Analysis, Imagination and Action

How did Civil Society Influence Public Policy in Relation to LGBTI+ Young People in Ireland 1993-2015?

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I, Michael Barron, certify that the Thesis is my own work and I have not obtained a Degree in this University or elsewhere on the basis of this Doctoral Thesis.

ABSTRACT

This study considers how civil society organisations influenced Irish public policy in relation to LGBTI+ young people between 1993, the year when homosexuality was decriminalised, and 2015 when both marriage equality and gender recognition legislation were introduced. While there is a growing body of scholarly work concerning the LGBTI+ community in Ireland and significant scholarship about the processes of policy making, there are significant gaps in literature about LGBTI+ young people and the role of civil society in public policy development. This study addresses these gaps with the intention of sharing learning with advocates for policy change.

Taking a qualitative and interpretivist approach, interviews with actors from civil society, the public service and politicians, who are together presented as members of the 'policy community', offer rich insights into policy development processes over a twenty-two-year period of significant social change. The study draws on public policy theory, including Kingdon's Agenda Setting Framework, to explain how and why policy change occurred.

It finds that civil society engaged in intentional, sustained and strategic long-term processes of turning ideals (social justice and equality) into actions (community, cultural and policy change). These strategies demanded social analysis to define 'policy problems', imagination to develop 'policy solutions' and action with government to bring about policy change. The work brought together three strands: 1. youth work (both as a process of consciousness raising and as a vehicle for building community infrastructure), 2. campaigns of public narrative change (to address culturally embedded stigmas and oppression) and 3. targeted policy change, which was enabled by the development of long-term relationships with politicians and public servants. In considering these strands together this research highlights limitations of policy analysis in relation to self-organised communities which fails to consider the roles played by community building and anti-discrimination advocacy.

The research finds that in framing advocacy as the pursuit of equality, civil society's work was underpinned by social values and by equality legislation, which it played a central role in developing. This is presented in this study as part of an activist tradition amongst communities who experience inequality, as is the concept of 'queer optimism', whereby civil society presented an alternative vision of Irish society which did not 'speak back to' (and thereby be seen to recognise and engage with) anti-LGBTI+ narratives, but rather focused on realising an ideal.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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GLOSSARY

The following is a glossary of terms, acronyms and abbreviations used frequently in the thesis.

BeLonG To	The national organisation for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans and Intersex (LGBTI+) young people
Bisexual	A person who is attracted to both people of the same sex and people of the opposite sex.
Coming out	Coming out is the process through which an LGBTI+ person accepts their sexual orientation or gender identity as part of their overall identity. It not only refers to the process of self-acceptance but also to the act of sharing this identity with others.
DES	Department of Education and Skills
Gay	A man who is physically and emotionally attracted to someone of the same sex.
Gender/Gender Identity	Gender identity is the person's feeling of being male, female, both, a mixture, or neither, which is shown to other people through gender expression (clothes, hairstyles, mannerisms, etc.). It is separate and independent from sexual orientation. Trans people can be lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, straight, pansexual (Someone who may be attracted to any person, regardless of their gender), etc.
GLEN	Gay and Lesbian Equality Network
Homophobic/ Homophobic Bullying	Homophobic is a behaviour or belief that discriminates against a person because they are lesbian, gay or bisexual. Homophobic bullying is bullying behaviour directed at a person who is perceived to be lesbian, gay or bisexual.
HSE	Health Service Executive
Intersex	Intersex people have various sex characteristics (e.g. chromosomes or genitals) that do not belong strictly to what is regarded as male or female categories, or that belong to both at the same time. The term 'intersex' also stands for acceptance of the physical fact that sex is a spectrum (rather than an either/or category) and people with variations of sex characteristics exist.
Lesbian	A woman who is physically and emotionally attracted to someone of the same sex.

LGBTI+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex. The '+' symbol denotes and is inclusive of, other gender identities of which people identify
RSE	Relationships and Sexuality Education
Sexual Orientation	Sexual orientation ranges along a continuum, from exclusive sexual attraction to the opposite sex through to exclusive attraction to the same sex. People can identify their sexual orientation as heterosexual, lesbian, gay or bisexual.
SPHE	Social, Personal and Health Education
Trans	Trans is an umbrella term used to describe people with a gender identity and /or gender expression different to their sex assigned at birth. It may be used to encompass many identities that are outside of a cisgender identity (where a person's gender identity and/or expression is the same as their birth sex i.e. someone who is identified as male at birth and grows up to identify as a man).
Transphobic/ Transphobic Bullying	Transphobic is a behaviour or belief that discriminates against a person because they are trans. Transphobic bullying is bullying behaviour directed at a person who is perceived to be trans.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT SETTING

1.1   Introduction

In May 2015 Ireland became the first country in the world to secure marriage equality by referendum, and the 16th in Europe to allow for same-sex marriage. By a margin of almost two to one, voters agreed to change the Irish constitution so that marriage rights were extended to same-sex couples. Just twenty-two years earlier in 1993, the Irish state decriminalized homosexuality, the last European Union country to do so. Over the same period, the status of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex LGBTI+ young people in Irish public policy has changed significantly. This change has seen LGBTI+ young people moving from a position of being unnamed any government policy to being included across a wide spectrum of public policy, and the introduction of Government National LGBTI+ Youth Strategy in 2018.

This thesis is specifically concerned with young people within the LGBTI+ community, and contributes to understanding their changing status in public policy. A motivatory factor influencing the approach taken to the current research is based on my role and practice as an advocate with and for LGBTI+ young people over a 17-year period (1998-2015). This work leads me to believe that this was an under-researched area in an Irish context and that there is significant learning and reflection to be shared.

A good deal of academic inquiry has focused on the lives of LGBTI+ young people over the past two decades. There is an abundance of research into public policy development, including agenda setting, trends, formation, governance and public administration systems. However, very little scholarly work has been produced which explores the longitudinal processes of public policy formation on LGBTI+ issues. Where LGBTI+ issues are discussed in Irish public policy texts, little focus has been given to young people or to the processes which lead to their concerns becoming public policy issues.

The present thesis addresses this gap with consideration to historical, cultural and social specificities of gender and sexual minority identities within an Irish context. This study takes an interpretivist and qualitative approach to telling this story, by focusing on interviews with fifteen key informants – people who in very varying ways significantly contributed to the changing status of LGBTI+ young people in public policy.

The period 1993 to 2015, book-ended by the decriminalisation of homosexuality and the introduction of both the Marriage Equality Act and the Gender Recognition Act, has been chosen because the change – both in terms of public policy and social attitudes, is remarkable. The twenty-two-year period covered also allows for consideration of the often-invisible incremental work of policy change. Indeed, this study is less concerned with the 'big ticket items' and more with the processes which were both built on them and which enabled them, often quietly 'behind the scenes'.

Primarily, using a thematic analysis approach in interviews, the research was initiated on the assumption based on abundant evidence, (please see timeline in Figure 1 below), and direct experience, of significant public policy development regarding and affecting LGBTI+ young people during the time period in question. A documentary analysis of policy alone does not reveal adequate insights into why such a marginalised, and indeed unmentionable concern, became a mainstream policy consideration.

My work has allowed identification of and access to key actors in the policy change environment whose insights shed credible and valuable light on the specificities of LGBTI+ youth policy change, the efficacy of advocacy strategies, and on the often-invisible workings of government and public administration in development of policy.

This study makes the case that the fifteen people interviewed comprise a significant part of the Irish policy community, regarding LGBTI+ youth inclusive policy. John Kingdon (1984 p. 123) describes policy communities as being 'composed of specialists in a given policy area (…) scattered both through and outside of government'. While discussion and analysis of the concept of 'policy community' occur in the literature review and findings and discussion chapter, the policy community in this instance is comprised of the following categories of interviewees: 1. Civil Society; 2. Public Service; and 3. Politicians.

This study is motivated by a central concern with LGBTI+ young people and their lived experience. As such it draws on concepts such as stigma and oppression with a view to articulating how the exclusions experienced by LGBTI+ young people are felt in daily life. It is, however, primarily focused on the relationship between civil society and government in the development of public policy, and as such, public policy and governance theory provide the central governing concepts for the enquiry.

Refer to *Appendix 1* for a timeline of LGBTI+ developments from 1993 to 2015 included in this study.

1.2 Background and Context

LGBTI+ Identity in Irish Society

Unusual amongst Western European nations, Ireland is a post-colonial country and a relatively recent democracy. Upon the establishment of the new state in 1921, British laws were largely transposed to the new legal system. These laws included the 1861 Offences Against the Person Act, and the 1885 Criminal Law (Amended) Act, which outlawed, amongst other provisions, what was described in the 1885 Act as 'gross indecency between males'. It was not until 1993, when these laws were overturned, that homosexuality was decriminalized in the Republic of Ireland. This was unusually late for a Western European country and bears more resemblance to both Eastern European and former Soviet countries such as Lithuania (1993), Russia (1993), Serbia (1994).

