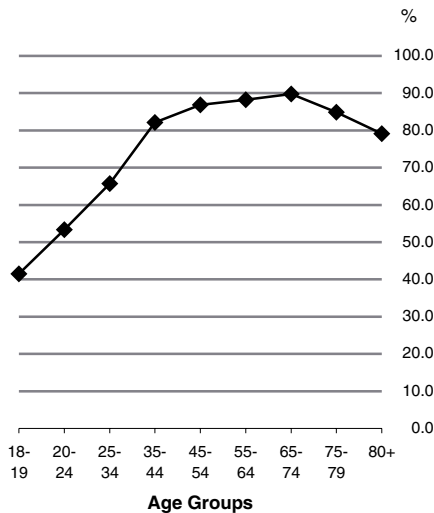




## Quarterly National Household Survey *Voter Participation and Abstention* Third Quarter 2002

**Voter Participation by Age**



### Voter abstention highest among young people

Significant differences were revealed in voter participation in the May 2002 General Election between younger and older persons who responded to a special survey module on the topic that was included in the Quarterly National Household Survey in the third quarter of 2002.\*

Just over 40% of young adult respondents aged 18-19, and only 53% of those aged 20-24, indicated that they voted in the election. Voter participation increased rapidly with age thereafter to reach a high of almost 90% for those aged 65-74. Voter participation remained quite high amongst elderly respondents with almost 85% of those aged 75-79 and over 79% of those aged 80 or over indicating that they voted. *See Table 1 and graph across.*

Male and female voter participation rates were very similar. However, there were significant differences when the rates were analysed according to the Principal Economic Status of the respondent. Just over three-quarters (75.8%) of those at work said they voted compared with 58.8% of the unemployed. Not surprisingly, a lower turnout was indicated by students eligible to vote (51.9%) while respondents on home duties and retired turned out in greater numbers with participation rates of 80.1% and 87.0% respectively.

### Just over one in ten cite disillusionment as reason for abstaining

Circumstantial reasons, such as not being registered to vote or being absent/away, were cited by 57% of non-voters as reasons for deciding not to vote. Amongst these non-voters *Not Registered* (21.8%), *Away* (15.6%) and *Too busy* (8.5%) were the most commonly identified individual reasons for abstaining. On the other hand, over 37% of non-voters indicated that they had either *No Interest* (20.4%), were *Disillusioned* (10.6%), felt *Vote would make no difference* (3.7%) or *Lacked understanding/information* (2.9%). *See Table 2.*

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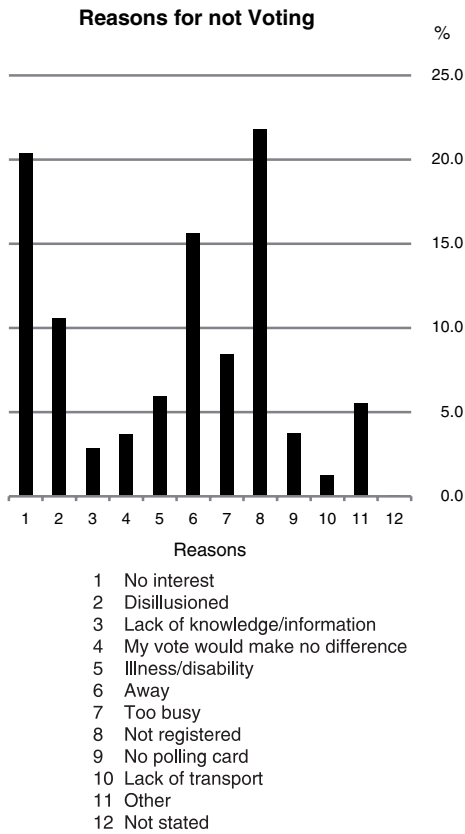
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\* Overall, 75.5% of respondents indicated that they voted in the election compared with an actual turnout rate of 62%. This overstatement of voter participation, which is usual in surveys of this type, reflects the likelihood of a lower turnout amongst non-respondents to the survey and also possible reluctance amongst some respondents to admit that they did not vote. Despite these shortcomings the survey results provide a sound basis for analysing the reasons for not voting and also for contrasting voters and non-voters in respect of their socio-demographic characteristics and attitudes.

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Young people were the least likely to be registered to vote i.e. either not on the electoral register at all or not registered at a suitable address for voting. Just under 40% of non-voters aged 18-19, and also a similar percentage of those who classified themselves as students, abstained for these reasons. In the case of those aged 65 and over who did not vote, 37.9% cited *Illness/disability* as the reason for not participating in the election. Voluntary reasons, such as *No interest or Disillusioned*, were the more commonly cited reasons for abstaining by non-voters in the middle age groups.

Some 40% of non-voters made their decision not to vote quite close to election day while almost 26% indicated that they had their minds made up at a much earlier stage. A further 24% made up their minds in the weeks coming up to the election while 10% were unaware of when they decided. See Table 3.

### Over 80% of those who voted participate in most elections

83% of persons who voted in the May 2002 general election *voted in all or most types of elections* since they became eligible to vote. This compares with fewer than 25% of persons who did not vote. In contrast, almost 35% of those that did not vote in the 2002 general election *did not vote in any type of election* since they became eligible to vote – compared with less than 1% for voters. See Tables 4a & 4b.

