A thesis submitted to the Department of Environmental Sciences and Policy of Central European University in part fulfilment of the Degree of Master of Science

Perspectives of Civic Science and Deliberative Democracy in Action:

An exploration of the Irish Citizens' Assembly's meetings on climate change

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Author's declaration

Certain sections of the literature review, specifically the discussion of two empirical cases – the British Columbia Citizens' Assembly (BCCA) and We the Citizens' (WTC) respectively – draw upon a prior essay (Hamilton 2012, Unpublished) submitted as part of a *Political Reform* module (10% of module grade) at Trinity College Dublin (TCD) in 2012. This has been acknowledged and cleared by my supervisor.

No other portion of the work referred to in this thesis has been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification of this or any other university or other institute of learning.

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A legitimacy crisis is apparent across Western civilizations. Trust in politicians, experts and institutions has been declining for decades as citizens feel unable to control the decisions that affect their daily lives; consequently, echo-chambers, particularisation and polarisation prevail. The desire for change is palpable, yet democracy seems ill-equipped to cope with today's challenges.

Climate change is one such incidence. Although citizens seek an augmented role for science, scepticism and uncertainty combined with scientists' distance from decisions inhibit their impact, while myopia, vested-interests and the costs of change preclude political action.

Prominent scholars have propagated civic science and deliberative democracy as solutions to these crises. Thus, Ireland – which serves as a microcosm of these issues with low trust and environmental inaction – established the Irish Citizens' Assembly (ICA) to deliberate upon climate matters. Hence, this thesis critically evaluates the legitimacy of the ICA in light of participants' perspectives. Seventeen semi-structured interviews - with ICA members and other key actors - triangulated with secondary sources form the basis of this research.

The findings illustrated the importance of transparency - particularly *before* and *after* the process - while recruitment anomalies and agenda-setting were evident. Self/group versus majority interest also emerged as a prevalent theme particularly relating to rural constituents' concerns. Furthermore, the priority of outcomes and the consequent need to strengthen the link between input and output processes became apparent. Nevertheless, the conclusions suggest that the ICA resulted in not only better decisions, but also a 'better' - more engaged, informed and trusting – citizenry.

Keywords: Citizens' Assembly, deliberative democracy, civic science, trust, legitimacy, transparency, representation, procedural rules, information, decision/outcomes

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Go raibh míle maith agaibh!

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List of Abbreviations

BCCA - British Columbia Citizens Assembly

CA – Citizen Assemblies or as reference (e.g. CA 2018a) refers to Irish Citizens' Assembly

CANE – Climate Action Network Europe

CCAC – Climate Change Advisory Council (of Ireland)

CCCAE - Committee on Communications, Climate Action and Environment

CC – Climate Change

CS – Civic Science

DD – Deliberative Democracy

EAG – Expert Advisory Group

ICA – Irish Citizens' Assembly

ICC – Irish Constitutional Convention

MMP- Mixed-member Proportional

NDP – National Development Plan

NDCA – National Dialogue on Climate Action

NECP - National Energy and Climate Plan

NMP - National Mitigation Plan

NYCI – National Youth Council of Ireland

RFT - Request for Tender

RTE - Raidió Teilifís Éireann (Irish National Broadcaster)

SFI – Science Foundation of Ireland

SG – Steering Group

SJCCA - Special Joint Committee on Climate Action

STEM - Science, Engineering and Technological Innovation

STV – Single-Transferable Vote

1 - INTRODUCTION

"...if Government doesn't engage with people, doesn't explain to them the nature of the direction the Government is taking the country, then people will feel alienated and then drift right or left through fear or anger – and that's what has happened with the consequent emergence of populism in a number of countries". Enda Kenny, former Irish Prime Minister[1]

"For millions of years, mankind lived just like the animals. Then something happened which unleashed the power of our imagination. We learned to talk, and we learned to listen. Speech has allowed the communication of ideas, enabling human beings to work together to build the impossible. Mankind's greatest achievements have come about by talking and its greatest failures by not talking. It doesn't have to be like this. Our greatest hopes could become reality in the future. With the technology at our disposal, the possibilities are unbounded. All we need to do is make sure we keep talking". Stephen Hawking

Democracy is in danger. Trust - a key component of democratic legitimacy and the glue that binds society together - has been continuously on the wane in Western societies since the 1970s (Dalton 2008; Pharr et al. 2000). However, the 2008 crisis served to completely shatter citizenry confidence in their democratic institutions, elites and experts alike (as well as the media and civic society), and a decade later, the Edelman Trust Barometer (2018) reveals a worrisome world of stagnant distrust and increasing economic, social and political divisions.

Meanwhile, a prevailing sense of "hopelessness, helplessness and paralysis" (Byrne, 2010) has consumed those ordinary citizens who - as a consequence of augmented internationalisation, ambiguity and complexity of both problems and solutions - feel unable to influence the very decisions that shape their daily lives. It is through this lens that Brexit and Trump's election can be rationalised, as they are arguably symptoms, rather than the core causes of an inherently flawed system with a pronounced democratic deficit. As Barber (2003, 118) wisely predicted, if our "thin democracies" favour "pusillanimous privatism" over the needs of the community, "more oppressive political ideologies will step in"; nevertheless, he

[1] Interviewed on 6th March 2018 as part of the current research.

asserts that we "need not accept the wan residualism of liberal democratic pluralism, which depicts politics as nothing more than the chambermaid of private interest".

Indeed, the desire for change is palpable; however, it remains unclear what shape this change should or will take. As the opening salvo by former Irish Prime Minister Enda Kenny[2] alludes to, failure to effectively engage with citizens will - or indeed has - resulted in people feeling "alienated" and "angry", and consequently, political parties – both on the left and right of the partisan divide - are turning more and more to populism. Meanwhile, we as citizens have become increasingly entrenched in our echo chambers, polarized in our opinions and ultimately particularised in our trust[3] (Rothstein and Uslaner 2005). This phenomenon is not only evident on some abstract theoretical level - it is something real, happening right now in our workplaces, universities and social media streams. As Stephen Hawking's statement illustrates, we are losing that gift that makes us distinct from other species; namely the art of talking and listening to each other, especially those who may have different experiences, opinions and/or interests.

1.1 Problem Statement

This growing distrust and inability to communicate has not escaped experts - particularly those in the environmental field - which creates a problematic situation. At a time when we are becoming more and more reliant on specialist knowledge (with technological advancements and the need for climate adaption), citizens have become increasingly disconnected from and sceptical of specialists. This paradox is perhaps best illustrated by Funk's (2017) study from the US – the world's largest economy – which found that although 67% of Americans support a major role for climate scientists in policy decisions, only 39% had "a lot" of trust in information from these experts. Moreover, a mere 28% of those surveyed responded that "climate scientists understand the causes of climate change…*fairly well",* while

[2] Who served as Taoiseach (Prime Minister) of Ireland from 2011 to 2017
[3] Were you are primarily concerned and/or trusting in your "own kind".

more than a third (35%) perceived that "*about half or fewer*…climate scientists agree climate change is due to human activity. Finally, only 48% of the US public believe that accelerated climate change is attributable to human activities; but importantly, citizens beliefs, confidence and trust varied considerably depending on their political outlook, with conservative Republicans holding more negative attitudes in contrast to the positive appraisals of liberal Democrats (Funk 2017). These findings illuminate some important findings, as although there is a strong public desire for more specialist involvement in the policy sphere, there is a clear disconnect between experts and citizens with generally low trust in climate scientists and relatively high uncertainty surrounding the apparent "consensus" on climate change.

Indeed, this distrust and uncertainty combined with climate scientists' distance from political decision making are key components within the problem structure of climate change which consequents in difficulties translating expert knowledge into climate action. More importantly, from the political perspective, these factors obfuscate the motivation of policy makers given the undoubtedly high short-term economic costs of climate adaption due to the immense structural changes required (from energy, to transport and agriculture), compared to the long-term, often intangible benefits for societies[4]. Moreover, this unwillingness to act is amplified by the fact that many of the highest emitting sectors also contain well-funded and politically influential vested interests who are highly resistant to change (e.g. the fossil fuel and agricultural lobbies). Finally, politicians, the media and public alike have become more myopic. There are always other immediate matters on the mind as we lurch from crisis to crisis; thus, climate change rarely persists on the political agenda despite the continued calls of concern from scientists and activists. Hence, this inherent problem structure of climate change – both from the scientific and political perspective – is unquestionably impeding the propensity

[4] While some countries - such as Canada and Russia - may benefit from climate change and the increased melting of the Arctic, which enhances opportunities for fossil fuel exploitation and shipping trade.

for policy action at a time when immediate change is required to avoid environmental catastrophe.

1.2. The Irish Context and the ICA

Ireland serves not only as a microcosm of this broader problem of advanced democracies, but also as a possible positive platform for a unique democratic solution - or evolution - that has the normative potential to cure these social ills. Firstly, from the problem perspective, according to the Edelman Trust Barometer (2018), Ireland ranks 25th from 28 countries[5] in terms of average institutional trust (although interestingly, the ranking rises to 23rd for "informed public"); ranks last (28th) in terms of trust in search engines and social media platforms while also placing 22nd in terms of media trust; and finally, is positioned 26th and 23rd for trust in business and NGOs respectively. Hence, in such a distrusting society, the very fabric and functioning of political and civil society could conceivably come under threat.

Moreover, like the international context, Irish scientists and environmental experts have seemingly failed to effectively communicate their concerns to the broader citizenry or translate their research into policy action. Specifically, although 64% of Irish citizens predict that STEM[6] will have a positive impact on the fight against climate change - similar to the US case - between 69% to 71% of citizens surveyed stated that STEM is *too* specialised for them to understand, that there is too much uncertainty to know what to believe, and importantly, that scientists should listen more to what ordinary people think (SFI 2015). Hence, there is a clear disconnect not only between (and within) citizens' and democratic institutions, but also between (and a perception of uncertainty within) the scientific community and broader society.

These phenomena have undoubtedly contributed to Ireland's failure to act on environmental concerns, with the supposedly "Emerald isle" described as a "laggard" on

[5] The survey includes countries from every continent.
[6] STEM - science, engineering and technological innovation

climate action and the current Minister for Communications, Climate Action and Environment stating that Ireland is "playing catch-up on our obligations in relation to climate change[7]". Specifically, the recent *Off Target* report (CANE 2018) placed Ireland as "the second-worst performing EU member state in tackling climate change, both in terms of national action and support for greater ambition". Moreover, in accordance with the vested-interests in certain sectors (e.g. energy, transport and agriculture), it asserts the low ranking is partly due to "their stiff opposition to climate action nationally and in the EU" (CANE 2018, 4).

Importantly however, the one positive highlighted by the report was the Irish Citizens' Assembly (hereon ICA) meeting on climate change, which "made strong recommendations to the Irish Parliament... to greatly enhance climate ambition" (CANE 2018, 13). Additionally, it propounds that "the Irish Government need to implement the Citizens' Assembly proposals" and that "this model of citizen-directed hearings with experts should also be promoted at international, regional and local levels". Given this strong international endorsement of the ICA in the context of Ireland's climate inaction, the process clearly merits further scrutiny. Moreover, the ICA meetings on climate change are an example of civic science and deliberative democracy (with the former embedded within the latter) in action. These concepts have been mooted as potential solutions to both the eroding democratic and scientific legitimacy, as Lövbrand and Khan (2010, 49) propound that "the deliberative turn in green political thought has restored an optimistic belief in the cognitive capacity and the moral potential of the 'ecological citizen'". Nevertheless, although numerous green scholars believe such forums can lead to both fairer democratic processes as well as better environmental outcomes, the Lövbrand and Khan (2010, 49) propound "that green deliberative theory is weakly linked to the practical reality in which environmental politics is played out" and thus they "conclude that

[7] http://www.irishexaminer.com/breakingnews/ireland/ireland-playing-catch-up-on-climate-change-obligations-admits-minister-798572.html

serious engagement with the practice of environmental governance is necessary in order to determine the feasibility and desirability of the normative ideal itself". Likewise, Bäckstrand (2003, 24) posits that "while there is lip service paid to the need for civic science, the question of how it can be realized is largely unresolved". Hence, the ICA's climate meetings serve as a unique opportunity for empirical research of both civic science and deliberative democracy in action, and therefore must be thoroughly appraised to assess the practical reality of these two conceptual ideals.

1.3 Research Aims and Objectives

Critical research is evidently required to effectively elucidate, evaluate and evolve the concepts of civic science and deliberative democracy; nevertheless, Carolan (2015) states that "much of academic commentary" of such processes "come from those who initially advocated it or were involved in its operations". Consequently, Leib and Elmendorf (2012, 69) propound that deliberative forums, such as the BCCA on electoral reform, usually received "rave reviews from both their participants and their academic observers…(with) a celebratory, at times euphoric, tone". Carolan (2015, 748) suggests that such academic appraisal may in part come from the fact that deliberative assemblies "correspond to their professional norms" while stating that "cynics might also point out that these bodies are likely to provide academics with their best opportunities to positively influence public policy".

Thus, in noting Smith's (2009) warning that it is all too easy to be swept along with the rhetoric of change without asking the hard questions of institutional design, this research aims to serve as an impartial and independent analysis of the ICA. Hence, this thesis will evaluate the input and output legitimacy – which are both vital for ensuring internal and external trust in the process - of the ICA meetings on climate change in light of the participants' perspectives in order to determine if the praise stands up to scrutiny. Specifically, Konsell and Bäckstrand (2010, 38) state that "input legitimacy" refers to the various procedural components of the

process (i.e. recruitment, procedural rules, information etc.) while "output legitimacy" concerns the problem-solving capacity dimension (i.e. outcomes/decisions). Therefore, the following research question will be addressed throughout the thesis:

How can the input and output legitimacy of the ICA's meetings on climate change be evaluated in light of the participants perceptions?

To illuminate this research question, Abelson et al.'s (2003, 245) "Principles for the Design and evaluation of public participation processes" has been adapted and holistically utilised to assess the ICA across four categories - *representation, procedural rules, information and outcome/decisions* - while *transparency*, vital for ensuring legitimacy (Smith 2009), has served as an overarching concept given its potential to fluidly impact on each stage. The thesis has sought to engage with the participants' perspectives - predominantly the assembly members (denoted by P1, P2...P11), but also deliberative experts (DE1), scientists (SE1; SE2), environmental observers (ENGO) and the secretariat (Sec.) - involved in the process to provide relevant insider knowledge. The perceived experiences of the assembly actors' - obtained through in-depth, semi structured interviews - has then been collated and compared with other relevant secondary sources emanating from the ICA (e.g. methodological documents, official ICA reports and transcripts, video recordings etc.) which formed the basis of the data analysis and resulting discussion of the key insights. The conclusion then summarises these finding in relation to the stated research question. Finally, given that Gutmann and Thompson (2009, 59) propound that "the future of deliberative democracy…depends on whether its proponents can create and maintain practices and institutions that enable deliberation to work well", the thesis then concludes by offering recommendations based on the discussed research findings with the aim of improving the input and output legitimacy of future assemblies both specifically in Ireland and abroad, while proposals related to the particular topic of climate change are also proffered, as well as guidance applicable for general assembly themes.

1.4 Thesis Structure

The subsequent thesis will contain the following structure:

Chapter 2 draws on the theoretical discussions of the concepts of "deliberative democracy" and "civic science", before outlining the need to examine the input and output legitimacy of the ICA. The utilisation of Abelson et al.'s (2003) evaluation framework shall then be discussed, before each of the four internal components - *representation, procedural rules, information and decisions/outcomes* - as well as *transparency* are examined considering the pertinent scholarship. Two relevant empirical cases - the BCCA and WTC - will be examined to illuminate prior applications of the normative assumptions within the literature.

Chapter 3 outlines the methodology utilised in carrying out the given research. Specifically, the steps undertaken to collect qualitative primary data – in particular the semi-structured in-depth interviews of ICA participants - will be discussed. Additionally, the data analysis stage will be outlined, and the triangulation of interviewees and secondary sources will be presented as a strength, while potential limitations are also elucidated.

Chapter 4 holistically applies the collected data to the theoretical framework, the four main components and the internal categories. The data is stylistically structured to achieve a logically coherent narrative, while insights are elucidated and further illustrated by quotes.

Chapter 5 then discusses the analysis in correspondence to the four categories with an overarching concern for importance of transparency. The insights garnered are examined considering the relevant literature and empirical cases and recommendations are then proffered in order to enhance the input and output legitimacy of future assemblies. The importance of the research, its findings and the need for future research is then reflected upon in the conclusion.

Chapter 6 summarises the key findings in relation to the research aims and question.

Chapter 7 summarises key recommendation derived from the analysis and explained within the discussion with the aim of improving the legitimacy of future assemblies.

2 - LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Normative Ideal

Democracy, for numerous reasons outlined in the introduction, has taken "a strong deliberative turn in recent decades" (Lövbrand and Khan 2010, 47). Inspired by Habermas's (1984) conceptions of the "public sphere'' and "discourse of democracy", prominent proponents of deliberative democracy such as Dryzek (2000, 1) posit that this "turn represents a renewed concern with the authenticity of democracy: the degree to which democratic control is substantive rather than symbolic and engaged by competent citizens". Consequently, Stears (2007, 95) propounds that the essence of the democratic process has been reconceived so as the value lies "less in the counting of votes or the aggregating of preferences than in the ability of reasonable citizens to explain themselves to each other and to engage in mutually responsive discussion about the key political, economic, and moral concerns that exercise them".

Abelson et al. (2003, 239) note that the "emphasis on participation methods is also a response to the prevailing view that methods used in the past", primarily this aggregation of preferences through voting (Stears 2007), "are no longer appropriate for current decision-making processes or for a more educated, sophisticated and less deferential public". For instance, Dalton (2007) notes how the generational shift from "duty-based" to "engaged" citizenship is increasing the public's capacity and thus the demand for non-electoral avenues of political participation. Consequently, there has been increasing calls to enhance the "two-way interaction between decision makers and the public as well as deliberation among participants" (Abelson et al. 2003, 240). Moreover, Abelson et al. (2003) posit that increasingly complex decision-making processes - such as the case with environmental issues - require a "more informed citizenry" to collectively weigh up the evidence and arrive at a mutually agreed consensus. Hence, regardless of the underlying motivations - whether to enhance the "democratic ideals of legitimacy, transparency and accountability" of decision-making or to

achieve (the perception of) citizenry support for divisive, unpopular or predetermined decisions - government bodies and institutions alike are becoming more receptive to the ideal of deliberative democracy.

This desire to "restore democratic authenticity by revitalizing public debate" (Bäckstrand et al. 2010) has arguably become more pressing since the financial crisis of 2008. This economic epoch has resulted in a wave of frustration, anger and apathy towards elites (politicians, media and experts alike) while concurrently increasing the degree of polarization and distrust both in and within political systems. Consequently, the calls for deliberative democracy - which has arguably cemented its place as "the darling of political theory" (Garside 2013, 140) - to remedy these political and social ills has increased. Deliberative democracy is defined for the purpose of this research as "a form of government in which free and equal citizens (and their representatives), justify decisions in a process in which they give one another reasons that are mutually acceptable and generally accessible, with the aim of reaching conclusions that are binding in the present on all citizens but open to challenge in the future" (Gutmann and Thompson 2004, 7).

However, Smith (2009) warns that it is easy to get swept along with the rhetoric of change without asking the hard questions of institutional design. Carolan (2015) and Leib and Elmendorf (2012) cite evidence of a "celebratory, at times euphoric, tone" in evaluations of the ICC and BCCA respectively. Moreover, given the various deliberative "turns" or "phases" in the literature throughout the past three decades - from the initial normative debates of the ideal to the concrete empirical focus on discrete cases to the recent systematic turn which attempts to illuminate the deliberative characteristics of given polities (Owen and Smith 2015, 213-14) - Niemeyer et al. (2018) posit that "it is crucial to take stock of theory, evidence, and the grand claims made by both deliberative scholars and practitioners". This is particularly important given the "institutional and political objections raised by elite commentators against the

citizens' assembly proposals…(which) reflect the challenge of realising inclusive, deliberative governance in highly politicised contexts" (Boswell et al. 2013, 164). Consequently, Niemeyer et al. (2018) propound that there is a need to critically evaluate both the theoretical as well as the practical application of such processes to determine "what deliberation is (process), what it does (outcomes), how these two inter-relate, and how deliberation is achieved (design)". In relation to this latter component, *design,* Abelson et al. (242, 2003) note that despite the variation of empirical cases and their distinctive features - whether citizens' assemblies, juries, panels or deliberative polling - the essence of deliberation remains the same: to provide participants with information regarding the topic at hand, encourage them to discuss and challenge the given particulars and subsequently "consider eachothers views before making a final decision or recommendation for action" (Abelson et al 242, 2003).

This closely mirrors the notion of "civic science" (CS) which has been mooted as one solution to the perceived legitimacy crisis of science (Bäckstrand 2003) that may help translate climate science into actionable policy via citizen participation. However, given the conceptual confusion within the field, particularly due to the interchangeable usage of "civic science" and "citizen science", it is it is important to clarify the stated concept. For the purpose of this thesis, CS is defined as "the process of linking experts and *citizens*[8] in planning social, economic and environmental improvements" (Schmandt 1998, 62). This definition has been adapted to emphasise the link between experts and "citizens" (as opposed to *stakeholders*) for multiple reasons. Firstly, with regards to the empirical case, it is citizens – not stakeholders – who are the participants in question. Secondly, the literature illustrates that stakeholders (who may be representing interest groups and thus be more fixed in their viewpoints) are often less malleable

[8] The term "citizens'" has replaced "stakeholders" from the originally definition.

to changing their outlook. Conversely, a somewhat neutral citizen is arguably more likely to have their opinions "moved" through this form of civic science and deliberative discussion.

Importantly, Clark and Illman (2001) note that this concept of CS goes beyond mere understanding of science to a more active dimension of the ability to analyse and subsequently take actions. Moreover, Pielke (2007), among other scholars, calls for an expanded role of civic science, particularly where value consensus is low and scientific uncertainty is high, as in the case of climate change. However, according to Dillion et al. (2016), "(t)he focus is not so much on doing the things we do better (i.e. making science more efficient in dealing with relatively simple or complex problems for which there is some robust knowledge available); rather, the focus is on doing better things altogether by transitioning to new forms of science and civic engagement that can deal with emerging, wicked sustainability challenges". Specifically, Bäckstrand (2003) outlines three rationales for CS, namely its potential to increase public *participation* in science and decision making, ensure more adequate *representation* and diversity of views while also installing more *democratic* accountability and governance. However, the actuality of this enhanced "representation" and "diversity" is something which needs to be further explored in empirical cases, while the question of whether including citizens in decision-making processes consequents in better outcomes is a point contested in green deliberative literature despite the fact outcomes are arguably the primary concern of environmentalists (Goodin 1992).

Thus, the same criticism levelled at deliberative democracy posed by Smith (2009) and Niemeyer et al. (2018) - mainly the link between process, outcomes and design - also remains true for civic science. Consequently, Lövbrand and Khan (2010, 61) propound that "the extent to which the promise of green deliberative theory translates into practice is just as much an empirical as a theoretical question". Hence, in line with the chosen research questions, both the input and output legitimacy of the ICA meetings on climate change need to be evaluated as

"the future of deliberative democracy…depends on whether its proponents can create and maintain practices and institutions that enable deliberation to work well" (Gutmann and Thompson 2009, 59).

2.2 Background to the ICA

Similar to the international trend, prominent Irish scholars have taken a "deliberative turn" particularly throughout the previous decade which has resulted in Ireland being commended as "the most innovative democracy in Europe" according Van Reybrouck[9]. Consequently, a succession of deliberative experiments has resulted in the country becoming a "vanguard in relation to this innovative form of citizen engagement" (CA 2018c, 98). The story unfolded after the crisis of 2008, as in response to the "*seething anger"* (Byrne 2010) emanating from the economic crisis and subsequent erosion of democratic sovereignty imposed by the Troika as part of the MoU[10], four academics - Prof. David Farrell, Dr. Jane Suiter, Dr. Elaine Byrne, and Dr. Eoin O'Malley - set about attempting to restore trust and legitimacy in Irish politics.

In reference to the seismic shift in the political landscape which occurred after the 2011 Irish General Election, Byrne (2011) propounded that "the main reason people voted the way they did was because they felt angry and let down by politics" while proffering that although "(t)here is no magic way to restore this trust, deliberative democracy does inject popular legitimacy into any proposed reform…(a) citizens' assembly facilitates greater popular engagement with democratic institutions because it gives citizens the opportunity to take ownership of one part of the decision-making process". These and other similar pronouncements paved the way for the idea of public participation to become a political reality.

[9] https://www.irishtimes.com/culture/why-ireland-s-citizens-assembly-is-a-model-for-europe-1.2876808
[10] Memorandum of Understand (MoU)

Specifically, the four Irish scholars - funded by The Atlantic Philanthropies - set the deliberative wheels in motion with the We the Citizens (WTC 2011) "pilot project" which proved that this new form of democracy could work in the Irish context. This model later became a template for the ICC established in December 2012 to propose amendments to the Bunreacht na hÉireann (the Irish Constitution). The ICC, which concluded its work in March 2014, consisted of 100 members (including both citizens and politicians) with its recommendations culminating in two concrete referendums[11]

This perceived success of the ICC led to a commitment in by Government for "the establishment of a Citizens' Assembly, within six months and without participation by politicians, with a mandate to look at a limited number of key issues over an extended time period" (CA 2016). The ICA consisted of the Chairperson, the Honourable Mary Laffoy, and 99 citizen Members of the Assembly who were chosen at random (conditional to being on the electoral register for referendums) to represent the views of the people of Ireland. Specifically, the citizens were broadly representative of society as reflected in the Census, with regard to age, gender, social class and regional spread. Finally, after its foundation by the Oireachtas on July 2016, the ICA was mandated to consider five topics[12] including: "*How the State can make Ireland a leader in tackling climate change*[13]*".*

Prior to commencement[14] of this topic, the ICA invited members of the public, representative groups and citizen organisations to make public submissions, with a total of 1,185 received. The stated question was then considered over two weekends in late 2017[15] with

[11] to mandate legal same-sex marriage and to reduce the age of eligibility for the presidency from 35 to 21, with the former accepted while the latter was rejected (Carolon 2015).
[12] 1. the Eighth Amendment of the Constitution (which concerns abortion); 2. how we best respond to the challenges and opportunities of an ageing population; 3. how the State can make Ireland a leader in tackling climate change; 4. the manner in which referenda are held; and 5. fixed term parliaments.
[13] It is important to note that the Climate topic " was not part of the original resolution calling for a citizens assembly, but was only added after an amendment by the Green party.
[14] The submissions process formally opened on 12 June 2017 and closed at 5pm on 11 August 2017.
[15] From the 30th September - 1st October 2017 (first weekend) and 4-5 November 2017 (second weekend).

21 speakers addressing the assembly. Based on these inputs and subsequent deliberations from the membership, a ballot paper consisting of 13 recommendations (see **Appendix A**) was voted upon and all items were approved[16] by a majority. A detailed report outlining the process and recommendations was released in April 2018 and will now be considered by the recently established SJCCA[17]. Hence, it is the input and output legitimacy of this ICA process that shall be the subject of examination.

2.3 Evaluation Framework

Similarly to the emergence of the deliberative ideal, Habermas's (1984) concepts of "ideal speech" and "communicative competences" serve as the foundations for an evaluative framework of public participations. According to Abelson et al. (2003, 244; see Webler 1995), two key meta-principles can be identified based on a revision of these concepts on which "deliberative participation processes can be judged" - namely *fairness* and *competence.* The former most resembles the representative and procedural components of a deliberative process, as it encompasses "the equal distribution of opportunities to act meaningfully in all aspects of the participation process including agenda setting, establishing procedural rules, selecting the information and expertise to inform the process and assessing the validity of claims" **(**Abelson et al. 2003, 244). As for the latter, this closely embodies the "civic science" element, as the aforementioned authors posit that "(a) competent process ensures that appropriate knowledge and understanding of the issue is achieved through access to information and the interpretation of the information", while they also add an important caveat (given the technicalities, complexity and breadth of a topic such as climate change) in noting the requirement "that appropriate procedures be used to select the knowledge that will be considered in the process."

[16] An additional four axillary recommendations were not voted upon, but were included in the final report.
[17] Special Joint Committee on Climate Action

Taken together, the evaluation of fairness and competency principles can help determine the *legitimacy* of both the process and its consequent outcomes, with Konsell and Bäckstrand's (2010, 38; also see Scharpf 2006) "dual legitimacy framework" clearly outlining the "input (procedural) and output (problem-solving capacity) dimension". However, arguably more weight has been given to the former over the latter in previous empirical studies. For instance, Abelson et al. (2003, 244) are critical of evaluations which have occurred within a narrow theoretical framework which assumes that adequate representation, procedural fairness and considered judgements *alone* will produce legitimate outcomes while ignoring or neutralising "the role of power…(in) producing a particular set of outcomes". Thus, for a topic such as climate change (which requires more expert knowledge as opposed to moral issues which are more easily relatable to the lay public), it is important to acknowledge and evaluate the dynamics of information as power that may significantly direct and affect outcomes.

To effectively evaluate the input and output legitimacy of the ICA, Smith's (2009, 12) four democratic goods - inclusiveness; popular control; considered judgements and transparency (similar to Dingwerth's [2007] categorization of legitimacy) have been considered. However, it may prove problematic for the given analytical purposes due to the incoherent internal logic (e.g. "popular control" may encompass both the prior agenda setting and citizenry control over outcomes) while it also fails to clearly distinguish between the deliberative (i.e. between citizens) and civic science (i.e. information from experts, witnesses etc.) components which would both fall under "considered judgements".

Nevertheless, these "goods" - especially the important consideration to *transparency* - will be referred to throughout the literature review and analysis sections. Instead, an adaption of Abelson et al. (2003, 245, see ***Table 1***) *"Principles for the Design and evaluation of public participation processes"* has been chosen for the given purpose as there is a clear distinction between r*epresentation, procedural rules, information* and *outcomes/decisions* (which is

necessary to assess both the input and output legitimacy), while it is also more value neutral than Smith's "goods". There is also a clear breakdown of the various components of these principles, with only the consideration to transparency absent (although this may be holistically addressed throughout the analysis). The four principles for design and evaluation (and their internal components) will now be holistically discussed in relation to the relevant literature:

***Table 1**. Evaluation Framework (adapted from Abelson et al. 2003, 245)*

Input Legitimacy → **→ Output Legitimacy**

Representation	**Procedural rules**	**Information**	**Outcome/ decisions**
Legitimacy and fairness of selection process Is there a representative sample? Geographic Demographic Political Community Participant selection vs Self-selection Inclusiveness (broad) vs Exclusiveness (narrow)	Degree of citizen control/input into agenda setting, establishing rules, selecting experts, information Deliberation Amount of time Emphasis on challenging experts, Information Mutual respect Credibility and legitimacy of process. What point in the decision-making process is input being sought? Who is listening?	Characteristics Accessibility Readability Digestibility Selection and presentation Who chooses the information Who chooses the experts Interpretation Adequacy of time provided to consider, discuss and challenge the information	Legitimacy and accountability of: Decision-making, Communication, Responses More informed citizenry Achievement of consensus over the decision (i.e. broad-based understanding and acceptance of final decision) Better/different decisions

TRANSPARENCY →

2.3.1 Representation

According to Abelson et al. (2003, 244) "(a)ll evaluation frameworks include some criteria about how representation issues might be assessed and emphasize the extent to which different types of representation can be achieved (e.g., geographic, demographic or political)". From a theoretical starting point, Manin (1987, 352) propounds that "(a)s political decisions are characteristically imposed on all, it seems reasonable to seek, as an essential condition for legitimacy, the deliberation of all or, more precisely, the right of all to participate in deliberation". However, Walzer (1999, 68) aptly notes that "(d)eliberation is not an activity for the demos ...as 100 million of them, or even 1 million or 100,000, can't plausibly 'reason together'". Thus, as Jennstå (2016, 2; also see Goodin 2000) illuminates, "the ideal of having all those impacted by a political decision deliberate together is empirically impossible".

Nonetheless, if we accept the proviso of Manin's "right of all to participate in deliberation", Dryzek (2001, 652) purports that "viability depends crucially on the vast majority always choosing not to exercise the rights and capacities that are so fundamental to the theory". Thus, Abelson et al. (2003 242) propound that this practical "requirement to select a small group of 'representative participants' subjects deliberative processes to critics who will dismiss their outcomes as unrepresentative while forcing the architects of the deliberative exercise to carefully consider whom to involve". Importantly, Dryzek (2001, 652) notes a clear "legitimisation problem" here as "decisions still have to be justified to those who did not participate", which is arguably a key component in achieving (external) legitimacy.

Moreover, given citizens' assemblies are unelected bodies with substantive power, Warren (2008, 56; also, Dryzek 2009) propounds that legitimacy is derived from the "descriptive similarities between the body and the citizenry", with this being regarded as the "gold standard" of inclusiveness (Jennstå 2016; Mansbridge 1999). However, Jennstå (2016, 1) posits that, although at its heart deliberative democracy seeks to engage and connect citizens

with politics, “there is a legitimate concern that not all citizens can, will, or want to participate in deliberation”. This leads Abelson et al. (2003, 248) to question “(h)ow to achieve representativeness when citizens do not want to participate”. Such considerations may be exacerbated by Lijphart’s (1997, 1) “systematic class bias”, wherein “the inequality of representation and influence are not randomly distributed but systematically biased in favour of more privileged citizens - those with higher incomes, greater wealth, and better education - and against less advantaged citizens”. This rule also holds true for deliberative forums, as Fishkin (2009, 80) states that “when participation is voluntary…the better off and the more educated tend to participate more” while Warren (2008, 58) notes that we thus see an “under-representation of those who are less organized, less educated, and have fewer resources”.

This may also be compounded by other factors - such as the availability of time to participate - which does not fall equally according to demographics or class, as Jennstå (2016, 19) finds that “(t)here appears to be sensitivity to time commitment for otherwise motivated individuals...that has implications for the design of such events in attracting these individuals”. However, Street et al. (2014, 5) found that the duration of a citizens’ jury “did not appear to impact on recruitment bias”.

Moreover, a review conducted by Street et al. (2014, 5) of 19 citizen juries found that absence of selection bias was particularly influenced by “stratified sampling with broad range of criteria; recruitment through market research company or by telephone, letter or door-knocking; and a substantial honorarium”. Yet importantly, they found that selecting merely one or two of these methods alone was insufficient to avoid contaminating juries with external inequalities, for instance they cite a Haigh and Scott-Samuel (2008) empirical analysis which found “recruiting via random sampling from the electoral register, stratified by geographic area with no honorarium, convened a jury with no young people and 70% aged over 45 years”.

Additionally, another key concern raised by Abelson et al. (2003, 248) concerns "(h)ow to mitigate strong vested interests which may try to use the deliberative process to sway the discussion or, ultimately, the outcome of the exercise". The clear danger here is that one risks creating "a politically engaged citizenry whose views are not representative of the broader public" (Gerber et al. 2011, 704), as Lindell (2001, 4; also see Thompson 2008) propound that "a deliberative discussion where citizens hold diverse viewpoints will have different outcomes than a discussion between like-minded individuals". However, other scholars (e.g. Fraser, 1990) have questioned the wisdom of filtering strongly held views embedded within the public from the selection process. Clearly, there is a balance to be struck between avoiding interest-group capture and accommodating conflictual, but legitimate, differences within society.