Article 44.1.2 of the Irish Constitution (1948, which was first published in 1937) read,

> The state recognises the special position of the Holy Catholic Apostolic and Roman Church as the guardian of the Faith professed by the great majority of the citizens. (Ireland 1948)

Although the fifth amendment to the constitution, which removed this article, was passed by the referendum in 1972, the fact that the position of the Catholic Church was enshrined in the constitution indicates the level of influence that this church had in the governing of the state. This influence continued beyond 1972 in the education system where the Catholic Church continues to this day to own in the region of 90% of primary and more than half of all secondary schools. This long history and exercise of ownership have led some to comment that the Catholic Church views 'control of schooling as its prerogative' and that the main function of the Irish education system was the 'inculcation of religious ideals and values' (Coolahan 1981 in McCormack and Gleeson 2010).

Fundamental aspects of LGBTI+ identity are at odds with Catholic ideals and values. Scholars have written extensively on the impact of Catholic teachings in schools on the health and wellbeing of LGBTI+ young people (Barron & Bradford 2007, Higgins et al 2016, Lynch & Lodge 2002, Mayock et al, 2009; Minton et al 2008, Norman & Galvin 2006), a site of much of the focus for advocacy for policy change which is discussed in this study.

For those of us who grew up in pre-decriminalisation Ireland (pre-1993), the invisibility of LGBTI+ identity was striking. In both Cork and Dublin, gay and lesbian community centres emerged in the late 1970s and early 1980s, however, it is reasonable to say that in a pre-internet era, awareness of these centres was limited. It is also important to reflect on the impact of the HIV/AIDS crisis which both cost the lives of many in the LGBTI+ community and which further stigmatised gay identity. The first diagnosis of HIV in Ireland occurred in 1982 and the first organised community response occurred in 1985, with the formation of Gay Health Action (RTÉ 2017). Nolan & Larkan (2016) maintain that 'Ireland at the outbreak of AIDS was a 'sex-negative' culture in which the 'procreative script' prescribed by Judeo-Christian beliefs' viewed sex as 'dirty, sinful, and wrong' except within marriage for procreation. This was a period of 'culture war in which the forces of conservatism and liberalism clashed' (Nolan & Larkan, 2015. p. 5). The Eighth Amendment to the Constitution, which recognised the equal right to life of the pregnant woman and the unborn was overwhelmingly voted in favour of in a referendum in 1983. 66.9% of voters approved the insertion of the amendment, which created some of the most restrictive abortion laws in the world, and with the exception of Malta, the most restrictive in the European Union.

The policing of women's sexuality, and its devastating impacts, was further amplified in 1984 when Ann Lovett, a 15-year-old schoolgirl, died together with her new-born baby as she gave birth at a grotto at Granard, Co. Longford. The tragedy received huge media attention. Later that same year, the body of a baby boy was found on a beach in Co. Kerry. This event saw the launch of a major police investigation involving what was claimed to be 'one of the most comprehensive police investigations into the morals and lifestyles of transgressive, especially single, women who were potentially or known to be, sexually active' (Inglis 2002 p. 8, Mayock et al 2007).

Two years earlier, in 1982, Declan Flynn, a gay man, was murdered in Fairview Park in Dublin. A group of five teenagers were arrested for the murder. The judge in the case heard that they had wanted 'to clear our park of what we call queers' and they had been 'queer-bashing for about six weeks before and had battered 20 steamers' (McDonagh 2020 p. 24). They were found guilty only of manslaughter, the judge ruling that this 'could never have been a case of murder' and handed down a five-year suspended sentence, allowing the convicted to walk free from court (McDonagh 2020 p. 24). In response to the injustice of the sentencing, a large march of lesbian, gay, women's and rights groups from Dublin city centre to Fairview Park happened in March of 1983, an action of protest

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and visibility, ten years before decriminalisation, described by some as 'Ireland's Stonewall' (Murphy, 2018).

In 1982, Jack Marrinan, general secretary of the garda representative association, stated that the 'values of society had taken a plunge in recent years with people like homosexuals and pro-abortionists demanding rights' (McDonagh 2020 p. 24) and the police investigation into the murder of Charles Self

> resulted in several hundred individuals from Dublin's gay community being interviewed […] resulting in considerable upset and fear among many gay men whose sexuality had becomes known to family and friends as a result of the police's actions. (McDonagh 2020 p. 23)

All of this sent a clear signal that in the eyes of the state, gay people were not protected from harm, and indeed further that the state was willing to harass and put gay people's lives at risk.

Opposition to LGBTI+ rights has long focused on children and young people. The argument about young people and morality can be epitomised by Family Solidarity, a Catholic lay advocacy group, originally established in 1983 to campaign for the insertion of the Eighth Amendment to the Constitution. While advocating against law reform they stated:

> If the laws against homosexual acts are repealed and the age of consent were made the same for all, then the lawmakers would give a clear message to the young: Homosexual behaviour is normal and acceptable and society does not mind which alternative you choose. (Family Solidarity 1990 p. 44)

Here opponents to law reform present homosexuality as a threat to 'traditional family values' which they describe as 'Judeo-Christian'. Strikingly, here and through various campaigns against the inclusion of LGBTI+ people in public policy, opponents place 'the young' at the centre of the debate, in doing so they sought to 'harness moral panics' about youth.

In 1990, the Irish Council for Civil Liberties (ICCL) published a vital evidence based position paper called 'Equality Now for Lesbian and Gay Men' in which they outline the extent and impact of discrimination, their position on the need for law reform, as well as their position on a suite of proposed policy changes, including partnership rights for same-sex couples.

On decriminalisation the ICCL report (1990) says:

> The Irish Council for Civil Liberties firmly holds that lesbians and gay men have an inviolable human right to equality of treatment. Unequivocally, we claim that homosexuality is a normal variation in the range of diverse human sexualities. Unconditionally, we say that the law on homosexual behaviour should be placed on the same basis as the law relating to heterosexual behaviour. In plainer terms, the age of consent for homosexual men and women should be the same for heterosexual men and women. There are no social interests having a rational basis overriding the claims of the lesbian and gay minorities to equal respect. Current law debases both its victims and this state, for it tramples on the fundamentals of genuinely egalitarian democracy. We call on Government and lawmakers of all parties not to duck this urgent issue. To those politicians who reflexively resist the case for lesbian and gay equality, we point out that unjust policies never make good law.
>
> (ICCL 1990 pp. 2-3)

Importantly, the report includes a chapter on 'discrimination against young lesbians and gays' in which they highlight:

- Young lesbians and gay men, as Irish citizens growing up in Ireland, should enjoy equal rights with their peers. As citizens, they should be protected against discrimination in all aspects of their lives, school, work, youth clubs etc.
- They have the right to expect representation and recognition on National youth bodies and in the youth services generally.
- Young lesbians and gay men have a right to explore and to enjoy sexual relationships at the same age as their heterosexual peers.
- All young people have the right to expect the support and facilities of an environment, which enables them to develop into mature adults. Being lesbian or gay should not be an excluding criterion.

(ICCL 1990 p. 34)

It is important to take into account, in a study of the work of (primarily LGBTI+) civil society that the working group which developed this ground-breaking report included LGBTI+ activists Ursula Barry, Chris Robson and Kieran Rose.

While the LGBTI+ movement became increasingly organised and influential, up to 1993 it would be reasonable to suggest that the forces of conservativism, closely linked to Catholic social teachings, were winning the culture war, which focused much of its attention on sexuality – ensuring that women's sexuality (beyond a procreation function) and gay people had no place within the moral code of the time, (Ingles 1998, Reygan & Moane 2014). The first gay and lesbian youth group, of the National Gay Federation, met in Dublin's Hershfield Centre from 1984. A self-organised gay and lesbian youth group continued to meet on and off until the launch of BeLonG To almost twenty years later in

2003 – an organisation which can, in part, be seen as a formalisation of this twenty years of work.

The long history of criminalisation and stigmatisation continued to impact on the experiences of LGBTI+ young people in Ireland long after decriminalisation – indeed right through the period of focus for this research. In a report of a nationwide consultation with LGBTI+ young people, published in 2017, young people highlight the ongoing impact of 'discrimination and stigma' and 'bullying and harassment' (DCYA 2017 p. 7) and call for action to 'remove religious patronage in schools and hospitals' (DCYA 2017 p. 8) and to 'separate Church and State' (DCYA 2017 p. 10). Up to 2015, Section 37.1 of the Equality Employment Act allowed for discrimination against LGBTI+ teachers in state-funded religious denomination schools. Until the 'Baptism Barrier' was removed in 2018 these same schools, which represent the vast majority of schools, were allowed to discriminate against non-religious and minority religious students (Barron 2018, EQUATE 2017, Finnegan 2018).

The impacts of discrimination and stigma on LGBTI+ young people are well documented in Ireland and internationally. A number of Irish studies have indicated that homophobia and transphobia are endemic in our schools (Barron and Bradford 2007, Higgins et al 2016, Mayock et al 2009, Minton et al 2008, Norman et al 2006), and that LGBTI+ young people are disproportionately vulnerable to early and prolonged drug use (Sarma 2007).

Changing Attitudes and Policies in Relation to LGBTI+ young people

The dramatic change in socio-sexual attitudes amongst the Irish people was clearly demonstrated by the result of the 2015 referendum on the right to marriage for lesbian and gay people. This was won by a large majority (62%) and the Irish Constitution (1948) was amended to recognise the equal right to marriage 'by two persons without distinction as to their sex' (34th Amendment).