In the case of non-voters in May 2002, regular abstention from elections is most pronounced among younger people, the unemployed and students. Over 55% of those aged under 25 claimed that they did not vote in any election since they became eligible to vote while almost 47% of those classified as unemployed were in this category.

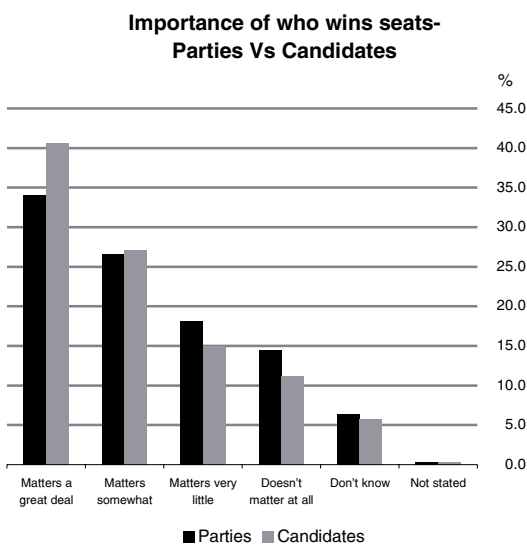
Over 60% of people responding to the survey (both voters and non-voters) did not have a preference in relation to the day of the week on which voting occurs. Of those who did indicate a preference Saturday was the day most preferred. This preference was most important to voting and non-voting students with 50.8% and 41.2% respectively indicating that Saturday would be the most convenient for them. See Tables 5a & 5b.

### Candidates perceived to be somewhat more important than parties

Over 40% of respondents indicated that *it matters a great deal* which candidate is elected in a general election while a further 27% said *it matters somewhat*. The perceived importance of parties was somewhat less at 34% and 27% respectively. Both voters and non-voters reflected this relative perception. Not surprisingly, voters are more convinced of the importance of candidates and parties. For example, over 46% of voters think it *matters a great deal* which particular candidates win seats compared with just 23% of non-voters. See Table 6a & 6b.

### Television, national newspapers and national radio the main sources of information on politics/current affairs

Television and the national newspapers are the primary sources of information on politics and current affairs for voters and non-voters alike. Over 76% of voters use television in this regard *once a week or more* while the comparable figure for non-voters was 48.1%. Looking at figures for *everyday* use, national radio is the most commonly used medium with 33.2% of voters and 18.1% of non-voters using it for obtaining information. See Tables 7a & 7b.



## 70% satisfied with the workings of democracy in Ireland

A little over 70% of all respondents indicated they were satisfied with the workings of democracy in Ireland. This figure is comprised of 16.2% who were *very satisfied* and 54.1% who were *fairly satisfied*. Being very satisfied with the workings of democracy increased directly with age, with over 20% of persons 65 or over expressing satisfaction compared with only 10.7% of 18 and 19 year olds. *See Table 8.*

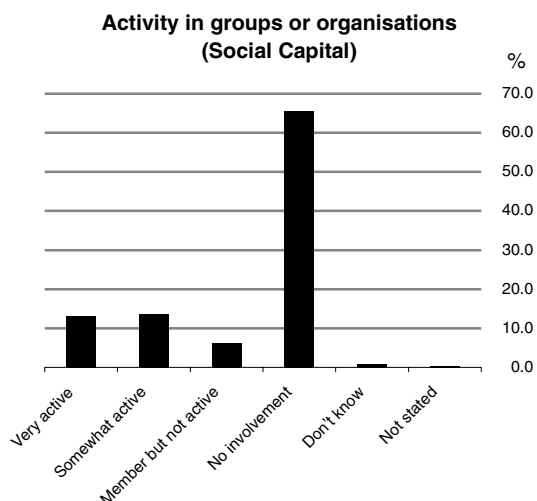
Voters showed a relatively higher level of satisfaction than non-voters, 75.6% compared to 54.2%. A significant proportion, 22.1%, of non-voters were unable to indicate their level of satisfaction compared with 7.3% of voters.

## Voters more involved in society than non-voters

Information was collected from respondents on their involvement with various voluntary groups and organisations in society. These organisations and groups included charities, sports clubs, local community clubs, political parties and religious groups.

Over 65% of all persons entitled to vote in the May 2002 general election said they have had *no such involvement* with organisations/groups of this kind. Men were more actively involved than women with over 30% indicating active involvement compared with 23.5% in the case of females. Active involvement was most pronounced amongst those aged 35 to 54 inclusive while the least active were aged 65 and over. *See Table 9.*

Almost 74% of non-voters said that they had no involvement compared with 63% of voters.



