law as it stood, the proposed change, the effect of a Yes vote and the effect of a No vote. It also included additional legal background information, information on how to vote and campaign news.

Social media

- > A social media presence on Twitter and Facebook giving campaign news and information, encouraging people to check the register and to vote. This included a week of curating the @ireland twitter account.

Accessible content

- > Versions of the referendum guide produced in braille, Irish Sign Language video, audio, large-print format and easy-to-read format for people with intellectual disabilities.

Advertising

- > A national advertising campaign on television, radio, online, press and outdoor to raise awareness of the referendum, to encourage voter registration and voting and to direct voters to the refcom2018.ie website where further information was available.

Free-to-air

- > Free-to-air broadcasts were provided to the Commission under law by national and regional broadcasters, both in line with legislation and augmented by voluntary additional time. These were used to give a more detailed account of the referendum proposal.

Media

- > Explaining the referendum proposal on national and regional radio as well as online news sources. The Chairperson, on behalf of the Commission, gave three interviews on RTE's Morning Ireland programme, one on Newstalk and one on TheJournal.ie through Facebook Live. Interviews were also given on around 20 local radio stations on the content of the referendum proposals.

Direct contact

- > Operating a lo-call phone line through which people could ask specific questions and get material posted to them. In addition responses were provided to questions submitted via email.

Figure 2. Key Campaign Statistics

Guide	2.2 million homes
Website	278,000 visits
Lo-call	1,190 calls
Broadcast media	25+ interviews
Emails	860
Letters	41

Resources

Funding allocations

The Commission was allocated €3.5 million by the Department of Health to cover the cost of its activities relating to the referendum. The Commission is satisfied with the level of funding provided, which was applied as shown in Figure 3. The unspent balance of €906,388 will be returned to the Department of Health.

In addition, the Commission is entitled to certain media-buying volume rebates arising from the referendum information campaign. The value of the rebates has not yet been established, but is estimated to be of the order of €22,500. When received, the proceeds of the rebates will be remitted to the Department of Health, and a note confirming the outturn and remission will be added to this report.

Figure 3. Expenditure on the referendum information campaign

	€
Campaign management fees	421,071
Content research	54,191*
Legal challenge fees	95,641
Guide production and distribution	455,138
Television / audio visual	459,216
Radio	254,561
Outdoor advertising	188,200
Print media	150,399
Online media	491,509
Administration and other costs	23,686
Total Expenditure	2,593,612

* Figures subject to rounding

Procurement

Early in 2018, the Office of the Ombudsman entered into framework agreements with a range of service providers. This approach was successful in previous referendum campaigns in securing appropriate services for the Commission at a reasonable cost. Those service providers are:

- > **Empirica Ltd** to advise and assist with specification development to procure services for the Referendum Commission
- > **Murray** public relations/communications services
- > **BBDO** creative and digital
- > **Mindshare** media planning/buying
- > **Colorman** booklet printing and distribution.

Legal services for the Commission, including engagement of Counsel, were provided by Philip Lee Solicitors, legal advisors to the Office of the Ombudsman.

The Office of the Ombudsman already had a contract in place with Webfactory for website design and they provided design and content management services for the Referendum Commission website.

Acknowledgements

The Commission is indebted to its service providers for assisting it to complete a wide array of tasks under very challenging time constraints. The various broadcast outlets and the national press also deserve thanks for their active co-operation with the Commission.

As marketing/communications consultant to the Commission, Murray, and Mark Brennock and Aoibheann O’Sullivan in particular, played a vital role in ensuring that the various strands of the campaign were delivered on time and in a coordinated fashion. The creative advertising agency BBDO, media buying agency Mindshare, website designers Webfactory, and booklet producers Colorman all delivered work of high quality under great time pressure. Niall Reynolds of BBDO, Ken Nolan of Mindshare, Marie Moran of Webfactory and Colin Reid of Colorman deserve special thanks as do the teams working with them.

The Commission is also grateful to its legal advisor, Patrick Walshe of Philip Lee Solicitors and Eoin McCullough SC and to Catherine Donnelly BL and Francis Kieran BL.