This significant break with Catholic social teaching was further deepened by the support for the removal of the Baptism Barrier from schools (opinion polls in late 2015 indicated that 77% Irish people wanted an end to the practice) ahead of its removal in 2018 (Barron 2015) and the Repeal of the Eighth Amendment in 2018, through a referendum process (Barron 2017).

LGBTI+ young people were unmentioned in Irish public policy between 1993 and 2003, the first ten-year period of this study. It is particularly noteworthy that the 1995 *Report of*

the Expert Advisory Group on Relationships and Sexuality Education while making the case for the introduction of relationships and sexuality education (RSE) to schools, made no reference to sexual orientation or gender identity/expression and defined sexuality in extraordinarily heterosexual and procreative terms as:

> an integral part of the human personality and has biological, psychological, cultural, social and spiritual dimensions. It especially concerns affectivity, the capacity to give and receive love, procreation and, in a more general way, the aptitude for forming relationships with others. It is a complex dimension of human life and relationships. A holistic understanding of sexuality will contribute to the development of personal wellbeing, will enhance personal relationships and will have implications for the family and ultimately for society.   (Department of Education 1995 p. 6)

Following decriminalisation in 1993, the Employment Equality Act 1998 and the Equal Status Act 2000 – all of which are vital moments in the progression of LGBTI+ young people in Irish public policy – the first explicit mention occurs in the 2003 National Youth Work Development Plan. The timeline outlined in Figure 1, below, includes key LGBTI youth inclusive policy: 1998-2015.

1998	2000	2003	2005	2009	2010	2013	2014	2015
Equality Employment Act	Equality Status Act	National Youth Work Development Plan	National Strategy for Action on Suicide Prevention: Reachout	National Drugs Strategy	Civil Partnership Act	National Action Plan on Bullying Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools	Better Outcomes, Brighter Future: National Policy Framework for Children and Young People 2014-2020	Connecting for Life: Ireland's National Strategy to Reduce Suicide 2015-2020 National Youth Strategy 2015-2020 Marriage Equality Act Gender Recognition Act The Equality (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act

Figure 1:   LGBTI Youth Policy Timeline 1998-2015

1.3   My Starting Point and Insider Positionality

I was born in 1975 and grew up in Co Kilkenny, in a rural part of the South East of Ireland. As a gay young person in the late 1980s and early 1990s it did not seem possible for me to discuss my sexuality with anyone and I received strong gender-normative and homophobic messages from peers and family. These arose particularly in relation to sport and acceptable masculine gender performance. I left home aged seventeen, in 1992, to attend university in Dublin.

I became involved in community youth work in 1997, the year I finished college and one year after I had 'come out' as gay. I was living in the North Inner City of Dublin, where I noticed much racist graffiti which lead me to volunteer with The Irish Refugee Council to teach English to migrant children.

In 1998, I undertook a Youth Studies certificate course with Maynooth University and the City of Dublin Youth Services Board. As part of this course, I carried out a piece of research entitled 'Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Experiences of School'. This research was carried out through focus groups and a survey with OutYouth – a gay, lesbian and bisexual youth group, which was supported by Gay Switchboard Dublin. This was my introduction to youth work with the LGBTI+ community and also to a number of LGBTI+ activists. That study revealed that LGB young people were experiencing a striking level of homophobia and biphobia in school.

From 2001, while working at the HSE's Gay Men's Health Project, I worked with an extraordinary group of community members and youth workers to establish a specific state-supported LGBT youth service, which was to become BeLonG To in 2003. I was the organisation's first worker and remained with it, including as Executive Director, until 2015. During this period, I advocated with others for much of the policy change discussed in this study. I approach the work of advocacy from a social justice position. This position, borne out through experience of working with young people and communities, determines that inequalities and oppressions are embedded in systems and 'sewn into the fabric of society through institutions that support both cultural norms and personal beliefs' (Thompson, 2003).

I began advocating for policy change in the areas of education and mental health from 2004 as a result of working with LGBTI+ young people who were experiencing difficulties in school and at home and who were displaying the effects of mental ill health,

including self-harming and attempting suicide. As a youth worker, I had been attempting to refer young people to mental health supports and had been advocating on their behalf with limited success. In a submission on behalf of BeLonG To, to the National Suicide Review Group in 2005, we made the argument that 'International studies have linked homophobic harassment, which is clearly endemic in Irish schools, with suicidal behaviour among LGBT youth' (BeLonG To 2005 p. 3). This argument was accepted and LGBT people became a named priority group in *Reachout: National Action Plan for Action on Suicide Prevention* (Health Service Executive 2005). In an Irish context, this was the first time LGBTI+ young people, indeed LGBTI+ people in general, had featured in a policy document relating to mental health. This is not an unproblematic framing of LGBTI+ youth, but it does mark, I argue, a milestone to the inclusion of their concerns across public policy more broadly. It represented a 'ground-up' approach to influencing government policy and also began a cycle with BeLonG To of planning, action, observing, and reflecting that is associated with Action Research. Kemmis and McTaggart (2000) suggest that action research involves a spiral of self-reflective cycles of planning a change, acting and observing the process and consequences of the change, and reflecting on these processes and consequences. The cycle then repeats itself by re-planning, acting and observing again, reflecting again and so on.

I am both an actor in the social change processes examined in the study, and the researcher. This positions me as an insider researcher and an 'academic activist'. This poses challenges of objectivity and of relational ethics which, as a researcher, I worked to make explicit. I also worked reflexively to acknowledge and challenge my position.

I have worked diligently and rigorously to counterbalance my subjectivity by systematically organising and analysing the data collected from the key informant interviews, using Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase guide to systematic analysis, and using the software NVivo I have been able to categorise themes in relation to frequency of discussion, as well as the interrelationships between interviewees and their position in the policy community.

1.4   Research Design

The design of this study is informed by its aims, objectives and questions. The study aims to explain how civil society influenced public policy in relation to LGBTI+ young people between 1993-2015.

Through this analysis this study also aims to answer the following questions:

1. How did LGBTI+ young people become included in Irish public policy (what changed and why)?
2. What lessons can be shared with civil society organisations seeking to influence policy change?

The study takes a qualitative interpretivist approach. In the interpretivist tradition, it holds that knowledge is created through interaction and as such adopted a 'conversational partnership' (Rubin & Rubin 2005) approach to interviewing key informants. Data was analysed through a combination of inductive and deductive thematic analysis

1.5   Language and Terminology

By default, this study uses the terms 'sexual orientation, gender identity/expression or sex characteristics' (SOGIE) and 'LGBTI+'. Exceptions are made when the specific context explicitly doesn't refer to all five groups - for example, a study on lesbian and bisexual students only. It is important to note changes occurred in the usage of these terms over the period covered by this study (1993-2015) and this is reflected in texts from different periods.

A glossary of terms and acronyms used frequently in the thesis was provided, for clarity, at the beginning of the document.

1.6   Thesis Structure

This chapter introduces the background and context for this study. This includes cultural and historical contexts for growing up LGBTI+ in Ireland and my starting point in this research. It further introduces the research questions, aims and design, as well as language commonly used throughout.

Chapter 2 presents literature relevant to the inquiry. This is broadly presented in three parts a) literature relating to LGBTI+ young people, b) literature about governance in Ireland, particularly relating to public administration and civil society, and final scholarly work in relation to public policy theory. Together this literature gives rise to and helps answer the research questions.

Chapter 3 outlines the research design and methodology. This includes surfacing theoretical and worldview positioning and the strategy undertaken to design and deliver this thesis. It outlines the qualitative research approach, the handling of data, the rigorous data analysis carried out and the ethical and reflexive practices adhered to.

The fourth chapter presents the findings from interviews with key informants, with a view to answering the core research questions. It is intended to give considerable space in this thesis to participants' voices, which is reflected in this chapter.

In Chapter 5, five key areas which emerged from research are discussed. This occurs through the bringing together of findings gathered from interviews, literature from chapter two with my analysis from the process.

Finally, Chapter 6 draws the study to a conclusion, through reflections on key insights, with a view to sharing learning with civil society groups seeks to affect policy change.

1.7   Conclusion

This chapter has introduced the rationale for undertaking this study. It has provided context in terms of the experience of being an LGBTI+ young person in Ireland, policies that relate to LGBTI+ young people and my reasoning for pursuing this line of inquiry.

The next chapter introduces literature related to the subject of LGBTI+ young people in Irish public policy. In doing so it brings together a number of fields of scholarship – those relating to sexual orientation and gender identity, youth, oppression, governance and public policy theory. While these fields may not regularly be 'bedfellows', this study presents them as necessary parts of the jigsaw puzzle needed to consider that changing status of LGBTI+ young people in Irish public policy.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The lives of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender and intersex (LGBTI+) young people have become the focus of increased academic inquiry over the past two decades. *The Journal of LGBT Youth* has been published quarterly (by Routledge) since 2004, while books, journal articles and encyclopaedias (Sears 2005) have examined related issues. Much of this enquiry has focused on school systems (Kosciw et al 2010, Norman et al 2006, Russell et al 2011), homophobic and transphobic bullying (Barron & Bradford 2008, Espelage et al 2008, Minton et al 2008) as well as mental health and suicidality (Grossman & D'Augelli 2007, Higgins et al 2016, Mayock et al 2009, Russell et al 2001).