## Marked differences in attitudes, interests and backgrounds between voters and non-voters

Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with a set of statements covering their attitudes, interests and backgrounds. Significant differences were recorded between voters and non-voters as can be seen from the following summary table. *See also Table 10 for more detail.*

Statements on general voting issues	Percentage of Voters who strongly agree or agree	Percentage of Non-voters who strongly agree or agree
I enjoy watching/listening to the results of the general election on TV/Radio	59.6	34.3
I think of myself as having definite views on political issues	57.6	35.5
Public representatives do not care about the opinions of ordinary people	37.3	41.4
Everyone has a duty to vote	90.1	56.3
I feel I have a good understanding of the important political issues facing the country	72.2	47.5
In general I think most politicians are honest	33.0	17.1
Most of my family and friends vote	83.6	57.2

**Table 1 Persons who were eligible to vote in the May 2002 general election classified by whether they voted or not**

	%		
	Yes	No	Total
<b>State</b>	<b>75.5</b>	<b>24.5</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Region</b>			
Border	78.9	21.1	100.0
Midlands	79.4	20.5	100.0
West	78.1	21.9	100.0
Dublin	71.6	28.4	100.0
Mid-East	71.5	28.5	100.0
Mid-West	79.7	20.3	100.0
South-East	80.6	19.4	100.0
South-West	74.5	25.5	100.0
<b>Sex</b>			
Male	75.9	24.1	100.0
Female	75.2	24.8	100.0
<b>Age group</b>			
18-19	41.5	58.5	100.0
20-24	53.4	46.7	100.0
25-34	65.7	34.3	100.0
35-44	82.2	17.8	100.0
45-54	86.9	13.1	100.0
55-64	88.2	11.8	100.0
65-74	89.8	10.2	100.0
75-79	84.9	15.0	100.0
80+	79.1	20.9	100.0
<b>Marital status</b>			
Single	61.9	38.1	100.0
Married	85.7	14.3	100.0
Separated	72.3	27.7	100.0
Widowed	83.3	16.7	100.0
<b>Principal economic status</b>			
At work	75.8	24.2	100.0
Unemployed	58.8	41.2	100.0
Student	51.9	48.1	100.0
On home duties	80.1	19.9	100.0
Retired	87.0	12.9	100.0
Others	71.1	28.9	100.0

**Table 2 Non-voters in the May 2002 general election classified by reason(s) for not voting**

	No interest	Disillusioned	Lack of knowledge/information	My vote would make no difference	Illness/disability	Away	Too busy	Not registered	No polling card	Lack of transport	Other	Not stated	Total
<b>State</b>	<b>20.4</b>	<b>10.6</b>	<b>2.9</b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>6.0</b>	<b>15.6</b>	<b>8.5</b>	<b>21.8</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>5.6</b>	<b>0.1</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Region</b>													
Border	23.4	11.3	2.7	8.1	9.2	14.5	5.7	15.5	1.6	2.5	5.5	*	100.0
Midlands	22.7	13.4	1.8	5.2	7.2	16.0	2.7	23.4	1.4	1.9	4.5	*	100.0
West	20.3	10.4	3.0	2.7	5.5	14.3	8.5	26.3	2.9	1.0	4.9	*	100.0
Dublin	18.3	11.0	3.2	3.4	5.4	16.6	10.9	19.5	3.9	1.1	6.6	*	100.0
Mid-East	17.4	6.2	1.7	1.7	5.1	16.5	7.2	33.3	3.5	0.9	6.5	*	100.0
Mid-West	27.3	12.2	5.2	2.9	4.4	9.0	6.6	17.7	9.0	0.3	5.3	*	100.0
South-East	22.5	9.0	3.1	2.9	5.7	17.3	2.6	23.9	4.4	1.7	6.8	*	100.0
South-West	20.1	11.8	2.0	4.1	6.8	16.8	11.6	19.4	3.3	1.1	2.7	0.4	100.0
<b>Sex</b>													
Male	19.9	13.2	2.7	3.8	4.1	16.2	9.5	21.0	3.9	0.6	5.1	*	100.0
Female	20.8	8.1	3.1	3.6	7.7	15.0	7.4	22.6	3.6	1.9	6.0	0.2	100.0
<b>Age group</b>													
18-19	24.0	4.6	2.6	4.0	*	9.0	5.8	39.4	6.3	0.7	3.6	*	100.0
20-24	25.8	5.8	4.5	2.6	0.9	17.3	9.6	25.5	4.3	0.3	3.5	*	100.0
25-34	21.1	11.6	2.5	3.3	2.5	16.3	9.9	24.6	3.8	0.4	4.0	*	100.0
35-44	17.8	15.2	2.5	4.0	4.0	14.6	9.8	19.8	3.7	0.8	7.9	*	100.0
45-54	16.7	17.4	2.0	5.2	6.2	18.0	9.7	10.8	2.1	1.0	10.5	0.5	100.0
55-64	13.8	16.0	1.9	4.1	12.4	21.5	6.7	9.5	3.7	1.7	8.7	*	100.0
65+	11.0	9.6	1.9	5.5	37.9	11.8	1.3	3.5	0.9	8.3	8.3	*	100.0
<b>Marital status</b>													
Single	22.9	9.3	3.4	3.4	2.7	14.0	8.0	27.0	4.4	0.7	4.3	0.1	100.0
Married	16.9	12.8	1.8	4.1	7.7	20.6	10.8	14.0	2.5	1.4	7.2	0.2	100.0
Separated	19.0	16.6	2.2	4.1	4.8	11.3	8.3	19.7	4.3	1.0	8.7	*	100.0
Widowed	10.5	8.8	2.9	4.9	35.8	13.2	2.1	3.7	1.9	7.3	8.9	*	100.0
<b>Principal economic status</b>													
At work	20.6	10.9	2.5	3.2	1.9	18.3	11.2	22.6	3.2	0.4	5.1	0.1	100.0
Unemployed	24.5	12.2	4.3	4.8	2.7	10.2	3.6	23.6	7.3	1.0	5.9	*	100.0
Student	14.7	6.1	4.6	3.7	0.1	18.0	6.4	38.4	4.5	0.6	2.9	*	100.0
On home duties	24.3	10.1	2.6	5.1	13.7	9.8	6.2	13.3	3.5	3.3	8.1	*	100.0
Retired	11.1	14.2	1.9	3.8	31.1	13.7	1.8	6.5	1.9	6.0	8.2	*	100.0
Others	22.0	13.9	1.4	2.6	25.9	8.2	2.3	13.1	5.5	1.3	3.8	*	100.0