The Commission is extremely indebted to its secretariat, provided by the Office of the Ombudsman, for their work in assisting it through a highly pressured public information campaign. Without their help and knowledge, the Commission could not have carried out its functions. We would like to thank the team of Stephanie O’Connell, Rebecca Coyle, Deborah Smyth, Alan Perkins and Fergus Keegan, and in particular Sean Garvey, who served as Secretary to the Commission.

The Office of the Ombudsman provided other necessary facilities to the Commission and many of the staff of that Office also contributed to its work. We would like to thank the Director General of the Office of the Ombudsman, Jacqui McCrum, for providing us with those facilities and staff, and for her further assistance on the Commission’s procurement work. In particular, the Commission would like to thank Liam Duffy, the Head of ICT, and his team for their work on IT and the website, and Aidan Moore for his assistance and expertise on the procurement work. The Commission is grateful to the Office of the Ombudsman for this assistance.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The Commission's three main functions are to explain the subject matter of the referendum proposal, to promote awareness of the referendum and to encourage people to vote.

The Commission is pleased to note the high turnout of 64.13%, the highest since the first Referendum Commission was established in 1998. Past research has shown that high levels of engagement and prominent debate result in higher turnout in constitutional referendums.

The Commission is satisfied with the level of funding provided for the referendum. **The level of funding required for future referendums should be based on a number of factors, including the Commission's assessment of its funding requirements, based on its experience and the nature of referendum proposal(s).**

The use of focus group research on the content of the Commission's independent guide to the referendum proved very valuable in informing content and ensuring that it was clear and understandable. **The Commission would advise future Commissions to seek to ensure that adequate time be provided for such research in preparing campaigns.**

During this campaign, the Commission received many questions arising from a lack of clarity as to who if anyone has a role in regulating the content of posters and the content and funding of social media advertising. The Commission has no role in relation these matters. Given the large number of complaints about advertising, the changed context with the extensive use of social media and concerns about potential overseas interventions, **the Commission recommends that proposals to regulate advertising in future referendums should be drawn up. An extended role for the Advertising Standards Authority of Ireland might be an appropriate means of doing this.**

Most of the previous Referendum Commissions asked that more time be allowed for Commissions to do their work, and that the Referendum Commission be given a continuing legal identity – the possibility of establishing a permanent Electoral Commission has been proposed in the past. **The current Referendum Commission endorses the position adopted by its predecessors that the optimum solution to this situation is the assignment of all the current statutory functions of the Referendum Commission to an Electoral Commission.**

TUARASCÁIL AR AN
REIFREANN I nDÁIL LE
**FOIRCEANNADH
TOIRCHIS A RIALÁIL**



An Coimisiún Reifrinn
Referendum Commission



An Brollach

Caithfidh an Coimisiún Reifrinn, de réir an dlí, tuarascáil a réiteach don Aire Tithíochta, Pleanála agus Rialtais Áitiúil ar fheidhmíocht a fheidhmeanna. Leagtar amach sa tuarascáil seo an cur chuige a glacadh agus príomhghnéithe an fheachtais eolais ar tugadh faoi.

Ar an 9 Márta 2018, bhunaidh an tAire an Coimisiún Reifrinn don reifreann ar an mBille um an Séú Leasú is Tríocha ar an mBunreacht, 2018. Reáchtáladh an reifreann ar an 25 Bealtaine 2018. Mar thoradh air sin, ní raibh ach 11 seachtain ag an gCoimisiún Reifrinn chun a fheachtas eolais a réiteach agus a sheachadadh. Tá an Coimisiún den tuairim gurbh é sin an íostréimhse iomlán ina bhféadfaí feachtas eolais iomlán cuimsitheach a ullmhú agus a reáchtáil, agus nach raibh aon teagmhas ann sa chás go dtarlódh rud éigin nach rabhthas ag súil leis, cosúil le hagóid dhlíthiúil.

D'oibrigh an Coimisiún go dian lena chinntiú gur seachadadh gach gné den fheachtas agus tá mé an-bhuíoch as tiomantas chomhaltaí aonair an Choimisiúin, na foirne feidhmí agus na gcomhairleoirí as an bhfeachtas a sheachadadh faoin mbrú ama mór sin. Mar sin féin, ba cheart aga tionscanta i bhfad níos faide a chur ar fáil do Choimisiúin amach anseo.