A great deal has also been written about public policy agenda setting (Kingdon 2003, Knill & Tosom 2012, Lasswell 1936), public policy trends (John 2003, Castles 1998), policy formation (Baumgartner & Jones 1993, Sabatier & Jenkins-Smith 1993, Stone 1989). This can also be said about governance, in terms of public administration and civil society (McInerney 2014, 2018).

This literature review is presented in three sections, which reflect the core landscapes of inquiry for this work. Section A presents literature in relations to LGBTI+ young people, with particular focus on the Irish specificities and theoretical frameworks for understanding the experience of being young and LGBTI+. This includes the concepts of stigma and oppression as they relate to cultural and structural barriers faced by LGBTI+ young people, and equality and human rights, as they relate to approaches to overcome these barriers.

In Section B concepts of governance are elaborated on with reference to Ireland, to roles the roles of both public administration and civil society and how they engage in the realm of public policy development. Finally, Section C examines public policy theory and frameworks with a view to providing pathways to linking research findings and theory and a platform for presenting the findings in Chapter 4 and to discussing these findings in Chapter 5.

The literature is presented in this way to bring together core ideas which intersect in the consideration of LGBTI+ young people in Irish public policy and the role of civil society

advocacy in advancing their rights. In bringing these ideas together, gaps in literature are identified which inform the direction of this inquiry.

2.2 Section A) LGBTI+ Young People

2.2.1 LGBTI+ Young People in Ireland

Context

There are broad global, historical, cultural and theoretical considerations to take into account when we examine the status of LGBTI+ young people in Irish public policy. At the time of writing, five countries– Iran, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Mauritania, Yemen – and parts of Nigeria and Somalia condemn gay people to death. Over 70 countries punish homosexuality with imprisonment or corporal punishment, (ILGA 2015). In recent years hate crime towards LGBTI+ people has become the largest category of such crime recorded by the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe in their bi-annual report (OSCE/ODIHR 2013). Violence towards LGBTI+ people has been the subject of numerous scholarly works (Mason 2005, Moran et al 2003), as has the effects of discrimination both socially and psychologically (Meyer 1995, 2003, Higgins et al 2016)

Scholars have reflected on the role played by defining sexuality in terms of reproduction in creating homophobic cultures. Mexican author and activist Gloria Careaga Pérez suggests that the drive to categorise sexuality as a reproductive function, (as opposed to being about pleasure), has led to LGBTI+ people being defined – in moral, medical, and state terms – as sinners, mentally ill and perverts (Pérez 2014 pp 143-149).

Homosexual acts were criminalized in differing ways in British Laws from the time of Henry the Eighth until 1967. Weeks (1997), in his history *Coming Out,* maintains that this emphasis on the nuclear family continued to be important in post-war Britain and 'by its nature, must exclude homosexuals except as aberrations*'* (Weeks 1977 p. 157).

Demographics

There is no national census data available to tell us the number of LGBTI+ young people living in Ireland, or what percentage of the youth population is LGBTI+ (Mayock et al 2009). In fact, it is not possible to put a percentage figure on the number of people who identify as LGBTI+ in Ireland, or anywhere else for that matter. Estimates vary considerably. In relation to sexual orientation, the often-cited figure of 10% emerged from

the work of Alfred Kinsey in the United States in the 1940s and 50s (Kinsey, 1948). Other research estimates the figure to be lower. A number of school health surveys in the United States, where the average age of respondents was 15-16 years old, found that on average 2.5-6% of young people identify as lesbian, gay or bisexual, with considerably more saying that they were unsure of their sexual orientation (Garofalo et al, 1998; Lock and Steiner 1999, Rostosky et al 2003). The difficulty in gathering data on the percentage or total number of LGBTI+ young people in Ireland is part of this story. The National Youth Council of Ireland noted in its publication *Access All Areas* that fear of homophobia and transphobia means that it is not possible to collect data on young people who are LGBTI+ within youth services, (NYCI 2010). The issue of demographic data collection is further discussed in the findings and discussion chapters.

Coming Out

Studies in the United States in the 1990s found that the average age for self-identification for gay and bisexual young men was 14 to 16, while for lesbian or bisexual young women it was 16 – 18 years old (Remafedi, 1990). A 2003 survey of LGBTI+ young people in Northern Ireland, found that 40% of respondents reported that they were 10-13 years old when they realised that they were LGBTI+ with 37% realising between 14 and 17 years old, (YouthNet 2003). In the Republic of Ireland, a national study in 2009 found that the average age at which an LGBTI+ person reported realising their identity was 14, (Mayock et al 2009).

In their 2016 Irish study, Higgins et al found that the gap between knowing and telling decreased with age; for 36-45-year olds there was a 9-year gap; for 26-35-year olds there was a 6-year gap; for 19-25-year olds it was a 4-year gap; while for 14-18-year olds there was a 1- 2-year gap. They note:

> While the gap is lowest for LGBTI teens, 1-2 years is a significant length of time for teens to be concealing their LGBTI identity and is occurring at a critical time of physical, emotional, social and vocational development.
>
> (Higgins et al 2016 p. 4)

It can be seen as positive that the age between 'knowing' and 'telling' is decreasing, as research shows that the period between when an LGBTI+ young person knows their identity and when they come out is a particularly difficult time. As D'Augelli (2002) states:

> Many adolescents who come to self-identify as LGBT have known about their feelings for many years before they tell anyone, and these years of secrecy may well be very difficult ones. These years of silence and hiding may be times of considerable worry and fear, social withdrawal, academic performance problems, and social avoidance. (D'Augelli 2002 p. 452)

In the Irish context, the *Supporting LGBT Lives* indicates that this period of life is one of the greatest mental health risk for an LGBTI+ person (Mayock et al 2009).

Barriers Faced by LGBTI+ Young People

The European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) *EU LGBT survey – European Union lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender survey* 2013 – found that of those surveyed across all EU countries, 2 out of 3 individuals (67%) said they often or always hid their LGBTI+ identity at school. Only 4% of respondents were consistently open about being LGBTI+ when they were at school. Across all LGBTI+ groups at least six in 10 of all respondents had, during their schooling before the age of 18, always, often or rarely experienced negative comments or conduct at school because they were LGBTI+. Gay men, in particular, recalled being the victims of such negative comments or conduct because they were LGBTI+: three-quarters (74%) of all gay male identifying respondents said they had always, often or rarely experienced this type of hostility when at school. Moreover, nine in ten of all respondents in each LGBTI+ group had experienced negative comments or conduct because a schoolmate was perceived to be LGBTI+ when at school.

Two-thirds of all respondents said such behaviour occurred often or always at their school. In addition, around three-quarters of respondents (72%) recalled hearing or seeing negative comments or conduct during their schooling before the age of 18 because a teacher was perceived to be LGBTI+. Almost half of the last (47%) and the most serious (49%) incidents of hate-motivated harassment encountered by respondents took place indoors. Of such locations, the workplace and education facilities were the most frequently mentioned: 14% of the most serious hate-motivated harassment happened at school or university (FRA 2013).

Scholars have identified significant barriers and impediments to LGBTI+ young people coming out, which also force many young people who do come out, having to navigate their lives with great care and skill. General public attitudes have been found to be one such barrier. Higgins et al (2016) found that while twelve years of age was the most common age at which an LGBTI+ person becomes aware of their identity, one-third of

Irish people do not believe that a young person can know they are LGBTI+ at that age (Higgin et al 2016 pp. 4-5). The same study found that one in four people believed that being LGBTI+ is a choice with the same number believing that learning about LGBTI+ issues in school might make a young person think they are LGBTI+ or would make them experiment (Higgin et al 2016).

LGBTI+ young people's experiences of harassment and bullying in school environments is well documented. The impact of this bullying within Irish schools has been highlighted by Higgins et al (2016), in part by comparing levels of depression, anxiety, stress, alcohol use, as well as self-esteem amongst those who had experienced LGBTI+ related bullying and those who had not. This found that:

> those who had experienced LGBTI bullying in school had statistically significantly higher scores on the depression, anxiety, and stress scales and lower scores on the self-esteem scale. They also had significantly higher scores on the alcohol use scale, indicating more problematic alcohol use and behaviours.   (Higgins et al 2016 p. 139)

Impact of LGBTI bullying on depression, anxiety, stress, self-esteem, and alcohol use among 14-25 year olds

Scale (n)	Mean (SD)
Depression Scale	
Yes, experience of LGBTI bullying in school (n=306)	18.48 (12.89)
No experience of LGBTI bullying in school (n=353)	13.11 (11.11)
Anxiety Scale	
Yes, experience of LGBTI bullying in school (n=306)	14.45 (11.33)
No experience of LGBTI bullying in school (n=353)	10.73 (9.76)
Stress Scale	
Yes, experience of LGBTI bullying in school (n=304)	19.10 (11.31)
No experience of LGBTI bullying in school (n=357)	13.86 (9.55)
Rosenberg Self-Easteem Scale	
Yes, experience of LGBTI bullying in school (n=318)	24.64 (6.41)
No experience of LGBTI bullying in school (n=373)	25.98 (6.15)
Audit Score	
Yes, experience of LGBTI bullying in school (n=249)	9.03 (6.0)
No experience of LGBTI bullying in school (n=282)	7.73 (5.6)

Figure 2:   Impacts of Bullying on Mental Health and Well-being (Higgins et al 2016 p. 140)

The same report found that those who experienced LGBTI+ bullying in school were 12% more likely to self-harm, 18% more likely to have seriously considered ending their life, and 19% more likely to have attempted suicide than those who had not experienced LGBTI+ bullying in school (Higgins et al 2016 p. 141).

