

## Marriage Equality Referendum 2015

### Background

Voters were asked whether to add to the Constitution that "marriage may be contracted in accordance with law by two persons without distinction as to their sex". The proposal was supported by the Government as well as all major political parties.

On the 22nd of May 2015, the Irish people supported this referendum by 62%. Voter turnout was 61%. This was the first time that a country legalised same-sex marriage through a popular vote. The bill was signed into law by the President of Ireland on 29 August 2015.

On the same day, voters also voted on the Presidential Candidacy Age Referendum, and there was also a by election in the constituency of Carlow-Kilkenny.

The National Library of Ireland (NLI) archived 49 websites relating to the Marriage Equality referendum and created the Marriage Equality referendum collection. The historic importance of this referendum in the social and cultural life of Ireland was acknowledged by the NLI, both by the size of the collection (which at 49 sites was bigger than other referendum collections) and the use of social media sites as part of the collection. The inclusion of social media sites for web archiving was due in part to the very effective use of social media as part of the referendum campaign.

### Site Selection

Selection of sites was carried out by Joanna Finegan and Della Murphy of the National Library of Ireland.

### Crawl parameters

The crawl of 49 websites was undertaken by our web archiving partners Internet Memory Foundation on the nights of 23rd- -25th May 2015, using the Heritrix web crawler.

## Scope and content of collection

- Given that we were limited numerically by the number of sites we could select to archive, we were anxious to include as broad a range of sites as possible.
- We included political party sites and official referendum sites as reflective of the political and official angles to the debate. We have Renua Ireland and the Referendum Commission amongst others represented here. We also included sites from organisations on both sides of the debate, commentary websites, e.g. Broadsheet.ie, official news sites, e.g. Irish times, election analysis sites such as Adrian Kavanagh's Irishelections.org and the Waterford Whispers satirical site. We also have Tá Comhionannas, an Irish language site on the 'yes' side of the referendum.
- Inclusion of social media sites was a priority for us due to the fact that much of the interactive nature of the campaign happened online. We try and include social media sites in every collection, however, they present challenges not associated with other websites. Of the three sites chosen (GLEN, Marriage Equality and Vote With Us YouTube channel) only one site, the Vote With Us channel captured well. This was for technical reasons connected with the crawling process. It took a substantial amount of liaison with our technical partners and contact with the website owners to complete the web archiving process in relation to 'Vote with us', but we think the end result was worth it.
- A number of additional sites were considered for archiving but were rejected for various reasons. Teachers for Marriage Equality and Yes Equality Carlow we rejected as they were Facebook sites. Facebook poses particular technical and privacy challenges for web archiving.
- Also, we often have difficulty making contact with people in charge of social media sites to ask their permission to web archive their page/site/account, so their sites have to be ruled out as well.
- All sites with one exception related to Ireland. The 'Get the Boat 2 Vote' site was primarily aimed at encouraging Irish voters based in the UK to come home to vote.

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Collection of key websites relating to the Marriage Equality Referendum held 22 May 2015. Also includes a smaller number of sites relating to the Age of Eligibility for Election to Office of President Referendum and the Carlow - Kilkenny By-Election which both took place on the same date.

Website Name	Live Website	Archived Website in 2015 Marriage Referendum Collection
ADFAM (Alliance for Defence of Family & Marriage)	<a href="http://www.adfam.ie/">http://www.adfam.ie/</a>	<a href="https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/http://www.adfam.ie/">https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/http://www.adfam.ie/</a>
Anti Austerity Alliance	<a href="http://antiausterityalliance.ie/">http://antiausterityalliance.ie/</a>	<a href="https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/http://antiausterityalliance.ie/">https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/http://antiausterityalliance.ie/</a>
Belongto	<a href="http://www.belongto.org/">http://www.belongto.org/</a>	<a href="https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/http://www.belongto.org/">https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/http://www.belongto.org/</a>
Boards.ie - Marriage Equality Thread	<a href="http://www.boards.ie/vbulletin/forumdisplay.php?f=1431">http://www.boards.ie/vbulletin/forumdisplay.php?f=1431</a>	<a href="https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/http://www.boards.ie/vbulletin/forumdisplay.php?f=1431">https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/http://www.boards.ie/vbulletin/forumdisplay.php?f=1431</a>
Breda Gardner	<a href="http://www.backingbreda.com/">http://www.backingbreda.com/</a>	<a href="https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/http://www.backingbreda.com/">https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/http://www.backingbreda.com/</a>
Broadsheet.ie	<a href="http://www.broadsheet.ie/">http://www.broadsheet.ie/</a>	<a href="https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/http://www.broadsheet.ie/">https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/http://www.broadsheet.ie/</a>
Catholic Comment	<a href="http://catholiccomment.ie/">http://catholiccomment.ie/</a>	<a href="https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/http://catholiccomment.ie/">https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/http://catholiccomment.ie/</a>
Catholic Voice	<a href="http://www.catholicvoice.ie/">http://www.catholicvoice.ie/</a>	<a href="https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/http://www.catholicvoice.ie/">https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/http://www.catholicvoice.ie/</a>
Cedar Lounge	<a href="http://cedarlounge.wordpress.com/">http://cedarlounge.wordpress.com/</a>	<a href="https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/http://cedarlounge.wordpress.com/">https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/http://cedarlounge.wordpress.com/</a>
Changing Attitude Ireland	<a href="http://changingattitudeireland.org/">http://changingattitudeireland.org/</a>	<a href="https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/http://changingattitudeireland.org/">https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/http://changingattitudeireland.org/</a>
Dublin Pride	<a href="http://www.dublinpride.ie/">http://www.dublinpride.ie/</a>	<a href="https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/http://www.dublinpride.ie/">https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/http://www.dublinpride.ie/</a>
Elections Ireland.org	<a href="http://electionsireland.org">http://electionsireland.org</a>	<a href="https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/http://electionsireland.org">https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/http://electionsireland.org</a>
European Movement	<a href="http://www.europeanmovement.ie/j">http://www.europeanmovement.ie/j</a>	<a href="https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-">https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-</a>

