



## May 2014 | Local Elections

Every month we invite a response to our short, 3 question survey. Our survey for May 2014 was in relation to the recent Local and European elections. The aim of the survey was to find out the primary concerns of voters and the responsibilities that they believe the Government should be upholding. We had a huge response to this month's survey; almost five times the usual amount of respondents!

### The Questions

1. Did you vote in the recent Local and European elections?
2. What were the key factors which influenced your voting in these elections?
3. What do you think should be the main focus of the Government going forward?

### The Results

Figure 1

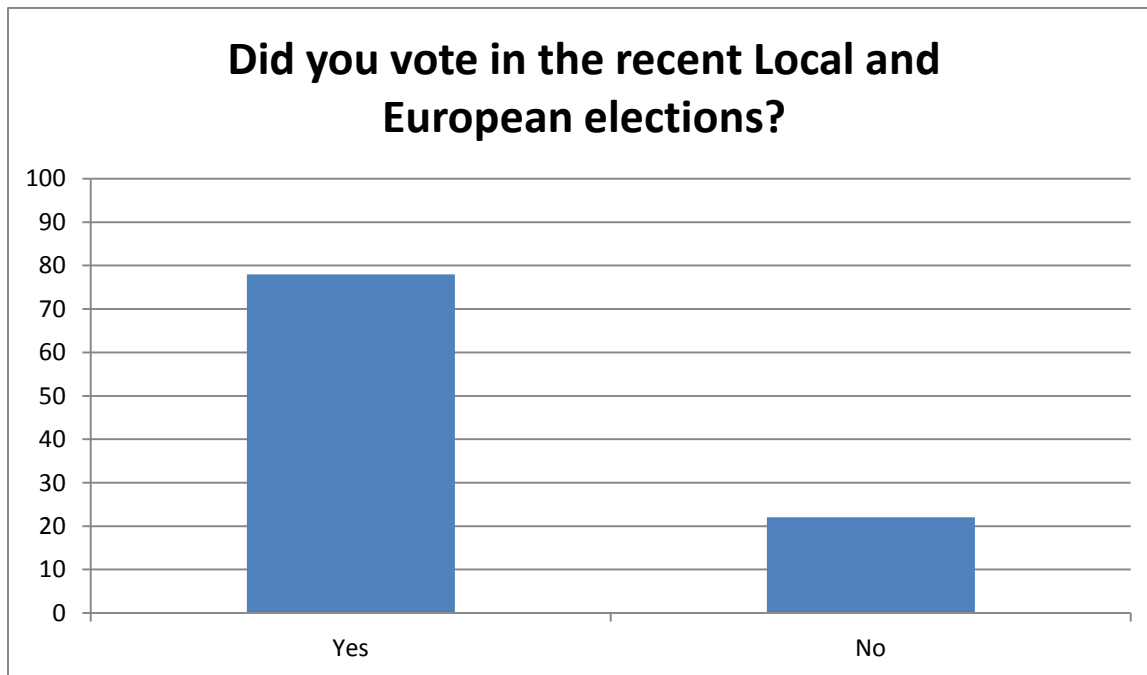




Figure one above shows that 78% of those surveyed voted in the recent elections. The remaining 22% indicated that they had not voted. A number of respondents chose not to vote because they felt that their interests were not being well represented or that the candidates gave empty promises.