Impact of LGBTI bullying on self-harm, suicidal thoughts, and suicide attempts of participants aged 14-25

		Bullied in School % (n)	Not Bullied in School % (n)
Self-harm	Yes	56.5% (178)	44.4% (164)
	No	43.5% (137)	55.6% (205)
Ever seriously thought of ending own life	Yes	76.2% (237)	58.6% (212)
	No	23.8% (74)	41.4% (150)
Ever seriously tried to take your own life	Yes	36.3% (113)	17.6% (64)
	No	63.7% (198)	82.4% (299)

Figure 3:   Impacts of Bullying on Suicidality (Higgins et al 2016)

Interventions to Address Discrimination Towards LGBTI+ Young People

Internationally, many efforts have occurred to tackle discrimination and violence towards LGBTI+ young people and to improve their life experiences. Much of these efforts have focused on schools, (GLSEN 2010, UNESCO 2013, 2018, Council of Europe 2018).

The LGBTI+ Safe and Supportive Schools Toolkit (2016, updated in 2019) from BeLonG To and the Health Services Executive takes a 'Whole School Community Model' with the view to improving school cultures towards LGBTI+ in the context of the broader community in which the school operates. It takes a 'beyond bullying' approach based on interventions across six areas, which are:

1. Creating a supportive school culture and environment for all students, including LGBTI+ students.
2. Developing and implementing effective school policies and plans.
3. Implementing a curriculum that supports diversity and respect.
4. Ensuring that staff are LGBTI+ aware and equipped to address LGBTI+ issues and support students.
5. Providing direct supports to LGBTI+ young people through the appropriate school structures including:
    a. Responding appropriately and supportively when an LGBTI+ young person 'comes out'.
    b. Signposting LGBTI+ young people as appropriate to outside agencies and supports.
6. Working with the community outside the school gates, including any local LGBTI+ youth projects/groups, parents and community organisations to promote a wider LGBTI+ inclusive community.

(Barron & O'Hagan 2019 p. 17)

A 2016 interim evaluation of the programme, which focuses in part on the training of teachers, found that

> Teachers completed questionnaires probing their knowledge, attitudes and ability to respond to homophobic bullying. These questionnaires were administered at four time points – prior to the project commencing, prior to training, after training and at the end of the school year. The findings here were overwhelmingly positive, with large statistically significant improvements in all domains over the duration of the project. In general, this would suggest that the project increased the capacity of the schools to support LGBT young people. (Sarma & Barron 2016 p. 4)

The Council of Europe in a 2018 publication 'Safe at school: Education sector responses to violence based on sexual orientation, gender identity/expression or sex characteristics in Europe' takes a similar approach to the LGBTI+ Safe and Supportive Schools model, proposing that, 'complementary' responses that include all the following, mutually-supportive components are 'fully comprehensive' responses:

1. National and school-level policies to prevent and address SOGIESC-based violence.
2. Curricula and learning materials supportive of diversity.
3. Support and training for educational staff, especially teachers.
4. Support for students.
5. Partnerships with civil society, in part, to inform about SOGIESC-based violence
6. Monitoring violence and evaluating responses.

This report found Ireland to be one of six Council of Europe member states to have 'full comprehensive responses', the others being Belgium (regionally), the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom (Council of Europe 2018 p. 31).

Intersectionality

It is important to consider that LGBTI+ young people live at intersections of identities and discriminations. Being a young person is itself an identity, which while prized in some narratives, such as 'the idealism of youth' (Devlin 2006 p 11), is subject to restrictions, (including legal restriction) and discriminations. Devlin (2006 p.63) found that 'young people believe themselves to be the subject of stereotypical ideas and images, and prejudicial and discriminatory treatment based on such ideas and images'. Devlin's (2003) analysis of Irish media's representation of young people's sexuality to be:

characterised predominantly by a sense of alarm, dismay and even of loss; a sense that something mysterious, possibly sinister, is happening among 'our youth' and that consequently the very nature of 'us', of 'our society', is under threat. There are gender differences within the representations, and ample evidence of the 'double standard' on sexual behaviour, but the sense of 'alarm' about 'young people' in general is pervasive. It is equally present in the broadsheet and tabloid newspaper items, which are found to use very similar rhetorical devices, verbal and visual, in their construction and representation of young people as a 'problem'.   (Devlin 2003 pp. 111-112)

In addition to being 'LGBTI+' and 'young people', LGBTI+ young people often live at various further intersections and can, for example, experience poor mental health, poverty, class inequalities, homelessness, addiction, violence, racism, sexism, ableism, poor access to education and health services, or lack of mobility and choice. These situations can be the result of enduring daily homophobia or transphobia – LGBTI+ young people were more likely than LGBTI+ adults to experience prejudice, discrimination and violence. But often this is only part of the problem. LGBTI+ young people often live at intersections of prejudice (for example, young lesbian Travellers) and injustices (for example, LGBTI+ young people living in poverty) (Barron 2013 p. 36).

2.2.2 Conceptualising Issues: Stigma and Oppression

Scholars have developed a number of frameworks which are useful at this point when discussing the experiences of LGBTI+ young people. These include the concepts of 'stigma', as outlined by Goffman in his 1963 work *Stigma: Notes on the management of spoiled identity*, the concept of oppression as outlined by Irish Young in *Five Faces of Oppression* (2004), and concept of 'minority stress' as outlined by Mayock et al (2009), who draw on the works of Meyer (1995, 1998, 2003) and Mirowsky and Ross (1989).

Stigma

Goffman's work on stigma is particularly useful in understanding the experiences of LGBTI+ young people. To Goffman, a person's identity is stigmatised when there is a discrepancy between social expectations of their identity and their actual identity. Where these expectations cannot be met, and the individual is *"reduced in our minds from a whole and usual person to a tainted and discredited one"* (Goffman, 1963 p. 3).

Goffman suggests that stigma has three principal dimensions:

1. "Bodily abomination" (perceived disfigurement or physical impairment, for example);

2. "Character blemishes" (perceived problematic identity or lifestyle, for example);

3. "Tribal stigma" (perceived negative characteristics associated with a particular group).

These multiple practices of stigmatisation are often used to characterise and 'cast out' members of minority and excluded communities. Stigma can be seen to operate in a public, visible manner. Foster et al (1972) suggest that

> The labelling hypothesis maintains that being publicly identified as deviant results in a 'spoiled' public identity. It contends that being labelled 'deviant' results in a degree of social liability...which would not occur if the deviance were not made a matter of public knowledge. (Foster et al 1972)

Emphasising the importance of 'the visual', Goffman indicates the vital role played by the body, as both biological and social index, in stigmatising practices, (Goffman 1963 p.8). Writing about stigma, body image and young gay men Barron and Bradford posit that:

> for young gay men…there is immanent potential and recurrent possibility of being stigmatised because of the visual (and transgressive) codes of camp and effeminacy that are identified in the complexity of everyday social interaction. (Barron and Bradford 2007 p. 2)

In his report *Sinning and Sinned Against: The Stigmatisation of Problem Drug Users* (2010) Lloyd suggests that stigmatisation occurs when a person's status is one which makes that person less acceptable in other people's eyes and which affects their interactions with others. He suggests that this phenomenon becomes much more serious when the stigma takes centre stage, to the obscuration of the rest of a person's identity: when it becomes a 'master status'. He further states that stigma only occurs where there is an imbalance in power between the stigmatised [little power] and the stigmatiser [more power] (Lloyd 2010 p. 7).

Oppression

Oppression, as theorised by Young, is structural, meaning that it is not caused by specific policies or individuals, but has its causes in 'unquestioned norms, habits, and symbols, in the assumptions underlying institutional rules and the collective consequences of following those rules'. Oppression is experienced by members of certain, less powerful social groups. It operates through systems and structures which 'inhibit the ability of

members of such groups to develop and exercise their capacities and express their needs, thoughts, and feelings' (Young 1990 p. 40).

Oppression, Young maintains, is not only about the distribution of resources but is about decision-making procedures, division of labour and culture. For modern emancipatory movements (Feminist, Black, LGBTI+) 'oppression' is a central tenant, in part because it is experienced by social groups, 'defined not primarily by a set of attributes but by a sense of identity' (Young 1990 p. 40). Members of such social groups may share an affinity because of life experiences (including oppression), cultural forms, practices and ways of life. She cites Fiss who states that for minority groups 'meanings have been either forced upon them or forged by them' (Fiss 1976).

Young posits that social groups are not 'associations', (which are founded, fully formed and people come to them by choice), or 'aggregates' – which suggests that group identity is arbitrary. The 'aggregate' idea is also unhelpful she suggests as it sees groups as the reason for inequality and calls for the end of social groups – as promoted by modern liberal individualism.

