

Beyond Business as Usual: Rethinking Research and Policy in Changed Times

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Institute for Lifecourse
& Society



Roinn an Taoisigh
Department
of the Taoiseach

Outline: Review of where we are at



Roinn an Taoisigh
Department
of the Taoiseach

2

Reflections

2

Questions

2 sets of
messages



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The Reflections

Beyond Business as Usual



Not a singular activity

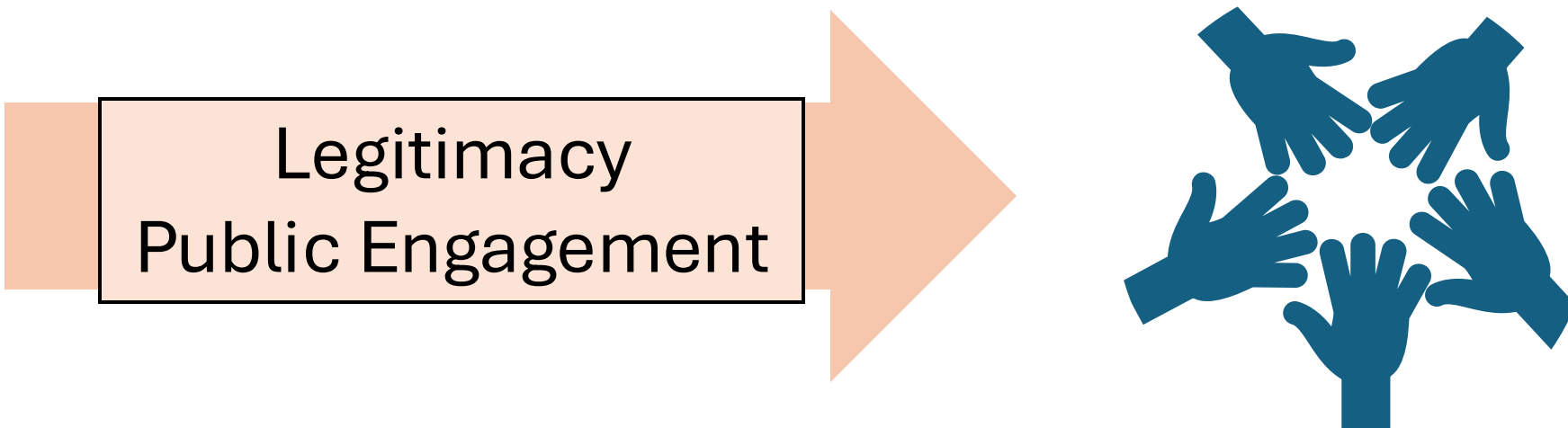


Nor a simple duality



Involves Complex network

Beyond Business as Usual



Legitimacy
Public Engagement



- Mindset- collaborative spirit, attitude, respect, understanding, duty, social good
- Methods- doing things the right way
- Capacity- who can do it and how
- Leadership – horizontal, collaboration and inclusive
- Enablers – focused themes, priorities, mechanisms for engagement
 - (Sally Washington, May Event, 2025)

The Questions

Question 1

What is evidence
and what does it
do or not do?

Researchers often assume their work is inherently valuable. From the point of view of decision-makers, it is not so simple. To succeed in getting research to inform policy, the needs of policy-makers must be taken into account.

Prof Cairney said these needs include being responsive to realpolitik, manifesto commitments, public demand, timing, and established policy-making processes which may include knowledge brokers and usually involves civil servants or people in similar roles.....

A further inconvenient truth is that policy-making typically involves an intricate web of interactions among multiple entities in civil society, business, and the political class

Professor Paul Cairney HRB webinar 23 Jul 2025

Question 2

Can we collaborate and critique at the same time on the ‘challenge team’?

- *Policy practitioners could consider gathering a ‘**challenge team**’ of colleagues to examine and challenge each of the key assumptions behind the implementation design. Every policy recommendation brought for decision should clearly set out an assessment of feasibility based on, and addressing, the activities set out above. (Policy handbook , Pillar 2)*

The Messages

Looking Back: Key Messages from 2024 and 2025

What next for Irish Public Policy Development? *Strengthening the use of Data and Evidence*

How do we foster and support effective public policy in Ireland?

How can we best use data and research evidence for key policy decisions over the life course?

The seminar examines 'what next' for our system of public policy. It considers progress since the OECD report *Strengthening Policy Development in the Public Sector in Ireland* (May 2023) from a national and international perspective, broadening the dialogue with public bodies, NGOs and other interested parties.

DATE: Tuesday, 28th May 2024

TIME: 10:00-16:00

VENUE: ILAS, Auditorium, University of Galway



Public Engagement for Better Policy

Public Engagement for Better Policy will bring together senior officials from across the civil and public service, civil society leaders and academics to debate the current status and future potential of public engagement for policy in Ireland and how institutions might best respond to enhanced participation.

DATE: Tuesday, 27th May 2025

TIME: 10:00-16:00

VENUE: G018, ILAS, University of Galway

Looking Forward: Towards better implementation for impact

- Copperfasten the view that the **process** of policy development is CRITICAL to successful **policy implementation and impact**
- Think about how we have and how we might meet the challenges
- Better articulate what **actually** happens and what works
- Broaden our view of who the players are
- Contribute to building/curating the ecosystem
- Help keep our “eye on the prize” – **impact for the people we serve**

The poster is for an event at the Institute for Lifecourse and Society (ILAS). It features the Galway University logo and the text 'An Institiúid Cúrsa Saoil & Sochaí' and 'Institute for Lifecourse & Society'. The main title is 'Policy Implementation for Impact'. The poster lists key questions, seminar goals, and details about the event's focus on evidence and public engagement.

ENABLING EQUITY ACROSS THE LIFE COURSE

Institute for Lifecourse and Society - ILAS
Public Policy Innovation Series

Policy Implementation for Impact

How do implementation issues and concerns affect policy design processes?
How do civil servants respond to implementation challenges? What factors drive successful implementation? How do we know when implementation is successful?

These will be some of the questions in focus for this third event in the Institute for Lifecourse and Society's Public Policy Innovation Series. Addressing **Implementation**, the third pillar of Ireland's Policy Handbook, the seminar builds on previous events focused on **Evidence** and **Legitimacy**.

The goals of the seminar are:

1. To establish what are the factors in policy design which determine successful implementation in the "real world".
2. To explore the complex challenges of responsive policy implementation towards impact.
3. To identify feasible pathways towards more effective policy implementation under-pinned by evidence and public engagement.

The seminar will be built on a selection of case-studies of recent public policy, chosen to reflect a variety of policy sectors and types, and spanning the range of experiences of implementation. The case-studies will be discussed by panels, comprising senior civil and public servants, academics and civil society actors, who will bring content and policy expertise to the discussion. Through the case-studies' discussion and a dedicated session, the seminar will contribute to existing initiatives seeking more systematic connections between Ireland's HE sector research and state policy making processes.

INVITATION