Fuair an Coimisiún comhoibriú iontach ó gach craoltóir i ndáil le ham craolta saor in aisce a chur ar fáil i rith na dtréimhsí is mó amhairc

agus is mó éisteachta dá chraolacháin. Tá ról tábhachtach ag craolacháin saorchraolta ó thaobh eolas a sholáthar, agus go háirithe chun daoine a spreagadh le vóta a chaitheamh ar an lá. Ba mhaith linn an tacaíocht sin a aithint agus ár mbuíochas a chur in iúl.

Fuair an Coimisiún go leor gearán i rith an fheachtais i ndáil le hábhar na bpóstaer agus ábhar agus maoiniú na fógraíochta ar na meáin shóisialta. Níl aon ról ag an gCoimisiún i ndáil leis na ceisteanna sin, agus ní rabhthas in ann na gearánaigh a sheoladh ar aghaidh chuig gníomhaireacht chúí.

De bhun Alt 14(1) d'Acht an Reifrinn, 1998, cuirim tuarascáil an Choimisiúin Reifrinn maidir le cur i gcrích a fheidhmeanna i ndáil leis an reifreann faoi bhráid an Aire.

An Breitheamh Onórach Isobel Kennedy

An Cathaoirleach

An Coimisiún Reifrinn

Deireadh Fómhair 2018

Réamhrá

Reáchtáladh an reifreann ar an mBille um an Séú Leasú is Tríocha ar an mBunreacht, 2018 Dé hAoine, 25 Bealtaine 2018.

Bunú an Choimisiúin Reifrinn

Faoi Acht an Reifrinn, 1998, gach uair a bheidh reifreann le reáchtáil, féadfaidh an tAire Tithíochta, Pleanála agus Rialtais Áitiúil, faoina lánrogha féin, Coimisiún Reifrinn a bhunú. I gcás leasú ar an mbunreacht, ní fhéadfaidh sé/sí sin a dhéanamh ach ar an dáta a thionscnaítear an Bille i nDáil Éireann nó ina dhiaidh. Tionscnaíodh an Bille ar an 7 Márta 2018.

Ar an 9 Márta 2018, rinne an tAire ordú a bhunaigh an Coimisiún Reifrinn. Ghlac an Breitheamh Onórach Isobel Kennedy le hainmniúchán an Phríomh-Bhreithimh le bheith ina Cathaoirleach ar an gCoimisiún (caithfidh gurbh iar-bhreitheamh sa Chúirt Uachtarach, sa Chúirt Achomhairc nó san Ard-Chúirt nó

breitheamh reatha san Ard-Chúirt é/í). Is comhaltaí ex officio iad comhaltaí eile an Choimisiúin.

Is iad sin:

- **Seamus McCarthy**
an tArd-Reachtaire Cuntas agus Ciste
- **Peter Tyndall**
an tOmbudsman
- **Peter Finnegan**
Cléireach Dháil Éireann
- **Martin Groves**
Cléireach Sheanad Éireann

Ról an Choimisiúin

Is iad príomhfheidhmeanna an Choimisiúin de bhun an reachta:

- ráiteas amháin nó níos mó a réiteach ina bhfuil míniú ginearálta ar ábhar an togra agus ar théacs an togra sa Bhille ábhartha agus aon eolas eile a bhaineann leis na ceisteanna sin a mheasann an Coimisiún a bheith cuí
- na ráitis sin a fhoilsiú agus a dháileadh ar bhealach agus trí mhodhanna lena n-áirítear teilifís, raidió agus meáin leictreonach eile a úsáid a mheasann an Coimisiún gur mó a thabharfaidh siad an t-ábhar ar aird na dtoghthóirí agus lena chinntiú a mhéid agus is indéanta go praiticiúil go n-úsáidtear modhanna a chuireann ar chumas daoine faoi mhíchumas radhairc nó éisteachta na ráitis lena mbaineann a léamh nó a chloisteáil

- feacht an phobail ar an reifreann a chur chun cinn agus na toghthóirí a spreagadh chun vóta a chaitheamh

Caithfidh an Coimisiún Reifrinn tuairisciú don Aire Tithíochta, Pleanála agus Rialtais Áitiúil maidir le cur i gcrích a fheidhmeanna nach déanaí ná sé mhí tar éis lá na vótaíochta agus díscailtear an Coimisiún mí amháin tar éis a thuarascáil a sheoladh isteach.