Young further suggests that oppression is experienced differently by different groups and by the diverse membership within (cross-cutting) groups – allowing for examination of intersectionality. She presents oppression as 'a family of concepts and conditions' (Young 1990 p.40) which function as a criterion to 'determine whether individuals or groups are oppressed" (Young 1990 p. 64).

Young's 'Five Faces of Oppression' approach is useful when thinking of the experiences of LGBTI+ young people. The 'faces' are:

- Exploitation: Including but beyond traditional socialist interpretation. Helpfully within an LGBTI+ context, she draws attention to the gendered aspect of exploitation – including in the heterosexual home – a site of unpaid and low status of child-rearing and sexual exploitation, and to 'public patriarchy' in terms of state subsistence for mothers.
- Marginalisation: Young describes this as 'perhaps the most dangerous form of oppression" and describes it with particular reference to race and dependency of people on welfare and those in institutions.

- Powerlessness: With particular reference to non-professionals she speaks of how powerlessness is manifest through lack of mobility and career progress, lack of autonomy, and lack of 'respectability'

- Cultural Imperialism: This is of particular importance when interrogating the experiences of LGBTI+ young people and school cultures. Young talks here about the normalization of dominant group culture, its imposition on subordinate groups, who have their culture 'othered'. She also speaks about how subordinate groups create their own culture – we can see this in queer art and performance.

- Violence: She speaks of how incredibly common violence towards oppressed groups is. She maintains that such violence is institutionalised and systemic and needs a cultural shift.

In conceptualising oppression as structural, Young draws on Foucault (1977) who called for us to look beyond ideas of 'sovereignty' (notions of centralised state tyranny) and to look at the day-today and even 'humane' practices of education, health and public administration and how they operate (perhaps unconsciously to those working in the practices) to ensure that certain groups of people are dominated and oppressed. As such "we cannot eliminate this structural oppression by getting rid of rulers or making some new laws, because oppressions are systematically reproduced in major economic, political and cultural institutions" (Young, 1990 p. 41). For an LGBTI+ young person, it could be said that this, in part, reflects the experience of living in a cis-gendered heterosexist world.

According to Thompson (2003), the workings of oppression can be analysed using a model that examines three levels – 1) personal (an individual's views), 2) cultural (shared values) and 3) structural where oppression is embedded in society through institutions that support both cultural norms and personal beliefs. Inequality is maintained through 'processes of discrimination that have the effect of allocating life-chances, power and resources in such a way to reinforce existing power relations' (Thompson 2003 p.12). The resulting experience of oppression is described as 'inhuman or degrading treatment of individuals or groups; hardship and injustice brought about by the dominance of one group over another; the negative and demeaning exercise of power'. (Thompson 2003 p. 34).

The concept of 'Minority Stress' is useful in considering the impact of stigma and oppression on the lives, particularly the mental health of LGBTI+ young people.

> Minority stress can be described as being related to the juxtaposition of minority and dominant values and the resultant conflict with the social environment experienced by minority group members. When an individual is a member of a minority in a stigmatising and discriminating society, the conflict between him or her and the dominant culture can be onerous and the resultant minority stress significant.　　　　　　(Mayock et al 2009 p.30)

When applied to LGBTI+ young people the concept of minority stress see prejudice – homophobia and transphobia, as the cause a great deal of stress and can result in negative mental health. The homophobia and transphobia experienced by LGBTI+ young people can cause alienation, isolation and intense fear. In addition, when LGBTI+ young people are exposed to oppression, stigma and a culture of homophobia and transphobia they can 'internalise' it, which in turn can lead to feelings of self-loathing and worthlessness (Meyer 2003)

It is important to acknowledge that there are varied concepts used to describe and understand the discrimination specifically experienced by LGBTI+ people. These include homophobia, heterosexism and heteronormativity. For some scholars homophobia is a manifestation of a wider heterosexism, which in line with Young and Thompson´s theories of oppression above, are deeply embedded across society and its institutions. Much of the scholarly work in this area has centred on the experiences of LGBTI+ young people with education systems (Gust, 2002; Martino, 2000), and how the presumption of, indeed the valuing of heterosexuality at the expense of other identities affects the lives of young people. Baker (2014) describes heteronormativity as:

> the idea that heterosexual attraction and relationships are the normal form of sexuality. It is rooted in a linked essential, dichotomous understanding of sexuality (a person is either heterosexual or homosexual) and gender (a person is either a man or a woman) and the perception that these things are fixed and unchanging (Baker, 2014)

As outlined in the introductory chapter above, the notion that (procreative) heterosexuality is the only normal form of sexuality is closely linked to Catholic social teaching. Such teaching has had an extraordinary impact of Irish society, particularly through the country's education system where Catholic organisations have maintained a strong influence. The next section presents literature in relation to the Irish education system and its impact on LGBTI+ young people.

2.2.3 Manifestations of Stigma and Oppression - the Irish Education System

In 2011 Minister for Education and Skills Ruairi Quinn established the Forum on Patronage and Pluralism in Primary Schools. In subsequent years, issues surrounding the role of religious group, particularly the Roman Catholic Church and Catholic institutions garnered a great deal of political, media and academic (O'Mahony 2006, 2013, 2015) interest. Professor John Coolahan's report of the Forum on Patronage and Pluralism's advisory group recommended a series of actions to diversify Ireland's primary school system, including the divestment of Catholic schools to other recognised patrons (Coolahan et al 2012). His report notes that in 2011 96% of primary schools were under religious patronage, with 89.65% of these being Catholic schools, (Coolahan et al p. 29). This extraordinary situation has been highlighted by scholars (Hyland 1993, O'Mahony 2013). When considering the dominant Catholic patronage of schools in Ireland and policy work within the education system, it is important to take into account this historical context. A number of scholarly works and reports have outlined the history of the involvement of the Catholic Church in Irish Schools (Coolahan 1981, Coolahan et al 2012, Hyland 1993, O'Mahony 2015).

The majority of primary schools, for children aged 4-12 years old, are 'voluntary schools' in that they are privately owned and managed, with most of these owned and managed by Catholic religious communities, Catholic parishes, or Boards of Governors who uphold Catholic religious teaching. They are, however, funded by the state (Department of Education and Skills 2015). The second-level school system is somewhat more diverse, but nonetheless, the influence of the Christian religions, particularly the Catholic Church, is still strongly in evidence

Both O'Mahony (2015) and Hyland (2012) have drawn attention to what is known as the 'integrated curriculum' approach to religion in Irish primary schools – which in essence means that in a Catholic school the Catholic ethos is not confined to religion class but is communicated to pupils in all subject classes. O'Mahony says,

> The empirical reality of the overwhelmingly denominational nature of the Irish primary school system, combined with the operation of the integrated curriculum, can have the effect that it is virtually impossible for some parents and children to fully exercise their rights with respect to religious freedom in education. They are faced with no realistic freedom of choice of school, and this is compounded by a partial and ineffective opt-out mechanism that leaves the children subject to a significant degree of religious influence.
>
> (O'Mahony 2015)

The enduring influence of the Catholic Church within the Irish school system was perhaps nowhere more clearly articulated until 2015 than in the exceptionalist bias of Irish employment legislation. Until 2015, Section 37.1 of the Equality Employment Act allowed religious institutions to discriminate in the hiring and promotion of staff in order to uphold their religious ethos. Being openly LGBTI+ could, therefore, be legitimate grounds for not hiring or for dismissing staff in denominational schools. This created a situation whereby LGBTI+ teachers in Catholic-owned schools, in light of the Catholic Church's teaching on sexuality and gender, feared coming out. As Gowran puts it, 'Being open about one's lesbian or gay sexuality is simply not an option for most teachers if they are to protect themselves from suffering negative consequences' (Gowran 2004 p. 5).

While in practice Catholic-maintained schools can be run in a way that is inclusive of LGBTI+ young people, it is clear that the Catholic Church's views on LGBTI+ people can alienate LGBTI+ young people from such schools. The extremity of official Church statements on sexual orientation and gender identity – for instance, Cardinal Ratzinger (now Pope Emeritus Benedict), describing homosexuality as a tendency towards 'an intrinsic evil' and as 'morally disordered' (Ratzinger 1986, cited in Norman & Galvin 2006) - can have serious effects at the micro level of the school environment.

Teachers have indicated that the Catholic ethos of their schools acts as a barrier to being inclusive of LGBTI+ identities and, they believe, prevents them from combating homophobic and transphobic bullying (Norman 2005), while respondents to many studies have linked the presence of a Catholic ethos in their schools to the extent of homophobic bullying (Barron & Bradford 2008, Minton et al 2008, Norman 2005).

The next section considers both human rights and equality as frameworks through which to tackle stigma and discrimination as experienced by LGBTI+ young people. These frameworks have been variously interpreted and employed with a good deal of success nationally and internationally to improve the position of the LGBTI+ community, and LGBTI+ young people in particular, in public policy.