Importantly, Jennstå (2016, 2) asks "what do we know about citizens' actual willingness to participate in deliberation?". She criticizes Smith's (2012) appraisal of the apparent willingness of citizen participation, noting that the empirical literature on citizens' actual disposition to participate in deliberation is mixed. Jennstå (2016, 2) cites two studies from the US, which suggest a low inclination to participate in deliberation (Hibbing and Theiss-Morse 2002; Mutz 2006), while a third is more positive (Neblo et al. 2010). However, the two prior cases perhaps most relevant to the ICA are the British Columbia Citizens Assembly (BCCA) which focused on electoral reform and the experimental Irish precursor - We The Citizens' (WTC) - which had "no agenda...legal standing or remit…other than to test "whether a form of deliberative democracy…would work in an Irish context" (WTC 2011, 34).

Regarding willingness to participate, Fournier et al. (2011, 34) illuminates that the response to the selection letters for the BCCA was a mere 7%; thus, the clear majority of people invited were not interested and/or unavailable. Likewise, only 15.7% (i.e. 195 out of 1247 polled) expressed an initial interest in WTC (2011, 14). In terms of gender and geography, both cases appeared to be duly representative, with the BCCA for example ensuring that one male

and female were selected from each of BC's 79 electoral districts. However, regarding potential systematic biases, the participants of the BCCA were found to be "much better educated" and have "notable differences in political attitudes" when compared to the general population (Fournier et al. 2011, 57-59). As for the WTC (2011, 25), the report notes that the "members started with a higher level of interest than the control groups" while the "upper middle-class" categories were also over-represented at the expense of the "lower classes". In line with Street et al. (2014), this could have been exacerbated by the failure to provide financial remunerations which may have impinged on the representation of both the young and low-income groups, as one could assume they would be less financially secure, while conversely, older and wealthier individuals arguably had more "free" time to engage in these deliberative forums.

Additionally, the BCCA failed to account for ethnicity due to Gibson (2002, 13) believe that Canadian Democracy was "resolutely color-blind". However, James (2008, 111-118) posits that this "failure to screen for ethnicity may have undermined the quality of deliberation", as such perspectives were not always voiced in the assembly process. On the other hand, Goodin's (2000) ideal of deliberative democracy assumes that participants will reflect on the interest of those who do not participate. Likewise, Lindell (2011, 4; also see Smith and Wales 2000, 61) propounds that "participants shouldn´t be seen as representatives of their own social group but be able to reflect and consider their own preferences in the light of new information and arguments put forward by other participants". However, somewhat contradictorily, she also acknowledges that "if the participants are like minded and hold the same views before the discussion, the conditions for deliberation aren´t the right ones and they do not confront the problem that deliberation is intended to address", which re-emphasises the importance of adequate and equal representation of different social groups within the populous.

However, attempts to address this notable imbalance in the BCCA by adding two Aboriginal members seemingly failed, as James (2008, 122) postulates that "in the absence of

other minority group members, an isolated individual is less likely to express a minority position that contradicts the dominant perspective", perhaps due to a lack of a "critical mass or threshold" which could empower visible minorities to articulate their opinions. This empirical evidence illuminates an important caveat to the idea of "representation", as merely having some groups "present" thus not equate to their views being represented or voiced in practice (Fraser 1990; Smith 2009). According to Smith (2009, 12), inclusiveness pertains to the way in which political equality is realized in two respects - *presence and voice*. Both criteria must be satisfied "to ensure the inequalities of life do not contaminate the deliberative process" (Fishkin 2009, 129), as Sanders (1997) suggests that deliberative democracy may paradoxically work undemocratically by mirroring and indeed amplifying disadvantages within society. This illuminates the importance of participants' ability to voice their opinions within the process, something which theorists often ignore, with Barber (2003, 133) for example assuming that the "deliberative democratic process equalizes value inputs". However, there is little reflection in these accounts of how we can overcome the existing "reductive historical sociology" (Barber 2003), with Shapiro (1999, 36) stating that deliberative theorists ignore the fact that "politics is about interests and power" and not necessarily "understanding" and the "better argument". This leads Eckersley (1995, 212) to question whether given the "existing social inequities and resources, knowledge and power disparities among different social classes and groups…if (green) institutional design should not start from the premise of power disparities rather than from a regulative ideal that is unlikely ever to obtain in practice?"

2.3.2 Procedural Rules

According to Abelson et al. (2003, 244), "the extent to which the procedural aspects of a consultation process are legitimate, reasonable, responsive and fair are fundamental aspects of the evaluation process". There are two main components of the procedural rules – namely the degree of citizen control and the design and subsequent quality of deliberations.

Regarding the first point - citizen control over the process - the authors raise a key question by asking at "(w)hat point in the decision-making process is public input being sought?". According to Smith's (2009, 12) concept of "popular control", this refers to "the degree to which participants are able to influence different aspects of the decision-making process". The perception of independence, influence and control afforded to CAs are imperative to their legitimacy, because "if the assembly members were to fall under the sway of some external actors - the chair or staff of the assembly, interest groups, or some other powerful political actor - they no longer can be said to represent the public" (Fournier et al. 2011, 91).

Therefore, it is worth noting the awkward truth Goodin (1992, 123) raises relating to theories of agency and theories of value which he argues may not be necessarily compatible as often portrayed by proponents of deliberative democracy. Additionally, Stears (2007, 95) questions if DD should be regarded as an ecologically friendly strand of democracy in comparison to its liberal predecessor. Simply put, it is theoretically and empirically questionable whether participative processes *actually* lead to positive environmental outcomes as green democratic scholars often assume. For instance, would environmentalists be willing to accept a deliberative democracy process which was deemed to be legitimate and fair, yet gave the "wrong" answers in terms of environmental outputs? For Goodin (1992, 168), the answer of where priorities lie is clear: "to advocate democracy is to advocate procedures, to advocate environmentalism is to advocate substantive outcomes'.

Although Lövbrand and Khan (2010, 51) note that there is a hope among green scholars "to bring about an age of reflexive ecological modernization when strong democracy and demanding environmentalism go hand in hand", they suggest that empirical evidence of this linkage is currently lacking. Consequently, given the complexity of an issue like climate change and the understandable pressure for positive outcomes (by the environmental proponents of

deliberative democracy), "political scholars are often faced with the pressing question concerning whether deliberative practices can legitimately be *steered* towards environmentally sustainable ends (emphasis added)". Hence, there may conceivably be reasons or motivations - whether conscious or subconscious among (environmental) advocates of such a deliberative process - for (intentionally or unintentionally) guiding lay citizens towards certain desired "positive" outcomes through undue influence over the agenda-setting, selection of experts and information and establishment of rules etc.

One remedy to this potential bias is for citizen control over agenda-setting, as Fraser (1990, 71) argues that participants' perspectives are most relevant "as only (they) themselves can decide what is and what is not of common concern to them"; although she acknowledges "there is no guarantee that all of them will agree". In fact, this is partly the point - disagreement - as then minorities could conceivably convince others of what should be included as a matter of public concern. Consequently, she argues that there should be "no a priori boundaries", as if we cannot presume a common good, "then there is no warrant for putting any strictures on what sorts of topics, interests, and views are admissible in deliberation" (Fraser 1990, 72).

This implies that the agenda should be set by citizens; however, with such complex, technical and broad topics such as climate change, one could argue lay citizens may not possess the requisite knowledge of which problems are more paramount. For instance, like the problem statement critique that government may have other more pressing concerns on the agenda than climate change, similarly, lay citizens may only perceive problems that are more immediate and tangible (e.g. litter rather than climate change), while they conceivably also lack the technical expertise to fully comprehend and assess the range of dangers and possible solutions. Thus, an advisory committee and/or steering group - which Street et al. (2014, 7) found in over two-thirds of cases - could be utilised to overcome this problem, with the latter (if containing citizens) allowing expert knowledge to be combined with citizens' concerns. However, the

composition and control of such groups must be completely clear, as Smith (2009) posits that the "very integrity" of the process depends on prior decisions - for example, in terms of agenda setting, selection of speakers and information - being perceived to be unbiased.

With regards to the two empirical cases - the BCCA and WTC - both had contrasting fortunes in this regard. Firstly, Warren (2008, 59) argues that the BCCA was unparalleled as a citizen's body because it was *"empowered* to set the agenda for electoral reform". Additionally, the BCCA was seemingly free to conduct its proceedings without any "suspicion of Government interference or direction throughout the entire exercise" (Carty et al. 2008, 146), which assured the assembly of complete independence and control over the process. However, some critics have speculated that the BCCA was subjected to undue influence as "the formal working agenda was guided by the government-defined mandate for the Assembly, laid out by Assembly staff, and subject to relatively minimal input from Assembly members" (Lang 2008, 86). For instance, when members raised the potentiality of increasing the number of parliament seats the Chair interpreted "the assembly's mandate as requiring it to work within the current size" (Fournier et al. 2011, 101). This decision inexorable damaged the case for MMP[18] which is more conducive to an expanded legislature (Lang 2008). Furthermore, the Chair's determination to restrict deliberation to the "*three core values",* despite members' appeals that these be revisited, ostensibly impeded the deliberation of the fourth value, *diversity*, which consequently was given little consideration (Smith 2009; Lang, 2008). This incidence explicitly demonstrated disdain for the "provisional principle" of deliberative democracy which "enables citizens to challenge earlier decisions, including decisions about the procedures for making decisions" (Gutmann and Thompson 2004, 19) and illustrates that "when push came to shove",

[18] Mixed-Member Proportional representation (MMP)

the staff imperative to keep the process on track overrode Assembly members' concerns about the interpretation of their mandate and the structure of their decision-making" (Lang 2008, 95).

Conversely, the WTC did not derive its agenda from the Government or a group of academics, but from the people of Ireland, thus ensuring "the initiative was truly citizen led" (WTC 2011, 9). Moreover, the absence of a "top-table or keynote speaker" (WTC 2011, 10) reinforced the idea that members were truly *primus inter pares* and *the* integral part of the process. However, the WTC was not immune from such prospective agenda-setting, although the evidence is less salient. For instance, the agenda for the WTC was determined by the prominent themes arising from the regional events which were "free and open to everyone" (WTC 2011, 9). The organizers acknowledged that this augmented the prospect "that the events and the agenda could be taken over or heavily influenced by some organized political or lobby group" (WTC 2011, 10), particularly when one considers that the WTC used "local networks" to "disseminate information about events", which would inadvertently increase the likelihood of certain interests being over-represented and perhaps excessively influential at a particular event. The BCCA differed in this respect, as it deliberately sought to exclude political groups and lobbies from the entire process (Fournier et al, 2011).

Overall, the two empirically cases illustrate the potential for bias with both paths, as a government set-agenda may have limited citizenry control (in the case of BCCA), while a totally bottom-up agenda may lead to a danger of interest-group capture of the process.

In addition to agenda-setting processes, the procedural rules and norms revolving citizen deliberation are integral to the ideal of deliberative democracy. Chambers (2003, 309) defines deliberation as "*a debate and discussion aimed at producing reasonable, well-informed opinions in which participants are willing to revise preferences in light of discussion, new information, and claims made by fellow participants. Although consensus need not to be the ultimate aim of deliberation, and participants are expected to pursue their interests, an*

overarching interest in the legitimacy of outcomes (understood as justification to all affected) ideally characterizes deliberation".

This definition encapsulates Smith's (2009, 24) idea of "considered judgements" which "rests on the capacity of citizens to make thoughtful and reflective judgements". More specifically, Fearon (1998) outlines five rationales for deliberating on an issue before arriving at a decision. Firstly, he argues that in contrast to referendums, deliberation allows participants to share views on relative weights of preferences and subjects that binary voting prohibits. Secondly, it is argued that deliberation allows for a range of options or new alternatives to be considered, which may be particularly important given the previous context of citizens' control/input into agenda setting. Thirdly, deliberation is assumed to encourage proposals that extend past narrow self-interest to encompass broader considerations of the public good. Fourth, granted the theoretical premise that everyone has an input into the discussion, it is believed deliberation enhances the overall legitimacy of the final decision as well as subsequent compliance and implementation as the participants have ownership (although, this may also lock-in non-participants to the decision and thus lead to an inability to effectively challenge the perceived 'consensus'). Finally, the process itself is regarded as a form of civic education wherein the intellectual and moral capabilities of the participants are enhanced.

The literature on deliberation is diverse, however Lindell (2011) identifies three ideals that are common to scholarly analysis - namely inclusion, reflection and rationality - which shall now be discussed. *Inclusion* - in the guise of "voice" (Smith 2009) - has already been addressed in the previous ***Representation*** section. However, facilitation is a key design element which may reduce "internal exclusion" (Young 2000) as moderators have the capacity "to structure group communication in a way that empowers disadvantaged participants" (Trénel 2009, 253; also see Fung 2004; Fulwider 2005). Specifically, Trénel (2009, 254) distinguishes between "*basic facilitation*" which "keeps participants focused on the agenda and ensure rules

of civility" and a more "advanced" form, wherein professional facilitators are "recruited for each discussion group, in order to balance participation, create a respectful climate, and stimulate, clarify, and summarize discussions (see Pyser and Figallo 2004)." The author found that there was a statistically significant positive difference in the "exclusion curve" for women when advanced facilitation as employed, with Trénel (2009, 255) positing that "that women felt more motivated because their specific use of rhetorical forms…were better accommodated" which is in line with Type II deliberation (outlined below). Nevertheless, despite this improvement (which was also evident, but not statistically significant, for "non-whites, low income and low educated groups"), Trénel (2009, 255) laments that this is "particularly troubling, as the basic facilitation approach seems to be the most common". Thus, if internal inclusion (i.e. voice) is to be satisfied, clearly further research into facilitation design, strategies and implementation will be needed.

The second ideal, *reflection*, pertains to the fact that citizens should be given time for thinking through their preferences and arguments. Firstly, practically speaking, time itself is of the essence as Street et al. (2014, 5) found that in shorter juries "some participants complained of insufficient time to explore the issues" although they note that "brief daylong juries still delivered outcomes". Moreover, the time factor is influenced by the number of participants at a given table, with Smith and Wales (2000) claiming that small groups are essential for ensuring equal and equate speaking time. Importantly however (in terms of the previous discussion on citizens' control), they propound that "(l)onger juries did permit participants greater control over the ensuing report". As for the quality of deliberations, here, Fearon's (1998, 63) notion of deliberation is worth noting, as he argues that "(it) refers either to a particular sort of discussion — one that involves the careful and serious weighing of reasons for and against some proposition — or to an interior process by which an individual weighs reasons for and against courses of action". There is clear distinction here between internal (individual learning

- civic science) and external (mutual group learning - deliberation) reflection. According to Dryzek (2000) in order for reflection to occur, arguments must be tested among others, and through a mutual exchange of views participants can reflect on their own and other viewpoints (Abelson et al 2003). However, Goodin and Niemeyer's (2003, 627-628) evidence from an Australian citizens' jury on environmental issues contradicts this, as they found that internal reflection "might be far more important" than implied by deliberative scholars such as Dryzek who place heavy emphasis on the discursive component as they found that "jurors' attitudes chang(ed) more in response to the 'information' phase of the jury proceedings, involving a large degree of 'deliberation within', than during the formal 'discussion' phase". This may change from topic to topic however, as environmental issues are more technical by nature, thus there is arguably more reliance on expert knowledge and learning, whilst in contrast, personal stories from other members during deliberations may carry extra weight for moral topics.

Nonetheless, regardless of whether reflection is derived internally, externally or a combination of both processes, deliberation occurs on the premise of openness to transformation of preferences and possible opinion change as participants are exposed to new information, ideas and opposing individuals' arguments. Yet importantly, Suiter et al. (2014, 200) propound that "it is quite possible for deliberation to strengthen the existing stances held by certain participants". For instance, Ganuza et al. (2012, 241) evaluation of citizens deliberation on management of water resources taking place among citizens residing in the Andalusia region found that "(d)eliberation can transform opinions and also change participants' attitudinal network" which can "influence both the acquisition of knowledge and a change in beliefs and attitudes"; however, they noted that these effects faded over time as participants incorporated their new-found knowledge into their prior belief systems. Moreover, Lindell's (2011, 18) analysis of 19 different empirical settings found positive outcomes in terms of "(o)pinion changes, knowledge gains and citizens´ deliberative capacity".

Specifically, they found opinions to change in 17 of the 19 cases. However, Lindell, (2011, 2) posits that knowing that opinion has changed does not illuminate *why* it changed, "since the change in itself can be a sign of manipulation or conformity". Abelson (et al 2003, 241) elucidate this point when stating that "as a social process, authentic deliberation relies on persuasion to induce participants' reflection on and altering of views in contrast to other communication approaches such as coercion, manipulation or deception which are achieved through ideological domination and interest group capture". Moreover, there is the perceptible danger of "groupthink" - something social psychologists claim deliberative scholars fail to even consider (Hart 2007) and which may become more prevalent due to the advent of social media (etc.) and the augmented particularisation and polarisation of opinions – which can subsequently give the (false) perception of opinion change.

Finally, the third theme is *rationality*, which Lindell (2011, 4) argues is viewed by many scholars as deliberation *per se,* as traditionally, there has been a *"strong focus on rational argumentation"* within the literature. Consequently, there has been much attention to how rational arguments are made between CA members, with Lövbrand and Khan (2010, 49 -57) suggesting that "the style and standards of deliberative reasoning, further disadvantages already disadvantaged citizens", while they also highlight the feminist critique that "representation in political discourse often privileges the beliefs, experiences and speaking styles of Western, white, well-educated men at the expense of the marginalized 'other'". This is particular apparent for the conception of "ideal discourse" encompassed within the strong procedural style "Type I Deliberation" (Bachtiger at al. 2010, 36). This style emphasizes rationality, reflection and respect in reaching a mutual decision; however, Bachtiger at al. (2010, 39) note that "many (usually) disadvantaged people do not engage in idealized forms of deliberation, which suits only a privileged few". Moreover, Young (2001) and Sanders (1997) argue that this goal of consensus - "driven by deliberative theorists' focusing on rational, dispassionate

discussions creates a stifling uniformity and constrains deliberation" (Bachtiger at al. 2010, 39). For instance, Fraser (1990, 72), in building on the work of Jane Mansbridge, contests the conflation of deliberation with a common good which she argues reduces discussion to "a single, all-encompassing 'we', thereby ruling claims of self-interest and group interest out of order". In particular, she argues that "the less powerful may not find ways to discover that the prevailing sense of "we" does not adequately include them" which also may increase the danger of "groupthink" as it gives the perception of a legitimised 'consensus' (Hart 2007).

Conversely, Dryzek (2011, 660; also, Sander 1997; Young 2001) propounds that "(t)aking difference seriously means attending to different identities and the different kinds of communication that accompany them, refusing to erase them in the name of a unitary public reason". Thus, rather than "restricting...arguments in particular kinds of terms" as the case with Type I, Dryzek (2001, 48) advocates "a more tolerant position (which) would allow argument, rhetoric, humour, emotion, testimony or storytelling, and gossip". Likewise, Young (2002, 58) contests this "identification of reasonable public debate with polite, orderly, dispassionate, gentlemanly argument" and calls for an "agonistic model", which may lead to a more authentic expression of viewpoints and understanding. Additionally, Fraser (1990, 72) emphasises the importance of "helping participants clarify their interests, even when those interests turn out to conflict"; yet ironically, "some critics have speculated that deliberation might widen political divisions instead of narrowing them" which subsequently lends itself "to the polarization of opinions" (Bachtiger at al. 2010, 39). For instance, Eley (in Fraser 1990, 68), propounds that "in stratified societies, the discursive relations among differentially empowered publics are as likely to take the form of contestation as that of deliberation". However, in closing this section it is important to note (returning to Goodin's and Barber's earlier arguments) that deliberative democracy may be a form of "civic education", and that if designed properly, the exposure to cross-cutting viewpoints may increase tolerance and understanding of the "other" (Mutz 2006).

Importantly, Fraser (1990, 69) suggests that such concerns regarding inequalities are "better treated as an empirical question than as a conceptual question" as she admits that there is "no reason to rule out in principle the possibility of a society in which social equality and cultural diversity coexist with participatory democracy", while also noting that "communication" which requires "multi-cultural literacy...can be acquired through practice".

Regarding the reflection and rationale of deliberations, these are encompassed in Smith's (2009, 24) concept of considered judgements which suggest that successful deliberation "rests on the capacity of citizens to make thoughtful and reflective judgements". The effects of the information stage (to be fully discussed in the next section) were successful in both aforementioned empirical cases - the BCCA and WTC. However, Smith (2009, 24) propounds that "considered judgment does not simply require citizens to learn more "facts" about the issue under consideration…it also requires them to appreciate the views of other citizens with quite different social perspectives and experiences". Again, while noting the limitations of inclusiveness[19], considerable changes of mind were evident in the two cases as a certain repercussion of the deliberative process which produced both justifiable and mutually acceptable outcomes. Firstly, "statistically significant" shifts of opinion were recorded among members of the WTC "after they had deliberated on economic issues" which were "distinctly different from those of the various control groups" (WTC 2011, 23). Thus, the report concludes that this was "not random or the result of chance", but in fact a direct consequence of participants' deliberation.

Likewise, the BCCA also experienced an observable deviation from the initial preference of MMP following the "learning phase" to an overwhelming support for STV after the "deliberation phase" (Fournier et al. 2011). Blais et al. (2008, 135), determine that their

[19] outlined in Representation section

recommendation was “no mere random or unreasoned response” but instead a clear consequence of shifting preferences stemming from the deliberative forum. For instance, they outline how “a minority intensely concerned with local representation”, and led by a charismatic advocate “Wilf”, were “able to convince others to weigh it more heavily in their assessments of electoral systems than they might otherwise" (Blais et al. 2008, 144). This capacity for conscientiousness among the members was seemingly assisted by the BCCA’s design, as members regularly travelled throughout the region, which Fournier (et al. 2011, 102) suggests “sensitized many of them to the vast size of the province and to the representational challenges of rural areas”. However, this instance also illustrates the potential for self-interested and prominent individuals to dominate proceedings (Mansbridge et al. 2010; Fishkin, 2009) as Wilf arguably rebalanced “the underlying considerations that lead to a late shift towards STV” (Fournier et al, 94). This aptly demonstrates that the despite deterrent design features, “the scope of the discussions in a deliberative forum depends as much on the agency of participants as it depends on the work of organizers” (Lang 2008, 104).

Interestingly, the WTC report (2011, 24) also concludes “that the deliberative method is one which encourages women’s involvement and would support the evidence that women are discouraged from political participation by the adversarial nature of politics”. Yet paradoxically, it is this very issue of women’s representation that in the two cases reveals the negative tendency “to devalue the issue forming the basis of conflict" during the deliberative process (Mutz 2006, 108) as Fishkin (2009, 102) posits that the social pressure for conformity may subsequently lead to an inadequate consideration of an argument on its merits. For instance, in the BCCA, some female participants felt unable or/and unwilling to discuss the issue perhaps due to its emotive and conflictive nature, as for example, one member interviewed by Lang (2008, 101) who described herself as an educated feminist remarked how she felt “concern over how vocal I could be” and furthermore found it difficult just to

"challenge the status quo". Moreover, although expert opinion was sought, both groups with differing opinions became increasingly entrenched in their prior beliefs (Lang 2008). Similarly, even though all participants were in favour of more participation for minority groups in the WTC, "when specific questions related to concrete proposals were made, for example, the introduction of gender quotas to increase the number of women in the Dáil[20], responses became more guarded" (WTC 2011, 30). However, instead of confronting these issues in pursuit of a mutual understanding and respect, the topic appears to have been avoided. This again illustrates Young's (2000) "internal exclusion" which posits that even if some people are formally included, they may not have their opinions taken seriously if they conflict with the cultural consensus. This, in line with the above state theory on reflection, may have been due to a natural group tendency to avoid conflict (Mutz, 2006) and seek conformity (Fishkin, 2009) but may also have been exasperated by over-zealous conflict rules and the inability of facilitators to allow constructive conflict as part of a healthy debate within the deliberation.

2.3.3 Information

According to Abelson et al. (2003, 244), "(d)ecisions regarding what and how information is selected, presented and interpreted are crucial elements of any consultation process and are therefore important evaluation principles to consider". Moreover, Fischer (1990) argues, there is a need for a serious examination of the nature of information itself, - particularly scientific information which is both complex and uncertain as in the case of climate change - the related power dynamics involved and the conditions under which citizens might be able to use it. Broadly speaking, the evaluation of "information" can be equated with the assessment of civic science as previously defined in the introduction to the literature review. The parallels between the emergence of civic science and deliberative democracy are clearly apparent. Like the aforementioned distrust of politicians and political institutions which has

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hastened the call for more deliberative forums, civic science has been mooted to "reverse the growing public distrust in science" which has emanated - particularly in Europe - from the "legitimacy crisis" of (normal) science; hence, increasing calls have been heard to make science more "accountable" and "democratic" (Bäckstrand 2003). Importantly, proponents of CS also echo deliberative theorists in purporting that citizens are more capable of participation than commonly realised and thus forums for their involvement - both inside and outside of traditional institutions - should be provided (Bäckstrand 2003, 34).

However, this conception of citizens' capacity has been challenged within the literature. For instance, the "deficit model" frames the negative reactions towards science as one of "irrationality, fear, ignorance and lack of knowledge" on behalf of the general public which can only be abated through "improved science communication, scientific literacy and public understanding of science" (Bäckstrand 2003, 30, 38). Moreover, Petts and Brooks (2006, 1045-8) propound that "the current drive to test out forms of deliberative process...are still missing key insights from the experts themselves...who in this model are no longer preeminent but who are required to be benign actors with a more flexible approach to knowledge". However, their evidence from a deliberative forum dealing with air pollution "suggests a continuing expert-deficit model of lay knowledge, with suspicion (among experts) that the public misunderstands environmental issues". Petts and Brooks (2006, 1045) also find that "this extended role for lay knowledge appears to be personally challenging and uncomfortable for experts" as they view their role as presenting impartially to citizens (i.e. uni-directional) and not necessarily with them (i.e. bi-directional). More importantly, they note that experts "do not conceive that lay knowledge might provide a similar role in terms framing of problems, knowledge input to assessment, and presentation of arguments to aid evaluation" (Petts and Brooks 2006, 1055).

From this perspective, one could argue that experts view civic science and deliberative forums as merely a means of ensuring access to decision-making while legitimising and

ensuring “buy-in” of (their) given solutions as opposed to a transformative process aimed at expanding alternatives as assumed within the theory. This conforms with Abelson et al. (2003 246) critique that “few evaluations have assessed what jury sponsors have learned from the process, implying that the information flow and learning is unidirectional (i.e. from experts/administrators to participants) rather than a two-way information exchange as idealized by the principles of the deliberative forum”. This implies that institutionalised and formalised scientific knowledge - which is constructed and legitimised through such processes as peer review - is superior compared to other forms of lay perspectives which are “embedded in the world around and directly impacting on individuals” (Petts and Brook 2006, 1046). However, this does not assume lay knowledge is “necessarily truer, better or greener”; thus its proponents concede it should be equally challenged as well as considered (Bäckstrand 2003).

Consequently, Petts and Brook (2006, 1048) conclude that if “a deficit ideal remains amongst individual experts this could be a significant inhibitor of a participative cultural shift in environmental decision making”, as under such conditions Bäckstrand (2003, 31) purports that “the traditional mode of top-down scientific expert knowledge is still retained...while dressed in the language of transparency, dialogue and participation”. Petts and Brook (2006, 1056) lament that little scholarly attention has been paid to this expert-citizen dynamic despite their assessment that “meeting the aspirations of deliberative environmental decision-making will be challenged to a far greater extent by the continuing linear conceptualisation of the expert ^ lay knowledge (science ^ society) relationship than by difficulties of designing processes, or of encouraging lay input”.

Such critiques also illuminate “the ‘d*ouble-edge’ built into the deliberative paradigm” (*Abelson et al 2003, 242), concerning the dichotomy between the experts who hold power (in the form of information) and the citizens’ who have the capacity to digest, interpret and indeed challenge it to varying degrees. Specifically, Abelson et al. (2003, 242) note that there is a

"naive assumption about the role of information as a tool for informing dialogue which ignores the reality of information as a source of power, with respect to its availability and use, in the participatory process". Consequently, Abelson et al. (2003, 245) posit that there is an "unavoidable power balance between those who possess what seems to be the desired information, who control its dissemination and the forum within which it is debated (the sponsor of the deliberative process), and those who do not (the participants)". In short, Bäckstrand (2003, 35) critiques that despite its best intentions, "deliberation does not necessarily change the ground rules for debate and may ignore the way power enters speech itself". Nevertheless, she purports that, likewise to the previous section's discussion on citizen control, "power largely resides in setting the agenda and establishing norms and rules for decision-making"; hence, the ability for citizens' to choose experts and information may go some way to mitigating these power dynamics. Additionally, Abelson et al. (2003, 246) suggest that "lay witnesses can also be helpful in improving the public's understanding of complex principles" as their evidence not only informs but can also counterbalance "expert" advice. However, Dunkerley and Glasner, (1998, 188) add the caveat that lay witnesses' contributions are only effective when "used on an equal footing with professionals, with equal time and equal opportunity for questioning". Nonetheless, the drawback of such an approach (in line with the "uncertainty" problem inherent within the scientific discipline and the complexities of competing claims) is that experts or lay witnesses with contradicting evidence who present at different times may cause significant confusion to CA members (Street et al. 2014).

On the topic of speakers, Street et al. (2014, 7) purport that although much analysis is paid to the inclusiveness of participants, rarely is such scholarly attention given to the representativeness of speakers. Specifically, Street et al. (2014, 7) purport that a diversity of speakers may provide for more varied content and viewpoints which could relate more closely

to participants' personal experiences and thus provide more scope for the understanding and challenging of expert opinions. However, again Abelson et al. (2003, 246) laments that "precisely how this is done is less clear as there appear to be no pre-defined roles and responsibilities for jurors or jury organizers" within the literature or practice. More importantly, they suggest that "(e)ven with significant lay involvement in and control over the selection of experts and information, the vast majority of the public will defer to the ''experts'' when it comes to these decisions because they may not have the expertise required to critically appraise the information presented". For instance, they make the comparison with a court of law, which has professional lawyers to challenge the evidence on behalf of the lay jury, while in contrast citizens within a deliberative forum are left to be "judge, lawyer and jury", a "heavy burden" which may undermine the authenticity and legitimacy of the process. This is especially pronounced if decision makers and/or sponsors have a tight hold on the design which may (intentionally or unintentionally) influence the participants' ability to assess the validity, quality and adequacy of information presented (Abelson et al. 2003, 246).

Finally, Abelson et al. (2003) – similar to the discussion of "internal exclusion" in the previous two sections – allude to the potential for power imbalances between participants (with various levels of background knowledge, education and aptitude), although they note this "may be masked by institutionalized ''comfort'' among participants, apparently taking part equally". For instance, Huitma's (2007, 303) empirical case study suggests that such inequalities may even be exacerbated by the inclusion of written background material, as given that "not everybody will read the material...this procedure is seen to increase the differences in the participants´ level of knowledge". Moreover, Lenaghan's (1999) evaluation of citizens' juries has raised significant questions about both the quantity of information provided (both prior and presented), as well as the time for participants to digest, understand, consider and ultimately deliberate reflectively upon it. The quantity factor is undoubtedly influenced by the breath of a

topic such as climate change, with Dryzek (2001, 654) positing that deliberative forums "require that well-defined boundaries can be drawn around issues", which can be difficult to achieve due to the multi-disciplinary connection of the subject, all of which lends to Niemeyer's (2017a) suggestion that it may be a problematic issue for achieving deliberation.

The above arguments combined lead sceptics to argue that "citizen deliberation in science will be cumbersome, time-consuming, ineffective and slow" and furthermore that "(e)ven an educated citizenry would have problems grasping the complexities of the highly specialized knowledge of environmental science", (Bäckstrand 2003, 34-5), while a more extreme Schumpeterian (1942, 260-261) view rather harshly assesses that the average citizen "is impatient of long or complicated argument" possesses "weak rational processes," and is "not `all there". Moreover, he suggests that citizens cannot comprehend any interest beyond one that immediately and obviously concerns themselves, which goes against the very essence of deliberative democracy and the specific problem of climate change – both of which require thinking beyond one's own narrow self-interest (Schumpeter 1942, 260-261). However, although power dynamics remain a significant issue, the literature and empirical evidence would seem to clearly contradict this Schumpeterian pessimism about citizen capabilities. For instance, Niemeyer (2014b, 37-38) propounds that "many studies suggest that improving the deliberativeness of decision making in respect to challenges posed by the Anthropocene brings considerable potential benefits in producing citizens that are responsive to the complexity of the task, inclusive of competing considerations and attuned to the temporal dimension of environmental challenges." Likewise, Lindell's (2011, 10) review of empirical cases highlighted knowledge gains in 13 (from 19) cases, with no negative findings in the remaining six. Moreover, in 12 of the studies cited, the conclusion is drawn that "citizens are capable of deliberating even about difficult and complex issues".

Finally, regarding the two empirical cases - the BCCA and the WTC - Fournier et al, 2011 found that the extensive "learning phase" served to "drastically improve" members' technical knowledge of the various electoral systems in the BCCA. Additionally, in the WTC, participants knowledge on economic issues was reported to have significantly improved as a result of the briefing documents and expert opinion provided (WTC 2011). Overall, the success of civic science seems largely dependent on the context (i.e. the nature of the environmental risk and problem at hand) as well as the procedural design. Finding a balance between traditional scientific inquiry and participatory expertise and between technical and deliberative approaches therefore is an ongoing endeavour of trial and error.

2.3.4 Outcomes/Decisions

According to Abelson et al. (2003 247), "the effectiveness of any public participation or consultation process should be judged by some measure of the outcomes achieved", however, they note that there is significant debate and contestation within the literature regarding the definition of "outcomes", with some scholars (mostly deliberative theorists) primarily interested in the credibility and legitimacy of the process while others (e.g. environmental activists) are predominantly concerned with the extent of positive environmental outcomes. As previously illuminated in the procedural section, Goodin (1992, 168) makes a clear distinction between the input and output legitimacy of the process when declaring that "to advocate democracy is to advocate procedures, to advocate environmentalism is to advocate substantive outcomes". Although deliberative scholars often assume that procedural effectiveness will inevitably lead to better decisions and outcomes, Lövbrand and Khan (2010, 51) suggest that empirical evidence of this linkage is currently lacking. Hence, there are two main concerns regarding outcomes. Firstly, Gutmann and Thompson (2004, 59) propound that "the future of deliberative democracy…depends on whether its proponents can create and maintain practices and institutions that enable

deliberation to work well". Secondly, Lövbrand and Khan (2010, 49) propounds "while the deliberative turn in green political thought has restored an optimistic belief in the cognitive capacity and the moral potential of the 'ecological citizen'...green deliberative theory is weakly linked to the practical reality in which environmental politics is played out"; therefore, they "conclude that serious engagement with the practice of environmental governance is necessary in order to determine the feasibility and desirability of the normative ideal itself". This particularly concerns whether "better (or different) decisions" can be obtained through a deliberative process (Abelson et all. 2003).