\* Sample occurrence too small for estimation

**Table 3 Non-voters in the May 2002 general election classified by when they decided not to vote**

								%
	On voting day	Few days before	Few weeks before	Few months before	Much earlier	Don't know	Not Stated	Total
<b>State</b>	<b>18.2</b>	<b>22.2</b>	<b>23.8</b>	<b>7.3</b>	<b>18.6</b>	<b>9.7</b>	<b>0.2</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Region</b>								
Border	18.5	17.6	23.2	7.9	22.3	10.4	*	100.0
Midlands	15.7	14.7	28.8	3.0	23.7	14.2	*	100.0
West	10.2	29.2	32.5	4.0	16.6	7.6	*	100.0
Dublin	22.5	24.8	22.2	7.6	13.6	9.2	*	100.0
Mid-East	20.0	19.0	25.1	6.9	20.2	8.8	*	100.0
Mid-West	11.9	21.7	22.9	2.0	29.7	11.7	*	100.0
South-East	12.0	20.1	20.2	6.7	28.6	12.4	*	100.0
South-West	19.1	21.0	21.9	12.4	15.8	8.7	1.0	100.0
<b>Sex</b>								
Male	17.5	20.9	23.6	7.0	20.6	10.3	0.1	100.0
Female	19.0	23.5	23.9	7.5	16.8	9.1	0.2	100.0
<b>Age group</b>								
18-19	12.2	23.3	25.7	5.3	21.6	11.9	*	100.0
20-24	17.1	24.7	24.6	7.0	15.1	11.2	0.3	100.0
25-34	17.7	22.5	25.7	7.3	17.8	8.8	0.1	100.0
35-44	22.5	22.1	20.2	8.1	18.6	8.4	*	100.0
45-54	22.7	19.1	20.7	7.1	18.6	11.4	0.4	100.0
55-64	23.1	18.6	20.6	8.5	21.4	7.8	*	100.0
65+	15.9	19.2	23.2	8.3	25.6	7.6	*	100.0
<b>Marital status</b>								
Single	15.7	23.6	24.3	7.2	18.3	10.8	0.1	100.0
Married	23.6	20.0	23.7	7.2	17.5	7.5	0.4	100.0
Separated	21.1	19.4	17.5	7.9	23.9	10.1	*	100.0
Widowed	16.4	20.7	24.0	7.4	23.2	8.2	*	100.0
<b>Principal economic status</b>								
At work	20.2	22.3	24.9	6.2	17.1	9.0	0.3	100.0
Unemployed	14.9	16.5	19.4	9.2	22.9	17.1	*	100.0
Student	10.4	29.5	32.2	8.5	14.2	5.2	*	100.0
On home duties	19.9	20.4	18.4	8.9	21.0	11.4	*	100.0
Retired	17.3	17.9	23.7	9.2	23.6	7.9	*	100.0
Others	12.3	26.3	13.3	4.9	29.5	13.7	*	100.0

\* Sample occurrence too small for estimation

**Table 4a Voters in the May 2002 general election classified by voting patterns in previous elections**

	%					
	Voted in all or most	Voted in some	Did not vote in any	May-02 was my first	Not stated	Total
<b>All</b>	<b>83.0</b>	<b>14.4</b>	<b>0.6</b>	<b>1.9</b>	<b>0.2</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Sex</b>						
Male	83.3	14.0	0.6	1.9	0.2	100.0
Female	82.7	14.7	0.6	1.8	0.2	100.0
<b>Age group</b>						
18-19	42.6	13.5	3.4	40.5	*	100.0
20-24	61.4	29.8	1.6	7.2	*	100.0
25-34	75.7	22.0	1.3	0.8	0.2	100.0
35-44	85.2	14.1	0.2	0.3	0.3	100.0
45-54	88.0	11.5	0.1	0.1	0.3	100.0
55-64	90.6	8.7	0.3	0.2	0.2	100.0
65+	92.6	6.8	0.2	0.2	0.1	100.0
<b>Principal economic status</b>						
At work	82.2	15.7	0.7	1.2	0.2	100.0
Unemployed	77.7	19.2	0.5	2.5	*	100.0
Student	55.3	19.5	1.9	23.3	*	100.0
On home duties	86.2	12.5	0.5	0.7	0.1	100.0
Retired	91.8	7.4	0.2	0.4	0.2	100.0
Others	82.0	17.2	*	0.5	*	100.0