2.2.4 Human Rights and Equality

In 1990 the Irish Council for Civil Liberties (ICCL) made a robust and definitive argument for the human rights and equality of lesbian and gay young people:

> We unequivocally accept that society must have laws to prevent the sexual coercion of any young person, and we accept also that a common age of consent in relation to sexual activity should be determined for all young

people. Moreover, we do not advocate special rights or privileges for young lesbians or gay men. What we vigorously stand for are their rights, as Irish citizens, to equality with their heterosexual peers in treatment, protection and respect (ICCL 1990 p. 22).

This articulated human rights and equality framing has been core to advocacy for policy change towards LGBTI+ young people. This section briefly outlines the core concepts involved, as they apply to LGBTI+ young people.

According to Mulderrig (2019 p. 3),

> equality is concerned with sameness and difference between individuals and groups. Human rights are concerned with fundamental properties (or minimum standards of treatment) of all individuals. Sufficiency, rather than equality, is the key principle here, and entitlement is unconditional, based not on need or desert, but on one's humanity … However, it is important to observe that these two concepts overlap in important ways. Indeed, the idea of human rights is itself premised on an essential form of equality between human beings. This egalitarian principle is made explicit in the claim in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that 'All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights' (Article 1).   (Mulderrig 2019 p. 3)

Human Rights and LGBTI+ Young People

Human rights are derived, 'from the inherent dignity and worth of each person and cover a broad spectrum of civil and political rights, and economic, social and cultural rights, they are aimed at ensuring that everyone enjoys dignified living conditions' (Equality Rights Alliance 2015 p. 22).

The application of international human rights law is guided by the principles of universality and non-discrimination enshrined in article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states that "all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. All people, including lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender and intersex (LGBTI) persons, are entitled to enjoy the protections provided for by international human rights law (Equality Rights Alliance 2015 p. 4).

LGBTI+ young people under the age of 18, also have their rights recognised in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 19 of which states the following: 'States Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence'.

In reference to this article, in its general comment No.13 (UN Committee 2011 pp. 9-10) the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child states clearly that 'bullying' is a form of

both physical and mental violence, that LGBTI+ young people are especially vulnerable to such bullying, which is prohibited under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and which signatory states to the convention are obliged to take measures to protect children and young people from.

In terms of LGBTI+ young people's right to education, UNESCO in their 2012 *"Review of Homophobic Bullying in Educational Institutions"* state:

> Violence, fear and intimidation should have no place in educational settings. Yet bullying is a pervasive practice that adversely affects the health and well-being of learners and is recognised as such by the United Nations
>
> (UNESCO 2012 p. 3)

UNESCO's global guide to tackling homophobic bullying - *Education sector responses to homophobic bullying* (2012) cites policy work carried out in Ireland. The Irish Department of Education and Skill's Action Plan on Bullying (2013) cites UNESCO's guide and research, while UNESCO's 2016 global report '*Out in the open: Education sector responses to violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression'* includes a case study of Ireland under the heading 'Case Study Ireland: Developing a comprehensive response to homophobic and transphobic violence in education settings' (UNESCO 2016 p. 71). Reference *Appendix 2* for UNESCO Case Study of Irish context – response to homophobic and transphobic violence in education settings.

The Danish Institute of Human Rights provides a useful definition of the principles underlying the Human Rights Based Approach to work:

> Human Rights go beyond the notion of physical needs and include a more holistic perspective of human beings in terms of their civil, political, social, economic and cultural roles. Rights always trigger obligations and responsibilities, whereas needs do not. Rights always cannot be addressed without raising the question of who has obligations in relation to these rights. This automatically raises questions about the actions and accountability of duty bearers. (Kirkemann et al 2007)

Equality and LGBTI+ Young People

The vehicles through which equality, in its complexities and intersections (including for LGBTI+ young people as outlined above), is practiced are only partially codified in legislation, in contrast to the human rights framework and its demarcated mechanisms. No less though, the work of both traditions is guided by similar baseline values of dignity, justice, and autonomy.

The pursuits of equality and human rights are two quite distinct approaches to addressing issues of social justice and social inclusion. While inextricably linked in terms of core motivation and desired betterment outcomes, these two concepts suggest traditions, practices and metrics that are clearly distinguishable, for example:

1. Human rights are codified in a set of ten internationally-agreed conventions, where the roles of rights holders and duty bearers are circumscribed by law, and advanced through practice. Equality issues, on the other hand, are not so neatly categorised or universally recognised, with only some of them covered in law, captured through the concept of discrimination on nine grounds. Outside of community development contexts, these two very separate traditions are frequently conflated and misunderstood.

2. Equality work is most often rooted in and emerging out of immediate or urgent need, and it seeks to mobilise, politicise and organise people to address the situation locally. Human rights work tends to be slower, more academic, universal in impact, and demanding use of robust monitoring and reporting mechanisms to be validated.

3. Violations of human rights are ultimately issues that require the State to address through a change of law or policy. Inequality or violations to equality law are addressed and adjudicated on in tribunals and courts and generally have impact on individual defendants, their workplaces or institutions (that may or may not have wider impacts).

Mulderrig maintains that 'the idea of equality is more complex than that of human rights', so that:

> In order to impose some conceptual clarity, the literature typically begins by posing a set of fundamental questions – what Baker (2004) terms the 'family of equality questions' - which any theory of equality must answer. Broadly speaking, these questions ask what kind of equality do we want, between whom should it exist, and how can it be achieved? (Mulderrig 2019 p. 4)

In terms of how Equality is discussed in this study, it draws heavily on how it has been applied in Ireland. As Crowley (2015) indicates, 'The promotion of equality in Ireland has traditionally lent towards a focus on activism to mobilise, politicise and organise people who experience inequality and discrimination' (Crowley 2015 p. 5), which has developed from Irish equality legislation which outlaws discrimination on nine grounds. This activist tradition towards Equality is of particular significance when considering the role of (activist) civil society in the promotion of LGBTI+ young people's lives at the

core of the current inquiry. This focus chimes well with Crowley's further description of equality in this context

> It [Equality] has a particular engagement with people who experience inequality and their organisations. There is a concern within this tradition about institutional and structural sources of inequality in society. This has involved a focus on social change and developing alternative forms of society. It includes an ambition for a more equal distribution of resources (including income, wealth, jobs, and social goods such as education, health and accommodation), status and standing, power and influence, and relationships of love, care and solidarity between groups (Crowley 2015 p. 5).

In this context, equality can be seen to be concerned with the active pursuit of a broad range of economic, political, cultural and social objectives, including:

- The distribution of resources, and access to, and benefit from, wealth, income, employment, and public goods such as education, health and accommodation,
- The distribution of power, and access to, and exercise of influence and having a say in decisions that affect one
- The distribution of status and standing, and access to recognition for, and accommodation of, one's particular identity, experience and situation,
- The distribution of respect and care, and access to, and enjoyment of, sustaining relationships of love, care and solidarity.

<div align="right">(Equality Rights Alliance 2011 p. 24)</div>

The Equality Rights Alliance (ERA), in working to bring the traditions of equality and human rights together, has developed a set of core values which are shared by both and which, 'connect the goals of promoting equality, preventing discrimination, and protecting, respecting, and fulfilling human rights'. They are:

- Autonomy: encompassing choice, agency, freedom, self-determination and the absence of coercion.
- Democracy: encompassing participation, voice, empowerment and accountability from those in positions of power.
- Dignity: encompassing respect, relationships of care and love, human worth and the absence of inhuman and degrading treatment, harassment and discrimination.
- Inclusion: encompassing a sense of belonging and community, interdependence, collective responsibility and a valuing of diversity.
- Social Justice: encompassing redistribution of wealth, income, jobs, and social goods, and the absence of privilege and entitlement.

<div align="right">(Crowley 2015 p. 27)</div>

Whilst equality is an established legal concept, through anti-discrimination legislation, particularly Employment Equality Act, 1998 and the Equal Status Acts, 2000-2015, it is

also an ambiguous concept. However, policy progress has been achieved in Ireland in this context of ambiguity. The LGBTI+ movement have been able to make a claim on equality without always elaborating on which form of equality was being sought.

It needs to be acknowledged that some LGBTI+ scholars argue that marriage equality campaigns such as that in Ireland (2015) to the extent that they pursue equality they pursued an equal treatment - sameness - approach rather than a valuing difference approach (Conrad et al 2014). In a contribution to a special edition of the *Irish University Review* in 2013, I raised concerns about the association within the Irish LGBTI+ Community of the term 'equality' with 'the achievement of individual rights as opposed to efforts to address the systemic inequalities which impact on the most marginalised within our community' and reflected on how 'this emphasis is not unique to the LGBT Community, or Ireland, and is reflective of a broader neo-liberal agenda which preferences the rights of the privileged individual over those of disadvantaged communities' (Barron, 2013, p.24)

Notwithstanding these important critiques, the pursuit of equal treatment is in John Kingdon's 'Agenda Setting' terms a 'good fit'. It is value congruent with an established approach to marriage and has 'feasibility', all of which Kingdon identifies as likely ingredients for gaining policy agenda status and policy success.

In addition, the successful passage of marriage equality by referendum in 2015, while adopting a limited equal treatment approach, provided a 'bounce' to other movements for social change. In the immediate term, after decades of campaigning and organising, the progressive Gender Recognition Act passed later the same year. In Kingdon's terms, another policy window of opportunity opened at this time and was availed of by politicians, activists and policy officials in the early aftermath and glow of the marriage referendums success.