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	<a href="http://ust-the-facts-referendum-on-the-presidential-age-of-eligibility/">ust-the-facts-referendum-on-the-presidential-age-of-eligibility/</a>	<a href="https://1444/*/http://www.europeanmovement.ie/just-the-facts-referendum-on-the-presidential-age-of-eligibility/">1444/*/http://www.europeanmovement.ie/just-the-facts-referendum-on-the-presidential-age-of-eligibility/</a>
Fianna Fáil	<a href="http://www.fiannafail.ie/">http://www.fiannafail.ie/</a>	<a href="https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/http://www.fiannafail.ie/">https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/http://www.fiannafail.ie/</a>
Fine Gael	<a href="http://www.finegae.ie/">http://www.finegae.ie/</a>	<a href="https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/http://www.finegae.ie/">https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/http://www.finegae.ie/</a>
Glen (Gay + Lesbian Equality Network)	<a href="http://www.glen.ie/">http://www.glen.ie/</a>	<a href="https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/http://www.glen.ie/">https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/http://www.glen.ie/</a>
GLEN @glenLGBT on Twitter	<a href="http://twitter.com/glenLGBT/">http://twitter.com/glenLGBT/</a>	<a href="https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/http://twitter.com/glenLGBT/">https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/http://twitter.com/glenLGBT/</a>
Gay Catholic Voice Ireland	<a href="http://www.gcvi.ie/">http://www.gcvi.ie/</a>	<a href="https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/http://www.gcvi.ie/">https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/http://www.gcvi.ie/</a>
Get the Boat2Vote	<a href="http://gettheboat2vote.com/">http://gettheboat2vote.com/</a>	<a href="https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/http://gettheboat2vote.com/">https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/http://gettheboat2vote.com/</a>
Green Party	<a href="http://greenparty.ie/">http://greenparty.ie/</a>	<a href="https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/http://greenparty.ie/">https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/http://greenparty.ie/</a>
Identity Ireland	<a href="http://identityireland.org/">http://identityireland.org/</a>	<a href="https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/http://identityireland.org/">https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/http://identityireland.org/</a>
Integritas	<a href="http://www.integritas.ie">http://www.integritas.ie</a>	<a href="https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/http://www.integritas.ie">https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/http://www.integritas.ie</a>
Iona Institute	<a href="http://www.ionainstitute.ie/">http://www.ionainstitute.ie/</a>	<a href="https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/http://www.ionainstitute.ie/">https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/http://www.ionainstitute.ie/</a>
Irish Council for Civil Liberties	<a href="http://www.iccl.ie/">http://www.iccl.ie/</a>	<a href="https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/http://www.iccl.ie/">https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/http://www.iccl.ie/</a>
Irish Election Literature	<a href="https://irishelectionliterature.wordpress.com/">https://irishelectionliterature.wordpress.com/</a>	<a href="https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/https://irishelectionliterature.wordpress.com/">https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/https://irishelectionliterature.wordpress.com/</a>