\* Sample occurrence too small for estimation

**Table 4b Non-voters in the May 2002 general election classified by voting patterns in previous elections**

	%					
	Voted in all or most	Voted in some	Did not vote in any	May-02 was my first	Not stated	Total
<b>All</b>	<b>24.8</b>	<b>35.5</b>	<b>34.7</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Sex</b>						
Male	24.1	34.1	36.2	5.1	0.5	100.0
Female	25.5	36.9	33.2	3.9	0.6	100.0
<b>Age group</b>						
18-19	3.0	9.8	57.7	29.5	*	100.0
20-24	13.8	27.4	54.8	3.7	0.3	100.0
25-34	22.9	44.7	31.3	0.6	0.5	100.0
35-44	30.8	42.3	25.3	0.6	1.1	100.0
45-54	40.3	41.0	16.7	1.5	0.6	100.0
55-64	43.2	36.4	18.4	1.5	*	100.0
65+	50.1	39.7	8.4	1.0	0.8	100.0
<b>Principal economic status</b>						
At work	26.1	36.6	34.2	2.4	0.7	100.0
Unemployed	12.1	34.1	46.6	7.0	*	100.0
Student	10.6	19.2	49.6	20.6	*	100.0
On home duties	29.0	40.0	29.5	1.1	0.4	100.0
Retired	47.8	38.6	11.8	0.9	1.0	100.0
Others	23.5	48.5	25.2	2.3	0.6	100.0

\* Sample occurrence too small for estimation

**Table 5a Voters in the May 2002 general election classified by preferred voting day**

						%
	Weekdays	Saturdays	Sundays	Doesn't matter	Not stated	Total
<b>All</b>	<b>9.8</b>	<b>22.2</b>	<b>5.3</b>	<b>62.5</b>	<b>0.2</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Sex</b>						
Male	9.5	24.1	6.5	59.6	0.3	100.0
Female	10.1	20.3	4.1	65.3	0.2	100.0
<b>Age group</b>						
18-19	9.7	40.4	6.8	43.1	*	100.0
20-24	9.7	35.9	7.8	46.5	*	100.0
25-34	10.4	28.2	5.5	55.5	0.4	100.0
35-44	10.0	21.9	5.7	62.2	0.2	100.0
45-54	10.7	22.0	5.2	61.8	0.3	100.0
55-64	8.8	18.2	5.2	67.6	0.2	100.0
65+	8.7	10.2	3.3	77.6	0.2	100.0
<b>Principal economic status</b>						
At work	10.5	25.7	6.5	57.1	0.3	100.0
Unemployed	9.8	20.6	3.7	65.6	0.3	100.0
Student	10.2	50.8	7.4	31.4	0.3	100.0
On home duties	8.9	14.4	3.1	73.4	0.2	100.0
Retired	7.9	11.6	4.0	76.3	0.3	100.0
Others	10.5	16.4	2.1	70.9	*	100.0

\* Sample occurrence too small for estimation

**Table 5b Non-voters in the May 2002 general election classified by preferred voting day**

						%
	Weekdays	Saturdays	Sundays	Doesn't matter	Not stated	Total
<b>All</b>	<b>6.0</b>	<b>23.5</b>	<b>5.7</b>	<b>64.3</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Sex</b>						
Male	6.6	25.5	7.5	59.9	0.5	100.0
Female	5.5	21.5	4.0	68.5	0.6	100.0
<b>Age group</b>						
18-19	5.8	30.3	5.7	58.1	*	100.0
20-24	6.2	31.4	5.0	57.1	0.3	100.0
25-34	6.3	25.5	7.5	60.1	0.5	100.0
35-44	5.7	20.3	5.2	67.8	1.0	100.0
45-54	6.7	17.7	4.5	70.4	0.7	100.0
55-64	5.4	10.2	5.6	78.3	*	100.0
65+	4.9	6.3	3.1	84.6	1.1	100.0
<b>Principal economic status</b>						
At work	6.9	27.8	6.8	57.8	0.7	100.0
Unemployed	5.4	16.5	6.1	72.1	*	100.0
Student	5.2	41.2	7.8	45.8	*	100.0
On home duties	5.1	8.6	1.5	84.4	0.4	100.0
Retired	5.1	7.8	3.7	82.4	1.0	100.0
Others	2.2	6.8	2.4	88.0	*	100.0

\* Sample occurrence too small for estimation



**Table 6a Persons entitled to vote in the May 2002 general election classified by how much they think it matters which particular parties win seats in a general election**