Abselson et al. (2003) also outline numerous sub-factors for assessing these various outcomes. Firstly, they note the importance of the legitimacy and accountability of the actual decision-making. Specifically, they highlight the degree of public and participant input into the final decision(s), its communication and ultimately the response from relevant authorities (assuming it is an advisory assembly such as the ICA) which justifies the reasons for implementing or rejecting the various recommendations. However, Abelson et al. (2003, 248) raise the important question regarding "(h)ow to ensure accountability to the participants for the outcome of the deliberation when the deliberative process is only one input into the decision-making process or if the final decision is several years into the future or may not be taken at all". Specifically, they highlight concerns among former members from various empirical examples "about what, if anything, would be done with their recommendations". For instance, Lenaghan, (1999, 54) notes that "(m)any positive remarks were often qualified to the effect that their final judgement would depend upon whether or not the authorities listened and took note of their recommendations". Moreover, Abelson et al. (2003, 248) cite evidence suggesting that this failure to incorporate the outcomes of assemblies may have broader implications for representation and citizenry commitment to future initiatives, as they find that "the public may not be that willing to participate in time consuming, face-to-face processes,

especially if they cannot be assured that their involvement will make a difference." However, herein lies a potential conundrum. On the one hand, binding-decisions would essentially ensure an assembly's recommendations are followed through which thus enhances the legitimacy due to the increased degree of citizen control. However, on the other hand, Abelson et al. (2003, 248) propound that the "stakes are often too high" to ensure "binding-decisions" while it would also raise some significant questions regarding the credibility and legitimacy (illustrated in the "representation" and "procedural - deliberation sections) of giving an unelected and voluntary-selected body such power (Abelson et al. 1995). Hence, clearly an advisory role, in conjunction with a referendum and/or detailed response from the relevant body would be more conducive to acceptance amongst the broader citizenry in terms of output legitimacy.

Apart from this assessment and subsequent action surrounding the actual decisions and/or recommendations made, the process itself must also be evaluated. Two factors - more informed citizenry and the degree of consensus - have already been discussed in the previous "information" and "procedural - deliberation" sections respectively. Regarding the former, it is clear that citizens who are part of the process become more informed and arguably become more aware and motivated by communal concerns rather than narrow self-interest. For instance, Lenaghan, 1999 notes how "jurors tended to praise the fact that the models enabled them to meet new people from different backgrounds and perspectives, to learn about a new area, to participate in decision making, and to foster a sense of community". Nevertheless, it remains to be seen if this knowledge translates to the broader public. For instance, in the case of the BCCA vote on electoral reform, the recommendation from the assembly was defeated with 60.9% voting against the reform and only 39.09% of voters supporting the change (Smith 2009). This illuminates the importance of communicating effectively the work and recommendations of the assembly to the public.

Consequently, transparency - which Smith (2009, 12) refers to as "the openness of proceedings both to participants and the wider public" - is fundamental for ensuring confidence and trust in a political process. Kronsell and Bäckstrand (2010, 38-41) posit that "(a) legitimate political order rests on the approval and consent of the community" and thus "transparency and access to information is a precondition of accountability". Furthermore, they cite the necessary role of "publicity, the media and public opinion" in achieving this outcome. Again, the BCCA appeared to achieve a respectable degree of transparency as expectations were evidently understood by participants while significant efforts were also made to convey their work to the greater BC public through the establishment of "a dedicated website providing background details and a running commentary of the Assemblies work; and a summary of the final report was sent to every household" (Smith 2009, 102). This seemingly had a discernible impact as Fournier et al. (2011, 123) notes how "voters who trusted the assembly were consistently more favourable towards STV [recommendation]".

In comparison, such internal transparency appeared limited within the WTC due to its non-agenda, research priority and indistinct objectives (WTC 2011, 34). Moreover, the promotion of the events was admittedly locally restricted and although mainstream coverage was somewhat achieved, it is doubtful whether this penetrated the national agenda or conscious. This point exposes a distinct deficiency in the application of deliberative democracy, principally its over-reliance on media outlets to convey its message, which was pertinently attested within the BCCA, as despite their best efforts, "by the time of the referendum, only slightly more than half of the BC electorate was aware of the CA and its work" (Warren 2008, 63). This conforms with another deliberative forum in Australia, wherein Dryzek (2001, 654) found that "(s)imply televising and publicizing the poll was insufficient…(as) the majority of those voting in the referendum chose the opposite of the deliberators' recommendation"

Poignantly, an explanation advanced for this anomaly is that "prominent political actors…did not engage with the referendum process" (Carty et al. 2008; 158-159), which not only dampened media interest in the referendum but also inhibited many citizens who "take their political cues from elite actors and media discussions" (Smith 2009, 104). Thus, a paradoxical flaw appears evident within the current deliberative model (particularly when combined with a referendum procedure), which is best surmised by the question: "If one attaches great importance to the necessity of education and preparation before deliberation and decision-making for the former, why disregard that logic for the latter?" (Fournier et al. 2011, 142). Therefore, a more concrete effort must be made to educate the wider public of the deliberations and decisions of their fellow citizens (which may be perceived as more legitimate than politicians and/or experts). This also enhances the participants perspectives of the outcome as Abelson et al. (2003, 247) suggest that they demand "greater accountability for their participation" ...(and) at a minimum, they want the resulting decision communicated to the public with some demonstration of how the public's input was used or considered in the decision-making process". However, similar to the empirical cases cited above, they conclude this currently appears to work better in theory than in practice.

As for the degree of consensus over the final decision, Gershtenson et al. (2010, 95-6) posit that "participating in deliberations about political outcomes leads people to discard inaccurate perceptions of the facts and rigidly held political views and may yield a greater sense of the overall legitimacy or acceptability of the ultimate outcomes, even if one personally disagrees with them." However, as previously discussed in the deliberation section with reference to Fraser (1990) etc., consensus may be more of a perception than a reality due to groupthink and/or inequalities which impose silence, particularly on disadvantaged groups. The utilisation of crude voting measures may also falsely contribute to this idea of 'consensus', with Niemeyer et al. (2016) observing distorting effects associated with aggregation of

preferences. Likewise, Felicetti et al. 2016 (440) propound in a study of an empirical cases (in Italy) that voting "constrained deliberation by imposing an oppositional and aggregative logic" while it also "implied unqualified endorsement of the amalgamation proposal" where in reality, the discussions were more contingent, reserved and nuanced. Consequently, they note that although "the focus in conveying the outcome was supposed to involve the justificatory arguments", it instead culminated in a crude communication of final votes which put the emphasis on decision-making rather than "deliberate making" (Niemeyer 2014). Moreover, they propound that if the latter concept had been implemented (e.g. 'via the mailing of the report to citizens'), the nuances would have been construed while it may have provoked more reflection from the public. Instead, Felicetti et al. (2016, 441) lament that "the dominance of the improvised vote fuelled a partisan clash among local political actors" as supporters highlighted the 'yes' vote outcome, without the reservations, detailed concerns and caveats discussed by so many of the participants.

Finally, Abelson et al. (2003, 245) state that "it must be asked if better decisions were taken and the participation process improved policy making (i.e., did the process make a difference to the final decision?)". This is particularly apparent in light of the considerable cost and time of such assemblies. For instance, although there are clear learning effects for those involved, one could argue this money would be better spent on informing, educating and engaging citizens' more broadly (without such procedural emphasis on deliberation and decision making) if there is no perceived advantage. The capacity for better (or different) decisions largely depends on factors discussed in the procedural and information sections; namely, whether the process is unidirectional (i.e. with the main underlying goal both learning and legitimisation of predetermined outcomes) or rather a two-way process of mutual learning and authentic exploration of alternatives. Here, Abelson et al. (2003, 246-7) also illuminate one important caveat - the danger of citizen co-option. Specifically, in citing Mullen (2000), they

posit an ironic situation that through becoming more informed and exposed to the difficulties of decision making (particularly in highly politicised settings), citizens' "may lose their lay perspective and their views may become more closely aligned with those of the 'professionals'". Additionally, one could assume that the quality of deliberation would be enhanced through the degree by prolonging time spent within such processes. But on the other hand, this over-exposure may lead to citizens' becoming institutionalised and perhaps viewing themselves as "apart" from the 'other' (external) citizens'. Hence, in concluding, a delicate balance must be struck "between the development of an informed, engaged citizenry who can actively and effectively contribute to decision-making processes but who do not become co-opted (either formally or informally) by that process" (Abelson et al. 2003), as a citizenry who are too obliging and understanding may fail to adequately challenge experts and elucidate 'inconvenient' alternatives which could lead to "better or different decisions".

In sum, the adapted framework from Abelson et al. (2003) with it composite catergories and criteria within has been used to illuminate the relevant literature with regard to deliberative democracy and civic science. This general theoretical outline will be holistically applied in order to guide the data collection and analytical processes, while always remaining flexible and open to new information, insights and ideas.

3 - METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

According to Blaikie (2010, 60), "a good description is all that is needed for an adequate understanding of many topics"; therefore, this thesis engaged a qualitative research design to explore participants perceptions of the input and output legitimacy of the ICA. As the focus was solely on the ICA climate meetings, this research adopted a case study approach. Specifically, the research aim was to independently evaluate this specific iteration of deliberative democracy and civic science in action. A constructivist research paradigm - where "reality is socially constructed" (Mertens 2005, 12) - was adopted and consequently an interpretivist approach was utilised. Furthermore, based on these ontological and epistemological assumptions, the methodological purpose was to focus on describing, interpreting and explaining "participants' views of the situation being studied" (Creswell 2003, 8) to provide a detail rich and accurate account of the ICA in light of the interviewees' insights.

According to Hudson and Ozanne (1998), the interpretivist researcher penetrates the social arena with some prior insight of the research context but recognizes that this is insufficient for developing a fixed research design (Hudson and Ozanne 1988). Consequently, an inductive research strategy guided by a general theoretical framework – adapted from Abelson et al. (2003, 245 – see ***Table 1***) principles for public participation design and evaluation with its internal categories of *representation, procedural rules, information and outcomes/decisions* – was adopted and holisitcally utilised. This allowed for a flexible approach which remained open to emerging insights elucidated from the participants' experiences. After critically probing for patterns derived from observations in the data, explanations, theories and recommendations could then be offered with the aim of evolving both the theory and practice.

3.2 Data Collection

The study gradually built upon passive observation, numerous in-depth interviews with accompanying field notes and documental analysis of official secondary sources.

3.2.1 Passive Observation

The first step of the research involved familiarisation with the ICA process and the specific climate sessions to inform the interview protocol. To achieve this, the video archives[21] of the presentations, Q&As and roundtable discussions of the respective climate meetings were viewed and analysed. This allowed for a general understanding and structure of the specific process to be noted, as well as the tone and body language of various actors in response to interesting caveats (e.g. how the Chair and/or panel of experts responded to certain questions from the floor). However, it is important to note that the actual deliberations between members were private and therefore not available for observation.

3.2.2 Document Analysis of Secondary Sources

Relevant secondary sources (e.g. recruitment methodology; official membership surveys; ICA reports etc.) were then analysed to provide concrete details of the process and to compare the "espoused theory" or "official view" with the "theory-in-use" (Argyris 1990). For instance, the recruitment methodology (Mooney 2018b, 2) stated that "99 full members and 99 substitutes" were recruited; however, it emerged during the interviews that the 99 substitutes were *not* in fact enlisted upfront, which had important (negative) implications elucidated upon in the analysis. Details from official transcripts of ICA meetings were also used to prompt members during the interview process, while it also allowed for the opinion of ICA members not directly interviewed to be incorporated into the research, thus strengthening the credibility and generalisability of the primary data and findings.

[21] Available here: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC2DgyetL9aUTMry_F9B9yUw

3.2.3 Interviews and Field notes

The interviews, conducted between the 23rd December 2017 and 27th June 2018, served as the main primary data collected throughout this research. The "participants perceptions" primarily pertain to the citizen members of the ICA (denoted by P1, P2…P12 in the analysis); however, interviews were also conducted with other relevant actors including: deliberative scholars involved with the process (DE1); an expert on the EAG for the climate meetings (SE1); an expert who presented at the ICA climate session (SE2); an environmental NGO observer who watched the respective sessions (ENGO); and finally an official from the Secretariat (Sec) of the ICA. In total, 25 interviewees were conducted as part of this research; however, only 17 were thoroughly analysed and included in the final thesis[22]. For a full list of the interviewees broken down into the relevant secondary categories see **Appendix B**.

The first difficulty was finding members to interview. Due to obvious privacy concerns, the ICA only provided the citizens names and their respective counties. These names were therefore searched on Facebook in an attempt to contact prospective participants; however, numerous issues emerged here. Firstly, a search of certain names would reveal numerous results[23]. Secondly, due to Facebook privacy settings, an unsolicited communication by a non-friend or person with no mutual friends results in the communication being sent as a "message request"; thus, it could remain "unseen" or ignored. Finally, due to the media attention surrounding the ICA - particularly relating to the 8th Amendment (i.e. abortion) session - it emerged that participants were extremely suspicious and cautious towards unknown interview requests, especially as members had been warned not to speak publicly about the process until

[22]The insights of tree politicians involved in establishing the ICA (including the former Prime Minister of Ireland, Enda Kenny, quoted in the introduction) and views of members of the public on the ICA were also solicited; however, due to time and space limitations a decision was taken to focus exclusively on actors intimately involved with the process.

[23]for instance, there were five "Murphy's" in the ICA alone. Consequently, a search for a particular "Murphy" in a given county may result in 5-10 person with the same name from the same county.

it had concluded. Hence, the general response rate for interview requests via Facebook was low which proved problematic in the early stages of the research.

Therefore, a careful strategy had to be employed to find willing participants. Thus, ICA members from the researcher's home county were firstly searched to increase the likelihood of having a "mutual friend" on Facebook. A prospective interviewee was subsequently discovered, and the mutual friend was contacted to provide an introduction; therefore, helping to build trust and rapport. This preliminary interviewee became a key "informant" throughout the research, and the first exploratory conversation provided invaluable insights which informed further data-collection; specifically, along with the passive observations and secondary sources it enabled an interview guide to be developed. This contact also allowed for snowball sampling to be adopted, as after acquiring confidence in the research, the participant helped identify further subjects. However, no more than one additional referral was accepted per interviewee to avoid the potential of finding too many "like-minded individuals" (Lindell 2011), while the research sought to purposely ensure their geographical locations always differed.

Additional interviewees were also filtered and found via Facebook and Linkedin (through clues and observations on their public homepages, such as comments or photos of the ICA). Prospective interviewees seemed more responsive to messages emphasising "a student academic research" that was focused solely on the "climate meetings" (i.e. clearly stating that the controversial meeting on abortion would not be discussed). A selection of different role perspectives was also sought to enhance the research and the search for other actors (e.g. experts, officials, observers etc.) proved a simpler process as their respective contact details were publicly available. Thus, official requests for interview via email were made and the response rate was much higher than in the case of citizens. Once a base of potential interviewees was established, a purposive sampling (Blaikie 2010) approach was utilised to

ensure citizen members were as diverse as possible with respect to the secondary characteristics (e.g. age, gender, geography etc.) outlined in the "Base Targets" (see **Table 2**, pg. 67) of the recruitment methodology (Mooney 2018b) to enhance the representativeness of the data. This process stopped once a saturation point, with respect to resources, access and time constraints, was reached.

In accordance with best ethical practice, interviewees were assured of their anonymity. Given the relatively small number of people involved with the ICA, numerous steps have been taken to conceal identities; for instance, the analysis uses gender neutral pronouns (i.e. they and their) when describing participants perspectives. Sometimes, interviewees would enquire who else was interviewed or how certain information was obtained; but these details were never divulged. By emphasising anonymity before every interview and including a consent form (see **Appendix C**) participants were more comfortable and candid; consequently, sensitive issues were disclosed which went beyond the surface-level platitudes of praise for the process to a more critical and reflective recollection of events.

In terms of the format, face-to-face interviews were sought (due to the opportunity to build rapport and observe non-verbal cues) and occurred in most cases. Interviews were conducted in a venue of the participants' choosing to enhance the trust and comfort factor. However, if meeting in person was not possible (due to time or cost constraints) then Skype interviews were held. After the initial exploratory conversation, semi-structured interviews were conducted using a general interview protocol and typically ranged between 40-80 minutes in length. This interview guide generally followed the categories of the theoretical framework (i.e. recruitment, procedural rules, information and outcomes/decisions) but was continually adapted as new details and insights emerged. The protocol also changed according to the different actors interviewed (i.e. members, experts, secretariat, etc.) to illuminate their specific

roles, experience and perceptions and how these differed or related to that of other participants interviewed.

Importantly, the interviews were conducted in a free and fluid manner which aimed to follow the flow of the contributor's recollections which allowed the conversation to drift into unknown directions not previously envisaged. Therefore, open-ended queries allowed for participant-led interviews which - in contrast to closed-ended questions - ensured that a lack of knowledge or intimacy with the process (e.g. deliberations which were not open to public viewing) did not restrict the discussion and thus important new details emerged. Finally, in line with the cultural context of "Irish informality"[24], the style of interviewing was casual and relaxed, with an emphasis on building rapport and mutual respect from the outset (e.g. using light jokes) to engender a familiar and friendly feeling. This also created a candid atmosphere which encouraged participants to be open and honest.

3.3 Data Analysis

The analysis utilised a general inductive approach, which "although… not as strong as some other analytic strategies for theory or model development, it does provide a simple, straightforward approach for deriving findings in the context of focused evaluation questions" (Thomas 2006, 237). Given the research question and stated aim is to evaluate the input and output legitimacy of the ICA climate meetings, this analytical strategy seemed most appropriate. Moreover, it allowed for a "goal-free" (Scriven in Thomas 2006, 238) evaluation which is "consistent with an inductive approach whereby evaluators wish to describe the actual program effects, not just planned effects"; thus, there is an inherent flexibility which enabled unintended happenings or consequences to be elucidated. As aforementioned, Abelson et al. (2003) evaluation framework was employed to identify key topics to be investigated

[24] "Irish informality", openness and warmth is a strong feature embedded within the culture. This led to an extremely enjoyable interviewing experience as participants engaged in anecdotes and humour which brought the session to life.

(specifically the four components – *representation; procedural rules; information; and decisions/outcomes*). The sub-criteria also served to holistically guide the research; however, these were adapted as required (both the order and the addition of new or modified criteria). Once transcribed, large extracts from the raw data were separated into the appropriate component. NVivo software was then utilised to refine and categorise this data, as labels with category descriptions (of key meanings, associations, perspectives etc.) and linkages were applied. In line with the various stages of the ICA, the data was then organised according to a logical and stylistic temporal sequence.

Some problems were also evident during the analysis stage. Firstly, time was an issue due to the sheer scale of the data (over 30 hours of interview content) with respect to the timeframe available for analysis. Specifically, the research started as an exploratory study with no a priori boundaries, thus different actors were interviewed in order to identify angles most interesting to pursue. However, there was an obvious trade-off, as a "foolish researcher collects, while a wise researcher selects". Thus, important decisions had to be made as to where to place the emphasis of the research and therefore interviews conducted with external actors (namely politicians and members of public) were omitted to ensure research clarity and to save time with transcribing and the subsequent analysis stage.

Another issue noted was that interviewees would often switch between their individual perceptions and (assumed) group-shared ideas and/or feelings through use of plural pronouns; but given the relatively small sample size (12 citizens from 99 members), it was important to assess whether these general perceptions were more generalisable to other participants. Also, like the ICA itself, there was an inherent danger of self-selection bias, wherein those who had an extremely positive or negative experience, or simply like-minded individuals could be more prone to respond to interview request which could subsequently skew the data. Moreover, another difficulty was that interviewees often used "communicative short-cuts and 'economies

of speech', such that the relationship between reasons, evidence and conclusions are not made explicit…since they may be so obvious that it is unnecessary to state them" (Bächtiger et al. 2010, 41). However, even if "obvious" during an interview, the risk existed that the precise meaning may not be so obvious on returning to the transcript and/or for the reader. Furthermore, another emergent difficulty was the fact that the ICA climate session was only one topic within a larger process (5 topics in total were considered); thus, although the participants were encouraged to reflect primarily on the climate weekend, at times it was challenging to ascertain if their perceptions related specifically to these meetings or to the process more generally. Finally, with any interpretivist approach, particular themes must be actively selected by the researcher from the data; consequently, there is always a potential danger of confirmation bias.

3.4 Quality of Data

To alleviate the stated problems associated with both data collection and analysis, this research undertook numerous steps as part of a reflexive and critical approach to enhance the credibility and reliability of the data. Firstly, the multiple methods adopted allowed for a "within method" triangulation approach which "has been found to be beneficial in providing confirmation of findings, more comprehensive data, increased validity and enhanced understanding of the studied phenomenon" (Bekhet and Zauszniewski 2012, 2). Specifically, the experiences of various actors with different roles in and thus perspectives of the process could be compared with the passive observations and secondary sources. Moreover, given the time-lag between the end of the ICA climate meetings and the subsequent interviews[25], inclusion of the latter allowed for specific details to be noted which could then be used to prompt interviewees and invite them to recollect their experiences, an approach which often

[25] The final ICA climate meeting finished on November 5th 2017 and the final interview was conducted in June 2018.

proved fruitful while also allowing for multiple source verification. Additionally, triangulation "across methods" was also utilised where possible as participants responses on certain issues (e.g. the facilitators, the level of material, mutual trust etc.) were compared with the official ICA quantitative "Feedback Reports" (CA 2018b) which surveyed the entire ICA membership on similar indicators. Moreover, "member checking" with interviewees continued throughout the concurrent collection and pre-analysis process which improved the reliability of the data and the validity of interpretations as several participants were asked to confirm if accounts were authentic and accurate (Bryman 2008). This also allowed for the interview protocol to be continuously adapted and updated throughout the process. Furthermore, peer debriefing (Lincoln and Guba 1985) was conducted at multiple stages of the process[26] to test not only the data, but the understanding and assumptions derived, which helped guard against the possibility of confirmation bias and ensured a reflexive approach to the data. Finally, the analysis endeavoured for a "thick description" to contextualise the data while also aiming to increase its credibility and transferability for future research (Tracy 2010).

3.5 Limitations and Strengths

Firstly, this research was invariably hindered by time, access and cost constraints. Another obvious limitation is that this research evaluates only a single case – the ICA – within a specific cultural context; thus, the generalisability of the study may be questioned, with Setälä and Herne (2014) for instance criticising the fact that many claims regarding deliberation are derived from single-case studies. Moreover, as will be elucidated in the analysis, the fact that the climate meetings were only one part of a larger process had design implications which may not be applicable to other standalone CA's dealing with environmental issues. Additionally, this could also have clouded and confused participants recollections. Furthermore, another

[26] The choice of co-supervisors with different perspectives was invaluable in this regard as both served as "devils advocates" and critically probed the findings in different ways. Debriefs were held after the first interviewee (in January 2018), after the 1st field trip (March 2018) and before and after the prolong research trip (May 2018). Presentations were also given to external professors and class peers where assumptions were tested.

weakness was that passive observation of the meetings did not take place in person; however, the availability of video content and inclusion of an observer (ENGO) may have alleviated this shortcoming. Finally, the time-lag between the conducting of interviews and the conclusion of the climate meetings could have led to fading recollections and/or confusion on the part of participants, with one interviewee exclaiming "*it was such a long time ago, I'm trying to think back".* However, triangulation techniques and the use of prompts seemingly helped aid their memory, while the focus was not on specific details (i.e. of recommendations) but their general perceptions.

Nevertheless, this time-lag may also be viewed as a potential strength of the study, as unlike other research on the ICA (wherein interviews or surveys were conducted during or immediately after the ICA meetings), it gave participants time and space to reflect on events. Additionally, the fact that interviews took place outside of the ICA meeting venue may have been advantageous, as arguably participants could be more candid and open in disclosing their perceptions[27]. Finally, it emerged throughout the research that no other Irish scholar (Master's or PHD) is currently evaluating the process (via qualitative methods); hence, given the stated author's intimate "insider" knowledge of the country, culture and conversational peculiarities[28], this may have enabled certain access to actors', admittance of details and an analytical understanding that "outsiders" could find more difficult.

[27] For example, if an employee is interviewed by an external evaluator within their given workplace, they may feel an (un)conscious pressure to conform with the employer's viewpoint and more positively appraise the work environment. However, the same interviewee could conceivable give contrasting responses if interviewed outside of the work venue as they could be free to discuss taboo subjects without fear of being overheard or observed etc.

[28] The author is an Irish citizen who has grown up in Ireland.

4 - ANALYSIS

The following analysis will outline the perceptions of the interviewees. These include ICA participants (denoted by P1, P2 etc) whose identity has been obscured through use of gender-neutral pronouns, deliberative experts (DE1), an EAG member (SE1), an expert presenter (SE2), a member of the Secretariat (Sec.) and an Environmental NGO observer (ENGO) of the ICA meetings on climate change. Their respective observations, experiences and perceptions shall be - where possible and necessary - triangulated through the inclusion of publicly available secondary sources (e.g. methodological documents, transcripts of roundtable discussions, participants reflective responses etc.). The analysis follows the adapted evaluation framework (see **Table 1**) by Abelson et al. (2003) in the literature review; however, the sub-categories within the framework have been rearranged and combined at points for stylistic purposes.

4.1 Representation

4.1.1 Legitimacy and Fairness of Selection

As outlined in the literature review, representation - in terms of both presence and voice - must be achieved to prevent external inequalities contaminating the ICA process (Smith 2009; Fishkin 2009). Thus, the "descriptive similarities between the body and the citizenry" are essential for representative legitimacy to be achieved (Warren 2008, 56). Specifically, Street et al. (2014, 5) outlined mutliple methods to achieve a broadly representative sample (in line with the practical constraints discussed) with minimal biases; namely, recruitment through an independent market research company; recruitment by door-knocking, letter, and/or telephone; providing a substantial honorarium for potential participants to limit self-selection bias; and perhaps most importantly, stratified sampling based on a broad range of criteria.

4.1.2 Independent Recruitment

Following the establishment of the ICA, a public e-tender was announced in early August 2016 seeking skilled and experienced suppliers to provide "99 members of the public plus 99 substitutes who are willing to act as members of the recently-announced ICA" (CA 2016). Specifically, the tender stated that "members of the Assembly should be chosen at random and representative of society as regards age, gender, social class, regional spread and should also be on the electoral register to vote in a referendum". The tender was subsequently won by Ireland's premium polling company - *RED C* - in late August 2016, and the first stages of recruitment began the following September and October. This would seem to account for Street et al. (2014) first criteria, however DE1 - who although stating that RED C are "*extremely good and a professional polling company*" - raised some concerns regarding the monitoring of the recruitment process given its stated importance:

"*...allowing civil servants total control over the project is a mistake, because civil servants are prone to do that - somebody is tendering, you get the deal, now your job is to go and do it properly…where a political scientist will be saying 'there is a turnover of membership, you got to keep an eye on this, there should be regular monitoring'" DE1*

In relation to recruitment, a door-to-door approach was utilised to directly contact potential recruits, as opposed to phoning or mailing. Arguably, cold-calling in person was the best choice, as the latter may disadvantage youth without a landline or old people without a mobile, while as for postal, in the case of the BCCA, only 7% of letters were answered (Fournier et al. 2011, 34). As for the response rate for the ICA, no official figures were made available, however DE1 - who had intimate knowledge of the process - divulged that **"***I don't know how many, but I'm told a huge amount of people said 'no' to member invitations"*.

4.1.3 Non-Payment of Members

The above evidence by DE1 corresponds with Street et al. (2014), as DE1 observed that there was "*no honorarium to pay members, so the self-selection process that's endemic to many*

public processes is particularly acute here". DE1 also brings this back to the point of civil servants "control" of the process, lamenting that "*it's the norm elsewhere, but it's a silly fixation on part of the civil servants. They just refused to accept advise on that*".

Nonetheless, this shortcoming was openly admitted in Red C's methodology document (Mooney 2016, 1) as they stated "(a) financial incentive was not offered to encourage participation" and furthermore "acknowledged that this may result in a group that have a stronger civic interest than a truly representative sample". Interestingly, nearly all (except one) participant interviewee were against the idea of honorariums and not surprisingly stated the importance of "interest" to take part, with the only self-interested reason offered for partaking being the enhancement of one's CV (noted by P8, P4, P11), while P9 also suggested that the process "s*hould have been attached to some sort of education attainment, like a Masters or something…it would have given something back to the individual for their commitment to learning, as we had a huge amount of submissions to digest":*

"if you get money to take part, you might get a ***different type of person****…it should be voluntary with just expenses in my opinion" (emphasis added) P5*

"I don't think people should be there for the money, you should be there if you have a social conscious or are civic minded, that should be incentive enough" P1

"I think if you are paid to take part it would defeat the whole purpose, people wouldn't give their honest opinion as they'd just be there for the money. But if you're there because of a ***genuine interest*** *in the topics****,*** *then you're going to want to give your own opinion," P8.*

4.1.4 Member Motivation

Poignantly, in the bolded comments the participants also note their "interest" in comparison to the "different" others. Indeed, a self-selection bias was evident in line with the stated theory (Fishkin 2009; Smith 2009; Warren 2008), DE1's observations and also Red C's prediction, with all participants describing themselves as "*civic minded*" (P1), "*really interested in politics*" (P3), and/or "*interested in the topics*" (P6), while P5 stated that a lot of people were "like-minded". This apparent like-mindedness (P5) in terms of civic motivation,

political and specific topical interest may be problematic when it comes to representativeness, as aforementioned in the literature review, Lindell (2011, 4) posits that "if the participants are like-minded and hold the same views before the discussion the conditions for deliberation aren´t the right…(as)at least some basic disagreement is necessary to create a space for deliberation".

Moreover, as DE1 noted, "*there might be questions as to how best to recruit members who might already have very strong views"*. This was evidenced from the interviews, as one participant even suggested interest should be a primary prerequisite for potential selection when stating that "*(m)aybe the better idea is to create a pool of anyone who is interested and engaged with those topics, and then from that pool try to get 100 people of different ages, demographics etc*". Indeed, there is a legitimate theoretical case for selecting people with vested interests in particular topics, similar to the so-called "chamber of discourses" ideal (Dryzek and Niemeyer 2008); yet, according to the ICA methodology, "it was decided that members of advocacy groups on the topics to be considered would be excluded…the rationale for this decision was based on the fact that interest groups have been invited to make submissions on the matters concerning them" (Mooney 2018a). Nonetheless, it was also acknowledged that "by the random nature of it's make up, (the ICA) may include Members who have views on either side of a debate" and therefore "these would not be excluded". However, in addition to the general self-section bias stated above, a significant number of participants interviewed expressed prior "interest" and "knowledge" in climate change as well as stating that this had influenced their decision to take part:

"like I'm really interested in hearing about climate change and was before anyway" P1

"I was interested in CC before the process. So the topics were quite nice and I was interested from the very start". P7

"I looked at the topics before and the energy one - I'd be particularly interested in" P8

4.1.5 Dropouts

Moreover, the multiple reasons for dropouts also provided clear-cut evidence of self-selection on given topics. For instance, the recruitment questionnaire attempted to filter self-selection by asking prospective participants if they "have been or intend to be acting in an advocacy role for any interest or lobby group currently campaigning on any of the issues to be considered by the Assembly". However, although not directly related to the climate session, one participant interviewed admitted campaigning for an advocacy group on the 8th Amendment, while P2 observed at the beginning of the process another member with a "clear agenda" was "kicked-off" the ICA. Another obvious sign of topical self-selection is the reported number of participants who dropped-out after the 8th Amendment and after the climate sessions, while the decision of participants to move the climate meeting forward (from 5th to 3rd) also suggests there were members involved who had a clear preference, priority or at the very minimum had a particular interest in environmental issues:

"you saw a big drop-off after the 8th, cause people would have had very strong views…" P7

"when they finished the abortion one, they had felt they'd done what they had come to do" P5

Relatedly, DE1 propounded that this dropout rate may have been further exacerbated by "*the fact that they appointed substitutes at the same time as original members"* which they suggested *"immediately gave the signal that it was okay not to turn up because somebody else can replace you*". Instead, DE1 argued "*the model should be, here are the dates…are you willing to participate, if you're not, go away and find someone else*". However, it is important to note an anomaly here concerning the "99 replacements", as the Secretariat confirmed that they were not in fact recruited upfront as initially requested, but instead were selected on an ongoing basis as members of the original cohort dropped out. Nonetheless, evidence of the negative effects of substitutes on member commitment is lacking, with only P2 (who dropped out) admitting that "they" missed a session knowing a replacement was available. Conversely,

other participants stated their strong commitment to the process with many interviewees not missing even a single session. However, the contrast between DE1's viewpoint and the "committed" interviewees may be due to a skewed representation (within the interviewee sample) in favour of those committed, as perhaps those with a positive experience and who were committed to the process were also those most willing to respond to interview requests:

"I was committed to it, so I wanted to be there" P12

"it was a long process and I really enjoyed it, you were really intrigued by it all, and it was so interesting that you didn't want to miss any - you know when you're into something - you're just into it…there was a commitment". P7

However, there were also other legitimate reasons for citizens to drop out, with the ICA website stating that "(m)ost of those who have withdrawn have done so for personal reasons including illness, illness of a family member, change in employment or circumstances". These and other reasons were illuminated by interviewees. Firstly, P2 speculated that some people may have dropped out due to the emotional burden (particularly evident for the 8th) and the heavy load of material[29] during the climate sessions, while P6 noted the "heavy workload" and how this intersected with other family, work, and social commitments.

"it was interesting, but it was pitched too high…maybe that's why people dropped out" P2

"we were so exhausted, it was very long run for us, it was hard going, very heavy work". P6

This theme was described by P9, who contrasted "their" situation as a retiree with the ample free time to those with young families, despite the provision of day-care services provided by the assembly (Sec).This illuminated the impact of time commitment which can dissuade "otherwise motivated individuals" (Jennstå 2016, 19), with P7 and P9 suggesting that the high drop-out after the climate session (one year mark) was attributable to the overrun of

[29] Which will be discussed in detail in the "information" section

the ICA[30]. Moreover, some groups - particularly young men - were perceived to be less committed to the process and less willing to give up their free time on weekends. This was confirmed by the Secretariat who noted that - in contrast to the ICC where young women were the most difficult cohort to retain - young men were the group that dropped-out most frequently:

"several reasons (for dropouts), if you look at the age profile, I'm a empty nester so I can dictate my own schedule, but there was a lot of people with very small children. I remember one lady, she had to drop out as she had two children under 3…she wrote to me and said she regretted so much having to leave the process…" P9

"the younger ones probably didn't give the commitment…that is one thing I did notice, and that the young boys in particularly dropped out more than the young girls" P6

"It was dragging on a bit, we were in it a whole year at that stage, so I'd had enough…" P2

4.1.6 Replacements

Given the high number of dropouts - 53 in total - assessing how the replacements were selected and integrated into the assembly is fundamental to ensuring that legitimacy of representation was maintained throughout the process. According to RED C, the substitutes were picked according to the same methodology as the original members; therefore, according to DE1 *"it didn't matter in terms of demographics, because it replaces like for like...they do try to get the demographics right*". This was also noted by P7 who observed **"***if I dropped out there was someone there with my criteria on the day".* However, P1 questioned the similarity of replacements when observing that "*a good few lads in their twenties came in to fill the gaps and I think they might have been interested in it because they were doing politics or law and things like that".* Although the accuracy of this claim cannot be verified, two interviewees who were ICA replacements closely matched this description of young males with political knowledge (i.e. education) and interests.