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Irish Elections; Geography, Facts and Analyses	<a href="http://adriankavanaghelections.org">http://adriankavanaghelections.org</a>	<a href="https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/adriankavanaghelections.org">https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/adriankavanaghelections.org</a>
Irish Times	<a href="http://www.irishtimes.com/">http://www.irishtimes.com/</a>	<a href="https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/www.irishtimes.com/">https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/www.irishtimes.com/</a>
Labour Party	<a href="http://www.labour.ie/">http://www.labour.ie/</a>	<a href="https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/www.labour.ie/">https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/www.labour.ie/</a>
LGBT	<a href="http://www.lgbt.ie/">http://www.lgbt.ie/</a>	<a href="https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/www.lgbt.ie/">https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/www.lgbt.ie/</a>
LGBT Noise	<a href="http://www.lgbtnoise.ie/">http://www.lgbtnoise.ie/</a>	<a href="https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/www.lgbtnoise.ie/">https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/www.lgbtnoise.ie/</a>
Marriage Equality	<a href="http://www.marriagequality.ie/">http://www.marriagequality.ie/</a>	<a href="https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/www.marriagequality.ie/">https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/www.marriagequality.ie/</a>
Mothers & Fathers Matter	<a href="http://mothersandfathersmatter.org/">http://mothersandfathersmatter.org/</a>	<a href="https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/mothersandfathersmatter.org/">https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/mothersandfathersmatter.org/</a>
People Before Profit Alliance	<a href="http://www.peoplebeforeprofit.ie/">http://www.peoplebeforeprofit.ie/</a>	<a href="https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/www.peoplebeforeprofit.ie/">https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/www.peoplebeforeprofit.ie/</a>
Political Reform.ie	<a href="http://politicalreform.ie/">http://politicalreform.ie/</a>	<a href="https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/politicalreform.ie/">https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/politicalreform.ie/</a>
Politics.ie	<a href="http://www.politics.ie/">http://www.politics.ie/</a>	<a href="https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/www.politics.ie/">https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/www.politics.ie/</a>
Referendum Commission	<a href="http://www.refcom.ie">http://www.refcom.ie</a>	<a href="https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/www.refcom.ie">https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/www.refcom.ie</a>
Referendum Ireland	<a href="http://www.referendum.ie/">http://www.referendum.ie/</a>	<a href="https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/www.referendum.ie/">https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/www.referendum.ie/</a>
Renua Ireland	<a href="http://renuairland.com/">http://renuairland.com/</a>	<a href="https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/renuairland.com/">https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/renuairland.com/</a>

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Website Name	Live Website	Archived Website in 2015 Marriage Referendum Collection
RTÉ News	<a href="http://www.rte.ie/news/">http://www.rte.ie/news/</a>	<a href="https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/www.rte.ie/news/">https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/www.rte.ie/news/</a>
Sinn Féin	<a href="http://www.sinnfein.ie/">http://www.sinnfein.ie/</a>	<a href="https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/www.sinnfein.ie/">https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/www.sinnfein.ie/</a>
Socialist Party	<a href="http://socialistparty.ie">http://socialistparty.ie</a>	<a href="https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/socialistparty.ie">https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/socialistparty.ie</a>
StandUp4Marriage	<a href="http://standup4marriage.ie/">http://standup4marriage.ie/</a>	<a href="https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/standup4marriage.ie/">https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/standup4marriage.ie/</a>
Tá Comhionannas	<a href="https://tacomhionannas.wordpress.com/">https://tacomhionannas.wordpress.com/</a>	<a href="https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/https://tacomhionannas.wordpress.com/">https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/https://tacomhionannas.wordpress.com/</a>
Vote With Us - YouTube channel	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCgKSLXV9DXHoZQkjDF_O7bQ/">https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCgKSLXV9DXHoZQkjDF_O7bQ/</a>	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCgKSLXV9DXHoZQkjDF_O7bQ/">https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCgKSLXV9DXHoZQkjDF_O7bQ/</a>
Waterford Whispers News	<a href="http://waterfordwhispersnews.com/">http://waterfordwhispersnews.com/</a>	<a href="https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/waterfordwhispersnews.com/">https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/waterfordwhispersnews.com/</a>
We are Church Ireland	<a href="http://wearechurchireland.ie/">http://wearechurchireland.ie/</a>	<a href="https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/wearechurchireland.ie/">https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/wearechurchireland.ie/</a>
Yes Equality	<a href="https://www.yesequality.ie/">https://www.yesequality.ie/</a>	<a href="https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/https://www.yesequality.ie/">https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/https://www.yesequality.ie/</a>
Youth Work Ireland	<a href="http://www.youthworkireland.ie/">http://www.youthworkireland.ie/</a>	<a href="https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/www.youthworkireland.ie/">https://wayback.archive-it.org/org-1444/*/www.youthworkireland.ie/</a>