Príomhghnéithe an reifrinn

Ritheadh Bille an reifrinn in dhá Theach an Oireachtais ar an 28 Márta 2018. Ar an lá céanna, rinne an tAire ordú inar leagadh síos an 25 Bealtaine 2018 mar lá na vótaíochta.

An t-am a bhí ar fáil don Choimisiún Reifrinn

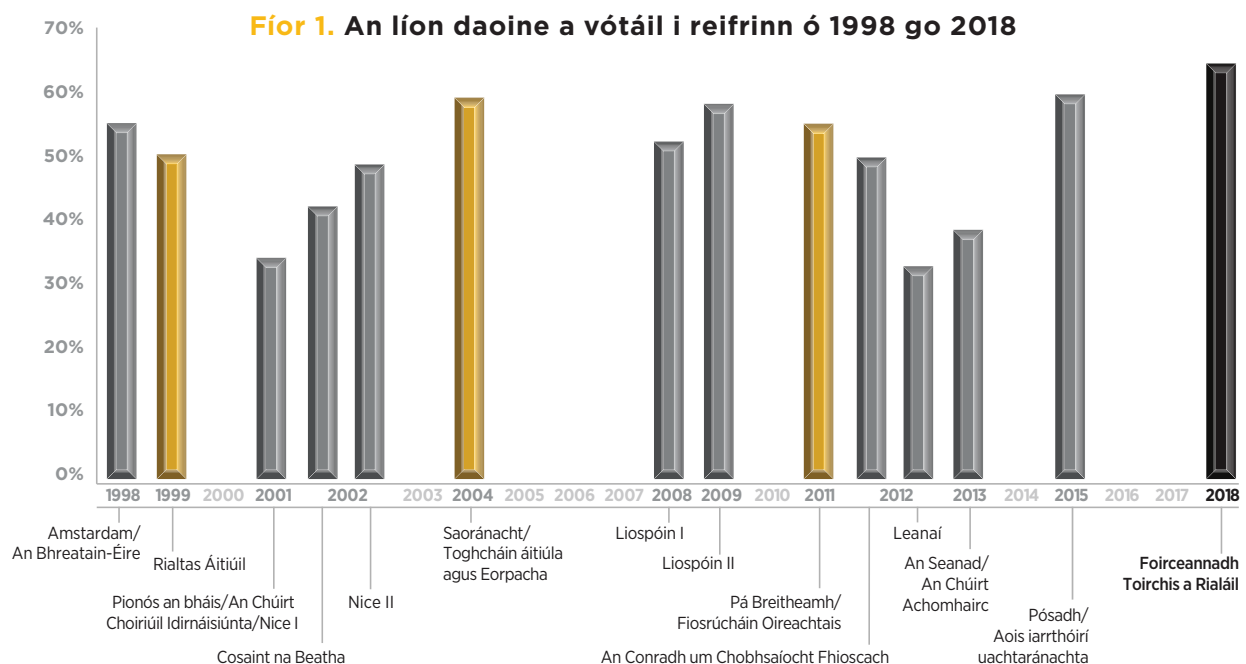
Ní raibh ach 11 seachtain ag an gCoimisiún go dtí lá na vótaíochta chun a fheachtas a phleanáil agus a chur i bhfeidhm. Tháinig an Coimisiún le chéile 20 uair roimh lá na vótaíochta. Bhí

dúshlán shuntasacha sa tréimhse ghairid sin don Choimisiún chun a fheidhmeanna a chomhlíonadh i gceart, go háirithe agus aird chuí ar dháileadh tráthúil na treorach neamhspleáiche priontáilte.