[30] Participants were told that the ICA would run for approx. 1 year over 10 weekends. However, this was eventually extended 11 weekends from Nov 2016 until April 2018.

Moreover, it is important to note any potential negative impact in terms of the ability of latecomers to fully participate in the process and how this may have affected other members. Regarding the former, it would seem replacements had little difficulty adjusting to the process, although one (P8) noted how questions could be raised that had already been previously discussed, yet P3 remarked how the experience of the original members helped them settle into the ICA:

"*I wouldn't say it was difficult to get up to speed, as you had all the information you needed, everything at your fingertips, you had the site, the experience of the other people up there, the speakers, the panels…it was fantastic the set up" P3.*

"There is only so much preparation they (organisers) can do, and I think it ran pretty efficiently, so even if you are dropped into it…you can find your feet easy enough". P6

From the other perspective, little if any negative perceptions were apparent towards newcomers, with P9 stating that "*I don't think it made an overall difference to process or the outcome as the highest number of replacements for a session was 13, so there could only be max. 1 at each roundtable".* However, P5 illuminated an important issue about the perceived lack of transparency regarding the introduction of replacements when stating that *"sometimes they added in people and sometimes they didn't, and it was something I never really felt was clear what they were doing…that whole area of "who left, who's coming in" should have been more publicised and public to us (the ICA members) as to what was happening. It should have been a bit more transparent – 3 people dropped out, 3 people came in"*

Moreover, according to P1 "*the way everyone was picked first off was completely fair…(but) whatever happened after that, I don't know*". Here, P1 alludes to the recruitment scandal wherein an employee from Red C, despite their strict methodology (Mooney 2018b), solicited friends and family to act as replacements for one of the sessions. Specifically, after an internal Red C audit (Mooney 2018a), it emerged that "seven individuals were recruited over the Christmas period in December 2017 and January 2018, to replace members who had

withdrawn from the Assembly following the conclusion of the Assembly's consideration of How the State can make Ireland a Leader in Tackling Climate Change...were contacted by phone in December 2017, rather than being recruited door-to-door, and were identified as potential members through friends and family of the recruiter*".* However, importantly, both RED C and the Chair were satisfied that this was an "isolated issue" from "one recruiter (who) without permission, recruited seven replacement members outside of the strict methodology for recruitment agreed" and that this had "no impact on work on previous topics".

On the one hand, the public admission of such an error could be regarded as adding to the transparency (as suggested by DE1) of the ICA. Nonetheless, it raises numerous issues about the recruitment process and particularly the (perceived) input legitimacy. Firstly, the concerns alluded to by DE1 regarding the lack of "control" and "oversight" over the recruitment process - especially given its importance, difficulty and prior mistakes in other processes (i.e. ICC) - are clearly evident, as DE1 stated that "*it was an error that should never have happened…I don't think they (i.e. Secretariat) had enough oversight over the role of the market research company in the recruitment process because we've already had errors with the {ICC} so there were questions about proper due process of that polling company, so radars should have been high for this one to make sure it didn't happen again… that's where allowing civil servants total control over the project is a mistake".*

Moreover, as outlined in the literature, there is a clear potential for "*legitimacy problems*" (DE1) stemming from representation and this mishap allowed critics of the ICA to question and undermine the process and its subsequent recommendations (specifically regarding the 8th Amendment) with accusations of (particularly "liberal" and "urban") bias. This was evidenced by a heated row in the Parliament with some politicians describing the ICA

as a "stitch up" and "debacle[31]", while others argued that the process had been "compromised", that it should be "postponed" and that there should be "a full and immediate audit of the entire Citizens' Assembly recruitment process over the last 18 months"[32]. Both citizens and experts interviewed had mixed views on this, with some expressing deep concern and questioning the validity of the ICA, while others noted an external agenda[33] to undermine the ICAs work:

"I heard something in the paper that one of Red C recruited one of their friends…it took me back (i.e. surprised me) a bit when I heard that. I felt it wasn't done in the right manner then, it just denied us the opportunity to meet other people from a cross section of society". P3

"I think there was a lot of interest though in proving we weren't recruited correctly…" P1

"but that (scandal) doesn't call into question the legitimacy of the process, it was a one-off, and [in] particular it had no relation to the (other) topics because it happened a lot later" DE1

However, herein lies a key point of contention. Over the course of the research for this thesis, it emerged that one interviewee had been recruited in an improper manner *before* this scandal broke. This calls into question the whole narrative of an "isolated incident" by "one recruiter", as a cynic might argue that it is better to admit to a minor failing rather than having a major one uncovered. Specifically, the participant in question stated they had been recruited by a "friend of a friend" as a replacement during the 8th Amendment sessions but had been told if anyone asked "they" had been recruited on the street.

4.1.7 Stratified Sampling

Returning to Street et al. (2014), "stratified sampling with broad range of criteria" is a key component to prevent representative bias. According to the recruitment methodology (see *Base Targets*, **Table 2**), "detailed demographic quotas were also set to ensure the sample was representative" with quotas "set based on gender, age and social grade based on current working status" (Mooney 2018b). In part, they achieved this, as P4 stating that they were the

[31] Mattie McGrath - Independent TD for Tipperary. https://www.irishtimes.com/news/politics/oireachtas/call-for-abortion-vote-delay-over-citizens-assembly-recruitment-1.3401905
[32] Fianna Fáil TD Eamon Scanlon
[33] particularly by the pro-life lobby concerning the recommendation of the 8th Amendment deliberation

"ordinary people" of the country, while P10 claimed members "*were representative from all different walks of life":*

Table 2 Base Targets of ICA Member Selection (Mooney 2018b)

	BASE TARGETS (Based on CSO 2011 and QNHS Pop. Estimates)
TOTAL	99
Male	48
Female	51
18-24	10
25-39	29
40-54	28
55+	32
ABC1	45
C2DE	48
F	6
Dublin	28
ROL	25
Munster	27
Conn/Ulster	19

4.1.8 Regional Spread

Regarding the first - regional or geographical spread - it appears the ICA satisfied Street's et al. (2014) criteria for "stratified sampling", as according to RED C's methodology (Mooney 2018b), "(a) detailed random multi-level approach" was utilized in accordance with Census 2011 data and QNHS population. Specifically, the first step involved a "random stratification of the sample by region across 15 broad areas representative of the Urban/Rural split within the four main regions of Dublin, Rest of Leinster, Munster and Connaught/Ulster", and secondly based on the number of representative points within a given DED[34], "individual points were then chosen by selecting every *nth* DED point from the census list for that area".

[34] A district electoral division

However, some selection disparities (in addition to the Red C Scandal) also emerged from the interviews, as two participants confirmed that four other ICA members had been recruited from the same town (<20,000 pop) while another stated that "they" along with two other members were from the same housing estate. These findings also relate to the perceived geographical imbalance within the ICA, with some politicians[35], media and groups noting the lack of representatives from each county and particularly rural regions especially considering the strong recommendations to combat agricultural emissions which would predominantly affect rural communities.

Some interesting observations from interviewees emerged regarding this issue. Firstly, P1 - a city dweller - noted that "*there were a few counties not represented"* yet deemed this justified when remarking *"but then again, their population is so small, like if you take (urban area), it has 200,000 people and I'm the only person from there...while Cavan (regional county), they didn't have anyone, but then you have someone from Longford, so it kind of evens out in the midlands"*. Moreover, DE1 made a more theoretical justification when noting that "a l*ot of critics would say there is nobody from this county or that county, but that is missing the whole point, these individuals are not representing anyone other than themselves, they are randomly selected, so when they go into the room they go in as themselves*…" DE1

4.1.9 Greater Good Versus Group Representation

This latter quote by DE1 concurs with Lindell's (2011, 4; also see Smith and Wales 2000, 61) viewpoint that "participants shouldn´t be seen as representatives of their own social group but be able to reflect and consider their own preferences in the light of new information

[35] For instance, TD McGrath stated that "Red C have accepted the 99 citizens couldn't represent the whole country by their own admission so it's a failure" while Mr r Scallon Fianna Fáil TD Eamon Scanlon argued in the Dáil (Lower House of Parliament) that "two people should have been picked from each county and the 47 others from the 99-member assembly should then have been selected appropriately" https://www.irishtimes.com/news/politics/oireachtas/call-for-abortion-vote-delay-over-citizens-assembly-recruitment-1.3401905

and arguments put forward by other participants". However, as discussed in the literature review, such opinions are contested, with Fraser (1990, 72) for instance rejecting the idea of "a single, all-encompassing 'we' thereby ruling claims of self-interest and group interest out of order". In general, most participants seemed to conform to DE1 and Lindell's expectations:

"...the fact that we took it as something bigger than ourselves personally, we were putting down this argument for or against, breaking them down, debating them..." P4

"it was about seeing the bigger picture rather than the private interest. All change affects people, and you just have to rise above it" P9

"...it's not really about getting your own opinion across, it's about what's best for the country...that was my way of looking at, it wasn't about me pushing my own opinions, it's about listening to everyone else and coming to an opinion what's best for the country" P10

Moreover, although there was evidence of opinion change this appeared limited. Specifically, due to the technical and complex nature of the topic, expert opinion and thus internal reflection (i.e. civic science component) appeared to be more influential than (external) deliberations, which contrasts strongly with the ICA session on moral issues (e.g. 8th Amendment) wherein participants' stories during deliberations had a perceptible bearing on opinion shifts. In contrast, participants seemed to have benefited more from the learning phase (i.e. hearing new or building on existing knowledge) rather than having their opinions changed:

"I wouldn't say my opinions changed, but I'd say my views got a little less concrete". P11

"I learnt a lot, but I didn't have my mind changed". P5

Specifically, in line with Fraser's (1990) argument regarding self-interest, pre-existing opinions and attitudes did appear to harden when specific groups or individuals' interests were negatively affected. This was most evident in relation to proposed recommendations for combating agricultural emissions which would predominantly affect rural communities. For instance, P1 noted that a farmer's partner was "*trying to represent the farmers, to ask their*

questions" as the person in question explained that *"to make this fair I need to ask the questions of the farmers - to represent them".* Such observations were also echoed by P11 who noted:

"I think a lot of people who were involved themselves or via family with farming didn't want to be demonised or painted as part of the problem or lend advocacy to ideas that would put them or their ilk under more pressure, or under more financial constraints…so with that specifically, people were a bit sluggish to change their opinions on that specific issue" P11

This was confirmed by two rural participants who lamented the so-called "anti-farming" (term used by P7 and P8) agenda which they were both against. For instance, P8 confirmed that although in the *"minority…(P8) stuck to my guns and didn't change my mind",* while P7 laid out the perspective of a rural community which "they" felt was acknowledged but not addressed. Moreover, P7 noted that "*there was a huge void between rural and urban (members) in what could be done"* and continued the theme of representative interest when supposing that *"everyone at the table is probably thinking about their own area, cause that's what you're thinking when you're listening to all those different speakers". Additionally,* P1 added the important caveat that they were *"mostly talking about Dublin"*. Interestingly, both SE2 and P1 empathised with the idea of group representation and self-interest:

"I wouldn't have agreed with those recommendations…as being from the West I know how important farming is to the community, that's our income over here, so if you take that out, what are you going to replace it with?" P7

"The process I felt was I put forward my research and the best international research in the area, and then they take on the role of them and 500 people in their area, and try to visualise what I'm saying in their locality and whether or not it would work on not…and that is the responsibility, that's what I felt" SE2

*"for instance, there was a girl there married to a farmer who was like "oh, the life of a farmer is so hard", and she was really involved in discussions about emissions from dairy farming…and there is such strong opposition from the farmers there…**it would be the same if it was to affect my job as a person, you're always going to try benefit your own interest.**" P1*

This bolded line raises an interesting point, as one could argue why should a majority of non-affected citizens impose their will on a greatly affected minority who - similar to the Aboriginals noted in the BCCA case - may lack a **"**critical mass or threshold" to persuade

others of their concerns (James 2008, 122), as for instance, there were only 6 farmers targeted out of 99 citizens. Moreover, P8 also noted that there was no "*regular farmer*" invited to be present despite agricultural reform being on the agenda. Ironically, rather than creating a "consensus" as perhaps perceived by a majority vote[36], failure to adequately address these concerns of the minority may have increased the risk of conflict (Fraser 1990) and polarisation (Bachtiger at al. 2010, 39) both inside and outside an assembly (Niemeyer et al. 2016):

"we had some people who wanted to get rid of animals (i.e. cows) altogether, to make some slaughter houses and end dairy farming. I think they voted against farming - there was a whole load of conversation about anti-farming, and the West went mad after that when it hit the papers…we (the members) got a bit of stick over that" P7

"the farmers have to get in line, the farmers have really called the shots here for too long" P9

Perhaps this "huge void" between rural and urban perceived by P7 could have been overcome through the movement of the ICA to rural regions. As the case of BCCA illustrated, moving around the British Columbia region "sensitized many (members)...to the challenges of rural areas" (Fournier et al. 2011, 102). Indeed, DE1 noted that this was the "original plan" based on the past positive experience of the ICC, but that it could not be achieved due to "practical reasons"[37]. Nevertheless, this was something many participants cited for improvement:

"there are a few changes that I think could be made...move it around the country" P5

"I think it should move around the country, we need this in all our communities, each province. Why does everything need to be centralised! Communities should have ownership". P12

4.1.10 Gender and Age

Firstly, with regard to gender, no imbalance was noted by any participant, with P1 stating that "(*i)t was definitely equal"* while also adding an interesting caveat that *"apart from*

[36] For instance, "89% of the Members recommended that there should be a tax on greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from agriculture. There should be rewards for the farmer for land management that sequesters carbon. Any resulting revenue should be reinvested to support climate friendly agricultural practices". (CA 2018a)

[37]The practicality of finding hotels that were well equipped with Wi-Fi, because all these sessions are live streamed, so they settled on the idea it had to be the same hotel

the 8th Amendment (on abortion)…for everything else, gender doesn't come into it, and it shouldn't really". However, as previously noted, there was evidence regarding the commitment (i.e. recruitment and dropout rate) particularly of young men. This brings us to the second criteria - age. As expected due to the voluntary selection and lack of payment (Fishkin 1990), there was a perceived skew towards older participants with P1 observing that *"there was definitely more older people*" while Sec. also noted the difficulties of attracting young people.

This was undoubtedly exacerbated by the requirement for potential participants to be registered to vote (i.e. on the electoral roll). For instance, according to the NYCI[38] 22% of young people aged 18-29 - some 150,000 people - were not registered as recently as February 2017, with the problem particularly acute among the 18-21 age group with up to 43% of this cohort not registered. This is especially problematic given Ireland is the worst performing OECD country with regard to voter registration, ranking a dismal 137th in the world (Norris et al 2018). As previously mentioned, not only were this age cohort the hardest to recruit, they were also the most difficult group to retain, while somewhat ironically, these are the very groups one would wish to engage in the political process.

4.1.11 Social-Class, Voice and Facilitation

Finally, a clear socio-economic class bias was evidenced from the interviewees, as according to P1, "*if there was a divide (between participants), it was more to do with class or education levels…(as) most people who did it were from a certain class I suppose"*. This statement was echoed by P3, who self-identified as "working-class" and noted "*there wasn't many represented...but there were a lot of teachers and professional people*", which also raises questions about the combining (e.g. ABC1; C2DE) of social categories. As a side note, it is important to take account of these "self-identifying" classes, as the official categories of social

[38] http://www.youth.ie/nyci/150000-young-people-may-not-be-electoral-register-deadline-nears

class alone may be a misleading tool, as social class has become a lot more fluid due to evolving occupational categories, while additionally, pensioners fall into the "E" category; however, two pensioners interviewed had prior professional backgrounds and education of a much higher social standing. These member observations were also confirmed by the Sec., who stated that despite the payment of expenses there may have been other monetary barriers to those on low-incomes (e.g. joining social events after the ICA session) which resulted in an under-representation and higher dropout of this group.

This bias - whether perceived or real - can also affect representativeness in terms of voice inside the assembly (Smith 2009). For instance, P1 noted how "*they (recruiters) really wanted my mom but she would be too nervous, she didn't go to school for very long - it would be very intimidating for her"*. Moreover, P1 posited that lower-income and/or lower educated groups present may have found it difficult to raise their voice as they "*wouldn't have the same confidence and there wasn't many of them there".* This chimes with James's (2009, 122) observation of the BCCA case wherein despite the inclusion of two Aboriginal members, "in the absence of other minority group members, an isolated individual is less likely to express a minority position that contradicts the dominant perspective".

Furthermore, when prompted if this intimidating perception was true (from the point of her subjective experience), P1 noted - despite being extremely eloquent during the interview - how "*there were a lot of very articulate people there and I felt I didn't measure up in comparison*". Moreover, although P3 stated her comfort in speaking out, she did suggest that "*some people might have felt silenced (as) there were people who very obviously spoke better – teachers and civil servants*". However, this fear was not confined only to those working class, as both P2 and P8 cited the "*fear of looking stupid*" as a reason for withholding a question, comment or opinion. These fears partly illustrate the critique raised by Fraser (1990) and

Lövbrand and Khan (2010, 40) who purport that "the style and standards of deliberative reasoning, further disadvantages already disadvantaged citizens".

"*I would like to see more diversity in the assembly, more foreign national, more disability, the unemployed. To me it seemed it was more middle class, retirees - they were a certain type of class…I would like it to be better representative of the population" P3*

"there was also people that I wouldn't think would be there, if you kind of get me...there were definitely people that were not educated, but I think it was the kind setting that if you were invited to come to something like that, I think people want to know a little about things…I think it would be intimidating if you came in as quiet uneducated person and tried to sit there through that, and try to comprehend things" P8

Nevertheless, the two self-identifying working-class people (P1 and P3) interviewed did feel able to express their opinion, with P3 stating that "*I think every voice was valued*" while P1 noted that *"every voice had to be heard, if someone had a problem with what another said, they'd have to let them speak first before giving their counter argument".* Moreover, it appears that there was some degree of consideration for low-income groups by the ICA, as for instance, a proviso was added to Recommendation 3 on carbon taxation that "(a)n increase in the taxation does not have to be paid by the poorest households (the 400,000 households currently in receipt of fuel allowance)". The ability to voice and thus include (possibly) under-represented points of view in the recommendations was helped by the structure of deliberations, with P9 stating that "*there was lots of provision made for individual points of view, they were all gathered*". Credit for this is given to the facilitators and notetakers who, as P8 recalled, *"ticked off people's name of how many times they contributed to the discussion during the roundtable…and were trying to be inclusive of everyone around the table".* This concurred with the official feedback survey (CA 2018b, 1-3) results which found that "there was strong support for the view that the facilitators did a good job". Moreover, facilitators were also commended by the interviewees for their impartiality and maintaining balanced, inclusive and respectful deliberation, while they also served the role of asking citizens' questions to the top-table for those who were uncomfortable or unwilling, as P1 stated members were "*always*

encouraged to ask questions via facilitators". This would appear to suggest that "advanced facilitation" (Trénel 2009) was utilised in the ICA, as P10 illuminated that, in addition to maintaining a civil atmosphere and keeping citizens on track, moderators *"might give us conversation starters or suggest what discussions we should have to best get insights into the information we were given"*, while likewise P7 noted that "*the facilitators at the table were able to calm people, get the best out of the questions and the best answers".*

"each table was given facilitators to orchestrate the way things went. At the very least what they did was just prompt people to join in…I remember they had charts and they made sure everyone spoke at least twice for each topic…they took their job very seriously so there was enough to stimulate each individual person and not have them dragging their feet" P10.

However, much of the theory assumes that deliberation occurs solely in a vacuum within a structured environment guided by facilitators and other supportive staff. This neglects the fact that deliberation between participants may also take place outside of the formal setting, where people may be persuaded, and alliances built which may have an impact on the formal discussions. This was illustrated by P5, who stated that *"I didn't do my arguing or debating in there (i.e. roundtable discussions). I'm a shy person, I would never stand up in there, but I had my point of view and I did my arguing outside around the hotel, one-on-one".*

Regarding this "shyness" mentioned by P5 and other participants, for at least some people this lessened throughout the process as they gained more confidence in their ability to deliberate and express their opinion. This highlights the individual learning component and conforms to broader democratic and deliberative theory which states that, similar to jury duty, the process is a form of civic education in itself (Barber 2003). However, as the quotes illustrate, this is something that happened over time which would suggest that the same group of participants should be maintained for a certain period if individual benefits are to accrue. For instance, P6 observed that "(*in) the beginning there was an element of that - people shy to share their opinion -but I think they learnt quickly and the process would make greater citizens of all of us*", while P2 concurred when stating that "*I think it's best for largely the same group*

of people to do it month on month… you get better listening, better engagement, better at debating and conversing at people on it". Nonetheless, as stated in the literature review, this needs to be balanced against the danger of an assembly becoming co-opted and unrepresentative of the lay citizen, as perhaps illuminated by P11's view who stated that "their" views became *"less concrete*" as "*I did get an appreciation for how complex issues are… there are no easy solutions and sometimes you have to play the long game"*:

"It didn't get easier (speaking up), or I didn't feel I wanted to, but I saw people who changed massively, who wouldn't have said a word for the first 3 weeks, and then all of a sudden they would have said something and then after that they were always talking" P5

"One of the most revealing things for me about the process was people I met at the beginning of the process – particular we'll say 30 year olds – they were quite different when I met them a bit later, their understanding of processes, it was almost like they had graduated in that time to a different level of understanding…from a personality angle as well, they almost in the beginning didn't have an opinion on things, and then when I met them the following year they were very much leaders of the conversation" P9

4.2 Procedural Rules

4.2.1 Credibility and Legitimacy of the Process

From the outset, the legislation passed by government set the agenda topics for the ICA. Regarding the perceived credibility and legitimacy of the process, the motivations for its foundations and how this was perceived by the membership must first be examined. For instance, some external critics, politicians, the media and members of the public alike have expressed the opinion that the Irish State already has an elected body to deal with matters of public interest - the Dáil (Lower House of Parliament) - and subsequently suggested that the establishment of the ICA was a political ploy to avoid taking political responsibility on controversial issues - most notably the 8th Amendment. Other more cynical commentators have even gone so far as to suggest the aim of ICA was to legitimise a predetermined "consensus" on contentious issues in order to empower the government to act or on the contrary avoid taking full responsibility for controversial issues that may affect members of their core constituency.

Views from participants were mixed in this regard, with the nuanced consensus seemingly that even if the ICA was set up due to ulterior political motives, the process itself has an undeniable value and merit, as P3 felt members *"were there to push the decision down the road, they (the Government) wanted to postpone making a decision"* but stated that even though "*I know the government used it for their own agenda… I'm still glad I was part of the process".* Moreover, DE1 acknowledged that the ICA may be used as a political "device" for a given end when stating that *"I think there may well be a bit of that, that politicians are using the ICA as a device to make the argument for them, to make it easier for them to make the argument they would have made in the first place",* while P10 noted how it would have been *"career suicide"* for politicians to take a stand on certain controversial issues before the ICA commenced, *"but when they left it to ICA to debate it and think it out, it was easier for people to get on board and push the subject out into the public".* On the contrary, P8 objected to this idea of "*kicking the can down the road",* and instead perceived that "*it was a genuine noble thing to get people on the street involved in the legislative process",* a view also shared by P11.

However, as P10's comment on "*career suicide*" illustrates, the political realities may dictate that some subjects - due to their divisive nature - are untouchable for politicians or even worse, may be subjected to polarized and populist discourses which paralyses the traditional political system from acting. In such cases, DE1 suggests that deliberative democracy, as opposed to replacing, may be a support as "*sometimes you have particularly difficult topics, they are complex and can't be simply solved in parliament, so on occasions like that, it's helpful for representative democracy to take it out, give it to another body, let them discuss it, let them help frame that debate, come up with ideas, bring in information and educate us in ways we wouldn't have been before and hand it back, and that's what this has done".* For instance, relating to the introductory problem statement, it was remarked that there are other more pressing issues on the agenda for power-seeking politicians and thus topics like climate change

may fall by the wayside. This reality was clearly picked up by participants with P8 observing that "*there are other immediate issues on the agenda, people have different priorities and they (politicians) are looking to win their seats at the next election",* with P3 similarly noting that "*climate change doesn't win you votes"* and that *"we are going from crisis to crisis and there are always other priorities than climate change".* Therefore, participants felt that the ICA offered an alternative avenue for building awareness and addressing an environmental issue of such national (and global) importance, while it was also reflected in their strong support for Recommendation 1 which sought an apolitical expert body to hold the government to account on climate change. Hence, it was clear from the perspective of participants that the assembly and the topic of climate change was deemed as both credible and legitimate[39].

Moreover, the fact that - as illuminated in the previous representation section - the Secretariat had overall "control" and "oversight" of the process. This was criticised by some DE1 who noted that, despite their undoubted skills, they are not necessarily versed in the important "*microlevel details*" that can make-or-break a deliberative forum and affect its legitimacy and credibility. Specifically, DE1 propounded that "*we're talking about processes established by government and run by civil servants. And unfortunately, as much as both sets of groups have their talents, deliberation is not their first instinct, so processes are not run (i.e. organised) as well as they could be*". Indeed, the Secretariat interviewee admitted that they had no prior experience with deliberative democracy and once assigned, a lot of the early months were spend immersing themselves in the relevant literature and theory. However, they sought to counterbalance this potential weakness by including a deliberative expert who served on each EAG[40] throughout the duration of the whole ICA process:

[39] This was not the case for all topics, with the session on "Fixed Term Parliaments" coming in for criticism.
[40] Expert Advisory Group (EAG)

4.2.2 Input into Agenda Setting

In terms of the agenda for the specific climate sessions, as noted in the literature review, there are obvious difficulties due to the complexity and breadth of the topic in question. According to the Secretariat, in the preceding meeting before a new topic, citizens were given the opportunity through reflective feedback forms to provide input into the agenda, sub-topics, speakers etc. for the following session. However, the Secretariat noted that due to the breath of the topic, they and EAG had a more pronounced input in setting the agenda:

For the 8th (Amendment meeting) a lot of it was set by us, the first few weeks it was set for us, but then we decided who we wanted to hear to have a balanced decision, everyone was entitled to a say in that...but for the climate change session it was different, so they set the agenda for that…it was set by the assembly". P1

"We didn't (have much input) to be honest, the agenda was already set, the speakers were already chosen, we had nothing to with that, just 2-3 weeks before we would have the papers on who was writing to have a look over… there was no option for us to change the agenda or kind of ask our opinion on the agenda, and I suppose we just kind of accepted it". P8

The secretariat noted that the logic for choosing the three topics under consideration - agriculture, transport and energy - was that these are the biggest sectoral emitters of GHG[41] while they were also the "most frequent sectors which emerged" from the public submission (CA 2018c, 291). However, within areas such as transport, some sub-sectors are undoubtedly greater emitters than others. For instance, material and presentations provided to the ICA on transport outlined that "the transport sector as a whole is contributing 21% of greenhouse gas emissions in Ireland, with cars, road freight and aviation the primary contributors" (CA 2018c, 297); yet, neither freight nor aviation were given much attention. Another point, raised in the roundtable discussion by the "Facilitator of Table 2" illustrates this point, as they note the respective citizens' concern that *"there was very little attention given to the industry of marine,*

[41] The most recent emissions figures compiled show that in Ireland agriculture is the single largest contributor to the overall emissions, at 29.2% of the national total, followed by energy at 21% and transport at 21%. http://www.epa.ie/climate/communicatingclimatescience/whatisclimatechange/whatareirelandsgreenhousegasemissionslike/

be it cruise liners coming in or out or the fishing boats from harbours and the net contribution they make to pollution and their responsibilities in terms of a cleaner, greener environment". However, the Chair replied that this was "s*omething we didn't have on our agenda and we didn't address because the topic is so large, and we had to specify what we thought were the most important areas. So I don't think we can go there really in the absence of a discussion on it*." Note here the "we had to specify" and "in the absence in discussions", both of which were predominantly set for, rather than by, the members. However, in contrast to the Chair's remark, citizens did in fact want to deal with such issues as noted by the above quote (from Table 2) and from SE2's remark, which also highlights how certain economic considerations may have underpinned which topics were subject to discussion, something which P11 also alluded to:

"from the previous weekend it came up from the citizens that they wanted more information on this...but the thing is with aviation, the emissions are huge, but it's not a thing that people (in the government) want to tackle…" SE2

"It's probably a bit cynical, but I really don't think they will change until there is a more tangible economic effect of climate and pollution – like tourism dropping..." P11

This illuminates that perhaps some topics - such as flights, freights and shipping - which are integral to the domestic economy (in terms of tourism numbers and import/export markets) were off-limits. Such sentiments echoed the potential danger outlined in the literature review for "steering" towards, with P3 asserting that *"I like to set my own agendas, if you know what I mean"*. However, on the contrary, the Secretariat insisted that citizens' views were considered, with the notion of "leadership" emanating from feedback responses leading to this topic being accounted for in the selection of speakers and eventually in the final recommendations; nevertheless, P8 felt that this came too late, and stated that "*maybe as part of the methodology of the whole thing they could have people's opinions on the papers before or could have addressed it before the start of the ICA"*. In sum, P5 (among others) clearly perceived that the agenda was set:

"the agenda was set, I don't mean we couldn't bring up new stuff, but it did at times feel like we were being led. When we went to the climate session, of course it was too short, we could only look at 3 areas…and even though they said we had the final say, and they included some topics and speakers we requested (etc.), there was always the underlying feeling…that they knew the destination before we even took off - although we changed quite a few". P5

4.2.3 Steering Group

Regarding the last quote by P8, there was one notable mechanism for ensuring the membership had a degree of input into the agenda and selection of speakers via the steering group (SG). The SG, according to P7 (a member) consisted of the Chair, the Secretariat, members of the EAG, and between 8 to 12 citizens which met twice before the climate change session "as *the discussions were going on longer, so we needed two meetings to discuss the agenda"* (P7). Membership of the group was voluntary as DE1 noted that there *"didn't seem to be much of an election of the steering group, it's whoever puts their hands up".* However, due to the fact that meetings were held exclusively in the capital, some ICA members from the countryside with an expressed interest in participating were unable to take part (P5, P3), while the extra time commitment was also a consideration according to P1 for those with young families and unsociable working hours. To alleviate this, P5 suggested that meetings could take place via Skype, but this (according to P5) was rejected; yet P7 noted that "*someone was always on the phone (from the EAG experts) for meetings"*, which is somewhat contradictory if true.

The specific role of the SG was "to assist the Chair in the ongoing monitoring of the Work Programme; ratification of the specialists/ experts to appear before the Assembly following advice from the EAG and the Chair; and evaluation of the Assembly procedures and arrangements" (CA 2018b, 52). The importance of an SG was highlighted by DE1 as he noted that "*it gives a sense of ownership to the members that they have had some inputs through their peers in designing somewhat the agenda and finally choosing experts".* However, this view did not appear to translate to non-members of the SG who were either unaware of their work,

such as P1 who stated that "*I'm not quite sure what they actually did to be honest",* or held quite sceptical and cynical views of the SG and the opportunity for citizenry input:

"If I thought I could change things, I would have got involved, but I didn't feel like I'd have much of an impact on it. Their proceedings are confidential, so it's just an impression I got, I can't say for definite. But I knew someone who was on it and (they) kind of felt the agenda was set, that the thing was a bit of a rubber stamping of a pre-set agenda. My impression was that it was set up in a particular way and there were viewpoints that kind of led you in a certain direction" P3

Additionally, this highlights the clear lack of communication between members and non-members which suggests the SG was underutilized, as for instance, although P7 stated "*we were there representing the citizens*", she lamented that "*members wouldn't contact us at all"* despite claiming that "*we were all made known to the citizens', they were aware of us".* However, this was not reflected in the responses of the non-members:

"I actually have questions in my mind about it to be honest...they should have had a function and it should have really been feedback to the members which did not happen" P9

"That is why we elected a steering group, we needed to have somebody to represent us…but I don't think they (citizens members) were actively involved with us (the non-members) enough…they could have sent out questionnaires etc 3 weeks before" P5

As for the actual input in terms of agenda setting, speaker selection and the draft ballot (recommendations), according to P7, "*when it came to the SG, they would have a pre-agenda there for us, we would have discussed if there was anything we (the citizens) would like to see, they would have gone through all the paper with us, and we discussed if anything was to be added or taken away*". Moreover, P7 notes that they would be "*introduced to who the speakers would be*" while they also "*talked about the first draft of the ballot (recommendations) and sometimes that would be changed at the SG, and the Chair would say she would be transparent with all the citizens', she would talk them through the changes and why".*

What is important to note here is that two key areas in shaping the outcomes - the agenda and the speaker selection (particularly for the first weekend) were already drafted in

advance by the Secretariat and EAG who also "*set up draft questions {i.e. recommendations}"* (SE1). Although there was an opportunity for additions or changes, it is clear from the progression of the work programme and from the above comments about predetermined outcomes that a framework was set which may have undermined citizens' control over the process. Nonetheless, P7 outlines that even if "*the draft ballot was written by the experts*", that each recommendation and the rejection of citizenry suggestions was justified and thoroughly explained to the citizens:

"there might be one or two things (members of SG) thought of, but they (the experts) would say they didn't put that in there because of such and such and then they'd explain that we had thought about this but it might cause a problem, if you read further down (the recommendations)…so it was all explained to us, there was no conflict at all, there was space and time there to speak your mind…everything was so open and transparent" P7

4.2.4 Who is listening? Selecting Experts, Information and the EAG

This problem of citizen control was also evidenced in the selection of speakers who were predominantly selected by the EAG according to SE1 (a serving member). However, given the influential role of the EAG, this raises the question of who choose the experts which picked the presenters which ultimately determined the information available to the members and arguably shaped the outcomes. For instance, in terms of information, there was one illustration from Table 2 during the roundtable discussions (CA 2018c, 572) wherein the members "*felt that there was a missed opportunity not to tie the amount of subsidies currently in agriculture and farming businesses...to greenhouse gas emissions*". However, although the Chair understood the logic, she stated that it was "*not something that anybody who spoke to us raised or discussed. Am I right in that? It is not something -- I mean we are not clear on the implications of that. We would have had to have some advice on that*". This caveat illustrates the power of information and those who hold it - as noted by Abelson et al (2003) - as the range of potential outcomes are determined by the speakers and their specific interests who are selected by the EAG. However, this is not to imply any deliberate agenda on behalf of the

speakers, with SE2 stating "*this is what the science says, I don't have a vested interest either way…that is what academic does, they consider the evidence".*

This latter point also relates to the question of "Who is listening" to the speakers and information. This raises the broader question, as noted in the literature review, of lay citizens' capacity to comprehend the gravity of a topic such as climate change and the various inter-related complexities and subsequently challenge the experts. Indeed, even P1 questioned *"why they are getting a load of people (i.e. non-expert citizens), who don't know about it to give them ideas of how to make us leaders of CC".* SE1 also expressed the viewpoint of a colleague on the CCAC[42] who questioned "*what's the point…how anyone could there make an informed decision on the basis of two weekends – we are the experts and we know about this stuff – they had a couple of people speaking to them and made a decision'".* This was also reflected in the responses of P5 and P11 who remarked:

"People were kind of like 'global warming is bad and should be addressed', but even if I comprehend this information, it takes such a huge amount of planning, unless I'm some sort of social scientist or engineer, I don't have so much to offer, nothing to add to the conversation. I thought that was small feeling in it sometimes, they were a little bit flummoxed!" P11

"topics like abortion, yes, I do agree citizens should have a say, because it's an emotional enough issue, it affects people…but with CC, is very technical and more distant …that is what was coming across, the only person up on that stand listening should be him (the Minister for Communication, Climate Action and Environment) …but what has the Minister done!" P5

However, SE1 disagreed with "their" peers' *"neo-classical economic perspective"* and retorted "*we live in a democracy, so there is absolutely a benefit to talking to citizens about CC*". Indeed, SE1 noted that the ICA was *"a clear demonstration that if you do provide people with a serious conversation - from what we found - they do have an opinion and something quite strong to say about increasing the commitment from Govt. around CC".* This view was supported by P1 who "*felt definitely more educated after the CC session"* and subsequently

[42] Climate Change Advisory Council of Ireland

"*noticed I've changed my habits a lot as well, definitely a lot more recycling (etc.)".* However, this raises the question of what the goal of the ICA is – whether it is to promote awareness and educate citizens (i.e. uni-directional) or engage in a truly two-way civic science process where experts and citizen inputs are equally valued.