							%
	Matters a great deal	Matters somewhat	It matters very little	Does not matter at all	Don't know	Not stated	Total
<b>All</b>	<b>34.1</b>	<b>26.6</b>	<b>18.2</b>	<b>14.4</b>	<b>6.4</b>	<b>0.3</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Electorate</b>							
Voters	38.9	28.9	16.7	11.2	4.1	0.2	100.0
Non-voters	19.4	19.5	22.7	24.4	13.5	0.6	100.0
<b>Sex</b>							
Male	36.8	26.4	17.9	13.9	4.7	0.3	100.0
Female	31.5	26.8	18.4	15.0	8.0	0.3	100.0
<b>Age group</b>							
18-19	16.7	20.6	24.2	21.1	17.4	*	100.0
20-24	24.9	26.9	19.0	15.6	13.5	*	100.0
25-34	31.3	27.9	18.6	15.7	6.2	0.4	100.0
35-44	35.1	27.9	17.7	15.1	3.8	0.4	100.0
45-54	37.3	27.3	17.9	13.1	4.1	0.3	100.0
55-64	39.8	25.6	18.1	12.4	3.8	0.2	100.0
65+	41.0	24.8	16.2	12.1	5.4	0.4	100.0
<b>Principal economic status</b>							
At work	35.3	27.9	17.5	14.0	5.0	0.4	100.0
Unemployed	25.9	22.1	21.3	20.0	10.5	*	100.0
Student	25.3	26.2	21.0	14.6	12.9	*	100.0
On home duties	31.2	25.5	19.6	15.2	8.3	0.2	100.0
Retired	43.1	25.0	15.8	11.8	3.8	0.5	100.0
Others	31.9	22.1	19.6	17.3	8.9	*	100.0

\* Sample occurrence too small for estimation

**Table 6b Persons entitled to vote in the May 2002 general election classified by how much they think it matters which particular candidates win seats in a general election**

							%
	Matters a great deal	Matters somewhat	It matters very little	Does not matter at all	Don't know	Not stated	Total
<b>All</b>	<b>40.7</b>	<b>27.1</b>	<b>14.9</b>	<b>11.2</b>	<b>5.8</b>	<b>0.3</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Electorate</b>							
Voters	46.3	29.3	13.0	7.6	3.6	0.2	100.0
Non-voters	23.3	20.6	20.8	22.2	12.6	0.6	100.0
<b>Sex</b>							
Male	42.3	26.7	15.2	11.0	4.5	0.3	100.0
Female	39.1	27.6	14.6	11.3	7.0	0.3	100.0
<b>Age group</b>							
18-19	21.9	19.3	23.8	19.5	15.5	*	100.0
20-24	30.8	27.2	16.2	13.2	12.5	0.2	100.0
25-34	37.3	28.5	15.5	12.9	5.5	0.4	100.0
35-44	43.5	28.3	13.9	10.6	3.3	0.4	100.0
45-54	45.0	27.1	14.3	9.4	3.9	0.3	100.0
55-64	46.3	26.9	13.8	9.1	3.6	0.2	100.0
65+	46.1	26.3	13.3	9.0	4.9	0.4	100.0
<b>Principal economic status</b>							
At work	41.7	28.4	14.4	10.6	4.6	0.4	100.0
Unemployed	32.5	23.2	17.5	17.4	9.2	0.2	100.0
Student	32.2	24.9	19.2	11.9	11.8	*	100.0
On home duties	39.0	26.6	15.2	11.7	7.4	0.2	100.0
Retired	48.2	25.5	13.3	9.0	3.6	0.5	100.0
Others	38.1	22.4	16.7	14.2	8.4	*	100.0

\* Sample occurrence too small for estimation

**Table 7a Voters in the May 2002 general election classified by their use of media for obtaining information on politics and current affairs**

	%				
	National newspaper	Local newspaper	Television	National Radio	Local Radio
Everyday	30.0	7.2	28.6	33.2	14.4
About 3 times a week	17.1	5.4	22.0	12.6	8.7
Once a week	24.3	46.7	25.7	15.9	15.6
Never or rarely use this	14.1	21.1	7.9	17.1	34.1
Pay no attention	14.3	19.5	15.7	21.0	27.1
Not stated	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 7b Non-voters in the May 2002 general election classified by their use of media for obtaining information on politics and current affairs**

	%				
	National newspaper	Local newspaper	Television	National Radio	Local Radio
Everyday	15.4	3.5	16.3	18.1	6.7
About 3 times a week	10.4	3.4	11.9	6.9	3.9
Once a week	19.0	25.0	19.9	11.7	9.1
Never or rarely	19.3	25.9	11.2	18.7	31.4
Pay no attention	35.3	41.6	40.2	44.1	48.4
Not stated	0.6	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 8 Persons entitled to vote in the May 2002 general election classified by their satisfaction with the workings of democracy in Ireland**

	Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	Not very satisfied	Not at all satisfied	Don't know	Not stated	Total
							%
<b>State</b>	<b>16.2</b>	<b>54.1</b>	<b>12.6</b>	<b>6.0</b>	<b>10.9</b>	<b>0.3</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Region</b>							
Border	13.8	48.1	12.3	5.6	19.9	0.2	100.0
Midlands	28.2	48.6	9.5	4.5	9.0	0.2	100.0
West	9.1	59.1	11.2	6.3	13.8	0.5	100.0
Dublin	17.0	55.2	14.5	6.3	7.1	0.1	100.0
Mid-East	14.4	52.2	14.4	6.5	11.9	0.6	100.0
Mid-West	27.3	46.1	8.9	4.7	12.8	0.1	100.0
South-East	16.0	56.2	11.3	5.1	11.1	0.4	100.0
South-West	11.9	59.2	12.7	6.9	8.9	0.4	100.0
<b>Sex</b>							
Male	18.1	54.1	12.5	6.5	8.5	0.2	100.0
Female	14.3	54.1	12.6	5.5	13.2	0.3	100.0
<b>Age group</b>							
18-19	10.7	45.5	9.6	6.1	28.1	*	100.0
20-24	12.5	52.3	10.6	5.0	19.4	0.2	100.0
25-34	13.5	55.6	13.2	5.9	11.5	0.3	100.0
35-44	16.7	57.1	12.5	6.0	7.3	0.3	100.0
45-54	17.8	54.1	13.8	6.9	7.0	0.3	100.0
55-64	18.6	54.3	13.7	6.3	6.9	0.2	100.0
65+	20.1	52.0	11.8	5.4	10.3	0.3	100.0
<b>Marital status</b>							
Single	13.4	52.2	12.4	6.3	15.6	0.1	100.0
Married	18.2	56.6	12.4	5.6	7.0	0.3	100.0
Separated	14.1	49.7	16.7	8.5	10.7	0.4	100.0
Widowed	19.3	51.3	12.1	5.2	11.8	0.4	100.0
<b>Principal economic status</b>							
At work	16.6	56.4	12.2	5.7	8.8	0.3	100.0
Unemployed	10.7	43.4	16.3	11.2	18.2	0.2	100.0
Student	13.1	50.8	12.5	6.0	17.6	*	100.0
On home duties	15.0	52.9	12.7	5.0	14.2	0.2	100.0
Retired	21.6	51.7	12.4	6.3	7.7	0.3	100.0
Others	14.2	48.7	12.6	8.9	15.5	*	100.0
<b>Electorate</b>							
Voters	18.2	57.4	11.9	5.2	7.3	0.2	100.0
Non-voters	10.1	44.1	14.7	8.5	22.1	0.5	100.0

\* Sample occurrence too small for estimation

**Table 9 Persons entitled to vote in the May 2002 general election classified by extent of involvement with groups and organisations<sup>1</sup>**

	Very active	Somewhat active	Member but not active	No such involvement	Don't know	Not stated	% Total
<b>State</b>	<b>13.1</b>	<b>13.7</b>	<b>6.3</b>	<b>65.7</b>	<b>0.8</b>	<b>0.4</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Region</b>							
Border	10.2	14.4	7.3	66.9	1.0	0.2	100.0
Midlands	15.3	15.9	4.2	63.2	1.1	0.3	100.0
West	12.6	11.8	4.4	70.3	0.4	0.5	100.0
Dublin	12.4	14.3	8.2	64.4	0.7	0.1	100.0
Mid-East	12.9	14.5	6.2	64.8	0.9	0.6	100.0
Mid-West	14.0	10.5	4.1	69.7	1.3	0.4	100.0
South-East	14.8	11.9	7.5	63.4	1.6	0.9	100.0
South-West	14.9	15.4	4.1	64.7	0.4	0.6	100.0
<b>Sex</b>							
Male	15.6	14.8	7.1	61.5	0.7	0.4	100.0
Female	10.8	12.7	5.5	69.7	0.9	0.4	100.0
<b>Age group</b>							
18-19	14.9	14.7	5.5	64.2	0.7	*	100.0
20-24	12.7	14.1	6.0	65.7	1.3	0.2	100.0
25-34	11.1	13.8	6.3	67.5	0.8	0.5	100.0
35-44	15.3	16.5	6.1	61.1	0.6	0.5	100.0
45-54	16.1	14.7	6.1	61.9	0.8	0.4	100.0
55-64	14.1	12.4	6.9	65.6	0.6	0.3	100.0
65+	9.2	9.5	6.7	73.2	1.0	0.4	100.0
<b>Marital status</b>							
Single	11.3	12.7	6.7	67.8	1.2	0.3	100.0
Married	15.4	15.4	6.0	62.1	0.6	0.4	100.0
Separated	12.4	11.2	5.1	70.2	0.5	0.7	100.0
Widowed	9.1	9.7	6.3	73.5	1.1	0.4	100.0
<b>Principal economic status</b>							
At work	15.2	15.3	6.8	61.5	0.7	0.4	100.0
Unemployed	8.8	9.1	4.4	75.7	1.4	0.6	100.0
Student	16.6	18.7	6.8	57.0	0.7	0.2	100.0
On home duties	9.1	11.1	4.7	73.8	1.0	0.4	100.0
Retired	11.6	10.4	7.1	69.7	0.8	0.4	100.0
Others	6.6	10.0	5.2	76.7	1.1	0.3	100.0
<b>Electorate</b>							
Voters	14.6	14.6	6.8	63.0	0.6	0.3	100.0
Non-voters	8.7	10.9	4.5	73.8	1.4	0.6	100.0

<sup>1</sup> See Background Notes for details of organisations and groups covered