An líon daoine a vótáil

Ag 64.13%, bhí an líon daoine a vótáil ar an líon ba mhó ó bunaíodh an chéad Choimisiún Reifrinn in 1998. Léirítear i bhFíor 1 athraitheacht shuntasach sa ráta vótála. Tá daoine a spreagadh le vótáil ar cheann d'fheidhmeanna lárnacha an Choimisiúin Reifrinn. Dá réir sin, tá an Coimisiún sásta gur chaith líon chomh hard sin daoine vóta. Rudaí eile a chuireann leis an líon daoine a vótáil is ea leibhéal

na feasachta poiblí ar an togra reifrinn, cineál na bhfeachtas ar son an togra agus ina aghaidh agus an méid díospóireacht phoiblí a rinneadh faoi na saincheisteanna. An uair seo, is léir go raibh na toghthóirí an-tógtha le hábhar an reifrinn.



Léirítear reifrinn a reáchtáladh ar an lá céanna le vótáil eile cosúil le toghcháin áitiúla, Eorpacha agus Uachtaránachta.

Feachtas eolais an Choimisiúin

Dearadh feachtas eolais an Choimisiúin chun a fheidhmeanna arna leagan amach sa dlí a chomhlíonadh: togra an reifrinn a mhíniú, feasacht faoin reifreann a chur chun cinn agus daoine a spreagadh chun vóta a chaitheamh.

1

Feasacht a chur chun cinn: Bhí an-chur agus cúiteamh faoi ábhar an reifrinn ar feadh tréimhse fhada sula ndearnadh cinneadh foirmiúil chun reifreann a réachtáil. Dá réir sin, nuair a thosaigh an Coimisiún a fheachtas, bhí an pobal ar an eolas go maith cheana féin go raibh an reifreann le réachtáil agus faoi ábhar an reifrinn.

Dhírigh an fhógraíocht a cheap an Coimisiún go mór ar aird na vótálaithe a tharraingt ar an dáta vótála agus ar ábhar an reifrinn.

2

Vótáil a spreagadh: Réachtáil an Coimisiún feachtas a bhí go mór i mbéal an phobail roimh an reifreann chun clárúchán vótálaithe a spreagadh. Ba é an teachtaireacht a tháinig as gach modh gníomhaíochta cuairt a thabhairt ar an suíomh gréasáin **checktheregister.ie** áit a bhféadfadh toghthóirí a stádas clárúcháin a sheiceáil, agus na foirmeacha riachtanacha a íoslódáil le clárú nó chun a sonraí a leasú. Mhínigh an Coimisiún freisin an próiseas vótála agus spreag sé toghthóirí chun pleananna a dhéanamh le vótáil ar lá na vótaíochta.

3

An togra a mhíniú: D'fhoilsigh an Coimisiún, de réir mar a éilíonn an dlí, cuntas neamhspleách, beacht agus neodrach ar thogra an reifrinn. Áiríodh ann míniúchán ar an dlí mar a bhí roimh an reifreann, cuntas ar an athrú beartaithe, an tionchar a bheadh ag vóta Tá agus an tionchar a bheadh ag vóta Níl.

Foilsíodh é sin i leabhrán a dáileadh ar an 2.2 milliún áit chónaithe sa Stát. Chuir an Coimisiún lena mhíniú trí agallaimh a thug Cathaoirleach an Choimisiúin sna meáin éagsúla agus trí fheachtas suntasach fógraíochta agus sna meáin shóisialta. Foilsíodh an treoir ar an suíomh gréasáin refcom2018.ie freisin, mar aon le heolas cúlra eile ar an reachtaíocht agus breithnithe cúirte ábhartha, agus eolas praiticiúil ar vótáil. Feachtas eolais an Choimisiúin Dearadh feachtas eolais an Choimisiúin chun a fheidhmeanna arna leagan amach sa dlí a chomhlíonadh: togra an reifrinn a mhíniú, feasacht faoin reifreann a chur chun cinn agus daoine a spreagadh chun vóta a chaitheamh.

Gnéithe den fheachtas

Ba iad na príomhghnéithe cumarsáide a d'úsáid an Coimisiún chun na trí chuspóir a chomhlíonadh:

Treoir

- > Treoir maidir leis an reifreann a seachadadh chuig 2.2 milliún áit chónaithe inar tugadh croí-mhíniúchán ar an togra.