Either way, there is a clear reliance on expert information and opinion as noted in the literature review. Nevertheless, Gutmann and Thompson (2009, 5) posits that "citizens are justified in relying on experts if they describe the basis for their conclusions in ways that citizens can understand; and if the citizens have some independent basis for believing the experts to be trustworthy". Hence, in order for citizens to trust the experts, it is clear there must be transparency behind who the experts are - both the EAG and the selected speakers. However, regarding the EAG, according to SE1**,** *"(h)ow you get identified to be on the committees, it is a total black box, I have no factual evidence to how it works"***.** When interviewed, the Secretariat outlined their logic for choosing an EAG compromising of "fresh voices" and a balance of capabilities (e.g. legal, scientific, process). However, even if the EAG was selected with the best possible intentions, the fact that the selection process was not transparent to members or the public may lead to concerns, as highlighted by P3 and P8:

"I'd have questions about the experts (EAG) that I didn't know..,like who are they, were they trying to promote their own thing, how are they appointed, were they appointed by the government, was it advertised...that's what I'd be interested in knowing" P3

"one of the things they pride themselves on is being so bloody transparent, they record it live and this that and the other…but before you walk in the door nothing is transparent" P8

4.2.5 Establishing the Rules: Facilitation, Time, Respect and Challenging the Experts

As for the establishment of rules, it would appear the citizens had a much greater degree of control. For instance, the participants - according to both the Secretariat and members - were afforded a degree of discretion to audit the deliberations via the feedback forms. For instance, P9 stated that "*I did actually feed it back in my reflection forms and I do believe they took*

account of these things". This in turn provided a good mechanism for enforcing ground rules and assessing the quality of facilitators as well as allowing for respectful deliberations. This was also confirmed by the Secretariat who noted that the feedback forms were key to assessing the facilitators performance, as they themselves were not privy to the roundtable discussions:

"we were asked every day to give feedback for facilitators and 90% of time they were great, and if we did have problems, you always let them know, and they aware next time" P1.

"I did feed into the process, just to make sure it was right. In the early days there were a few people speaking over eachother, but it was sorted out very quickly. I brought it to the attention of a facilitator, so at the beginning a page was handed out with the ground rules" P3

However, a possible issue was illuminated by P7 when she noted how facilitators helped the participants to get the "best answers", while P11 remarked that "*they (facilitators) might give us conversation starters or suggest what discussions we should have to best get insights into the information we were given. After each bloc of presentations, we'd talk amongst ourselves …and then the judge and the secretariat suggested how the conversation should go again, and then we'd have our conversation".* One should not extrapolate too much from these caveats, but, a rather critical reading could suggest it raises questions - similar to the extent of citizen control over the agenda, speaker selection and ballot paper illuminated above - whether the ICA officials had too much control in framing the discussions and shaping the deliberations.

Another example of the membership control was evident with regard to scheduling, as the climate session was moved from the 5th (last) weekend to the 3rd, while an extra session was also added. Specifically, P7 highlighted that "*from the start we actually had a few citizens' who wanted to deal with that (CC) straight away, as that was originally further down the list (last session), but we moved it forward*" while P9 remarked that "*we had extended time more than once where the citizens sought extra input from other experts, which happened on climate change*". However, despite the extra weekend, the (lack of) time was a continual theme

throughout the interviews, with the Secretariat even noting that due to the breath of the topic, at least another weekend was required.

Regarding the deliberations, the findings from the interviewees strongly contradicted the survey data from the official feedback which claimed that "(l)ike in previous weekends, with a very small number of exceptions, the members were happy that they were given ample speaking time at the table discussions" (Mooney 2018b, 1-3). On the contrary, there was a strong and shared view from the sample participants and experts alike that time pressure was in fact a serious issue, with some citing how they felt "*very rushed"* and "*against the clock*", with P7 stating "*it would have been nicer to have more time at that, I think we all agreed on that".* This also came across from the experts' perspectives, with SE2 stating he thought the deliberation "co*uld have been longer, because you are asking them to consider very important things",* while SE1 colleague's scepticism - who propounded "*how could anyone there make an informed decision on the basis of two weekends* - is also worth recollecting:

"*The frustration is that we didn't give enough time and what we said to them was such a limited scope and needed more time I suppose. It's a huge topic and I don't feel like we gave it half enough time. I would have much rathered 2 topics, 5 weekends each, we would have covered a lot, would have allowed a lot more time for deliberation, it just felt very, very rushed." P5*

This frustration and suggestion by P5 (of having only 2 topics running 5 weekends) was a predominant theme, as some participants - and the experts and secretariat - felt some weekends were wasted on topics not suitable to the assembly or of relevant public interest. In contrast, the WTC agenda was derived from a bottom-up process where the citizens decided which issues were important. This failure, relating back to lack of citizen control, was also reflected in the quality of deliberations between the different sessions, as expounded by P8:

"the agenda is crazy, there are really important topics – like climate change – but fixed term parliaments, that was silly" DE1

"you know what, the thing about CC topic, we were constantly talking, there might have been a 30min discussion, and we did talk about the topic to hand for the full duration…but then at

the political ones (i.e. Referendum and Fixed Term Parliaments), you might talk for 5 mins and then have nothing more to say because I don't really know or don't care, but people did have a genuine interest in the climate ones which was great, we just needed more time" P8

Yet, some members and the secretariat had a different perception of the time available. In line with Parkinson's law - that work expands to fill the time available for its completion - there was a sense that a balance needed to be struck between affording enough time for adequate discussion without descending into pedantic points and never-ending discussions:

"it's *a very interesting topic, but so broad, we could still be debating it to this today" P10*

"I suppose you could have left more time for some of it…but then, people could waffle on and go off on a tangent, so maybe the time limit was a factor that helped you on where you needed to go to, because it kept you focused and you had to keep on track as the clock was ticking" P9

Here the Chair played a commendable role according to some participants, with P5 noting that "s*he did a great job within the constrained timeframe"* while P11 recalled that "s*he kept everything in line, and everything and on time*". This was particularly evident when it came to roundtable discussion of the ballot paper, which the Secretariat and participants alike described as the most difficult and stressful - yet crucial - part of the process. To achieve a degree of parity, the Chair ensured that six or more roundtables (from 13) would have to express a lack of consensus on a recommendation for further discussions on the matter to be triggered. This helped avoid some dominant members who *"liked the sound of their own voice*" (P1) and "*always had something to say*" (P8) hijacking the discussion. On this latter point, the Secretariat elucidated that they did consider putting a limit on the number of contributions a single member could make per topic, but such restrictions were deemed undemocratic and not in keeping with the spirit of the process. Nevertheless, there was a degree of frustration and apathy on the part of the broader membership (as illustrated by P2) regarding the final drafting:

"So in respect of each of those questions six or more tables have expressed a view that they want to discuss the matter. So I mean we will be here as the saying goes until Tim's Eve if we go beyond that" Chairperson, (CA 2018c, 548)

"it would take hours and hours…to the point that people didn't really care at the end, 'fine yeh, we'll just go with that'…it did get a bit tedious at the end". P2

"(the Chair) was actually a bit of a lady for keeping time, it was a hobby horse really. I think she was good for directing, as her opinion wasn't going into process, and you have to keep things on track. If you don't keep things in order it comes crashing down pretty quickly" P9

However, despite the obvious respect and affection for the Chair (as evidenced by P7), there were some who questioned whether a Judge was the most suitable person for a deliberative process. Specifically, P9 raised an interesting point that due to their authoritative status within society, members may have felt deferential and uncomfortable challenging a person of such standing - which could also have implications for testing various experts, information etc.:

I actually fell in love with the judge, she was great -very fair, balanced, everything was very well structured, everything was transparent, very professional" P7

"I just think it's ironic it was a judge leading (the ICA), it didn't have to be a judge, did it" P3

"she is quite a formidable lady, I took it that she was a woman used to making her statements and not having them questioned too much. She was very much a model of her background, the legal life- it's quite fixed, there is a point of view and very little altering of that view" P9

However, on this last point, and as previously mentioned in the Representation section, the facilitators played a key role in acting almost as a conduit of opinion on the roundtables and enabling members who were "too shy" or reluctant to challenge the judge, experts or the information at hand. Nevertheless, there was evidence that as the process progressed, citizens became more confident in expressing their own viewpoints to the Chair and experts (see P7). More importantly, as highlighted by P8, members internalised this need to challenge as an integral part of the process, and as will be further discussed in the next section, at various points they contested and changed the speakers' inputs and suggestions to make them more conducive to citizen's needs. For instance, P1 provided an example of participants demanding that citizens and communities have a dividend in the profits of wind farms (against current Irish practice),

something (according to P1) omitted by the experts. Specifically, P1 notes that "*there was more on the gap between theory and implementation (regarding wind farms), people saying it's a great theory and we all want it, but what is the best way for everyone – and you (the experts) are not following the best way of doing it".* Crucially, P1 notes that this challenge "*came out in the roundtable discussion, and then was put back to experts in questions and comments*". Finally, as P11 and P8 note, the other extreme - over-challenging or criticising the experts - can be a "*slippery slope*" (P11) and thus a certain degree of trust, which was clearly evident in the ICA, is needed for a cordial two-way process between citizens and experts.

"I was never intimidated, there was never a problem with pass-me-the-mike, that was something that built up overtime. Everybody was a citizen there, and we were all encouraged to ask questions. It wasn't a case of all the educated were going to dominate, everyone got their chance and if you were afraid to ask a question, that was why the facilitator was there" P7

"Now we did challenge what the specialists said, or we asked difficult questions, which I suppose is the whole point of it in the first place…but that is definitely something that could be taken on board if there is another, opening up a little bit more…" P6

"I was on about another participant earlier who was a bit of a loud-mouth, but in fairness, he asked some questions that kind of challenged the board, but people were sick of him at the end of it, he asked too many of them…he challenged them on every bloody thing (laughter)" P8

Finally, in addition to this trust and respect for the experts, the Secretariat and facilitators appeared to have successful engendered a high degree of mutual respect between participants in line with advanced facilitation techniques (Trénel 2009). These findings concurred with the ICA's survey feedback for the two meetings, where the clear majority of participants were satisfied "that fellow members respected what they had to say...even when they didn't agree" (CA 2018b, 1-3). Overall, this undoubtedly contributed to the quality of deliberations as everyone interviewed felt respected while they also appeared to internalise good civic behaviour:

"I was very aware of myself at the roundtable, that I was probably more familiar with some topics than others, so I kept a rein on myself never to enter and speak first, I would allow the others to out of respect" P9

"the facilitators, along with the Secretariat, made it such a respectful space for everybody. There really wasn't much struggle around the tables, everyone let everyone speak" P10

"so even if they felt people were wrong about something, they didn't want to eclipse their voice at all…there was the sense that people wanted to collaborate as much as possible and not overwhelm anyone else – regardless of what their opinions may be" P11

"the tone was incredibly respectful, there was no sense of antagonism at any stage, people listened to everyone's point of view, listened fairly…genuinely it was very very respectful towards everyone's point of view and that made it easier and much more enjoyable to work in, as people did respect you" P12

4.3 Information

As outlined in the literature review, Abelson et al. (2003, 245) posit that there is an "unavoidable power balance between those who possess what seems to be the desired information, who control its dissemination and the forum within which it is debated (the sponsor of the deliberative process), and those who do not (the participants)". Therefore, careful consideration must be given to both the selection of experts and the subsequent selection of information - particularly due to the complexity and technicalities inherent within an issue such as climate change (as opposed to arguably more accessible topics). However, as already established, speakers were predominantly chosen by the EAG, who in turn were themselves selected in a non-transparent and informal manner as aptly described by SE1:

"*This has always been the way…someone says who shall we have, and someone will come up with a name, and they'll be asked "have you worked with them, what are they like etc." SE1*

Likewise, SE1 revealed that the presenters list was chosen in a similar fashion of who knows who and who would be deemed appropriate for the task at hand, with SE2 (a speaker) commenting that *"whoever selected us (speakers), assumed that we are the guys who know the most, are the experts and are able to bring across our views*". This is not to suggest that speakers were selected in a flippant or improper manner, or even to question their credentials, as there were no complaints or accusations of bias from the participants, with P5 noting that *"they were quite well chosen*" while P8 remarked that they "*were honest and objective*".

Nonetheless, despite their merits, P8 succinctly illustrates the potential problems (in terms trust and thus legitimacy) with such an un-transparent process:

"*I don't know how the speakers were chosen. I definitely don't have time to delve into the ins and outs of whose speaking, and that definitely could have an impact on the outcome" P8*

Despite the apparent lack of transparency or formalities with selection, SE1 outlined that the EAGs indeed had a clear criterion for speakers derived in part from the ICC feedback based on "*what worked well, what didn't"* (SE1). Specifically, SE1 illuminates that the selection of speakers was informed by the given *"process of deciding the best way to give people information in the time available in a way that made sense to them, which would be comprehensible, engaging, not just pure science or facts, not just high-level science talk"***.**

Here, the necessity for clear and concise communicators is apparent, as SE1 explains the EAG and Secretariat alike "w*ere looking for people who were thought leaders but also communicators, that was a key thing for us in terms of giving presentation"* as they "*didn't want people to switch off and wanted people to relate*". Therefore, SE1 explains how the EAG decided on a combination of "*international experts*" as well as "*local examples...as you can't just cut and paste into the Irish context*". In this regard, given the high levels of engagement noted by numerous participants, as well as SE2, DE1 and the ENGO observer, it is fair to say they were largely successful. However, again the "time pressure" mentioned before in other contexts came into consideration, as SE1 noted how even with the addition of an extra weekend session, there was still "*not a lot of time especially when talking about leadership*".

On the matter of "leadership", the Secretariat remarked that it emerged strongly from the feedback forms that members wished to hear more on leadership, and thus John Fitzgerald - the Chairperson of the CCAC - was invited. Specifically, the members were asked after the first weekend meeting "(w)hat would you like to see covered at the next meeting of the Assembly and who would you like to hear from?" (CA 2018c, 291). This was confirmed by P1

who noted that "*you were given a form, filled it out at the end of the day, say what you didn't hear enough of or what you'd like to get more info on, and if a few people said it they would try to get (a speaker/person) in for the next session*". However, P8 lamented the fact that these sometimes came after a session had finished when stating that "*I don't know the purpose of it, because it's almost too late when your given those sheets (on the 2nd weekend), because it's over and done with then" (P8).* Nonetheless, despite the Secretariat and EAGs' attempt to accommodate members' requests for speakers, there were some evident complaints from members that certain types of speakers were chosen over others, with P3 stating that "*they were all academic people"* and that "*it might have been good to have someone from the community, or someone delivering workshops, more hands on, like practitioners, more of a balance...the people to me who had the most impact and increased my learning more were the practitioners and those presenting local initiatives".* This was also articulated by members in the feedback form responses. One specific example comes from P8, who highlighted that there was no platform offered to a "regular farmer" despite agriculture being a prominent theme:

"they got an eco-farmer who changed and showed energy savings, but a lot of us were saying was that, there was no farmer who lived in the modern day and that was something that we did notice alright because we thought - okay, you're giving this guy (eco-farmer) a podium to stand up, but why can't you give the average farmer a chance to stand up, is it because they didn't want to? Maybe that could have been mentioned before any talk took place, can we get an actual farmer here, because that is something I noticed" P8

"*Lock the scientists' away and get the practitioners to the forefront. Too much apocalyptical speculation and condescension with the terms like "denier" attributed to those who seek to question their speculations. Having to buy into scientific apocalypticism is an unnecessary distraction. So my recommendation: Bin the scientism and promote pragmatism through plain speaking, uncontroversial and successful practitioners (Response 9: CA 2018c, B6)*

4.3.1 Accessibility

These above critiques - specifically the call for "*plain speaking...successful practitioners"*, "*local initiatives*" and "*the average farmer*" - relates to two points raised within the literature review. Firstly, Street et al. (2014, 7) illuminate how although much attention is

given to the representativeness of members, in contrast scant scrutiny is applied to the inclusiveness of speakers, with the majority in the case of this specific ICA session coming from academia, think-tanks, or public authorities. With this one could also expect a certain type of (political) discourse, one which "privileges the beliefs, experiences and speaking styles of Western, white, well-educated men at the expense of the marginalized 'other'" (Lövbrand and Khan 2010, 57). In contrast, the most commonly recollected presentation which resonated with participants (according to the interviewees) was "The Story of Kilbarrack Fire Station" by firefighter Neil McCabe - which was also confirmed by the ENGO observers:

"The one that stuck with most people was Kilbarrack fire station where this one-man mission has made it the most environmentally fire station in Ireland if not Europe - it was a lovely story" (ENGO)

The key word - both in the above quote and in title of the presentation - is "story". Drysek (2001, 48), although speaking specifically of deliberation (the archetypal Type II), notes the importance of "rhetoric, humour, emotion, testimony or storytelling, and gossip" which contrast with the "rational, dispassionate discussions" of Type I deliberations (Bachtiger at al. 2010, 39). Such stories are arguably more accessible to the lay public and resonate more with what they can do as individuals rather than the more academic approach, with P2 positing that *"it was very professionally done…maybe too professionally, it was very polished".* Conversely, P4 noted that "*as an ordinary citizen, I want to know how I can make a difference, I want to bring it down to the lowest possible level…so there'd be something for everyone*". This contrasts with some of the participants perspectives of the academic content offered, with SE2 recalling: *"I was told by the ICA not to dumb it down, that they wanted numbers, but there was no point putting up slides of equations, as it would just turn people off - it's better to have a discussion about what we found":*

The material…I found it okay, but I know there was a lot of people who didn't, there was a lot of graphs, a lot of jargon. I would of studied energy in Uni myself so I would have been familiar with it….I think it would be intimidating if you came in as quite uneducated person and tried

to sit there through that and try to comprehend things, especially with the graphs and things like that, that would really throw people off…that was throwing people who were very well educated off as well, trying to make sense of it" P8

Some of the topics were heavy, maybe they were pitched a bit high, if the general population were to be engaged it would probably be better if it was pitched more level, it was too academic. I have a degree and I think most people in the room had a degree, but it was still heavy" P3

Interestingly here, the two participant quotes mention their own "education", with P8 comparing "*uneducated people*" outside with the "*very well educated*" inside the ICA, while P3 states that *"I think most people in the room might have degree".* This relates back to the discussion on inclusiveness where "education", "class" and "articulation" were noted as traits more representative than the general populous (which suggest an over-representation of A or B classes and/or those more educated that the average citizenry). Indeed, from the survey data provided, most participants (on both weekends) stated that the material was pitched "about right", while "(m)ore than four out of five members felt that the input of the experts was useful or very useful" (CA 2018b, 1-3). However, not everyone agreed with this viewpoint, with P5 expressing frustrations that the ICA *"wasted an awful lot of time on stuff that we didn't really need" such as "really really basic stuff like what is climate change…you should only have an hour in the morning"* while adding that the priority should have been *"what's happening in the Irish context...what needs doing".*

This again raises an important point regarding civic science relating to climate change, and how the problem is framed in general. Feedback from the roundtable discussions noted how the issues was "*distant*" and "*not directly affecting us*" as well as "*overwhelming*" and "*intimidating*" for ordinary citizens, with most responses indicating that both the ICA members and public wanted examples and solutions that were tangible and resonated with them. For instance, similar to the participant interviewees, the Appendix transcripts of the roundtable discussions (CA 2018c, 174) revealed that "*the Citizens at Table 6...felt that there was a lack of information, that people get bored and feel powerless, the sheer scale of information, graphs*

and figures are complicated and very technical" and moreover that *"(climate change) doesn't resonate with people in their daily lives and it needs to be presented in a simpler and more engaging format"* while Table 5 added that the "*language is too scientific for the ordinary person"*. This viewpoint was also held by the ENGO observers who stated that they "*did get the impression from the Q&A afterwards, that maybe some of the more technical stuff went over some people's heads*" and that "*they kind of needed to get down to a less technical level in the Q&A before people started to see that this is feasible*". However, they did not attribute this to a lack of intelligence on behalf of the citizens, but more on how the information was presented, as the "*concrete stuff*" and "*practical examples are what people got their head around*" (ENGO). Moreover, the importance of the Q&A for distilling information was also illuminated by P7, while P9 highlighted how "*examples*" and "*comparisons*" helped the learning process:

"people wanted a lot more concrete examples, a lot of questions were like 'oh is this possible' and they'd (the experts) be like "oh yeh, they're doing it in Germany", and then the next question would be "is this possible in a country in Ireland", and they'd say 'oh a country like Denmark would be the best example'... so they were really looking for definite stuff" ENGO

"some of it would have been complex…there was one Scientist who went off in his own world and we were kind of looking at each other thinking what is he on about! But the Q&A session sorted that out and we could figure out what he was talking about" P6

"it wasn't too advanced, as they gave examples all the way through, so you were kind of getting comparisons to hit off each other, so it was learning at a very deep level...and you got the submission handouts beforehand, so you had a very good handle on the reference point" P9

4.3.2 Readability

As P9 notes above, reading material was available beforehand as part of the "learning phase". However, as mentioned in the literature review by Huitma (2007, 303), "as not everybody will read the material...this procedure is seen to increase the differences in the participants´ level of knowledge". This seemed to be the case for the ICA, as firstly the feedback surveys stated that "less than half the members" had read the pre-materials for the first weekend with only a "slight improvement" for the second (CA 2018b, 1-3). More

specifically, and in accordance with expectations, the participants who stated that they were less likely or unable to read the pre-materials were those young(er) professionals and/or those with families, as opposed to older retirees with more leisure time. For instance, P3 admitted that *"I'd only skim through the pre-material,* likewise P8 "*who had a busy live and didn't have time*" while P5 stated that *"if you were retired and had a bit more time maybe, but most people couldn't".* Although those with work and family commitments had the best intentions to "catch-up" before a weekend session as observed by P9, other participants cited that - due to the late addition of speakers and/or late submission of papers, there were cases when they only received some written materials on the Friday evening before an ICA session, which possibly affected members ability to read, interpret and reflect on the respective papers arguments.

"I think people in general did come prepared, and when we checked in Friday evening the first thing that people asked for was the hard copies (of pre-material), because they were going to catch-up - particularly people who were at work – before the next morning" P9

"..in most cases you get a lot of read in time…but, some of the speakers were confirmed late so they didn't get enough lead-in time to write their own material…and there were some things you didn't get until you showed up at the hotel, so that was a little bit taxing going over the whole thing in the one evening, it's kind of hard to get a grasp of it" P2

However, with respect to the material itself, the feedback surveys noted that "the views about the quality of the briefing material were again positive: the greater majority of members felt that the briefing material was balanced (though there were a significant number who were undecided), and four-fifths said it was 'pitched about right'" (CA 2018b, 1-3). The necessity of the readings - particularly for such a technical topic – was stated by numerous participants, with P11 for example stating that "*there is no really getting around that, if you want to have a fully informed and objective view of something you need to do all the reading*". However, obviously the quality of material different from presenter to presenter, this despite the fact that the Secretariat reviewed presenters' material and noted that there wasn't a single paper that they didn't send back without revisions (to first draft), which was also confirmed by SE2:

"I think it depended on the person and the paper…and this one (holding paper in hand) ...it was very easy reading I must say, most people could read it, it's pretty fine…but then there are different papers (holding up another), with graphs and things like that...I kind of got bit overwhelmed by those types of graphs and technical jargon as well" P8

"Your comprehension improved a lot by doing the readings beforehand…the presentations adhere to what is in the paper, although they might bring in some new things or present things that are better for a presentation…it does help if you read it beforehand" P11

4.3.3 Selection and Presentation

As for the presentations, the general perception from members, the EAG and the secretariat was positive, with the Secretariat in particularly commended for their role, with P9 stating that "*"if they had not put in the quality of work they did (in selecting speakers etc), the assembly would not have been as successful as it was".* Although according to SE1, some speakers were "*more successful in some areas than others – which is more a reflection of the current state of Irish context on climate change*". However, members were critical of State officials, with P5 lamenting that *"some were really good, while some were civil servants who just rolled out presentations – which were glossy, beautiful – but nothing is done in reality"*.

"people were really appreciative of each speaker, because they picked really good speakers, who did really good presentations, spoke well… and it was clear each was accomplished on a certain level…people were very glad to even have the opportunity to listen to the experts in this field, that was the general sense I got" P11

I think a lot of people would agree with me with this, especially for the CC one, it was very objective, very comprehensive on effects, causes, possible solutions and what other countries are doing…nothing was really left out." P9

Moreover, it was clear from the interviewees - both participants and speakers - that there was a high degree of trust and respect for the presenters. Although a healthy degree of scepticism is arguably needed in order to effectively challenge the experts, P11 outlined how undue "*suspicion of experts is really dangerous and a slippery slope"* which could render the process futile. However, as previously mentioned, despite the translucent process of speaker selection, the presenters were highly commended for their objectivity, knowledge and balance,

as on both weekends "(m)ore than four out of five members felt that the input of the experts was useful or very useful" according to the official ICA feedback surveys (CA 2018b, 1-3):

"Yes, I feel people trusted (the experts), at no point was anyone insecure about their intellect to say "look at this guy, he thinks he's so smart" …there was no mistrust" P11

"they realise you are an expert because of where you come from and with your titles, so that garners the trust, and then you use your platform to distil your research". SE2

However, time again emerged as an issue, as some speakers noted how they had to squeeze a life's work into a 20-minute presentation, while participants noted that they would have preferred some presenters to speak longer than others and would have incorporated more interactive forms of presenting if given more control:

"I suppose, the thing is each speaker only gets 20 minutes, so you kind of get speakers rushing through papers, and then you have the judge banging the glass against the table trying to get them to stop speaking (laughter!) - and some of them are really interesting, others are more heavy on their content, but the citizens would have rathered listen to some over others" P8

"most of the presentations were PowerPoint… actually, I thought we could have used some more interactive methods…they could have come down into the groups, different methods might have been more interesting, more colour and different forms of presenting" P3

In terms of content, similarly to the written material, the Secretariat and the EAG seemed to hold a high degree of editorial control and speakers were guided on what particular topics were required and also on the visual presentation of the piece. However, this raises important questions again over who decides what information is more important and based on what criteria. Specifically, the selection of information given to members and how it was framed was largely predicated on the chosen speaker's areas of expertise, which P8 noted earlier can shape the outcomes of the recommendations. For instance, SE2 noted how some areas - such as freight and aviation - were not within "their" domain of expertise. Thus, less information was provided (i.e. only a "slide" on aviation) on these more structural topics with potentially economic consequences, while more emphasis was arguable put on individual behavioural (i.e. the above quote, "people need to") and technological change:

"I sent on the slides and they came back and said is there anything on aviation you could include…it had come up the previous weekend that they met that they (i.e. the members) wanted more information…but the thing is with aviation, the emissions are huge, but it's not a thing that people want to tackle" SE2

Here, it is interesting to note which *"people"* did not want to tackle emissions from aviation etc., as the quote clearly states that the members *did* in fact wish to engage with these issues. This suggests that the EAG and/or Government sought to avoid such topics which had a potentially negative economic impact and focus on 'safer' topics, with SE2 noting that *"there is nothing there that people could disagree with…and a lot of the stuff in there is actual Govt. policy to a certain extent*" while also remarking that "*I know people from the Department (of Transport) were delighted with recommendations".* But perhaps the Department would not have been so happy if citizens had suggested an airline tax for example. Put simply, different outcomes and more radical recommendations could have been possible if citizens were given full control over the agenda and speaker selection as it appears their option were confined.

4.3.4 Time to Digest, Interpret and Deliberate

As outlined above, there was little or no obstacle to participants understanding once the material was broken down in a concise and clear manner with concrete examples (as noted by P9, ENGO etc). As P8 confirms, "*the way people (i.e. presenters) were explaining things, a lot of them did break things down as much as possible so that the majority of people could come to terms with what they were saying*". However, the main issue with regards to the digestibility of information appeared to revolve around the volume of information presented combined with *"the scale of the problem which some people may find intimidating"* (CA 2018c, 183). Moreover, numerous participants remarked upon the intense and condensed timeframe within which the information was to be considered, with 22 speakers in total over two weekends, as well as the signpost document (of public submissions), pre-materials and deliberations to digest. Consequently, tiredness and mental fatigue were noted as factors by participants. Thus,

the extent of material to cover within a pressured timeframe may have been detrimental to the quality of deliberations as numerous participants recollected their fatigue

"…it was all day, it was very interesting, but trying to focus all that time was heavy going... there was a bit too much information" P12,

"…the only thing that makes it slightly hard to comprehend is the volume of information, there is a lot of statistics, a lot of scientific terms, a lot of volumes of pollutants etc, it can be a bit overbearing, just the volume of information, it's not that it's presented in a complex way. When it came to the global warming one, there was a small sense that people were bombarded with so much technically information" P6

This limitation was also exacerbated by what some members and presenters perceived as an imbalance between the time afforded to experts (i.e. "internal reflection") over deliberations (i.e. "external reflection"). However, as noted in the previous section, there was a delicate balance here as the expert opinion and subsequent (internal) reflection by citizens was an essential base to these discussion, especially for those unfamiliar with the topic (such as P9 stated above). Nevertheless, P3 lamented that although "*the experts did help you form an opinion, but there wasn't enough time to explore that*":

"I did enjoy the speakers…but you need more balance for the group work (i.e. deliberations), I think it's more important (than the speakers) as well, the interaction between people" P3

"the deliberation I thought could have been longer, because you are asking them to consider very important things…and think it was 10 minute break, and it's an intense day…and you're asking lay people to take in a huge amount of information and then to make decisions based on evidence that they heard, so maybe more balance towards deliberation is needed" SE2

4.3.5 Citizens Capacity to Challenge

In terms of citizens capacity to challenge the information, again the knowledge disparity between experts and citizens was apparent from some of the interviewees which may have restricted the latter's ability to effectively and constructively criticise the information provided. Specifically, although a degree of trust in experts was established during the process, there is also the danger that this descends into deference and subsequently a co-opted citizenry. However, despite these potential limitations, there was a clear willingness from members to

question speakers. This was particularly apparent by their frustration that no Q&A session was offered after a presentation from the National Mitigation Plan and Adaptation Framework, with Citizen 1 from Table 4 (CA 2018c, 173) remarking that "*this damages the entire purpose of why we are here because essentially they are product of the Department of Environment and Communications who are refusing to engage and communicate. I was particularly flabbergasted by the fact that we couldn't ask him questions".* Moreover, P8's quote illuminates the potential problem with civic science and deliberative processes expounded by Abelson et al. (2003, 246) who note that "(e)ven with significant lay involvement in and control over the selection of experts and information, the vast majority of the public will defer to the ''experts'' when it comes to these decisions because they may not have the expertise required to critically appraise the information presented". Furthermore, the absence of "lay witnesses" and the "heavy burden" on participants to act alone as "judge, lawyer and jury" is highlight by P2:

"I suppose when you just an average person of society, and you have people who have their doctorates and whatever, you do take them on their word, so obviously you are going to be "they know what they're on about, why am I questioning them…but then I suppose how they (experts) got there was by questioning other people" P8

"We didn't have many practitioners, so there was no concrete information here from engineers saying "actually expert, you're wrong", because you almost assume the academics have done an engineering degree already and there is definitely a degree of assumption there that people (experts) are more knowledgeable than they are" P2

Another point of contention appeared to revolve around how this theory could be put into practice in accordance with real-life constraints, with P1 noting that "*there was more on the gap between theory and implementation, people saying it's a great theory and we all want it, but what is the best way everyone – and you (the experts) are not following the best way of doing it".* Here, there seemed to be a genuine two-way process to engage in mutual learning and adjustment rather than a top-down rubber stamping of expert opinion. For instance, SE1 and SE2 both outlined that their approach to proceedings was to objectively lay out the facts

and allow citizens to discuss and decide based on their own discretion and deliberations, while P7 and P11 also highlighted this openness between citizens' and experts:

"So it wasn't me lecturing them - it was me saying "this is what could work" based upon my research and what works elsewhere…you now consider whether it works for you and the people in your area…that's exactly what I'd be thinking if I was on ICA, it's all well and good me saying get the tram, but how realistic is in their area" SE2

"we weren't seeking to get citizens action on C.C, we wanted to hear what citizens felt. I think that's the difference - we are not advocates, not activists, we were there to provide a balanced response to the question we were given...but we weren't there to set-up a framework that would mean citizens would give the answers that we wanted - we wanted them to listen to the info of experts and make their own minds up…along with the breakout discussions in groups" SE1

"During the Q & A there was a good bit of engagement with speakers…they weren't coming across as arrogant at experts, the only thing they were speaking about were the scientific facts…they were of the same mind as the citizens that we are here to collaborate and come up with solutions rather than throwing solutions down your throat...but we were there for the same process, they inform us and amongst ourselves – with their help again – we discuss it and try bring solutions on from there" P11

An illustration of citizens' ability to challenge information related to the provision of electric cars outlined by SE2. For instance, although SE2 stated that *"there was nothing in there that I presented that people could really criticise…people need to move more greenly, less cars etc*"., he also stated how "they" emphasised that the emergence of electric cars would be largely dictated by the market and downplayed the role of government intervention in incentivising public take-up; however, this viewpoint seemed to ignore the reality of citizens and numerous members challenged the feasibility of such suggestions by outlining their own particular social or regional contexts, which prompted a degree of reflection from SE2:

"There was one lady, and I'd said something like, "we are in love with our cars", I was probably flippant…and then she stood up and said how much she had to drive etc…and then I said, then this is maybe the way that makes it greener to you…but then again, for me to say you need to buy an electric…she may not be able to afford, it may not be feasible for her, she might be driving too far…it was great that viewpoint was given!" SE2

"I said about the transport. It's quite different up in Dublin… here (the West of Ireland) there is no train service, no plane and the bus services are bad… my point is, even though we are all in Ireland, we are two different worlds away, and what would work over there (i.e. the city), is completely different, the needs are completely different" P7

Furthermore, P7's quote elucidates this apparent disconnect between experts and citizens, as it was clear that most experts were dealing with the macro-level while in contrast members mused on the micro-level applicability and details. For instance, SE2 remarked that "*(i)f you talk to anyone about transport…citizens bring it back to their own personal journey*", which conforms with the observations outlined in the Representation section that members reflected on their own self and group interest when proposed recommendations could affect them personally. This inevitably led to frustration on both sides, as SE2 remarked that although it was interesting to listen to participants' stories, it at times felt like *"a counsellor"* who was explaining to individual members the best option for them but noted how this could potentially become repetitive. However, on the other hand, some members felt - similarly to the case of agricultural reforms – that their concerns *"were acknowledged but not really taken into account"* (P7):

"one lady was talking about a bus service down in West Cork, and why it's so poor, and if it was better…look I can't get from A-B, then I'd say "look, an electric car is what you need", to travel the greenest way as possible, but that was afterwards…it was almost like counselling in a kind of way…while it would have been good to have longer time (to discuss individually with citizens), you might have spent time repeating yourself". SE2

"we were still left without answers, so it was very frustrating, like with carbon emissions, we have to go to electric cars, but we don't have enough plug-ins over here, how are we going to make this massive change? It wasn't realistic for everywhere, especially us in the West, we don't have the facilities, we don't have infrastructure, investment…" P7

However, whether or not experts fully considered these micro-issues, it appears these social and economic considerations - contrary to SE2's stated belief (of reliance on the market for introduction of electric vehicles) - were in fact taken on board by the ICA with regard to the final recommendation. Specifically, "96% of the Members recommended that the State should immediately take many steps to support the transition to electric vehicles" with the proviso that the State should "introduce a range of additional incentives, particularly aimed at

rural communities to encourage motorists towards electric vehicle ownership" (emphasis added).