\* Sample occurrence too small for estimation

**Table 10 Attitudes and interests of voters and non-voters in the May 2002 general election**

	Enjoy		Views		Pub_reps		Duty		Issues		Honesty		Family		%
	Voters	Non-voters	Voters	Non-voters	Voters	Non-voters	Voters	Non-voters	Voters	Non-voters	Voters	Non-voters	Voters	Non-voters	
Strongly disagree	10.0	15.2	4.0	9.4	3.6	2.7	1.4	2.1	1.5	3.6	11.0	17.7	0.7	1.4	
Disagree	14.7	29.7	19.1	32.6	31.5	24.6	2.0	14.6	9.1	22.4	27.5	35.5	2.9	10.7	
Neither disagree/ agree	11.3	12.6	16.5	16.0	23.2	20.2	4.9	18.6	13.3	16.8	23.7	19.9	3.1	7.5	
Agree	45.9	27.2	44.6	28.7	30.3	32.7	61.5	44.4	58.2	40.7	31.0	16.1	67.3	49.2	
Strongly agree	13.7	7.1	13.0	6.8	7.0	8.7	28.6	11.9	14.0	6.8	2.0	1.0	16.3	8.0	
Don't know	4.2	7.6	2.4	5.8	4.3	10.3	1.3	7.7	3.6	8.9	4.6	9.1	9.4	22.6	
Not stated	0.3	0.7	0.3	0.7	0.3	0.7	0.3	0.7	0.3	0.7	0.3	0.7	0.3	0.6	
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

**Note:** The above column headings *Enjoy to Family* relate to the following statements

**Enjoy:** *I enjoy watching/listening to the results of the general election on TV/ Radio*

**Views:** *I think of myself as having definite views on political issues.*

**Pub\_reps:** *Public representatives do not care about the opinions of ordinary people*

**Duty:** *Everyone has a duty to vote*

**Issues:** *I feel I have a pretty good understanding of the important political issues facing the country*

**Honesty:** *In general, I think most politicians are honest.*

**Family:** *Most of my family and friends vote.*

## Background Notes

<b>Reference period</b>	The questions on voter participation and abstention were included in the Quarterly National Household Survey (QNHS) in the three months from June to August 2002.
<b>Purpose of survey</b>	While the primary purpose of the QNHS is to collect information on employment and unemployment, it also includes modules on social topics of interest from time to time.
<b>Voter participation and voter abstention</b>	The voter participation and abstention results in this module are based on responses to the following question: ‘As you may know, for one reason or another, many people did not vote in the general election last May. How about you? Did you vote?’
<b>Reasons for not voting</b>	<p>If respondents answered No to the ‘Did you vote’ question above they were then asked the following question:</p> <p>‘What were the main reasons why you did not vote in the recent general election?’ Respondents were able to give multiple responses to this question given the following answer options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>01 Not interested in politics</li> <li>02 Disillusioned with politics</li> <li>03 Did not understand the issues/could not make a choice/too little information</li> <li>04 My vote would not make any difference</li> <li>05 Illness/disability</li> <li>06 Away from home/away working, could not go home/away on holidays</li> <li>07 No time/work commitments/family commitments/leisure commitments</li> <li>08 Not registered to vote/Registered at a different address</li> <li>09 No polling card/lost card</li> <li>10 Lack of transport</li> <li>11 Other</li> </ul>
<b>Questionnaire</b>	The voter module was asked of all those born in Ireland and all Irish or British citizens who were 18 years or over on the 1st May 2002, and who were interviewed directly. The questions covered included questions on whether people did vote in the May 2002 general election, the reasons why people did not vote, when people decided they would not vote, questions on people’s electoral registration details, questions regarding politics and current affairs and questions on the use of different forms of media. Also included was a question on what is sometimes referred to as ‘social capital’. This social capital question asked about people’s level of involvement in various groups and organisations.
<b>Activity in groups and organisations</b>	The groups and organisations referred to in Table 9 cover voluntary groups or organisations like a charity or a sports club, or a local community group, or a political or religious group or organisation.
<b>Economic status</b>	<p>The Principal Economic Status (PES) classification used in these results is based on a single question in which respondents are asked what is their usual situation with regard to employment and given the following response categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At work</li> <li>• Unemployed</li> <li>• Student</li> <li>• Engaged on home duties</li> <li>• Retired</li> <li>• Other</li> </ul>

**Regions** The regional classifications in this release are based on the NUTS (Nomenclature of Territorial Units) classification used by Eurostat. The NUTS3 regions correspond to the eight Regional Authorities established under the Local Government Act, 1991 (Regional Authorities) (Establishment) Order, 1993, which came into operation on 1 January 1994. The NUTS2 regions, which were proposed by Government and agreed by Eurostat in 1999, are groupings of the NUTS3 regions. The composition of the regions is set out below.

<b>Border, Midlands and Western NUTS2 Region</b>		<b>Eastern and Southern NUTS2 Region</b>	
<b>Border</b>	Cavan Donegal Leitrim Louth Monaghan Sligo	<b>Dublin</b>	Dublin Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown Fingal South Dublin
<b>Midland</b>	Laoighis Longford Offaly Westmeath	<b>Mid-East</b>	Kildare Meath Wicklow
<b>West</b>	Galway City Galway County Mayo Roscommon	<b>Mid-West</b>	Clare Limerick City Limerick County North Tipperary
		<b>South-East</b>	Carlow Kilkenny South Tipperary Waterford City Waterford County Wexford
		<b>South-West</b>	Cork City Cork County Kerry