Suíomh gréasáin

- > Suíomh gréasáin, www.refcom2018.ie, inar úsáideadh ábhar scríofa agus físeáin chun an dlí reatha, an t-athrú beartaithe, an tionchar dlíthiúil a bheadh ag vóta Tá agus an tionchar dlíthiúil a bheadh ag vóta Níl a mhíniú. Áiríodh ann freisin eolas cúlra dlíthiúil breise, eolas maidir le vóta a chaitheamh agus nuacht faoin bhfeachtas.

Na meáin shóisialta

- > Láithreachtaí ar na meáin shóisialta ar Twitter agus Facebook inar tugadh nuacht agus eolas faoin bhfeachtas, ag spreagadh daoine chun an clár a sheiceáil agus vóta a chaitheamh. Áiríodh leis sin seachtain ag coimeád an chuntais Twitter @ireland.

Ábhar inrochtana

- > Leaganacha den treoir reifrinn a cuireadh ar fáil i mBraille, físeán le Teanga Chomharthaíochta na hÉireann, leaganacha fuaimne, i bhformáid mhórchlóg agus formáid éasca le léamh do dhaoine faoi mhíchumas intleachta.

Fógraíocht

- > Feachtas fógraíochta náisiúnta ar an teilifís, raidió, ar líne, sa phreas agus amuigh faoin spéir chun feachtas a ardú ar an reifreann, chun clárúchán toghthóirí agus vótáil a spreagadh agus chun toghthóirí a chur i dtreo an tsuímh gréasáin refcom2018.ie, áit a raibh tuilleadh eolais ar fáil.

Saorchraoladh

- > Chuir craoltóirí náisiúnta agus réigiúnacha craolacháin saorchraolta ar fáil don Choimisiún faoin dlí, de réir na reachtaíochta agus cuireadh am breise deonach ar fáil dó freisin. Úsáideadh iad sin chun cuntas níos mionsonraithe a thabhairt ar thogra an reifrinn.

Na Meáin

- > Togra an reifrinn a mhíniú ar an raidió náisiúnta agus réigiúnach mar aon le foinsí nuachta ar líne. Thug an Cathaoirleach, thar ceann an Choimisiúin, trí agallaimh ar chlár Morning Ireland RTÉ, ceann ar Newstalk agus ceann ar TheJournal.ie trí Facebook Beo. Tugadh agallaimh chomh maith ar thimpeall is 20 stáisiún raidió áitiúil maidir le hábhar thogra an reifrinn.

Teagmháil dhíreach

- > Líne ghutháin íosghlao a oibriú trína raibh daoine in ann ceisteanna sonracha a chur agus a iarraidh go seolfaí ábhar chucu tríd an bpost. Anuas air sin, cuireadh freagraí ar fáil do cheisteanna a seoladh isteach trí ríomhphost.

Fíor 2. Príomhstaitisticí an Fheachtais

Treoir	2.2 milliún áit chónaithe
Suíomh gréasáin	278,000 cuairt
Íosghlao	1,190 glao
Na meáin chraolta	25+ agallamh
Ríomhphoist	860
Litreacha	41

Acmhainní

Leithdháiltí maoinithe

Leithdháil an Roinn Sláinte €3.5 milliún don Choimisiún chun costas na ngníomhaíochtaí a bhain leis an reifreann a chlúdach. Tá an Coimisiún sásta leis an leibhéal maoinithe a cuireadh ar fáil, a caitheadh de réir mar a léirítear i bhFíor 3. Tabharfar an t-iarmhéid €906,388 nár caitheadh ar ais don Roinn Sláinte.

Anuas air sin, tá an Coimisiún i dteideal ardlacáistí áirithe meán a cheannach ag eascairt as feachtas eolais an reifrinn. Níor deimhníodh luach na n-ardlacáistí go fóill ach meastar gurb ionann agus €22,500 iad. Nuair a fhaightear iad, tabharfar fáltais na n-ardlacáistí don Roinn Sláinte, in éineacht le nóta, ina ndeimhnítear an t-olltoradh agus an laghdú, a chuirfear leis an tuarascáil seo.