Overall, despite the obvious intensity, complexity of information and time limitations to consider and challenge information, it was evident (from the speakers, observers, the secretariat, EAG and most importantly the participants) that there was an extremely high level of engagement. It was clear that the participants were enthralled by the presentations and topics and thus actively sought to listen, learn and interact. Moreover, this engagement was not limited solely to those members inside the assembly, as the ICA received over 1,200 public submission, had the most observers present including politicians, ENGOs and members of public as well as garnering significant media coverage over the course of the two weekends, which can only have helped raise public awareness of climate issues:

"I took it seriously. I was focused, tuned in and did my best to engage and give feedback" P3

"everyone was really engaged at the assembly...everyone was really trying to listen intently to each speaker and comprehend something out of it" P11

"I'd never seen an audience as engaged as they were, every single person was listening to what we had to say…the citizens' were very engaged, compared to students (at University), looking at smartphones, trying to figure out how they get out, watching the clock (laughter!)" SE2

4.4 Outcomes/Decisions

4.4.1 More Informed Citizenry

Following on from the "Information" section, it is apparent that members experienced significant learning throughout the process, with P3 for instance stating, "*it's been a learning curve for me*". This is similar to Lindell's (2011) findings and the two empirical cases outlined in the literature review. Specifically, learning comprised of two different components - factual learning on the topic at hand and personal self-development. Firstly, citizens within the ICA became more informed on climate change both as a consequence of the expert opinion provided and the subsequent deliberations with their peers. This also stood true for those who claimed

to have prior knowledge of climate issues, with P11 noting how prior "misconceptions" about the capacity for action at individual and country-level were uncovered, which highlights the potential of the process to close gaps between scientists and the public's knowledge. Some participants also remarked how their attitude and habits changed after the assembly (P1), and that they are now more "mindful" of environmental concerns than before (P4). Even the Chair stated that "*I knew hardly anything, and I feel so much wiser now" (CA 2018c, 590):*

"I would have had an interest and known quite a bit beforehand, but only a fraction of what was taught over the weekend…. because there are lot of stuff, even if you think you are clued into things, you have a lot of misconception - it was really helpful clearing things up, P11

"I absolutely learnt more, I was very heedless before like a lot of people. Why would I care, it didn't really affect me! So it put a lot of things in my head, I'm a lot more mindful now P4

"I did feel definitely more educated after the climate sessions, and I've noticed I've changed my habits a lot as well, definitely a lot more recycling, compositing, lots of small changes" P1

However, as illuminated in the representational section, this learning was not confined to the purely factual. Many citizens observed how they and other members went through an almost transformative process as they became more confident, capable and conscious citizens, with P9 aptly surmising that "*the process would make greater citizens of all of us"*.

"I'm definitely better able to debate and I definitely feel more knowledgeable and more confident about speaking out and saying my opinion" P1

"it's really made me think I'd like to run for the senate…you kind of get to the point where you see you could make policy decisions, and could argue with the best of them, and it's a very exciting life, you're dealing with live issues, there is nothing passive" P9

However, one must also consider the external impact of the ICA, as Fournier et al. (2011, 142) propounds that "(i)f one attaches great importance to the necessity of education and preparation before deliberation and decision-making for the former, why disregard that logic for the latter?". For instance, P10 stated that members "*were lucky, as we had such amazing information and this was the only time ever I've voted fully informed",* while propounding that *"it's a way forward for the country because the info is available for everyone*

on the website, and I think if it happens again that's where I'll be going to get my information"

However, similar to the case of the Italian referendum noted by Carty et al. (2008) in the literature review, the ICA did not actively seek to promote the nuances of the deliberation process which could have informed the public, but instead the aggregate recommendations attained the most public attention. Nevertheless, in line with Barbers (2003) "strong democracy" and the CANE (2018) recommendation, both experts and the members seemed unanimous that this type of process should be extended outside of the ICA, with P3 stating that "*we need this in all our communities*" and SE1 propounding that *"the more that we can work to communicate with people the better…having forums where there are more conversations can only be useful":*

"Civic engagement is really important. I'd like to see it in schools, I'd like my daughter to think she could be President one day, rather than it being something distant, for them to see through such exercises that such roles are attainable and for the ICA to be more accessible" P3

However, how much the public were aware of the ICA or the specific topic of climate change is debatable, with DE1 stating that the public were mostly unaware of the ICA. As noted by Cathy et al. (2008) and Smith (2009, 104) in the literature review, citizens' by-and-large "take their political cues from elite actors and media discussions", thus it is imperative for them to be involved - whether directly or indirectly - in the process. There was high engagement from parties who viewed the session with SE2 stating there were more observers than any other weekends, while there was media coverage of proceedings was also prominent:

"it probably gets people outside the assembly more engaged with it…it puts in the media spotlight…even at the international level, "Ireland is facing CC" even if you don't throw up any golden ideas, on a macro level it is more engaging and puts it in the spotlight " P11

Nevertheless, not all members were happy with the reporting of the ICA and felt their credibility and legitimacy was unfairly attacked throughout the process. Indeed, some stated that they were surprised the Chair did not defend the citizens and process more publicly.

However, the Secretariat explained that this was a conscious decision, as due to attention surrounding the ICA[43] they wished to appear objective and "let the facts speak for themselves":

"but when people kind of see that, if you go on Facebook and see articles published by the media, and you do get slated. If you're a member you'd want to have thick skin, as you have all these keyboard warriors coming up and giving their opinion – "what do they (ICA) know, they are hired by the Govt.- this, that and the other…at the end of the day we took a decision, we had free speech and that's exactly what they wanted from the ICA". P8

"the proof of the pudding are the results that came out[44], the fact that it was all balanced, people were saying it was skewed this way or that way – it wasn't. I think it is a bit unfair to the members that people could say we were all brainwashed all, it's not possible" P4

Likewise, despite DE1 noting "*that politicians didn't dominate the ICC discussions…on the contrary the evidence showed that well run facilitator process was enough to make sure any domination didn't arise*", a decision was taken to exclude politicians and interest groups from involvement in the ICA. The reason provided by the Secretariat, similarly to the logic outlined in limiting the amount of publicity, was that the officials were conscious of the perception of any bias through their involvement. However, the Secretariat noted that groups were able to influence the ICA agenda through the public submissions process.

In terms of actual public engagement (although outside the remit of this analysis), DE1 suspected that *"the vast bulk of people don't have an idea of it, so I don't think the ICA contributes to a wider discourse in Irish society"*. However, DE1 may be understating the level of public engagement and knowledge of the ICA process as an RTE exit poll (McShane 2018, 50-57) found that 66% of those surveyed were aware of the ICA; nevertheless, similarly to representation within the ICA, awareness was lowest among the <24 and 25-34 age cohorts. Moreover, despite the question relating specifically to the 8th Amendment meeting of the ICA, 70% believed it was "true" that "randomly selected Irish citizens discussed the topic of abortion in the Citizens' Assembly"; the vast majority of voters surveyed believed the citizens chosen

[43] particularly the contentious topic of the 8th Amendment which set the tone for the proceeding sessions
[44] Regarding the 8th Amendment referendum which has a striking similarity to the ICA voting outcome.

were unbiased; while 76% knew that experts were invited to inform the discussions. Although this cannot be generalised to the specific climate change session, from these indicative results it appears the ICA did catch the public's imagination and moreover garnered a degree of representational legitimacy, credibility and trust.

4.4.2 Decision-Making

After the information (civic science) and deliberative processes, the citizens were asked to vote on recommendations (i.e. the ballot paper) which served as the primary outcome of the ICA. In total, there were thirteen recommendations with several qualifications, as well as four ancillary recommendations[45]. Changes from the initial draft were marked in red and outlined by the Chair to the ICA in a transparent manner (as noted by P7). According to the Secretariat, the first step in this decision-making process involved soliciting members' views after the first weekend meeting (1st October 2017). However, although citizens seemingly had control in this regard, their perceived input into the initial draft paper may be somewhat overstated. For instance, the Sec. admitted that the climate session was "different" to other meetings, and the Secretariat - whose membership had a degree of prior education and experience of working on climate issues - along with the EAG had a significant impact in shaping the first draft:

"some questions were already prepared by the Secretariat and these were discussed by the EAG and modified (extensively) and added to both by the EAG and then by the members of the ICA. The suggestion of the members was then considered alongside other considerations" SE1

"the draft ballot would be written by the experts, it wasn't us that was putting the paper together…what we would be doing would be reading through them, making sure if we understand where they were coming from and if we knew where they were coming from, there might be one or two things we thought of, but they (the experts) would say they didn't put that in there because of (i.e. explanation)...and then they'd explain that we had thought about this but it might cause a problem, so it was all explained to us..there was no conflict at all…" P7.

The second quote by P7 alludes to the previously mentioned steering group (SG) which gave a selection of members an opportunity to reflect upon, query and revise suggestions. As

[45] which were not voted upon but included in final report

already established within the procedural section, the communication lines between the general membership and citizen members of the SG was lacking. Therefore, the group of 12 citizens had a high degree of responsibility in critically reflecting upon the first draft ballot. However, similarly to the last section (information), one could argue that citizenry members of the SG may be co-opted and/or unable to effectively challenge the EAG and Secretariat. For instance, at the end of the above quote, P7 notes that "everything was explained to us (and) there was no conflict at all", which could suggest a degree of deference, polite consensus or groupthink. Moreover, it is important to note that members of the SG and subsequently ICA members were presented with draft ballot recommendations rather than actively being involved in the selection and writing stages. Thus, their role was always confined to accepting or suggesting changes (i.e. secondary rather than primary input), which may have affected their degree of influence over the final draft ballot paper and subsequent recommendations.

4.4.3 Better or Different Decisions

Nevertheless, the above observation should not negate the degree of citizen involvement in shaping the final recommendations, with P3 noting that the members "*did have quite a bit of input because we changed it, we had to go back to the drawing board a few times"*. Firstly, the Secretariat stated that the important role of "leadership", something that had not been fully considered, emerged strongly from the membership – with P8 concurring that "*one thing that was definitely brought to attention was, the Government should be leading by example* – and thus the topic was emphasised in the choice of speakers and Recommendation 2. Moreover, the Chair stated that the second draft presented to the ICA took "account of comments received from the Members of the Assembly and any further changes made to the original draft.". Specifically, it had entirely new recommendations (absent from the first ballot) such as a "tax of GHG emissions from agriculture".

"a significant amount of day would be assigned to refining (the draft ballot), cascading from each recommendation to see what shape the whole thing took… the initial state and the state it ended up was always vastly different…" P11

"If anyone had any problems at the way the ballot was or they thought the wording was any way restrictive at all, they'd let their concerns be known and it got amended ..it didn't seem that people were confined by the ballot paper at all, the judge and the secretariat were very open, they wanted everyone to be happy with it and they wanted whatever version to reflect the exact thoughts of the assembly and have no loose threads, and not leave anything out". P6

Furthermore, as illuminated in the previous sections, the members did in fact challenge experts as well as the information presented to overcome *"the gap between theory and practice"* (P1), while social and rural concerns emanating from discussions were also referenced in the final recommendations. For instance, the initial draft, although explicitly going into the technical details (such as the positive benefit to the exchequer that could be derived) of a carbon tax, paid little heed to the social concerns of citizens (for example, those on low-incomes at risk of energy poverty). It is unclear how this concern entered the deliberation, but one could assume that given its absence from the first Secretariat and EAG drafts, that it was indeed the members who pushed for the qualification that "(a)n increase in the taxation does not have to be paid by the poorest households (the 400,000 households currently in receipt of fuel allowance". Furthermore, as previously noted, the rural concerns regarding electric vehicles and public transport - outlined by P7 - were accounted for as both recommendation 9 and 10 made specific references to "rural" needs. These were illuminated in the Chair explanation to the ICA:

"The remaining questions in this section make specific suggestions in respect of rural transport...It also explicitly responds to the feedback from the floor about the special role cars play in transport in rural Ireland" (Chairperson: CA 2018c, 568).

4.4.4 Degree of Consensus

However, the inclusion of such suggestions did not necessarily mean that a "consensus" was achieved as the aggregate voting may falsely allude to (with over 80% agreement on every

recommendation). For instance, as previously noted, despite this reference to rural concerns, P7 still felt "*frustrated*" and that concerns were "*acknowledged but not really taken into account"*. Perhaps this latter view stems from the Chair's statement that although the ICA staff *"were very conscious of the fact after discussions there is a distinction between urban areas and rural areas and we didn't want to ignore the difficult situation that rural areas maybe in, but we have left it in a* ***very very general way {emphasis added}****"* (CA 2018c, 573). On the other hand, all of the citizens of Table 2 felt "strongly" that it was "unfair" to single out rural areas for special attention, which illuminates a degree of polarization. These points again illuminate the difficulties accounting for micro-level concerns when considering macro-level policy as previously discussed and furthermore highlight the importance of sensitising members to "minority" (in this case rural) concerns.

"it was strongly felt by all of the table that the specific reference to particular attention on rural areas be omitted. That it's a complete nation that needs to be addressed in terms of the public transport system and how resources are allocated, etcetera so just giving particular attention to rural areas was deemed to be unfair" (Facilitator, table 2; CA 2018c, 573)

Moreover, due to the perceived failure of political leadership on climate change expounded by the members, another consensus emerged that decisions should be "apolitical" and that experts should have more power to inform policy and hold the government to account on climate change, which was embodied within Recommendation 1 (see **Appendix A**):

"That was a clear take away, that the only step in the right direction is if we give agency and responsibility to actual scientists and let them put the plans into action…but that idea was a prime one, that there does need to some panel of experts of scientist with authority and power but -from there were able to come up with anything more refined than that unfortunately". P11

"Oh yeh, this was the one thing that came out, the only way it will be achieved is to keep in non-political...so you would have experts on a panel, who work with CC in all the policies that are coming out, keep up to date research, make affordable plans and implement them" P5

Although, given the earlier discussion of the EAG and Secretariat writing the initial draft and the prominence of the first recommendation, one could argue that there was a certain

self-interest in strengthening an expert-body, with Carolan (2015, 748) noting how "(c)ynics might also point out that these bodies are likely to provide academics with their best opportunities to positively influence public policy". This was in part confirmed by SE1 - a member of both the EAG and the CCAC. Interestingly, even though the recommendation refers to "new" or "existing body", it was eventually revealed (after members repeated discussion of a "new" body) that the "body" they in fact had in mind was the CCAC (CA 2018c, 540). This suggests that there was in fact an agenda to strengthen the role of the CCAC, while several of the CCAC's members (including the CCAC Chair) were chosen as speakers at the ICA:

"Well we would be generally supportive of strengthening the CCAC, they are quite experienced academics who work across that science-policy divide and know the nitty-gritty of political decision making and how to keep things moving" SE1

"…the reason we have referred to a new or existing independent body is because we were thinking of the CCAC..." (Chairperson: CA 2018c, 578)

Nevertheless, the members seemed supportive of this idea and also wished to strengthen the body by adding the caveat of new "powers" (as opposed to just "functions"), while also setting stricter time frames and proposing powers for such a body to take action against the State. In fact, the EAG and Chair at times had to temper members' suggestions for increased power to such a body for legal reasons. However, the irony - and perhaps danger - of a democratic citizen-led forum increasing the powers of a non-elected expert body was not lost on some citizens, with P11 remarking that it's "*a slippery slope giving power to people who aren't politicians… it's just not a great idea, so we didn't really develop those ideas past the prototype stage, but everyone was cognizant of its own pitfalls"*:

"it's a great idea, let's have a body, give it real powers, real goals with specific dates". P6

"I think the general feeling from our table was, who is this body, what type of powers do they have, and if they are genuinely trying to make it better should we give them more power…but I think the overall feeling was, who is this, how did they get there and why are they there". P5

4.4.5 Quality of Decisions

Overall, finalising the draft ballot paper (i.e. recommendations) appeared to be the most difficult part of the process, but as Sec. outlined, it was also the most essential and key to the success of the process. Nevertheless, the Secretariat stated how stressful it was in a limited period to include the suggestions from the floor into a new draft. Although in politics it is not uncommon for drafts to be revised and pushed through at the final moments, one could argue whether this is the best method for a CA to ensure the quality of recommendations considering the emphasis given to citizenry learning and deliberation. Specifically, there was only 40 minutes for the Secretariat, Chair and EAG to revise the members' suggestions emerging from the final roundtable discussions. Hence, as P5 noted, drafting the ballot paper should have its own day, which would have the advantage of allowing citizens to adequately reflect on what they have discussed as well as enable time to properly consider any proposed changes:

*"I think we have heard an awful lot of material from you that we have to consider. So we will have to go outside and consider what you've said and come back to you. I don't know how long it's going to take and I'm conscious of the fact that some of the Members have time considerations so we will try and do it as quickly as possible so that the voting can start as quickly as possible**...(Adjournment)**…We spent I think 40 minutes going through the suggestions you've made" (Chairperson: CA 2018c, 589).*

Moreover, although the citizens - some more than others - wanted to leave *"no stone unturned*" (P11) and the ICA officials did their utmost to accommodate this desire, it also led to a degree of tiredness, frustration and apathy towards the final drafting stage. This was exacerbated by the fact the drafting took place on a Sunday evening after a whole day and weekend of presentations which overloaded the members; consequently, some felt the discussions were never-ending and pedantic. Although P7 stated that the SG could have had a role in easing this process, this was rejected by the Secretariat for fear of creating a hierarchy:

"…it's quite tedious actually discussing the ballot papers, because people take their time, and we were really scrutinising every question…" P8

"That was probably the most difficult part of the ICA, refining the draft ballot paper…people didn't wanted to leave any stone unturned, even if they thought something was irrelevant they thought "we are here to do it probably"…but people ended up splitting hairs and each time the paper would have to get rewritten and brought back and then someone else would have some niggly thing and then it would take hours and hours, to the point that people didn't really care at the end, "fine yeh, we'll just go with that"…it did get a bit tedious at the end" P11

Overall, this time-pressure raises concerns about the quality of the decisions, with the Chair repeatedly noting that there wasn't space to delve into details. This conforms with some of the critics of civic science, such as SE1's colleague who complained "*how could anyone there make an informed decision on the basis of 2 weekends"*. This was also acknowledged by some members, with P5 stating that *"after 2 weekends there are probably recommendations that we made which were totally not feasible and probably not even well thought out".*

4.4.6 Response to Outcomes

Given this later point, combined with the stated representational issues as well as notable time pressures, it is important to restate that the ICA was an advisory body and thus recommendations were non-binding. Interestingly, all of the interviewees questioned, as well as the experts, agreed that the ICA should be non-binding due the legitimacy question:

"And that's why I hold the view that the outcomes of processes like this should only ever be advisory. Never declaratory. Because you just can't crack that problem on legitimacy question. I think the way to reduce criticisms is to say look, it's a stage in a process, it's not taking a decision, it's making a recommendation. And in doing so is helping frame the debate in ways that might not have otherwise emerged but for this way of doing this. The best way to push back about legitimacy of this process is to hold the line that is only advisory, a stage in a process…I don't think forcing the politicians is the way to go" DE1

"It's absolutely impossible to do that (i.e. binding-decisions)…without swallowing all the recommendations whole and saying we have to implement everything…I think there are issues about feasibility, practicability and the legitimacy of doing that" SE1

No. I don't think anything should be binding, as no matter how representative it is, it's still only 100 people. So, I don't think the govt should be bound - but answerable yes". P11

However, this raises the question of what type of response will emerge from the recommendations and how will the citizens perceive this. P1 specified an eminent fear from

participants that, despite the merits of the process in terms of personal learning, "*we were all kind of thinking, is this a wasted exercise, is this just a weekend of us listening with you doing nothing we advise you to do after you heard it?*". However, despite agreeing that the ICA should only be advisory, on the other hand the members felt that their recommendations should be taken seriously due to the time invested in the process, the investment of taxpayers' money, and their degree of representational legitimacy[46]. Moreover, others noted - similarly again to the 8th - that the government could use the outcomes to legitimise their own agenda:

"I can see we should be taking seriously…we are the citizens and the voice of the majority of the nation, we are not the poorest of the poor or the richest of the rich, we are the middle-class people living in Ireland, 99% up there did account for the way the people think" P8

"the fact that the referendum result (on the 8th) was so close to what we voted, I think it has put extra wind behind the mandate given, and I'd personally like to see them act asap" P6

"they gave us a mandate…of course there is no obligation on them, but if they are going to spend taxpayers money, get a whole load of people up to Dublin, you'd expect them to act" P5

Some citizens were more optimistic than others on the basis of the ICC outcomes (e.g. referendum on same-sex marriage) and the recent 8th Amendment (i.e. abortion) referendum, with P9 stating "*I'm optimistic that they will use them"* while P8 noted how *"they showed us what was done in the ICC, they said a fairly high percentage were taken (on board)…so I'm hopeful they will take some of the big issues, as they seemed to have taken on the abortion ones"*. However, others were more sceptical, fearing that the government would not act - until necessary - but instead avoid the more controversial issues:

"you see…at the end of the day all we did was make recommendations, but that has no weight…it's the govt decision, they can take it or leave". P4

"I don't think is going to happen, with this present Government anyway…they have their own agenda, so I don't think much is will happen P3

[46] which some believe was enhanced by the referendum outcome of the 8th Amendment which closely mirrored the ICA vote.

Moreover, it was clear from the interviewees' perspectives that failure to act - in spite of the obvious positive learning outcomes - would undermine the legitimacy of the process in the eyes of all those involved. This view was also held by SE1, who noted that "scepticism" in the process will grow if no action is seen to be taken, while the ENGO, in line with Goodin's (1992) theory, noted how the outcome is paramount over the process and thus this would be the real litmus test of the ICA's legitimacy and capacity to invoke action on climate change:

"I *don't know what will happen, but this important bit at the end, almost the most important bit…where does it go, what does it do, what influence does it have, where do the insights going to go…the problem is that if nothing happens, people's scepticism will grow" SE1*

"that is something I think I could find frustrating, and the citizens would find frustrating…that we don't want to see the report that was written on CC sitting there gathering dust…then people become cynical about the process and then say the assembly…how good is it really!!" SE2

"I think for us in Environmental groups we're wondering what's going to happen now, are the government actually going to act on the recommendations, because that's all that really matters…the ICA is a lovely process, it was interesting to see it in action and it's unique…like it is a great idea, but are they actually going to listen" ENGO

"It be a pity if they ignored them, when a lot of thought and work has gone into it, and the citizens have a spoken. They have a voice there…and it be a pity if they didn't listen to it…it would undermine the process. I would hate to think it was just there for the 8th Amendment and that (other topics) was just thrown on…I hope they break down each topic and recommendations and give it due consideration" P4

Clearly, it is imperative to follow-up on the recommendations and to communicate any actions taken by the Oireachtas (Parliament) and Government, as the interviewees themselves noted that thus far they had heard very little (including the EAG member). However, as stated in the theory, there may be a significant time-lag and as there is no clear constitutional change required (as opposed to the 8th), there may be no specific tangible outcome and the recommendations could become entangled in a broader policy process without clearly defined actions being taken. Nonetheless, there was a sense of urgency, particularly on behalf of SE1 who noted the bigger picture and an opportunity to tie the process and outcomes to the ongoing NDCA. However, one could argue that due to the lack of substantive detail within the

recommendations - which are more "aspirational" than concrete – it may be difficult to derive comprehensive outcomes from the policy process as P5 has alluded to:

"I can see how it would undermine the process if the government didn't take certain actions, I don't have too much time to be looking at the Oireachtas" P8

"I would of liked a bit more follow in terms of communication of the findings, and timeline around when is it going to Govt committee etc…going forward…but I imagine it's because people who are organising it don't know themselves…"but what should absolutely be is for the Govt. to actually respond to what the citizens have said, to say why we can't do some of these actions, or we are going to address these actions within the next 5 years" SE1

"I put down on my (feedback) paper, let's just give them a 10-point plan, and give it to them, and give them a year or two to do the 10 points, things that are very quick to do and would make a difference quickly. Not like we recommended…more aspirations than reality" P5

It is important to restate that, it is the obligation of the Parliament - not the Government per se - to respond to recommendations by the ICA. In part, this may have been an intentional design element for the Government to distance themselves from potentially unpopular recommendations, create broad political consensus in parliament or avoid action altogether:

"It will now be a matter for the Oireachtas, in the first instance, to consider how it will take forward consideration of the Assembly's report. The Government will study the report and recommendations and will provide its response in the context of the agreed mechanism in the Oireachtas for further consideration of the report". (Minister Naughten[47])

However, a clear "window of opportunity" has been opened and the ICA has put climate action firmly on the agenda of the CCCAE. Specifically, since the release of the report in mid-April 2018, the report has been advocated - particularly by the Green Party, relevant academics, and other NGOs public authorities - as they try to attach their own priorities and solutions to the broader recommendations particularly in relation to the NMP and the upcoming NECP, as illustrated by some of the statements by stakeholders in the JCCAE's meetings on the issues:

"The report and recommendations of the Citizens' Assembly provide a clear and highly legitimate basis for near-term policy developments that can increase ambition beyond that

[47] Response given to Parliamentary question by Deputy Eamon Ryan on April 24th 2018 to the Minister for Communication, Climate Action and Environment on his response to the ICA recommendations. https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/question/2018-04-24/476/

contained in the NMP in the short term. We urge the committee to establish a workplan as soon as possible to consider and provide a report to the Oireachtas on the Citizens' Assembly's recommendations on climate change". (Ms Sharkey, Trocaire)

"the Government could decide it needs to revise the NMP on the basis of the evidence, of the landmark Citizens' Assembly report. What can the committee do now? We think it should write to the Minister asking him to trigger the revision of the mitigation plan on foot of the critiques of the climate council and the Citizens' Assembly" (Mr. Coghlan - Friends of Earth)

Consequently, this sustained pressure by internal political actors (most notably Deputy Ryan of the Green Party) as well as external actors has subsequently succeeded, as on the 4th July 2018, after a request from the aforementioned CCAE, a motion was passed to establish a SJCCA[48] which must consider the ICA's Third Report on climate change and "report its conclusions and recommendations to both Houses of the Oireachtas not later than 31st January 2019". Specifically, the SJCCA is tasked with considering the recommendations in light of the NMP, and NECP respectively. Moreover, it also requires the committee "to assess the state of play i*n relation to the Sectoral Adaptation Plans (SAPs) of relevant Government Departments…(and) to engage with the Secretaries General of these relevant Government Departments in relation to proposed adaptation measures to be included in such plans taking into account the recently published National Development Plan (NDP)".* This last reference to the NDP is particularly important, as it opens the possibility for the recommendations to be mainstreamed and embedded within national policy for the next 20 years.

In short, although this is only the first step in the process, the fact that a committee has been established specifically to consider the recommendations, and that these will influence key national plans (the NMP, NECP and NDP respectively) is clearly a positive step in terms of the (potential) output legitimacy of the ICA and an endorsement of the process itself (input legitimacy). However, it remains to be seen whether the recommendations are substantially

[48] Special Joint Committee on Climate Action - SJCCA

included and what response the Government - after it receives the report of the new committee in early 2019 (if on time) - will take.

In sum, this is only the beginning of what will be a long and complex political process, especially given Ireland's poor record of implementing national plans and propensity for "parish-pump-politics" (P9). For instance, Van Egeraat (2016, 64) propounds that "planning decisions (are) based upon short-term political priorities as the political environment remains embedded in traditional approaches to planning across the State…(which) goes to the heart of the Irish political process". Hence, some members' cynicism on whether action will be taken may yet prove justified:

"in Ireland we have a type of politics which historically focused on the smaller bits and pieces rather than the bigger picture" P9

5 - DISCUSSION

From the outset of this thesis, the necessity of both input and output legitimacy for ensuring the effectiveness of the combined civic science and deliberative processes has been elucidated. Thus, the aim of this research has been to offer an independent and impartial evaluation of the ICA. Specifically, the analysis section, in drawing upon the insights gleaned from the relevant literature and prior empirical cases, has attempted to illuminate the research question - *How can the input and output legitimacy of the ICA's meetings on climate change be evaluated in light of the participants' perceptions.* The main findings uncovered shall now be thematically discussed with reference to aforementioned theories and data presented in the analysis, as well as other relevant sources.

5.1 Transparency

Although not included in Abelson et al.'s (2003) evaluation framework, transparency is arguably the most important consideration for ensuring the trust, credibility and ultimately legitimacy of the ICA and future assemblies. Unlike the other categories, transparency is not simply a step in the process, but is *integral* to the process. Failure to ensure openness and accountability at one point can ultimately undermine legitimacy of an assembly at preceding or subsequent stages; therefore, it is fluid both in its temporality and impact while also serving to underpin each of the four other categories.

As noted in the literature review, transparency refers to "the openness of proceedings both to participants and the wider public" (Smith 2009, 12) which is fundamental for ensuring confidence in the process and its subsequent outcomes. As Kronsell and Bäckstrand (38-41) expound, "(a) legitimate political order rests on the approval and consent of the community"; thus, since the "deliberative turn", the burden of proof - both theoretically and empirically - has been on deliberative scholars and practitioners to manifest practices which achieve and maintain this legitimacy. As outlined in the problem statement, citizens declining trust in

politicians, experts and institutions were underlying factors and an undoubted catalyst for the emergence of deliberative democracy in the international and Irish context; hence, it is imperative that (external) legitimacy is established through embedding transparent procedures.

The necessity for transparency was also recognised by the ICA, with the final report of the Chair reflections stating that "the Assembly has at all times operated on the principle of maximum openness and transparency" (CA 2018a, 101). The inherent logic is clearly in line with the above stated theory and arguments, as the Chair expounds that "this level of transparency was not required by the Oireachtas resolution but was rather a decision which I took at an early stage to ensure that the legitimate questions and concerns raised by onlookers about the process could be immediately answered and addressed" (CA 2018a, 101). Moreover, the Chair states that given its "positive impact...such transparency should be a hallmark of any future Assembly and should be specifically stipulated in the Oireachtas resolution" (CA 2018a, 102). Therefore, it is commendable that transparency was placed right at the heart of the ICA and embodied as an overarching principle by those overseeing the assembly.

However, we cannot simply judge the ICA - or any democratic initiative - on its "espoused theory", but instead must thoroughly evaluate the hidden (and often unspoken) truths manifest within the "theory-of-use" (Argyris 1990). Specifically, this is to question how exactly transparency was actualised throughout the process. From the outside looking in, the ICA could be perceived as externally transparent, as it was open to the media, observers, streamed online, while all relevant documentation regarding procedures, outcomes, costs etc. were open to the public. Nevertheless, akin to a stage performance, the audience (i.e. public, media) can only observe what is presented on the "front stage", which may appear calm, coherent and credible; however, it is crucially important to lift the curtain and constructively criticise the management of the assembly "backstage" if the concept is to evolve (Goffman, 1975). As Carolan (2015, 747) posits about the prior ICC, it "in many respects...operated as a

consciously public-facing institution which made a substantial effort to engage with and bring its work to the attention of the general populace. That is not the same, however, as opening up the relevant workings of the Convention to public scrutiny". Specifically, Smith and Wales (2000, 58) propound that "the effects of bias does not centre only on the process of deliberation between citizen" as influential decision have been taken even before participants are selected; hence, they state that "the stage prior to any jury deliberations is thus fundamental to the overall fairness of the process….(as) the very integrity of the whole process is dependent on decisions made at this point". Likewise, as P8 elucidated regarding the ICA: *"one of the things they pride themselves on is being so bloody transparent, they record it live and this, that and the other…but before you walk in the door nothing is transparent"*.

5.2 Representation

5.2.1 Membership Selection

Firstly, as outlined in the analysis with regard to representativeness, there was the notable Red C scandal that undermined - at least temporarily - the trust, credibility and legitimacy of both the process and its outcomes. The ICA, seeking to appear in a fully transparent fashion, choose to share this "isolated incident" which emerged from an internal audit by Red C. However, as this analysis has subsequently uncovered, this was *not* in fact an isolated incident, as another member interviewed was recruited in an improper manner *before* the scandal broke (i.e. at an earlier stage of the process). This is not to presume that the ICA staff knew of this mishap, or even that the Red - C management were aware; however, a cynical interpretation of these events might lead one to question whether either Red C and/or the ICA staff decided, to use a quote attributed to President Theodore Roosevelt, that "(s)ometimes it's more noble to tell a small lie than to deliver a painful truth". Put simply, in admitting to a seemingly minor, one-off error by a singular deviant individual, the ICA were able to maintain - or perhaps even enhance - the image of transparency through portraying an ideal of open

disclosure. However, even with a more benign reading of events, it is clear - as illuminated by DE1's concerns over past-failings of the stated polling company during the ICC recruitment stage - that there was a lack of effective oversight and control over the selection of members which prohibited the ICA and/or the public from validating the legitimacy of this process.

