

# Smartvote Privacy Policy and FAQs

## What is Smartvote?

Smartvote is a 'voting assistance application' that allows voters to compare their own policy views with those of the candidates standing for election.

It aims to inform voters about the policy positions of candidates and to help voters to make a more informed voting decision.

## How does it work?

A set of relevant policy issues are selected by the research team in advance of the election. Election candidates are contacted to complete a questionnaire on these issues. Their answers are incorporated into the questionnaire.

Voters who visit the website are asked the same set of questions, and their answers are compared with the answers of the candidates. Voters can also rank each question, according to how important each question is to them. A customised results page is then presented to each user, containing a ranking of candidates ordered by how closely their answers match.

## How is the ranking calculated?

When you agree/disagree or choose neither by answering a question – we compare that answer with those of the candidates. When a candidate has the same answer for that question as you, we add points based on the size of the thumb you've selected for that question to that candidate's score.

small thumb 1 point added to candidate's score.

medium thumbs: 2 points added to candidate's score.

large thumb: 3 points added to candidate's score.

Neutral (two arrow icon): Question is not included in final score.

This is repeated for each question until the test is complete, after which the scores of each candidate are compared and the candidates are ranked from high to low.

## Why are some candidates missing?

We have contacted all declared candidates over three weeks before the election. Some candidates have declined to share their policy views with us and are not featured on the website.

## Is it independent?

Smartvote is not associated with any political party, candidate or organisation.

### **Why do you ask for my name and email address?**

Your name and email are entirely confidential. We will never show these to any third party. The reason we ask you for this information is to:

- 1.) to address you properly when we send you your results email
- 2.) to send a link to your inbox that only you can access, which can be used to recreate your results page at any time.

### **Are my answers stored?**

Yes.

We save your answers for later internal analysis to help us continuously improve the service we can offer you through Smartvote.

We also aggregate answers on a national and constituency level basis to infer trends.

### **Why are you asking for my personal information?**

During the test you have the option of saving your results. Providing the following information about yourself:

- Your First name
- Your Second name
- Your email address
- Your constituency
- If you are part of the USI competition: Your college or university

When you start the Smartvote test – we assign you a unique –anonymous- identifier against which we log your answers and your location. This is to compile reports where we can aggregate the opinions of the people taking the test more accurately.

The reports would be used as aggregated public opinion polls: to communicate with the public at large and public representatives how you feel about the issues we covered.

Under no circumstances would we ever make data available to a third party that might be used to identify an individual user.

### **What are Cookies?**

This website uses things called "Cookies" to ensure your experience of the site, and our ability to improve it is enhanced. Specifically, the following Cookies are in use:

- Google Analytics (3rd party). We use this to see how many visitors we are getting, and how they found us. You can find out more about Google Analytics' Cookies [here](#)

- Social Media Sharing and Integration (3rd party). We use Facebook and Twitter functionality within this site so that you can share items of interest, or become a fan of our Social Media Profiles.
  - You can find out more about Facebook's Cookie policy here: <http://www.facebook.com/help/?faq=115180708570932> ,
  - and Twitter's here: <https://twitter.com/privacy>
- We also sometimes use video embedding, like YouTube or Vimeo (3rd party) to enhance your experience of content on our site. You can find out about YouTube's Cookie policy here: <http://www.google.com/intl/en/policies/privacy/>, and Vimeo's here: <http://vimeo.com/privacy>

**Who do I contact with queries or complaints?**

Any queries or feedback on Smartvote can be sent to [info@smartvote.ie](mailto:info@smartvote.ie)