Fíor 3. Caiteachas ar fheachtas eolais an reifrinn

	€
Táillí bainistithe feachtais	421,071
Taighde ar ábhar	54,191 *
Táillí d'agóidí dlíthiúla	95,641
Táirgeadh agus dáileadh na treorach	455,138
Teilifís / closamhairc	459,216
Raidió	254,561
Fógraíocht faoin spéir	188,200
Na meáin chlóite	150,399
Na meáin ar líne	491,509
Riarachán agus costais eile	23,686
Caiteachas Iomlán	2,593,612

* Déantar na figiúirí a shlánú go dtí an figiúr is gaire

Soláthar

Go luath in 2018, rinne Oifig an Ombudsman creat-chomhaontuithe le réimse soláthraithe seirbhíse. D'éirigh go maith leis an gcur chuige sin i bhfeachtais reifrinn roimhe seo chun seirbhísí cuí a bhaint amach don Choimisiún ag costas réasúnach. Is iad na soláthraithe seirbhíse sin:

- > **Empirica Ltd** chun comhairle agus cúnamh a chur ar fáil le haghaidh forbairt sonraíochta chun seirbhísí a fháil don Choimisiún Reifrinn
- > **Murray** caidreamh poiblí/seirbhísí cumarsáide
- > **BBDO** cruthaitheach agus digiteach
- > **Mindshare** pleanáil meán/ceannach
- > **Colorman** dearadh, priontáil agus dáileadh leabhráin.

Buíochas

Tá an Coimisiún fórbhuíoch dá sholáthraithe seirbhíse as cuidiú leis réimse leathan tascanna a chur i gcrích faoi shrianta ama an-dúshlánach. Tá buíochas tuillte freisin ag na hasraonta craolacháin éagsúla agus ag an bpreas náisiúnta as a gcomhoibriú gníomhach leis an gCoimisiún.

Mar chomhairleoirí margaíochta/cumarsáide leis an gCoimisiún, bhí ról lárnach ag Murray, Mark Brennock agus Aoi bheann O'Sullivan go háirithe, lena chinntiú gur seachadadh snáithe éagsúla an fheachtais in am agus ar bhealach comhordaithe. Chuir an ghníomhaireacht fógraíochta cruthaithí BBDO, an ghníomhaireacht ceannaigh meán Mindshare, na dearthóirí suíomh gréasáin Webfactory, agus na táirgeoirí leabhrán Colorman obair den chéad scoth ar fáil faoi bhrú ama mór. Tá buíochas ar leith ag dul do Niall Reynolds as BBDO, Ken Nolan as Mindshare, Marie Moran as Webfactory agus Colin Reid as Colorman mar aon leis na foirne a bhí ag obair leo.

Tá an Coimisiún buíoch chomh maith dá chomhairleoir dlí, Patrick Walshe as Philip Lee Solicitors, an tAbhcóide Sinsearach Eoin McCullough agus Catherine Donnelly BL agus Francis Kieran BL.

Chuir Philip Lee Solicitors, comhairleoirí dlí Oifig an Ombudsman seirbhísí dlí, lena n-áirítear Abhcóide a fhostú, ar fáil don Choimisiún.

Bhí conradh i bhfeidhm cheana féin ag Oifig an Ombudsman le Webfactory don dearadh gréasáin agus chuir siad seirbhísí bainistíochta dearaidh agus ábhair ar fáil don shuíomh gréasáin an Choimisiúin Reifrinn.

Tá an Coimisiún fórbhuíoch dá rúnaíocht, arna chur ar fáil ag Oifig an Ombudsman, as an obair a rinne siad ag cuidiú le trí fheachtas eolais poiblí lena bhain go leor brú. Gan a gcúnamh agus a gcuid eolais siúd, ní fhéadfadh an Coimisiún a chuid feidhmeanna a chomhlíonadh. Ba mhaith linn buíochas a ghabháil leis an bhfoireann Stephanie O'Connell, Rebecca Coyle, Deborah Smyth, Alan Perkins agus Fergus Keegan, agus go háirithe le Sean Garvey, a d'fheidhmigh mar Rúnaí an Choimisiúin.