An important anomaly to note here is that, contrary to the legislative stipulation for the polling company to recruit "99 members of the public plus 99 substitutes", the reality was that the substitutes were recruited as required (i.e. as members dropped out). Such deviation from the original demands - although understandable given the short lead in time – arguably led to a non-transparent and pressurised situation which may have detrimentally undermined the representativeness of the ICA, as P5's comment that "*there should have been a bit more transparency"* regarding the coming and goings of substitutes illuminated in the analysis. However, the ICA staff have recognised and accounted for these shortcomings in their recommendations for future assemblies - which were also presented in an open, transparent and public manner - as they have advocated that any future RFT[49] should "*outline the validation procedures proposed to ensure that the recruitment guidelines are fulfilled and adhered to"* and furthermore have sought to ensure that prospective participants *"sign the recruitment questionnaires upon completion at the initial face-to-face interview". (CA 2018a, 103).*

This analysis supports the necessity for these recommendations; however, in addition, it is important that there is a clear and independent oversight of the recruitment process (as DE1 suggested) by a relevant expert body – consisting of academics and/or external practitioners and/or recruiters - engaged in deliberative theory and practice but disengaged from the specific assembly to ensure accountability. Moreover, periodic external (as opposed to internal in the case of Red C) audits should be undertaken for future assemblies.

[49] Request for Tender (RFT)

5.2.2 Geographical, Representation, Time considerations

With regard to "regional spread", the analysis outlined how some members were selected in close proximity to one another (e.g. 4 from same <20,000 pop. town; 3 from same housing estate) while some counties were not represented in the ICA. This last point - "represented" - is crucial to the perceived importance of these findings, as DE1 propounded, in line with Lindell (2011), that members were not there to "represent" anyone but themselves. However, the analysis found with the case of rural constituents and the sub-topics of agriculture and transport, certain members felt obliged to state and represent their self and/or group interest, particularly when it came to micro-level issues that would (in)directly affect their welfare. Indeed, rather than seeing the "*bigger picture*" as some of those less affected could (P9), they "*stuck to (their) guns"* (P8) and became even more entrenched in their positions, felt their opinion was "*acknowledged but not really taken into account*" – even when referenced in the recommendations (P7) - and there appeared to be clear evidence of polarization (rather than consensus) between those affected (P7, P8) and non-affected groups as illustrated by Table 2 "strong disagreeing" and deeming it "unfair" that rural communities be singled out for special attention in the final draft.

This alludes to a tension noted within the literature review between self-interest and consensus building (Fraser 1990; Lindell 2011; Suiter et al. 2014). Mansbridge et al. (2010) posit a middle-way is required when stating that deliberation should aim to both clarify conflict and forge common interest. However, an all-encompassing emphasis on consensus may lead to groupthink, a silenced minority and pressure to conform, while focussing too much on self-interest could consequent in entrenchment and a failure to constructively engage in deliberation. In the ICA, it appears that the latter scenario was more evident, as due to the strong facilitation, "everyone had a voice" (P3); yet, as the above evidence attest to, it appears

that opposing views (on agricultural reform) became further engrained rather than engendering empathy and enlightened mutual understanding through exposure to differing concerns.

This is not to suggest that citizens were unwilling or unable to act beyond their own self-interest; on the contrary, numerous members - including those mentioned above (P7, P8) - stated the importance of coming to collective decisions not solely derived from a position of personal advantage or interest. For instance, similar to the WTC wherein members moved towards a willingness to pay more tax (Suiter et al. 2014, 208), ICA members also recommended a willingness to pay a carbon tax under certain conditions. Similar to Suiter et al's (2014) findings, there was also evidence of opinion shift both as a consequence of internal reflection (i.e. learning phase) and external reflection (i.e. deliberation); however, the citizens' perceptions suggest the former played a more prominent role, which conforms with Goodin and Niemeyer's (2003) evidence from deliberative forums on environmental issues in Australia. Moreover, this finding mirrors the reflections from the recent CA on Brexit, as Renwick et al. (2017, 78), found that contrary to the view that "public 'have had enough of experts[50]', "(m)embers in their feedback cited the opportunity to engage with experts as one of their favourite aspects" and "crucially, these experts did not address Assembly Members from on high or tell them what to think". Specifically, all interviewees (citizens, experts, secretariat and observers) cited the "high levels of engagement" and "trust" throughout the learning phase, which serves to highlight the importance and potential of civic science to create awareness and attitudinal change towards climate change.

Nevertheless, and perhaps naturally, the voting for recommendations that did not affect the majority (e.g. peat extraction) or that were directed at another actor (e.g. the State) received higher support than ones in which the direct interests of members were at play, as for example, only 80% of the Members said they would be willing to pay higher taxes on carbon intensive

[50] Pronounced by Michael Gove during the Brexit campaign.

activities – which, although still a high number, was the lowest (by 13%) tally of all the recommendations voted upon. This raises the question of whether a majority of non-affected members should make decisions at the expense of less-represented groups who may not have - as in the case of aboriginal members of the BCCA - a "critical mass or threshold" (James 2008, 118) to convince the other members of their concerns. It is important to restate here that rural concerns were in fact referred to in the recommendations, but, in the Chair's own words, "only in a very very general way" (CA 2018c, 573). Nor is this to deny that change - with regard to agriculture in this regard - is not required given the significant emissions produced by this sector. The question is more, how could this (recommendation for) change have been conceived through creating an actual - rather than mere voting - consensus (Carty et al. 2008) and by more effectively sensitising the other members to rural community concerns?

Two possible solutions for this specific issue - and several cascading additions - can be recommended here. Firstly, the ICA report (2018a, 104) outlines concerns, also emerging from the analysis, regarding the extent of regional spread. Consequently, it recommends that the Oireachtas review the geographical representation and "if (it) should consider it necessary to have a representative on the Assembly from every county, this would be made clear in advance of the Assembly commencing recruitment". However, this need not be a black or white issue but could change according to the topic. Clearly, geographical representation was of importance for an issue like agriculture which primary effects rural communities who thus have "different priorities" (as highlighted by P7 and P8); however, this may not be the case for other issues (e.g. Ireland's response to climate change at the international level). To give another non-climate example, P1 stated that "gender did not come into" other meetings such as fixed term parliaments; however, it was clearly crucial to have a representative gender sample for the 8th Amendment and also the meeting on ageing populations (which may impact differently on the respective genders) - although, gender parity should be ideally sought for all assemblies.

Nevertheless, making such consideration on a topic-by-topic basis may come under criticism for the additional time and cost of recruitment. However, when this is combined with two other proposals - emerging from both the analysis and the ICAs own recommendations - such a suggestion could become more feasible. Specifically, time emerged as a crucial factor due to the length of the process (over 15 months in total), as evidenced by the number of participants dropping out, especially after the one-year mark (as observed by interviewees), while additionally only 26 members attended every meeting from start to finish (CA 2018a). Moreover, as illuminated by the literature review (Lindell 2011), analysis and ICA report (2018a, 108), the length of service "may represent a real deterrent to potential members participating", in particular young people, professionals and/or those with (young) families, given that "this level of commitment took a considerable toll on their personal lives". Consequently, the report has wisely suggested "imposing a maximum length of service" of six months, while noting that "the construction of the work programme would have to be developed in accordance with this limitation" (CA 2018a, 110).

This leads to the second potential recommendation regarding the work programme. Specifically, the analysis concurs with the ICA's own finding that "each topic selected for consideration by the Assembly should have, as a minimum, two weekends for deliberation" (CA 2018a, 114). Given the climate meeting initially had only one session planned and the consensus from participants and experts was that two was not enough, it would be fair to suggest that if such a question were to be asked again, five weekends (like the 8th Amendment), over a 6-month period, would be more desirable. This would, in theory, allow for one weekend of a general, broad overview - which could be necessary if the assembly members are more representative (e.g. an honorarium applied - see below) of the general population and not self-selected due to prior interest and knowledge of the topic as was found to be the case for the ICA - while allowing three weekends to discuss individual sub-topics (e.g. agriculture,

transport and energy), with an additional day or weekend to consider, debate and decide upon the final recommendations. This is particularly important given the fact that members and the Secretariat came under undue stress when finalising the ballot recommendations. Consequently, this could have negatively impacted on the quality, depth and detail of the outcomes. Finally, a time-limitation for a specific cohort to consider a certain topic would also have the potential advantage - in contrast to the ICA - of alleviating against potential co-option of members involved for a prolonged period (Abelson et al. 2003).

Returning to the issue of geography, another alternative or additional solution which was suggested by both the experts (DE1) and the members would be to move any future assembly or/and its membership around the country at various intervals to sensitise participants to the concerns of citizens from other areas and contexts. This could be enhanced by members being afforded the opportunity to select speakers to outline specific regional and/or sectoral issues. As elucidated in the literature review, Fournier et al. (2011, 102) noted how this "sensitized many of {the members}...to the representational challenges of rural areas" in the BCCA case. It's important to note that the main reason given (by DE1) for a stationary assembly in the capital was for technical reasons (poor Wi-Fi in regional locations), rather than any theoretical objection. In addition, similar to the WTC (2011) which derived its bottom-up agenda through country-wide "roadshows", this could arguably help engage and capture the imagination and insights of the broader public outside of the capital.

Another variation of such a proposal, stemming from the analysis (P3's suggestion), would be to establish follow-up deliberative forums to assess how the recommendations of a national forum could be adapted at the regional level. Indeed, as SE1 stated, the NDCA presents the perfect opportunity to distil the ICA recommendation at the regional and local level. This recommendation also concurs with the recent *Off Target* 2018 report outlined in the

introduction, which stated that "this model of citizen-directed hearings with experts should also be promoted at international, regional and local levels" (CANE 2018, 13).

5.2.3 Non-Payment of Members and Consequent Self-Selection Bias

There was clear evidence of a self-selection bias from the analysis as all members voluntarily described themselves as civic minded, educated (although they observed "non-educated" people in process) and interested, and at different times and to different degrees suggested these characteristics - especially interest - should be a prerequisite for inclusion in an assembly process. Moreover, many of the members interviewed noted a general political and/or specific interest in the given topics. This conforms with Smith's (in CA 2018a, 110) analysis of BCCA wherein he found that "participants tended to be more politically knowledgeable and civically active than the general population". Although self-selection is expected when recruitment is voluntary (Fishkin 2009), something which was also acknowledged in the recruitment methodology of the ICA (Mooney 2018b), the analysis suggests the lack of compensation (in addition to expenses) most likely exacerbated this effect. For instance, young and low-income groups were more conspicuous in their absence while there was strong evidence of the former (specifically young-males) being harder to attract and retain. Moreover, there was also anecdotal evidence (e.g. from P1's mother) that those without a formal education and of a lower-class felt intimidated by the prospect of the ICA and thus opted out of selection, something partly confirmed by DE1's observation that a high number rejected the initial invitation.

Nevertheless, nearly all interviewed members suggested that future assembly participants should *not* be paid for their contributions given the danger of getting the "wrong" people with misguided motivations, as many suggested that interest again should be a sufficient motivation alone (which illustrates the memberships "difference" from the general populous). Indeed, the potential for recruits motivated purely by financial gain has been

highlighted as a potential disadvantage of payment by the ICA; however, the final report (CA 2018a, 106-7), in referencing the recruitment methodology of other empirical cases in the UK (Renwick et al. 2017), states numerous benefits of utilising an honorarium. Firstly, they state that "(a)n extrinsic motivation can help to encourage a greater range of people to participate, who aren't immediately motivated by the topic or opportunity" contrary to the members interviewed for this research. Secondly, in line with aforementioned theory, they suggest that "it helps with enabling the participation of those with less secure circumstances, who cannot give that level of time commitment freely". In addition, this may also reduce the number of dropouts, which in turn would reduce recruitment costs (as the current ICA had to increase Red C's budget due to the high number of replacements needed). The final advantage stated is based on a point of principle, mainly that participants, as highlighted in the analysis, gave a significant amount of time, consideration and engagement to the process and thus should be compensated as "decision-makers". As definite outcomes in terms of the recommendations are not always clear or timely, such payment may also serve as compensation and reduce feelings that participants have "wasted their time" (P1). Thus, the final report (CA 2018a, 107) concludes that "in advance of any future assembly, the Oireachtas should give explicit consideration as to whether the participants should be paid". However, in concurring with the outlined views of DE1, SE1 and the Secretariat, this thesis recommends going beyond mere "consideration" to "clear compensation" of future members which, through potentially increasing representativeness, will also augment the input legitimacy of the process. Nevertheless, as the recent case of the Brexit CA illuminated, "attracting people who do not engage with traditional politics is difficult, even where substantial incentives are in place" (Renwick et al. 2017, 28); thus, further research and practical innovation to induce involvement of such groups are required if deliberative process are to avoid mirroring - if not amplifying – existing inequalities within society (Sanders 1997).

5.3 Procedural Rules and Informational Issues

These two categories - the procedural rules (encompassing the agenda-setting, selection of speakers and information as well as the deliberative component) and information (outlining the characteristics of this information, how it is interpreted, deliberated upon and challenged) - can be presented as two sides of the same coin with the former largely shaping the latter. Specifically, the "information" category can be viewed as the "civic science" component within a deliberative democratic forum; hence, the findings of the two can be discussed in unison.

Similar to Carolan's (2015) observations of the prior ICC, there were clear transparency issues regarding the procedural and information stages of the ICA, specifically with regard to the selection and influence of the EAG and expert speakers, the SG and agenda-setting. Firstly, regarding the EAG and the subsequent selection of speakers (with the latter chosen largely by the former), the analysis uncovered that there was no formal, open or transparent interview procedure for selecting the expert committee or presenters'. This is not to suggest intentional bias, as the Secretariat outlined a logical, rational and subjectively balanced criteria for their chosen EAG picks (also outlined in the TOR document and a marked improvement on the previous ICC), while they, along with SE1, also stated their logic for the chosen presenters.

However, like Carolan's (2015, 743) observations of the ICC, the analysis found issues relating to the "procedures applied to...the recruitment of experts or to the identification of persons to advocate for and against the proposal being considered...at any given time". Specifically, given the degree of influence of the EAG in agenda-setting (i.e. framing the debate), selecting the expert speakers (i.e. gatekeeper of information), and drafting the initial recommendation (i.e. influencing outcomes as P8 and P5 alluded to), along with the complexity of a topic such as climate change (wherein there is a reliance on experts), ambiguity regarding the *actual* (informal) selection is concerning.

5.3.1 EAG Ambiguity

Specifically, given that assemblies naturally appeal to the values and professional norms (i.e. rational, informed, evidence-based decisions) of academics and furthermore that "these bodies are likely to provide academics with their best opportunities to positively influence public policy" Caralon (2015, 748), there is a potential for experts to (consciously or unconsciously) guide the processes towards "desirable" ends. This is particularly apparent given Goodin's (1992) assertion that environmentalists are primarily concerned with outcomes rather than (democratic) process, as illustrated by SE1, SE2 and the ENGO in the analysis.

Whether this is a subjectively 'good' or 'bad' thing is debatable however, as one could easily argue in favour of a more technocratic approach, something which has appeal in certain environmental circles (e.g. Ophuls and Boyan 1992). Nonetheless, if such "influence" is concealed, then this is clearly problematic, with P5 for example purporting an "*underlying feeling*" - observed to a greater or lesser extent by other interviewees - that the members "w*ere going to get the draft (i.e. recommendations) that the experts were going to give us anyway…(and) that they knew the destination before we even took off*". Again, this is not to suggest that agenda-setting was purposively deceptive or manipulating; however, if the experts are not obliged to *justify* their decisions - likewise to the deliberating citizens who must *justify* their thoughts - then accusations of leading are always likely to abound to some degree, even if these are unintentional biases deriving from design issues. However, it is clear that there was some degree of intentional bias evident with regard to Recommendation 1 which sought to augment the power of the existing CCAC, given the prominence of this recommendation on the ballot paper, the crossover of experts involved in the CCAC and ICA, and the fact that despite the draft question referring to "a new or existing body", it emerged from the analysis that it was in fact the CCAC that the ICA staff had in mind when making this proposal.

5.3.2 Selection of Speakers and Challenging the Information

Secondly, the EAG had the power to choose speakers, and as aforementioned in the analysis, this was not done in an open, formal or transparent process, but instead in an informal "who knows who and what are they like" (SE1) manner despite the logical criteria applied. This potential problem was succinctly elucidated by P8 in the analysis who stated *"I definitely don't have time to delve into the ins and outs of who's speaking, and that definitely could have an impact on the outcome*", while it also illuminates the "unavoidable power balance between those who possess what seems to be the desired information, who control its dissemination and the forum within which it is debated [the sponsor of the deliberative process], and those who do not [the participants]" (Abelson et al. 2003, 245). Moreover, citizens appeared to have little control over the selection of speakers which affected the diversity of the line-up - an important criterion outlined by Street et al (2014, 7) - with practitioners and lay persons (e.g. farmers) noted by participants (P8, P3) as being under-represented or absent. This also had an impact on the characteristics of the information available, with some participants as well as the transcripts of members feedback (CA 2018c) complaining that presentations were "too scientific", with sometimes unsuitable "jargon" or "graphs" which they noted were difficult to interpret even for those who had prior knowledge of climate issues and high levels of education (although, on balance most felt the material was "pitched about right").

Furthermore, the lack of citizenry control and diversity of speakers may also have impeded citizens' capacity to effectively challenge the experts as Abelson et al. (2003, 246) suggest that "lay witnesses can also be helpful in improving the public's understanding of complex principles" as their evidence not only informs but can also counterpoise "expert" advice. Specifically, P8 stated that members noted the decision not to include a 'normal farmer' to counterbalance (through outlining their real-life challenges, constraints and concerns) the

presentations from the eco-farmer and academic experts on agriculture despite the substantial degree of change and reform envisaged.

Nevertheless, it is important to state that the evidence (from both participants, SE2 and observers) from the analysis revealed that citizens *were* in fact able to interpret the information presented, particularly when it was brought down to "concrete examples" which often emerged in the Q&A sessions (ENGO; P9; P8). This may explain why practitioners seemed to resonate more with participants as arguably their material was more relatable to the lay members which further strengthens the above assumption about the positive effect of lay witnesses (Abelson et al. 2003). Moreover, there were clear examples of members' ability to effectively challenge experts and thus modify the recommendations as noted in the analysis; however, clearly certain design elements could have enhanced the capacity for members to be fully informed and interpret a wide(r) range of perspectives, as well as effectively challenge the views of presenters.

The first step in this regard would be ensure that citizens have more control at an earlier (problem outlining or brainstorming) stage of the process in deciding who exactly they wish to hear from. This is tricky from a design perspective, as participants were in fact asked after the first weekend who they might like to hear from in the following session; however, it seems it wasn't until citizens had a general outline of the issue (i.e. agriculture) on the second weekend that they realised the need for other speakers (i.e. 'normal farmer') by at which point P8 stated it was "too late". Likewise, Smith and Wales (2000, 58) posit that "in the initial stages, do not have enough of an overview on a subject to deal competently with setting the charge, agenda organization or witness selection". Thus, this ties into the time recommendation previously alluded to (i.e. a five weekend climate session); specifically, that a first weekend objectively outlining the contours of the general topics would provide participants (along with the public submissions) with the requisite base knowledge, time and scope to reflect on what aspects of

the problem-solution dynamic needs to be further explored and who could best illuminate these issues (i.e. where to place the *emphasis* within topics - which in the ICA was predominantly decided by the EAG and Secretariat through their selections). Hence, a quota system of speaker selection - wherein members were encouraged to actively choose a certain percentage of presenters - might help counteract the influence of an EAG and Secretariat in future CAs.

5.3.3 Agenda-Setting

Finally, as highlighted in the analysis, the initial draft (as well as work programme and selection of speakers) was "different" (according to P1 and Secretariat) to the other sessions (in part due to the complexity of the topic and need for expert advice). Specifically, it was drawn largely by the Secretariat and EAG (to various degrees) in the absence of the membership and this would then be presented to the SG prior to assembly meetings. Indeed, although the input of the wider external citizens (via public submissions) and the ICA membership was solicited, it is clear from the analysis that the Secretariat and EAG had a more pronounced role in setting the agenda and selecting the speakers; furthermore, the inherent lack of background transparency and the potential for framing the outcomes of the final text is troublesome. With regard to the public submissions which helped inform the agenda-setting, in contrast to the ICC (Carolan 2015), the Secretariat must be commended for their transparent compilations of the signpost document, although as a safeguard the ICA's (2018a, 121) recommendation "for a future Secretariat to consider partnering with academics and researchers, both in relation to the design of the online form for submissions, and consideration of the ways in which the submissions could be analysed for the benefit of the Members of the Assembly and the wider public" seems sufficiently reasonable.

5.3.4 Steering Group

Moreover, the SG - which consisted of twelve self-selected assembly members during the climate sessions - were supposed to have an important role in "*giving the members a sense*

of ownership" through providing mechanisms whereby *"member had some inputs through their peers in designing somewhat the agenda and finally choosing experts*" (DE1). However, as outlined in the analysis, this proved not to be the case, as most non-members of the SG had sceptical or cynical attitudes towards it or simply were not aware of its function. This illustrates an important weakness, as if members of the ICA were unaware of the workings of the SG, then how could the public possibly know of or trust such an influential internal body. Indeed, the SG meetings were held in private and no minutes of the discussions were released (although the Chair did explain their decisions to the ICA), while the analysis illuminated that there was limited or no contact between the SG citizen members' and the general ICA members.

Thus, it is important to reassert Carolan's (2015, 747) recommendation for the ICC, namely that there is a clear "necessity for greater transparency around question of process, most notably the decisions made by the…steering group in relation to the agenda and organization of topics". Specifically, selection of SG members should be transparent and not on an ad hoc voluntary basis. Moreover, SG members should also receive expenses, as the analysis found many (non-Dublin resident) members wished to take part but were reluctant to do so because of the time and distance involved. Furthermore, minutes of the meetings should be available to both assembly members and publicly (after the completion of a given report); these could be compiled by the notetakers, while facilitators could also be present at the SG meetings to ensure moderation of discussions. Finally, clear lines of communication should be established between SG members and the general assembly, with an open and transparent mechanism for relaying the memberships concerns to the SG via the citizen members.

Additionally, it is important to reflect on the actual role of the SG, particularly the citizen members, specifically in relation to their input into the agendas, selections and drafts etc., as during the ICA they had a more passive role to approve or suggest changes rather than being active-participants in compiling these programmes and documents. This is an important

distinction, as according to negotiation theory (PILPG and Baker & McKenzie 2007, 71), whoever draws the "initial drafts of any operative document, such as an agenda or settlement agreement, will often remain largely unchanged, with only the most significant points being negotiated". This may seem like a trivial fact, but there "is a distinct advantage to submitting your delegation's draft first, because your delegation's draft may then define the words and issues to be used throughout the negotiation". Thus, McIver (in Smith and Wales 2000, 58) posits that "the presence of a wider range of people than just members of the organising authority can bring a degree of independent scrutiny to the planning process"; thus, it is advisable that initial documents are concurrently discussed, debated and drafted with citizens.

Nevertheless, as noted in the case of the ICA, documents were by-and-large prepared by Secretariat and EAG in the absence of members. Of course, the ICA is not a negotiation process per se, with Jory (2016) establishing criteria to distinguish between the two forms of argumentation. However, the SG meetings - in contrast to the facilitated deliberative discussions between citizens' in the assembly - may have partly resembled a negotiation forum, with defined actors (EAG; citizens; Secretariat/Chair) each with their own set of priorities, wherein, as noted in the literature review, clear (knowledge and status) "power" dynamics exist and not all actors are equal. If so, this arguably undermines the legitimacy of the SG and thus the broader process, as for instance, Connelly et al. (2006, 273) study of deliberation within rural governance found that "(the SG's) legitimacy was also challenged by other stakeholders, principally as it developed a decision-making role, and relied on different justifications for making its judgements"

On the other hand, Jory (2016, 163) distinguishes that "for a deliberation to take place not only a proposal has to be performed" akin to negotiation, "but also argumentation for or against that proposal" which appeared to occur according to P7's recollection of meetings. Either way, as stated above, the minutes of such meetings should be available at first to a CA

membership (during the process) and secondly to the wider public upon completion of the work to ensure transparency and enhance output legitimacy. There is precedence for this, with Elstub's (2010, 316) study of a partisan citizen forum in the UK noting that the respective SG "agreed to be transparent and to publicise their minutes and decisions through the website, and by reporting back to the Forum" as he propounds that "(w)ithout such processes the general Forum participants are completely excluded from hearing the reasons of the representatives, and the element of publicity, an essential aspect of deliberative democracy, is significantly compromised". Additionally, although the Chair explained the SG's decisions to the ICA, it appeared that the general membership had no facility to challenge and/or change these choices. Consequently, Elstub (2010, 317) argues this is contrary to the normative ideal which seeks "an interactive and deliberative relationship; not one where the represented just receive reasons, but one where they can give them as well".

One could argue that given the comprehensiveness of the first draft and the level of expert authority, the capacity for change on behalf of citizens' may have only been stylistic and/or symbolic rather than substantial, a possibility supported by P11 who spoke about the importance of changing certain words (in already formed recommendations). However, it must be noted that some recommendations were derived from members' concerns (as space was left in the first draft of the ballot paper, e.g. Recommendation 2) while others were substantially altered by the participants to account for social concerns (i.e. Recommendation 3).

In sum, what is crystal clear is that any future EAG and speaker selection procedures should be formally and publicly advertised as well as open to both national and international experts (though an appropriate balance of the former could be required depending on the topic) on an interview basis. Moreover, the members of an EAG or selected Chair of this body should be obliged to outline (by way of report and/or press conference etc) the stated reasons for their given decisions throughout the process. Furthermore, a clear weakness of the ICA is the

apparent lack of "popular control" (Smith 2009) over the agenda-setting and outcomes (i.e. drafting recommendations). Consequently, clear mechanisms should be included in future assemblies to ensure that (a selection of) members are present for the initial discussion on the work programme, selection of speakers, and drafting of the ballot paper. The last point is particularly important given that none of the actual drafting was done in public (as revealed in the analysis as the ICA staff left the room in other to incorporate citizens' concerns), while the noted time pressure, stress and apathy of the drafting process after a long weekend may have induced citizens to accept any changes given rather than critically challenging them.

5.3.5 Time and Balance between Expert Presentations and Deliberations

The other main procedural point of concern regarded the limited time that participants had to reflect and deliberate upon complex topics as noted by numerous participants, SE2 and a caveat by SE1. Thus, as previously recommended, there must be more weekends devoted to topics with the breath and complexity of climate change. However, in addition, regardless of the allocated time, a clear balance needs to be struck between internal (i.e. learning or civic science component) and external reflection (deliberative component). Clearly, in the specific climate meetings of the ICA, more time was given to the former (P3, SE2) and indeed, members - particularly those who lacked prior knowledge - were (more) often moved (in terms of learning, attitudinal and opinion changes) by the information provided by speakers over that of their peers. This illuminates the importance of civic science, while also highlighting that citizens (especially with strong prior believes, interests or knowledge) may be less malleable to change which conforms with Suiter et al. (2016) findings from the WTC and Renwick et al.'s (2017) observations from the recent CA on Brexit. Specifically, one issue raised was the difficulty of mediating the macro-level concerns predominantly held by the academics with the micro-level realities of the membership and their communities, as the evidence suggested that participants tended to assume a representational role - contrary to Lindell's (2011) expectation

- and brought “it back to their own personal (experience)” in considering what “works for (them) and the people in (their) area” (SE2).

Nevertheless, as discussed in the literature review, Abelson et al. (2003, 246) remarks that “few evaluations have assessed what jury sponsors have learned from the process, implying that the information flow and learning is unidirectional (i.e. from experts and administrators to participants) rather than a two-way information exchange as idealized by the principles of the deliberative forum”. Therefore, it is clearly a concern that some participants felt it was more of a one-way process, even if they at times mediated “the *gap between theory and implementation” (P1)* with regard to the final recommendations. Although some experts did work the floor after their presentations, this was an informal, non-obligatory part of the process. Interestingly, SE2 described it as feeling like a “counsellor” which conforms to Petts and Brooks (2006, 1045) assertion that “this extended role for lay knowledge appears to be personally challenging and uncomfortable for experts”. Furthermore, other members (P9, P11) felt that the academics focusing on “the big picture” couldn’t learn or learnt little from the citizens, which seems in line with the “expert-deficit model of lay knowledge with suspicion (among experts) that the public misunderstands environmental issues” (Petts and Brooks 2006, 1045-8). Moreover, P7 stated that there was a perceivable detachment between academics and their research (which focused on macro/urban contexts) and rural constituent concerns.

However, there was clear evidence (from SE1, SE2 and the Secretariat) that citizens’ reflections did provoke thought, self-reflection and at times revision on the part of the experts and therefore this should be applauded and further encouraged. Clearly then, there is more scope for this if a credible two-way civic science process - where experts actually listen, engage with and learn from lay participants as equals - is to be embedded in future assemblies.

5.3.6 Potential for Political and Expert Involvement

Interestingly, the ICA deviated from the ICC wherein the latter had politicians acting as members and participating in deliberations with citizens. Although there was a fear that "these figures, by both virtue of their personality as well as their experience with constitutional politics, would be liable to dominate discussions with an undue influence over the final outcome" (Carolan's 2015, 739-740), DE1 (who closely followed the ICC process) stated that there was "politicians didn't dominate the discussions" and the evidence showed "that a well-run facilitator process was enough to make sure any domination didn't arise" (DE1). Additionally, the primarily positive moderation of deliberations partly resembled Trénel's (2009) "advanced facilitation" in the ICA. This is commendable as there was significant evidence it helped reduce "internal exclusion" (Young 2000) as everyone was given the chance to express their opinion and address the panel of experts via the moderators. This design element was further enhanced by the citizens' control via the feedback forms provided by the Secretariat, as they could then monitor the quality, as well as advise and inform the facilitators of citizens' concerns. Although, given that there were some issues raised in the analysis with specific facilitators (particularly at the beginning of the process), there is a clear validity in the ICA's recommendation that "the Secretariat should explicitly reserve the right to make any changes as required to protect the integrity of the process" (CA 2018c 119).

Hence, given this strong facilitation and the positive evidence from the ICC, an argument can be made to invite both politicians (as members) and experts (after presenting) to roundtable deliberative discussions. The case for the former is clear both from the theory and data presented. Firstly, numerous members questioned whether they were the "right people" to be listening to expert presentations - particularly if their final recommendations would not be taken on board - while some stated that "politicians should be up there listening" (P5, also P11, P8). Specifically, (the lack of) political leadership was a key concern relayed by members to the Secretariat and EAG (embodied in Recommendation 2). Thus, involvement of politicians

may have had the effect of sensitising them to the importance of environmental issues, as the introduction and citizens' reflections from analysis noted that due to the specific problem structure of climate change this is not always a pressing priority on the agenda for electoral-seeking deputies.

An interesting caveat here is DE1's reflection that the leader of the Fianna Fail - Micheál Martin - went on record as saying his reading of the first ICA report (on the 8th Amendment) influenced his decision to go against most of his party and support the 'Yes' side in the subsequent referendum which proved a wise political decision. This proves that deputies have much to learn and can have their opinions swayed on the back of expert and citizen opinions. Moreover, constituency service - although often criticised for promoting "parish-pump-politics[51]" (P9) – is integral to the role of Irish deputies (TDs) and arguably keeps them "aware of the reality of life for ordinary people, preventing the development of a completely out-of-touch political class and better equipping TDs to bring the concerns of ordinary people to the work they do in parliament" (Gallagher 2009, 12). Likewise, inclusion of politicians in future assemblies would further expose them to a broader range of citizens concerns (i.e. not only their own constituents) and thus potentially improve the linkage between parliamentarians and the public. Finally, politicians involved in an assembly would also have a degree of ownership over its outcomes and may be more likely to advocate its recommendations in Parliament; hence, strengthening the link between input and output legitimacy.

Lastly, as outlined in the literature review, numerous assembly processes (most notably the BCCA) have failed to connect or inspire the broader public, with Carty et al. (2008) and Smith (2009, 104) positing that this is due to the absence of politicians, as the public "take their political cues from elite actors and media discussions". This was also found to be the case for the ICA, as the ICA (2018a, 108) lamented that "the lack of engagement from the domestic

[51] Of local importance or interest only; parochial

audience in relation to the *process* as distinct from the topics under consideration, has been surprising, particularly given that Ireland is in the vanguard in this area, being the only country in the world to have run two processes such as these in a row. (emphasis added)".

Furthermore, the participants interviewed also expressed disappointment at the quality of media coverage concerning the ICA deliberative processes which they believed misrepresented the integrity of their work. Thus, the active inclusion of politicians may create an added interest in the deliberative process while again serving as positive learning curve for politicians who are engaged in a more conflictual style associated with the archetypal Westminster parliamentary politics. Finally, with regards to the credibility of the process itself, the analysis illuminated that members of the public, as well as DE1, SE2 and some participants, suggested that the Government may use such assemblies to "kick the can down the road" and avoid dealing with controversial and/or complex decisions; hence, the involvement of politicians within the process may lessen this critique and thus enhance its legitimacy.

In addition, experts should be invited at various stages after their presentations to engage in specific Q&As and deliberations at roundtables to allow more scope for challenging and justification of their research so as to mitigate against a process wherein "the traditional mode of top-down scientific expert knowledge is still retained...while dressed in the language of transparency, dialogue and participation" (Bäckstrand 2003, 31). This could conceivably work on a rotating basis, where one or two experts would sit at certain tables for 10-15 minutes, before rotating to another. Although this will create additional time constraints, this may be worth pursuing if the process is to evolve, as Petts and Brook (2006, 1056) posit in the literature review that "meeting the aspirations of deliberative environmental decision-making will be challenged to a far greater extent by the continuing linear conceptualisation of the expert ^ lay knowledge (science ^ society) relationship than by difficulties of designing processes, or of encouraging lay input".

There are numerous potential benefits however, as well as allowing experts to be sensitized to the micro-level citizenry concerns and to justify their stances in light of these, it would also allow an additional and perhaps more effective mechanism for their views to be challenged. Here again politicians may play a positive role, as the literature review noted the burden on citizen members to act as the "judge, lawyer and jury" of information while "the vast majority of the public will defer to the ''experts'' when it comes to these decisions because they may not have the expertise required to critically appraise the information presented". This was highlighted in the analysis by numerous members, with P8 stating that "*I think the thing is, nobody in the room is a politician so they don't challenge, challenge and challenge, and I suppose most of these (experts) are used to dealing with politicians, so they don't give a yes or no answer, they just go around (it)".* Put simply, politicians may also keep the presenters and EAG in check as they are arguably more versed in questioning expert opinion as part of the parliamentary committee process; however, political objectivity would also have to be assured.

In short, according to the Secretariat, the controversy surrounding the 8th Amendment played a key role in shaping the initial design of the ICA which set the framework for the subsequent sessions. Thus, this was clearly a factor in excluding politicians. However, for future assemblies dealing with climate or environmental issues (or indeed other, less black and white issues), the benefits of their re-inclusion would arguably outweigh the negatives, while also potentially encouraging a more interactive, two-way civic science component.