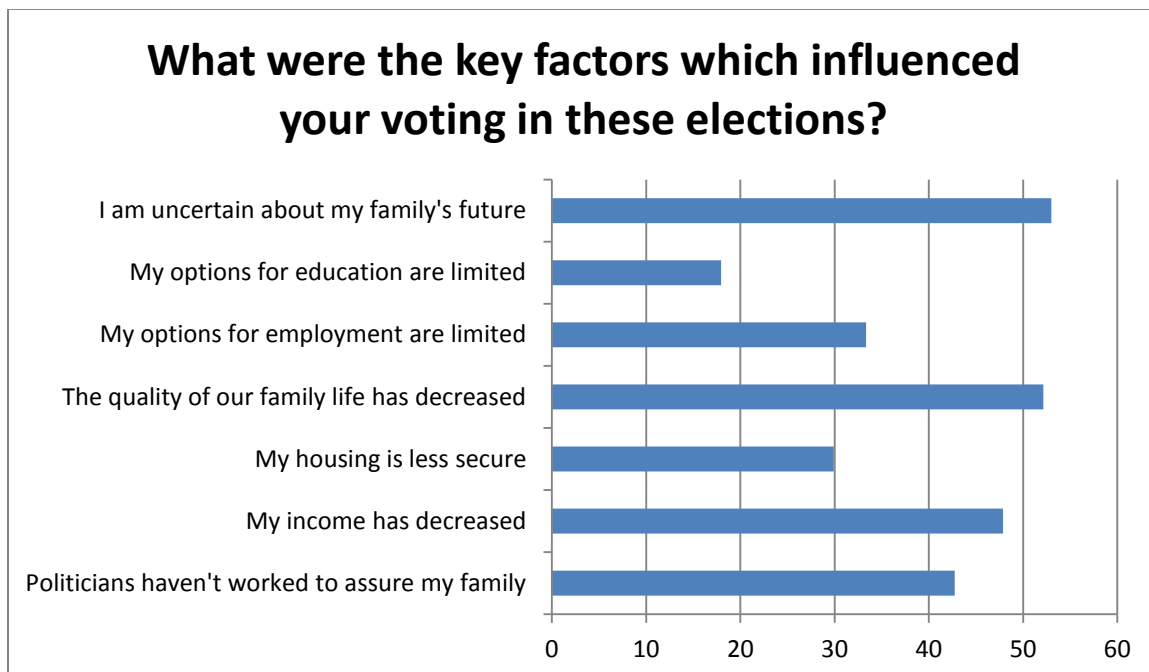
*“I find it very hard to trust any of them. When they get elected they seem to go against what they promise.”*

The majority of people did express the importance of voting in the Local and European elections. This was clearly shown by the number of people that voted.

*“I believe it’s very important to use your vote.”*

*“I voted for candidates whom I thought would be best for the community at a local level and for the European election, I voted for the candidate aligned to the EU party I favour.”*

**Figure 2**





As shown in Figure two above, three of the top four factors that influenced participants' voting involved the wellbeing of families. Many participants expressed concern about the safety of their children and the importance of securing a positive future for their families.

*"I am overwhelmed with worry for my children and their future. I suspect that they will be expected to emigrate if they want to earn a living."*

*"The inequality and injustices in society are not being addressed. I want a fairer deal for all families. Rent controls and mortgage relief for people with small children."*

The impact of housing and childcare costs has also been significant for many of the respondents. Several people are struggling to find affordable and safe homes to raise their children. In many cases, housing and childcare alone take up the majority of parents' budgets. Participants expressed their need for help from the government to make ends meet. This was a key factor which influenced their voting preference.

*"I am a single parent working full time and I can't afford to pay rent for myself and my children to live somewhere secure. There is no support or incentive for me to go out to work full time."*

*"The cuts to Lone Parents, lack of childcare as promised, cuts to rent supplement, and lack of social housing all influenced my decision to vote for independents."*

When asked what the main focus of the government should be in moving forward, many people responded with concerns about employment and education opportunities.

*"Jobs, jobs, jobs. Education, education, education. There are only two things that will get the country into some kind of shape – giving people the education to compete with the best in the world and then ensuring that there is work for them. We do not fund higher education..the job situation, especially outside the major cities is dire and support for people outside cities in relation to work or education is even worse."*

*"There needs to be a stimulus for growth. More money needs to be put into education and health, and jobs need to be created outside of Dublin."*



*“Creating Irish jobs, funding Irish businesses with less concentration and finance going to encourage Multi Nationals to Ireland. We need more confidence in our ability to create and support jobs and businesses. Multi Nationals have no loyalty, we do not need Wal-Mart economics here and this is what is happening if we don’t make the changes necessary.”*

In conclusion, it is clear from this month’s survey that many people participated in the recent Local and European elections with hopes to see the focus of the Government change. Greater emphasis should be placed on helping to support families, particularly those who are currently struggling to financially support themselves. Means of addressing the costs of childcare and housing would dramatically help many of these families. The Government should also focus on rebuilding the economy by supporting businesses, creating jobs, and encouraging individuals to further their education.

Through their votes, those parenting alone have encouraged a new set of responsibilities for the Government. It is now up to the Government to address these concerns.