Chuir Oifig an Ombudsman áiseanna riachtanacha eile ar fáil don Choimisiún agus chuir go leor d'fhoireann na hOifige sin lena chuid oibre freisin. Ba mhaith linn buíochas a ghabháil le hArd-Stiúrthóir Oifig an Ombudsman, Jacqui McCrum, as áiseanna agus foireann a chur ar fáil dúinn, agus as cúnamh breise a thabhairt le hobair soláthair an Choimisiúin. Ba mhaith leis an gCoimisiún buíochas a ghlacadh go háirithe le Liam Duffy, Ceannasaí TFC, agus lena fhoireann as a gcuid oibre ar theicneolaíocht faisnéise agus ar an suíomh gréasáin, agus le Aidan Moore as a chúnamh agus a shaineolas ar obair soláthair. Tá an Coimisiún buíoch le hOifig an Ombudsman as an gcúnamh sin.

Conclúidí agus Moltaí

Is iad na trí phríomhfheidhm atá ag an gCoimisiún ábhar togra an reifrinn a mhíniú, feacht faoin reifreann a chur chun cinn agus daoine a spreagadh chun vóta a chaitheamh.

Is mór ag an gCoimisiún gur chaith 64.13% de thoghthóirí vóta, an líon ba mhó daoine a vótáil ó bunaíodh an chéad Choimisiún Reifrinn in 1998. Léiríodh i dtaighde roimhe seo go dtagann níos mó daoine amach ag vótáil má bhíonn leibhéil arda rannpháirtíochta agus go leor díospóireachta ar siúl roimh ré.

Tá an Coimisiún sásta leis an leibhéal maoinithe a cuireadh ar fáil don reifreann. **Ba cheart an leibhéal maoinithe a theastaíonn do reifrinn amach seo a bhunú ar roinnt tosca, lena n-áirítear measúnú an Choimisiúin ar a riachtanais mhaoinithe, bunaithe ar a thaithí agus ar chineál an togra (na dtograí) reifrinn.**

Bhí an úsáid a baineadh as taighde grúpa fócais ar an ábhar i dtreoir neamhspleách an Choimisiúin an-luachmhar chun bonn eolais a chur faoin ábhar agus chun a chinntiú go raibh sé soiléir agus sothuigthe. **Chuirfeadh an Coimisiún comhairle ar Choimisiúin amach anseo d'fhonn a chinntiú go gcuirfí dóthain ama ar fáil don taighde seo agus feachtais á réiteach.**

I rith an fheachtais seo, fuair an Coimisiún go leor ceisteanna ag eascairt as an easpa soiléireachta maidir le cé aige a bhfuil ról, má tá sé ag aon duine, i rialáil ábhar na bpóstaer agus ábhar agus maoiniú na fógraíochta ar na meáin shóisialta. Níl aon ról ag an gCoimisiún i ndáil leis na ceisteanna sin. Mar gheall ar an líon mór gearán a fuarthas faoin bhfógraíocht, an comhthéacs athraithe agus úsáid fairsing na meán sóisialta agus imní faoi idirghabháil fhéideartha ó thar lear, **molann an Coimisiún gur cheart moltaí a chur le chéile chun fógraíocht a rialú i reifrinn sa todhchaí. D'fhéadfadh sé a bheith oiriúnach ról níos leithne a thabhairt d'Údarás Caighdeáin Fógraíochta na hÉireann chuige sin.**

D'iarr formhór na gCoimisiún Reifrinn roimhe seo go gceadófaí tuilleadh ama do Choimisiúin chun a gcuid oibre a dhéanamh, agus go dtabharfaí aitheantas dlíthiúil leanúnach don Choimisiún Reifrinn – an fhéidearthacht go mbunófaí Coimisiún Toghchánaíochta buan, mar a moladh cheana. **Formhuiníonn an Coimisiún Reifrinn reatha an seasamh a ghlac a réamhthéachtaithe gurb é an réiteach is fearr ar an gcás seo go saineofaí feidhmeanna reachtúla reatha uile an Choimisiúin Reifrinn chuig Coimisiún Toghchánaíochta.**



An Coimisiún Reifrinn
Referendum Commission