5.4 Outcomes/Decisions

As alluded to in the literature review, "if one attaches great importance to the necessity of education and preparation before deliberation and decision-making for the former, why disregard that logic for the latter?" (Fournier et al, 2011, 142). The outcomes/decision phase is arguably the least transparent or accountable part of deliberative democracy, yet ironically receives little attention from deliberative scholars more focused on the input processes. This is

despite output legitimacy being integral to the credibility of past, present and future deliberative forums as demonstrated by the analysis. Specifically, a key finding, which concurs with the collation of members' feedback in the ICA final report (2018a, 100), is that participants noted the importance of having "the opportunity to influence a tangible output to shape future policy making" via their recommendation. However, unlike the 8th Amendment or the aforementioned ICC and BCCA, wherein there was a clear output linked to citizens' recommendations in the form of a referendum, the report (CA 2018a, 116) notes that in the case of the climate change recommendations "it is unclear how and when (it) will be considered by the Oireachtas". This highlights an important lack of transparency, as participants relayed that their time will have been "wasted" if the ICA's outcomes are not adequately considered.

These feelings were evident despite the personal development wherein "many acknowledged it was personally a great learning experience and it was a valuable space for the presentation of expert information in relation to the particular topic" (CA 2018a, 99). However, somewhat surprisingly and contradictory to the stated analysis wherein members interviewed stated that deliberative process and particularly the civic science component should be available to the broader citizenry (via the education system, workplaces), the report noted that "(t)here was a divergence in opinion on whether the general public would benefit from the availability of the expert evidence"' this may again allude to the self-selection bias of the ICA.

Conversely, members citied in the analysis stated that such learning should not be the privilege of assembly members alone; on the contrary, they insisted that both the process and the topics provide a rare opportunity for informed deliberations and voting on (in theory) objective factual evidence away from the echo - chambers and electoral seeking motives of parliamentary and ideological discourses. As noted in the analysis, the Secretariat took a decision to avoid active publication of the ICAs process and findings and simply sough to"let the facts speak for themselves". However, Chair's reflections noted little engagement or

interest in the actual process [52], which also led to members' complaints of media misrepresentation and public misunderstanding which undermined the legitimacy of the ICA.

Hence, a strong component of any future Secretariat apparatus should be an "Information and Communications" team; or indeed, if assemblies are to be an ongoing feature[53], then such a sub-group could become a permanent division within the civil service. Specifically, the aim of this group should be to disseminate information both on the deliberative practice and the subsequent deliberations on the specific topics (once concluded). For instance, educational programmes and workshops could be provided within universities and workplaces to give the broader public a taste of deliberative forums, while it may also prove a fruitful venue for further experimentation and research for academics and practitioners given that deliberative democracy is an evolving process. As already mentioned, the NDCA serves as a key first step to reflect on "how to engage, make engagement bilateral and have access to expert advice" and scale-out (increasing the avenues for deliberative forums rather than the numbers of members within assemblies). As Prof. McMullin[54] expounded, "(a)dmittedly it costs money but the costs are utterly modest by comparison with the scale of what we are talking about and the opportunity to engage our entire society in what is a fundamental generational challenge".

Returning to the discussion on outcomes, in addition to members fears of inaction, SE1 also propounded that failure to act could further increase (pre-)existing scepticism of the process, which would in turn further weaken prospective members from engaging with future deliberative forums (such as the NDCA), as Abelson et al. (2003, 248) posit that "the public may not be that willing to participate in time consuming, face-to-face processes, especially if they cannot be assured that their involvement will make a difference". Moreover, in line with Goodin's (1992) assumption, there was overwhelming sense from the "environmentalists"

[52] Specifically the Irish publica and media, in contrast to international to observers interested in the process
[53] which seems likely as another ICA is mooted.
[54] https://www.oireachtas.ie/ga/debates/debate/joint_committee_on_communications_climate_action_and_environment/2018-05-16/2/

involved - mainly the ENGO observers and scientists involved (SE1, SE2) - that although the process was positive, the "most important bit" (SE2) would be the subsequent outcomes, because as the ENGO interviewee succinctly stated: "that's all that really matters".

Hence, this is a crucial finding, as it implies that for all those involved (perhaps excluding the deliberative scholars), the internal (input) process itself - no matter how well-organised, how engaging, or how transparent - has little real value or legitimacy unless it results in concrete, clearly communicated outcomes. This also raises the question, asked to the interviewees, if their recommendations should be binding; however all participants, both members, deliberative and scientific experts were reflexive and resolute in agreeing that such forums should only be advisory – due to issues surrounding representativeness and the sheer importance of decisions. Nevertheless, the link between both input and output legitimacy is paramount, as without input legitimacy, the outputs will be undermined; however, without output legitimacy, deliberative forums, would become socially and politically superfluous.

Conversely, some might argue, as some interviewees did, that deliberative processes have an inherent value through placing climate change in the media spotlight, creating awareness and placing it on the agenda. Indeed, the RTE exit poll (McShane 2018) cited showed that - at least in the case of the 8th Amendment - there was a surprisingly and unexpected (according to DE1's assumption) knowledge and awareness of the ICA among voters. Nonetheless, these results cannot be extrapolated to the climate session, as arguably the very fact there was a tangible outcome for the meetings on the 8th Amendment - a referendum which was anticipated *before* the assembly even commenced work on the topic (thus giving it immediate importance in the eyes of politicians, the media and indeed public) - arguably enhanced the public's subsequent knowledge of the ICA as its findings were repeatedly referred to throughout the course of the campaign.

This is vitally important, as the literature review referenced that the public often "take their political cues from elite actors and media discussions" (Smith, 2009, 104; see also Carty et al. 2008). Moreover, without clear outcomes, as the problem statement and interviewees alluded to, even if climate makes it into the media spotlight or politicians' agenda, this is - apart from Green Party advocates - for only a fleeting moment. Indeed, as propounded by Kingdon (2011), such impetus is only productive when there is a purpose and mechanism to push behind, as illustrated again with the case of the 8th Amendment, as advocates (seeking a repeal vote) could continually pressurise the parliamentary committee established to consider the ICAs report in order to ensure a timely referendum (i.e. ensure output legitimacy).

It is important to reiterate here that as established in the analysis, on 4th July 2018 a motion was passed in Parliament to establish the SJCCA to consider the ICAs recommendation on climate change. However, after member-checking with participant interviewees[55] it became clear that this had not been communicated to ICA members. This is problematic, as P8 stated that *"I can see how it would undermine the process if the govt didn't take certain actions, I don't have too much time to be looking at the Oireachtas*". Furthermore, at the time of writing, there had been no mention of this progress on the ICA website, while the Secretariat when interviewed admitted they are at the stage of winding-down their working.

Nevertheless, due to the stated importance of output legitimacy, it is clear that as much emphasis should be placed on informing the members, media and general public of the outcomes as the preceding assembly progress. This is especially important given that, in line with Abelson et al (2003, 248) assumption that the final decision could be "several years into the future or may not be taken at all", there may be a significant time-lag between the finalisation of an assembly process and subsequent actions taken, with the SJCCA only set to submit its own report by the end of January 2019. Thus, the analysis of the ICAs output

[55] on the 12th July 2018

legitimacy conforms (thus far) to Lövbrand and Khan (2010, 49) assertion that "green deliberative theory is weakly linked to the practical reality in which environmental politics is played out". Hence, more effort should be made to link these two stages through publication of the SJCCA's meetings, live streams and intermediate reports and decisions, while continuously updating the ICA members of their work.

In short, the findings from this analysis concur with the ICA final report (2018a,117) that "the imposition of a time limit for, and, stipulating the format of, the process which will follow receipt of a report and recommendation from a deliberative democracy process should be considered by the Oireachtas. This would make it more encouraging for a potential Chair or potential members to participate in the process, in that it would give some assurance in relation to the fate of the recommendation". However, in order to enhance transparency, credibility and output legitimacy of future assemblies, the link between Oireachtas committees and assembly apparatus should be strengthened to ensure that both members, the media and the public are made aware of subsequent committees work and thus can publicly hold it accountable.

Nevertheless, one cannot, or indeed should not oblige the State to act on recommendations that are not in the best interest of general public. That is to question the quality of the recommendations themselves and whether they are "better or different decisions" than might have otherwise been if left to the Parliamentary process. Firstly, it is apparent that the establishment of the SJCCA is a clear outcome that would not have emerged without the ICA meeting on climate change; thus, this is clearly a different and better outcome relating to climate politics in Ireland. Secondly, the quality of the final recommendations may be debatable, and the analysis also illuminated that critics will always question whether citizens (with non-expert knowledge) should be given such responsibility to decide on important issues within a restrictive timeframe. Indeed, the analysis (P5, P11, Chair's remarks) alluded to the fact that the recommendations were more aspirational statements rather than substantive and

detailed proposals. On one hand, this could be regarded as a negative, as the devil is in the detail; however, on the other hand, given these knowledge and time constraints (i.e. no matter how long an assembly is, a citizen will never be an "expert"), the analysis has demonstrated that the ICA has been a suitable platform for citizens, not to try "solve" technical issues, but rather provide them with a voice in shaping the future vision of society and set the broad contours on how this could be best achieved. Put simply, the citizens (if given adequate input into the procedural rules as earlier recommended) can frame the discussion and then allow experts, politicians and advocates to fill in the gaps. Finally, this approach also partly nullifies the criticism and indeed unique challenge of deliberative forums on climate change identified in the literature; namely the (potential) disparity between expert and lay knowledge.

Another key strength of deliberative processes which emerged from the analysis, and where there has arguably been failure in the past (Porder 2004), is that it offers an opportunity for the scientific community to communicate with citizens and engage in two-way conversations to understand, acknowledge and answer their legitimate concerns, as well as mutually learn from their lay knowledge and perspectives. Moreover, as illuminated in the analysis, the ICA, through placing climate action on the agenda, has created a "window of opportunity" for policy entrepreneurs - such as academics, NGO advocates, and politicians - to link the ICA recommendations to broader climate and public policy process (Kingdon 2011).

Hence, the findings suggest that deliberative exercises which engage civic science as a core component are key to overcoming the disconnect between (climate) science and political action as problematized in the introduction while concurrently helping to restore public trust in both experts and political institutions. In particular, the analysis uncovered that there were incredibly high levels of engagement and trust in the assembly speakers, while the RTE exit poll stated in the analysis tentatively suggests that the general voting public also had a high degree of trust in the ICA (McShane 2018). Moreover, specifically relating to science and

climate issues, between 69%-71% of Irish citizens surveyed (SFI 2015) answered that STEM is too specialised to understand, that conflictual information makes it hard to know what to believe and that scientists should listen more to the ordinary people, although 64% agreed that STEM has a key role in the fight against climate change. Thus, the ICA provided the perfect platform to confront all these fears and concerns, as the research found (to a greater or lesser extent) that citizens were given access to objective speakers and information, could understand climate science (when clear presentations and concrete examples were provided), and had their concerns listened to by experts and included in the final outcomes. Moreover, regarding the latter point, there was clear evidence of citizens mediating their personal, communal or societal concerns with expert knowledge to "fill the gap between theory and implementation" (P1).

Finally, as discussed in the introduction from the civic science perspective, we are living in an increasingly complex society and therefore will need to increasingly engage with expert advice. As P11 stated, it's a "*slippery slope"* to distrust or discard specialist knowledge, with DE1 recounting the maxim that "*you would not want a group of citizens flying a plane".* Nevertheless, the problem remains of how to translate this knowledge into policy, given that the design and incentives within current political systems seem ill-suited to deal with imminent environmental problems that require immediate long-term structural change. As previously mentioned, Carolan (2015, 748) notes that "cynics might also point out that these bodies are likely to provide academics with their best opportunities to positively influence public policy".

However, the analysis found that from the perspectives of citizens, increased involvement of expert knowledge, particularly within the realm of climate change and environmental issues, is arguably a positive, if not a necessary development. Indeed, despite the criticism surrounding Recommendation 1 and the potential for vested interest, a clear consensus emerged that there is a need for an apolitical expert body - not motivated by electoral gain - who will set targets and hold the government of the day to account on climate policy.

This raises the question of whether deliberative theory and practice – through its emphasis on rationality of decision-making, may paradoxically favour an end rather than means based approach. Specifically, could citizens exposed to the civic science component of climate change or other environmental matters become more sceptical of political inaction (and consequently institutions) and - likewise to Goodin's (1992) environmentalists and those featured in the analysis – favour what they appeared to perceive in the ICA as "better" (technocratic) outcomes? There is an inherent contradiction given that P11's assertion that elected politicians aren't "*going to negotiate away power"* to unelected scientist; yet seemingly citizens' within a deliberative process purporting to be more democratic did, as they choose to overwhelming support a technocratic body "(t)o pursue the State in legal proceedings to ensure that the State lives up to its legal obligations relating to climate change".

Ironically, the stated "legal obligations" are enforced by another technocratic commission with an obvious democratic deficient (i.e. the EC). Thus, in echoing Shapiro (2004, 354), there is a potential danger that "technocratic, corporatist, nondemocratic nature of these (transnational) regulatory networks would be disguised and lauded as the newest triumph of deliberation, one that by definition produces the best, most rational achievement of the shared values of mankind", while Carolan (2015, 748) also purports that citizen-led deliberative decision may "create opportunities for "destabilising and dangerous" manipulation, "allowing particular individuals or groups to threaten democratic order in seemingly legitimate ways". Yet importantly, this potential danger was not lost on the citizens' (P3, P5, P8, P11), with the key caveat included that the expert body would "operate in an open and transparent manner" and thus a form of accountability and credibility could be obtained. This mirrors the stated research findings regarding the ICA itself; namely, that the involvement of citizens and experts alike in the policy-making process may be both positive or negative (Carolan 2015, 748). Hence, transparency is the key to achieving the requisite legitimacy.

In sum, the analysis suggests that by combining two variant - but both vital - forms of knowledge, realities and experiences, the ICA session on climate change achieved not only better, but also radically different (given Ireland's current climate position) decisions which have created an impetus and space for future action. Hence based on the findings, it is recommendable that citizens' assemblies - both in general and dealing specifically with environmental issues - should be continued and the outlined problems addressed.

6 - CONCLUSION

Based on the examination of the relevant literature, the data analysis and subsequent discussion, some clear findings have emerged. Firstly, despite the espoused claims of transparency emanating from the ICA, the evidence illuminated some opaque elements which evidently affected representation, procedural rules, information and outcomes/decisions. Specifically, this research elucidated the importance of openness and accountability not only during – but *before* and *after* the formal assembly process (i.e. assembly meetings), given that a (perceived) failure at a certain "input" stage (e.g. inadequate recruitment, informal expert selection, uncommunicated outcomes etc.) can undermine the legitimacy of the process in the eyes of both participants and the broader public. For instance, one key finding that emerged from the analysis was that the Red C recruitment scandal, wherein members were improperly selected, was *not* in fact an "isolated incident" as the ICA proclaimed; on the contrary, it was revealed that a participant interviewee had been recruited in an equally inappropriate manner *before* this controversy. This, combined with other anomalies and the previous ICC recruitment shortcomings, raises serious concerns over the control, oversight and validity of representation which must be addressed if future assemblies are to attain and maintain input legitimacy.

Additionally, there were strong indications of self-selection bias as interviewees perceived themselves and other ICA members as civic minded, politically and/or topically knowledgeable as well as possessing (subjectively) higher levels of education than the general public. This was undoubtedly exacerbated by the decision not to offer an honorarium to prospective participants, as the young (particularly men) and those with lower incomes and/or education levels were both underrepresented and proved more difficult to retain. Arguably it is these very groups - who are often disenfranchised from and under-represented within the traditional political system - that assemblies should be seeking to attract if the ideals of deliberative democracy are to be achieved and amplification of existing inequalities avoided.

However, the question remains of "(h)ow to achieve representativeness when citizens do not want to participate" (Abelson et al. 2003, 248), as it is doubtful whether monetary inducements alone will be enough to motivate apathetic groups given that "there is a legitimate concern that not all citizens can, will, or want to participate in deliberation" (Jennstå 2016, 1). Thus, future research and innovation is needed to uncover novel ways of increasing incentives and interest while decreasing indifference and the (perceived) intimidation of assembly processes uncovered in this research. Hence in echoing Eckersely (1995), perhaps future CA designs should start from the premise of power disparities rather than from a regulative ideal that is unlikely ever to be obtained in practice.

Nevertheless, the analysis also elucidated that advanced facilitation contributed to lessening "internal exclusion" as every participant had the opportunity to express their opinion. However, having a voice is not the same as being listened to, and it appears that when contentious issues concerning self and/or group interest emerged, entrenchment - rather than empathic engagement - predominated. Specifically, in such incidences, members internalised a representational role, and this was also perceived and rationalised by other citizens and experts. This was especially evident for rural constituents who propounded their differing circumstances particularly where macro-considerations and micro-concerns collided such as in the case of agriculture and transport. However, it appeared that most members disagreed and felt it unfair that this group should receive special treatment. Neverthess, the recommendations acknowledgement of rural concerns "in a very general way" (CA 2018c) and aggregate majority voting may have created a false appearance of consensus which masked underlying confliction. This could prove problematic for groups outside the process who were not given a platform to present their case (e.g. 'regular farmers'), as since 'the citizens have spoken' (in their absence) they may be unable to critically challenge the decision(s) and subsequently be unwilling to accept the outcome(s). Perhaps a fairer, or indeed additional process, could be to

create mini-forums to deal directly with those affected citizens wherein adaptation strategies and recommendations can be conceived which foster a consensus and ownership over the direction of change, with the NDCA an obvious natural starting point.

Additionally, it appeared citizens with strong self-interest and/or prior knowledge or beliefs seemed less malleable to change. This raises broader questions for the normative ideal of "consensus" particularly for more divisive issues or contexts. For instance, one wonders how such a CA on climate change would have proceeded if conducted in the US where only 48% of Americans believe climate change is caused by human activity and trust in climate scientists is particularly low among conservative Republican and considerably higher among liberal Democrats (Funk 2017). Specifically, the introduction posited that deliberative democracy could conceivable help breakdown the existing echo chambers within society and overcome particularised trust and political polarisation. However, on the contrary, with the growth of social media, alternative information sources and different perspective realities, people can easily locate like-minded groups which may serve to further entrench and mutually re-enforce existing positions without critical exposure to or challenges from opposing views. Consequently, citizens could be or gradually become less willing and/or able to constructively engage with divergent ideas. Hence, the propensity for opinion change could be lowered while the proclivity to contest information (from experts or citizens) which is "inconvenient" may increase, both of which - in the extreme - could prove problematic for the deliberative model.

Nevertheless, the positive effect of the information stage or civic science component, especially for those with limited prior knowledge of the topic, cannot be understated. Specifically, members interviewed expressed both enthusiasm and gratitude for the opportunity to listen, learn and converse with experts which was a highlight of the process for many. Importantly, participants displayed both high levels of trust in and engagement with presenters - thus bridging the expert-citizen divide (SFI 2015) - while there was also significant evidence

of attitudinal change towards more climate-friendly behaviours. Thus, contrary to the anti-expert fervour, the ICA demonstrated that citizens both valued and benefited from the civic science component. Hence, such processes have a clear potential to overcome the prevailing disconnect wherein 69% to 71% of Irish citizens believe that STEM is *too* complex and ambigious and importantly, that scientists should listen more to what ordinary people think (SFI 2015). However, on the latter point, the findings suggest that increased consideration in future designs should be given to enhance experts' exposure to and engagement with lay perspectives in order to ensure that civic science is a truly bi-directional learning process.

Moreover, the balance of power between citizens and experts, particularly prior to the formal meetings of assemblies, must be reassessed to ensure legitimacy as "the very integrity of the whole process is dependent on decisions made at this point" (Smith and Wales 2000, 58). Specifically, the research uncovered transparency issues surrounding the EAG, speaker selection and the internal workings of the SG. Furthermore, the citizens level of control over the work programme was questioned with some citizens perceiving an underlying feeling of agenda-setting that was perhaps most evident in relation to Recommendation 1 (which sought to augment the function and powers of a "new or existing" expert body, namely the CCAC). Thus, the observation was made that the "initial drafts of any operative document, such as an agenda or settlement agreement, will often remain largely unchanged"; consequently, this "defines the words and issues to be used throughout" (PILPG and Baker & McKenzie 2007, 71). Hence, members – or indeed lay citizens – should have a more active collaborative role prior to the meeting stages of a CA in co-producing the framework, as McIver (in Smith and Wales 2000, 58) posit that "the presence of a wider range of people than just members of the organising authority can bring a degree of independent scrutiny to the planning process".

Nevertheless, a clear consensus emerged among citizens - in spite of the ICA staff steering of Recommendation 1 - in strong support of an expert body that would hold the State

to account on climate action, which conforms with the evidence that 64% of Irish citizens believe that STEM can have a positive impact on the fight against climate change (SFI 2015). This also illuminates an interesting paradox as it suggests that lay citizens - once endowed with an education of environmental issues within this democratic process – favour an end rather than means based approach, with such prioritisation of outcomes also strongly evident among scientists and environmental advocates interviewed as part of this research. This conforms with Goodin's (1992, 168) postulation that "to advocate democracy is to advocate procedures, to advocate environmentalism is to advocate substantive outcomes". Specifically, it appeared that once exposed to the civic science component, members became increasingly critical of political inaction on climate change and subsequently sought a more technocratic approach to achieve action. Hence, there is an ironic possibility that due to the strong emphasis on rationality within deliberative theory and practice, citizen assemblies on climate change may result in recommendations that advocate less rather than more democracy as outcomes take precedence.

Nevertheless, Fournier et al. (2011, 142) propound that "if one attaches great importance to the necessity of education and preparation before deliberation and decision-making for the former, why disregard that logic for the latter?". For instance, there was an obvious frustration emanating from citizens and climate scientists due to uncertainty over the ultimate outcomes given that there was no pre-determined mechanism in place for responding to the ICA recommendations on climate change; thus, participants propounded that this had the potential to undermine the legitimacy of the process. Consequently, although there was a mutual concurrence from members and experts alike that future assemblies should remain advisory, interviewees strongly stated a desire for recommendations to be adequately considered and responses duly communicated. However, even though the SJCCA has subsequently been founded to consider the ICAs report, member checking of interviewees revealed that participants had *not* been informed of this progress. Thus, the research concurs

with Lövbrand and Khan (2010, 49) that "green deliberative theory is weakly linked to the practical reality in which environmental politics is played out" and therefore highlights the necessity to strengthen the link between the means and the ends with the (re-)inclusion of politicians in future CAs offered as one possible solution to achieve this outcome. Overall, more attention is required from both scholars and practitioners to improve the communication, accountability and transparency of decisions taken in the aftermath of deliberative processes.

Nonetheless, the establishment of the SJCCA to consider the ICAs climate report within the framework of national plans illustrates that the process *did* in fact allow for the inherent problem structure of climate change and political inaction to be overcome which has resulted (thus far) in better and different outcomes. Specifically, not only has expert knowledge – mediated via citizens' concerns – been legitimised and incorporated into the policy sphere, but the expert-citizen divide has also been alleviated. Thus, this evaluation of the input and output legitimacy of the ICA meetings on climate change confirmed the merits of deliberative democracy and civic science in inducing awareness and action. Hence, citizen-led forums serve as effective models for preventing environmental catastrophe.

In closing, this research echoes Gutmann and Thompson (2009, 59) words that "the future of deliberative democracy…depends on whether its proponents can create and maintain practices and institutions that enable deliberation to work well". This thesis endeavoured to aid this evolution by providing an independent appraisal of the ICA. The findings of this research suggest that – despite still being a work-in-progress - the positives of civic science and deliberative democracy in action far outweigh the negatives, as the ICA resulted in not only better outcomes, but also a better - more engaged, informed and trusting - citizenry in the process; thus, illuminating the potential for assemblies to achieve both positive means (i.e. a more representative, fairer and democratic process) and ends (e.g. constructive climate action).

7 - RECOMMENDATIONS

Overall, the ICA staff, contributors and citizen members must be commended for their positive work, commitment and dedication which resulted in a largely successful process. However, based on findings of this thesis research, the following recommendations can be proposed:

Representation:

- There should be an independent oversight of recruitment. An EAG should be appointed *before* the RFT to advise upon, access and critically appraise the selection process.
- The EAG should also oversee periodic external audits (in addition to any internal audits) to independently verify that stipulated guidelines have been followed.
- The recruitment of substitutes should be undertaken *prior* to a future assembly's commencement. Specifically, between one third and half of the original membership should be additionally recruitment in line with the specified recruitment methodology.
- Replacements should be obliged and/or financially incentivised to engage in the "learning phase" throughout the duration of an assembly (e.g. reading materials).
- Short dossiers of the roundtable discussions (compiled by notetakers) should also be prepared to facilitate substitutes entry into the deliberative stage of proceedings.

Geographical Spread, Categorical Inclusions and Sensitising Members and the Public:

- Specific consideration should be given to geographical representation - as well as other categories (e.g. ethnicity) – and be assessed and decided on a topic-by-topic basis.
- Future assemblies should also consider including other groups – young people, migrants, Irish emigrants, Northern Irish residents – not on the electoral register.
- CAs should also strongly consider including a quota of politicians for future inclusion.
- CA should move around the country to engage the wider public and sensitise members to their concerns. Relevant "field trips", with the same aim, should also be considered.

- CA should be adapted to the local/regional level. The ongoing NDCA should adopt the ICA civic science format and be utilised to further adapt and distil recommendations.

Member Payment:

- Future members of CAs should receive an honorarium or stipend. The ICAs inclusion of child-care services is highly commendable and should be maintained and broadened.
- Future assemblies should set a maximum time-limit for members. Although increasing costs, this will reduce fatigue, widening the membership base and engagement with the process, while also lessening the potential danger of membership co-option overtime.
- The work programme should be tailored to retain a membership cohort for a given topic.

Time:

- CAs on climate change should have a minimum of 5 weekends. There should be a general "state of play" session before the formal agenda and speaker selection.
- This would provide future CA members with the requisite base knowledge which could empower them to have greater control over agenda-setting and speaker selection.
- Additionally, a quota system for selection of speakers (by citizens) could be introduced.
- Three weekends should be assigned for particular sub-categories while the final weekend could be devoted to reflection, deliberation and drafting recommendations.
- CAs should ensure an adequate balance between the learning phase and allowing members time to reflect, deliberate upon and challenge the information provided

EAG:

- Recruitment for future EAGs should be conducted in an open and transparent manner. Specifically, positions for the EAG should be publicly advertised (with financial incentives) and prospective members be subject to formal interview procedures.
- EAGs should also be obliged to justify their decisions (e.g. speaker selection) to both assembly members and public (via final report and/or press briefings).

- Future CAs should pay added attention to the diversity principle and seek to include a wider spectrum of practitioners and lay witnesses in addition to academic experts.

Steering Group:

Clear reforms are necessary to enhance the transparency and effectiveness of this body:

- SG members should not be selected on an ad hoc voluntary basis; instead, purposive sampling (similar to the allocation of members on roundtables) should be applied.
- Specifically, members of the SG, where possible, should broadly encompass the general characteristics of the assembly according to age, gender, class, geography etc.
- Expenses and/or additional compensation should be considered to facilitate prospective SG members involvement, particularly young, rural and time pressured groups.
- The minutes of SG meetings should be recorded to improve transparency. These should be provided to members before assembly meeting and to the public after its conclusion.
- Communication between the SG citizen members and general assembly members should be improved and formalised (via private meetings, email correspondence etc.)
- The SG should have an augmented role as active co-participants in shaping the *initial* agenda-setting, selection of speakers and drafting of the ballot papers. Consequently, the first (and thus final) documents should have more resemblance to citizens' concerns.
- Additionally, during the assembly meetings, SG citizen members should be present and included in the redrafting of ballot papers based on the feedback from deliberations.
- Given the enhanced role envisaged for the SG, where possible, consideration may be given to rotating the membership at assigned intervals to avoid hierarchies or co-option.
- For example, cohort 1: prior to commencement of formal meetings, selection of agenda and speakers; cohort 2: incorporating feedback; drafting recommendations.

Information (Civic Science Component):

- Given the stated importance of reading materials, due time should be given for preparation by speakers and digestion by members, with allocated time for (re)-reading.
- Both materials and presentations should avoid complicated graphs and jargon. Concrete examples from similar countries or contexts proved the best means of citizen learning.
- Time should be set aside for experts (both EAG members and speakers) to join roundtables on a rotating basis *after* members initial deliberations on the presentations.

Outcomes/Decisions:

- CAs should only be advisory; however, there should be a clear and time-specified mechanism for reviewing and responding to recommendations by the appropriate body.
- The link between a CA and the appropriate reviewing body should be strengthened to ensure members, the media and the public are made aware of subsequent outcomes.
- Regarding the climate meeting recommendations, the SJCCA's should be followed by ICA staff and updates communicated to ICA members on an ongoing basis.
- The SJCCAs work (live streams, reports etc.) should also be added to the ICA website.
- Future Secretariats should consist of an "Information and Communications" team to; to disseminate information both on the deliberative practice and the specific topics.
- Concurrently, educational programmes should be organised to inform and engage the public with deliberative practices, which can also be utilised for research purposes.

Transparency:

- Transparency - both before, during and after formal assembly meetings - should be an overarching principle (embedded in the relevant founding legislation) of future CAs.
- External experts (academics, practitioners) - not involved in the process design – should be solicitated after the completion of CAs in order to evaluate the process and outcomes.

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9 – APPENDIX

Appendix A

ICA recommendations on climate change as stated in the Third Report {CA, 2018a}

"A total of 13 questions appeared on the ballot and the recommendations were reached by majority vote. The following recommendations were made by the Assembly;

1. 97% of the Members recommended that to ensure climate change is at the centre of policy-making in Ireland, as a matter of urgency a new or existing independent body should be resourced appropriately, operate in an open and transparent manner, and be given a broad range of new functions and powers in legislation to urgently address climate change. *
2. 97% of the Members recommended that to ensure climate change is at the centre of policy-making in Ireland, as a matter of urgency a new or existing independent body should be resourced appropriately, operate in an open and transparent manner, and be given a broad range of new functions and powers in legislation to urgently address climate change. *
3. 80% of the Members said they would be willing to pay higher taxes on carbon intensive activities
4. **96% of the Members recommended that the State should undertake a comprehensive assessment of the vulnerability of all critical infrastructure (including energy, transport, built environment, water and communications) with a view to building resilience to ongoing climate change and extreme weather events. The outcome of this assessment should be implemented. Recognising the significant costs that the State would bear in the event of failure of critical infrastructure, spending on infrastructure should be prioritised to take account of this.
5. 99% of the Members recommended that the State should enable, through legislation, the selling back into the grid of electricity from micro-generation by private citizens (for example energy from solar panels or wind turbines on people's homes or land) at a price which is at least equivalent to the wholesale price.
6. 100% of the Members recommended that the State should act to ensure the greatest possible levels of community ownership in all future renewable energy projects by encouraging communities to develop their own projects and by requiring that developer-led projects make share offers to communities to encourage greater local involvement and ownership.
7. 97% of the Members recommended that the State should end all subsidies for peat extraction and instead spend that money on peat bog restoration and making proper provision for the protection of the rights of the workers impacted with the majority 61% recommending that the State should end all subsidies on a phased basis over 5 years.
8. 93% of the Members recommended that the number of bus lanes, cycling lanes and park and ride facilities should be greatly increased in the next five years, and much greater priority should be given to these modes over private car use.
9. 96% of the Members recommended that the State should immediately take many steps to support the transition to electric vehicles. ***
10. 92% of the Members recommended that the State should prioritise the expansion of public transport spending over new road infrastructure spending at a ratio of no less than 2-to-1 to

facilitate the broader availability and uptake of public transport options with attention to rural areas.

11. 89% of the Members recommended that there should be a tax on greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from agriculture. There should be rewards for the farmer for land management that sequesters carbon. Any resulting revenue should be reinvested to support climate friendly agricultural practices.
12. 93% of the Members recommended the State should introduce a standard form of mandatory measurement and reporting of food waste at every level of the food distribution and supply chain, with the objective of reducing food waste in the future.
13. 99 % of the Members recommended that the State should review, and revise supports for land use diversification with attention to supports for planting forests and encouraging organic farming.

Question 1* Such functions and powers should include, but not be limited to those outlined below.

- To examine any legislative proposals, it considers relevant to its functions and to report publicly its views on any implications in relation to climate change; the relevant Minister must respond publicly to the views expressed in a report prior to the progress of the legislative proposal;
- To propose ambitious 5 year national and sectoral targets for emissions reductions to be implemented by the State, with regular review and reporting cycles;
- To pursue the State in legal proceedings to ensure that the State lives up to its legal obligations relating to climate change.

Question 3** Subject to the following qualifications:

- *Qualification 1:* Any increase in revenue would be only spent on measures that directly aid the transition to a low carbon and climate resilient Ireland: including, for example, making solar panels more cheaply and easily available, retrofitting homes and businesses, flood defenses, developing infrastructure for electric vehicles.
- *Qualification 2:* An increase in the taxation does not have to be paid by the poorest households (the 400,000 households currently in receipt of fuel allowance).
- *Qualification 3*: It is envisaged that these taxes build year-on-year.

Question 9*** Electric Vehicles: Develop an expanded national network of charging points;

- Introduce a range of additional incentives, particularly aimed at rural communities, to encourage motorists towards electric vehicle ownership in the short term. Such measures should include, but not be limited to, targeted help-to-buy schemes, reductions in motor tax for electric vehicles and lower or free motorway tolls.
- Measures should then be introduced to progressively disincentives the purchase of new carbon intensive vehicles such as year-on-year increases in taxes on petrol and diesel, motor tax and purchase taxes for petrol and diesel vehicles."

Appendix B

Outline of Interviewees according to Roles and Secondary characteristics

Interview Categories	**No**.
Citizen Participants of ICA	12
Members of EAG	1
Presenters at ICA	1
Members of Secretariat	1
Observers of ICA climate meeting	1
Total	16

Geographical Spread (by Region)	**Number of Participants**
Leinster	4
Munster	4
Connaught	3
Ulster	1
Total	12
Age Category	**Number of Participants**
18-24	1
25-39	4
40-54	4
55+	3
Total	12
Social Class	**Number of Participants**
ABC1	7
C2DE	5
F	0
Total	12

Gender	**Male**	**Female**
Number of Participants	6	6

Duration in ICA	**Start to Finish**	**Replacement**	**Dropout**
No. of Participants	7	3	2

Appendix C

CONSENT FOR PARTICIPATION IN A RESEARCH INTERVIEW

I agree to participate in this MSc thesis research entitled - "*Perspectives of Civic Science and Deliberative Democracy in Action: An exploration of the Irish Citizens' Assembly's meetings on climate change* - led by Daragh John Hamilton from the Department of Environmental Science and Policy at the Central European University (CEU), Budapest.

The purpose of this document is to specify prior consent regarding the following terms of participation in the interview:

1. You have been informed that anything you say during the interview today will remain **completely confidential: your name will not appear nor any other information that could be used to identify you.** ☐

2. The purpose of your participation as an interviewee in this project has been explained to you. ☐

3. You allow the researcher to take written notes and record the interview. ☐

5. You can refrain from answering any question. If you feel uncomfortable during the interview, you may withdraw at any time. ☐

6. You have read and understood the points and statements of this form. You have had all questions answered to your satisfaction, and voluntarily agree to participate in this study. ☐

Date

_____ _____

Participant's name Interviewer's name

_____ _____

Participant's signature Interviewer's signature