Public Sector Duty

The Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act (2014) places wide-ranging obligations on government and the public sector to protect human rights and promote equality.

Section 42(1) of the Act provides that "A public body shall, in the performance of its functions, have regard to the need to: (a) eliminate discrimination, (b) promote equality of opportunity and treatment of its staff and the persons to whom it provides services; and (c) protect the human rights of its members, staff and the persons to whom it provides services".

Public bodies here include government departments, the Health Service Executive, universities and the Education and Training Boards – key institution which LGBTI+ young people engage with daily. They are required to assess the equality and human rights issues relevant to their work and to propose policies and plans to address them, within their strategic planning frameworks. The duty requires public bodies to consider human rights concerns regarding those human rights treaties and conventions that have been incorporated into domestic law, as well as Ireland's equality legislation. (Equality Rights Alliance 2016). In addition to the obligation to embed equality and human rights in their work, the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission encourages public bodies to 'engage with inter-agency approaches and inform policy development' (Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission 2019). Such approaches provide opportunities for civil society groups to work with public bodies to strengthen their capacity to work inclusively of LGBTI+ young people. Such opportunities are further discussed in the governance section below.

Conclusion

This section has introduced literature on the background and discriminations experienced by LGBTI+ young people, which formed the basis of civil society advocacy for policy change. It further conceptualised these issues in relation to literature on stigma and oppression. Finally, it introduced equality and human rights as frameworks from which to consider civil society engagement with government on public policy development towards LGBTI+ young people.

2.3   Section B: Governance in Ireland

This section of literature relates to governance in Ireland. It presents literature on the function and role of public administration (civil and public service) and of its engagement with civil society. Concepts of governance, how policy and practice decisions are made and implemented is core to the research aim of understanding the impact of civil society

on the changing status of LGBTI+ young people in public policy. Concepts of governance go to the very heart of how the policy community engage with each other and how policy agendas are set. This section considers some of the specificities of governance in Ireland, where the long tradition of state subsidiarity has required civil society to play a key role in governance – from policy agenda setting to policy implementation, including in the form of service delivery. It is in this context that this section considers the role of youth work and advocacy for youth policy change.

2.3.1 Governance: Public Administration

Governance

Jessop describes governance as:

> the complex art of steering multiple agencies, institutions and systems which are both operationally autonomous from one another and structurally coupled through various forms of reciprocal interdependence.   (Jessop 2004 p. 65)

Osborne and Gaebler (1991) suggest that governance as "the business of government", while other approaches see it as referring to the engagement of an increasingly complex set actors including but beyond government, which is needed to govern in a more complex world of interdependent international bodies and markets (Rosenau & Czempiel 1992).

Bevir (2012) suggests that governing is increasingly shared by actors outside of government – private firm, non-profit service, and as such 'governance has, therefore, come to refer to all processes of government, whether undertaken by government or an informal organisation' (Bevir 2012 p. 1)

The Commission on Global Governance (1995) also emphasises the multi-agency nature of governance, describing it as:

> The sum of the many way's individuals and institutions, public and private, manage their common affairs. It is a continuing process through which conflicting or diverse interests may be accommodated and co-operative action may be taken.
> (The Report of the Commission on Global Governance 1995)

It can be seen that governance, as we know it today, came about because it became impossible for an elite to rule over increasingly complex societies in a traditionally authoritarian way. As Stoker puts it, governance is the 'concern with governing, achieving collective action in the realm of public affairs, in conditions where it is not possible to

rest on recourse to the authority of the state' (Stoker 2000 p. 93). Decolonisation in the Twentieth Century and the concern with promoting democracy in newly independent countries also lead to an increased discussion on what it meant to govern in the modern world and what actors were needed to carry out the task (Santiso 2001).

In this context governance can be understood to relate to how a country's affairs are directed and managed through the coming together of certain actors, including, (though not exclusively), the elected government, the public administration, (or civil service), and civil society groups.

It can be said that governance became significant in late Twentieth Century and early Twenty-First Century because complex issues such as economic crisis demanded that an array of actors would come together to find solutions and also to share responsibility, particularly when things went wrong, with elected officials. In Ireland, this occurred with 'Social Partnership', which began in 1987 following a period of high inflation and weak economic growth, which led to increased emigration and unsustainable government borrowing and national debt. This governance approach lead to a series of national agreements. Initially, these agreements were between government, employers' groups and trade unions and focused solely on the economy, (*Programme for National Recovery 1987-1990*). In the mid-1990s however, the community and voluntary sector were included and formed what was known as the Community and Voluntary Pillar. Agreements which involved this new 'pillar', such as *Partnership 2000: for Inclusion, Employment and Competitiveness, 1997-2000*, were also concerned with promoting Equality, particularly gender equality and we can see more clearly see how the values of social justice were being reflected.

Public Administration

Frederickson says there are three purposes of public administration – 1) efficiency – producing the best public services for available resources; 2) economy – managing to spend as little as possible; 3) equity – managing to deliver public services as fairly as possible (Frederickson 2010). According to Frederickson, the importance of equity in public administration lies in the notion that without it, public administration acts as an oppressor of minority and excluded groups:

> Pluralistic democratic government systematically discriminates in favour of established stable bureaucracies and their specialised minority clientele and against those minorities who lack political and economic

> resources…Continued deprivation amid plenty breeds widespread militancy…A public administration that fails to work for changes that try to redress the deprivation of minorities will likely be eventually used to repress those minorities. (Frederickson 2010 p. 7)

In the structure of government public administration and its officials could be seen as the unbiased bureaucracy who delivers the policies set by the democratically elected legislature. The reality, as McInerney (2014) puts it, however, can be seen to be quite different:

> The democracy-bureaucracy divide is not a simple linear relationship – administrators are not only involved in the delivery of public policy but are centrally involved in its design. More importantly, public officials, like all other human beings, embody a whole host of beliefs, values, dispositions, prejudices and biases that may cause them to act in a certain way. Moreover, institutions too, not least public administration, develop their own values, personalities and biases. For those outside of such institutions, these values and institutional personalities are not only difficult to recognise, but are even more difficult to change. (McInerney 2014 p. 32)

McInerney (2014, 2018) has written extensively about the potential for public administration to promote social justice, a key consideration for this study. The degree to which public administration is involved in steering the state, towards social justice or otherwise, depends in part, on the size of the state and its level of involvement in the lives of its people. This can be seen in the ideological difference between traditional welfare state and the 'Enabling State', the latter being aligned to the theories of New Public Management, which have come to the fore since the 1990s. A movement from 'traditional' to 'enabling state' has had at its centre a move from state delivery of welfare services to delivery by private and civil society groups (McInerney 2018). New Public Management seeks to reduce state involvement in the provision of services and the day-to-day life of its citizens. As such it is often seen as part of the Neo-Liberal movement, which favours privatisation over what it sees as inefficient state intervention (Savoie 1995).

O'Connor and Ketola claim that in recent years the Irish State had deepened its New Public Management approach:

> Since the collapse of social partnership, and the economic disaster of 2008 and subsequent period of austerity, Ireland's governance of community, voluntary and charitable bodies exhibited even more of the signs of what is characterised as 'New Public Management' (NPM)—perhaps influenced by

the IMF and EU overseers of Ireland's bailout and austerity regime.

(O'Connor and Ketola 2018 p. 40)

McInerney, pointing to the failings of the New Public Management focused Enabling State, offers an alternative described at the Enabling State+, which is possible with

a state that acknowledges it doesn't have all the answers and needs to collaborate, co-operate and co-design to find them. It is a state that has reached a level of maturity where it doesn't need to dominate and dictate but instead preferences dialogue and deliberation.   (McInerney 2018 p. 22)

Key to this concept capacity building support to the public service in which 'an enabled public administration system, one that is willing to reflect on the nature of its existing capacities, build on its strengths and remedy its deficiencies' (McInerney 2019 p 22).

McInerney outlines the core characteristics of the traditional welfare state, the enabling state and his proposal for an Enabling State+. This table (**Figure 4**, overleaf) is presented here to introduce the concept of the Enabling State+ and the opportunities which it presents to understanding the relationship between civil society and the public sector in the development of public policy in Chapter 5 of this study.

McInerney further introduces the need to for an 'enabling public administration for an enabling state' which 'requires an enabled public administration system, one that is willing to reflect on the nature of its existing capacities, build on its strengths and remedy its deficiencies' (McInerney 2018 pp. 11, 22). He posits that such enabling requires the state to adopt five 'relational and transformational capacities' in order to work with a range of other actors in the processes of effective governance.

These capacities are: 1. Leading and collaborating with others, 2. Legitimising the role of civil society in governance, 3. Listening, including to marginalised people, 4. Learning, including from communities (and not only from 'experts'), 5. Licence, whereby officials at all levels are sanctioned to embrace the principles and practices of the enabling state (McInerney 2018 pp. 14-21).

	Traditional welfare state	Enabling state	Enabling State +
Delivery mode	Delivery of welfare services mainly by public bodies	Delivery mainly by private and non-profits, contracting out	Stronger integration of family and community systems

Dominant logic	State / public	Market / private	Communitarianism
Expenditure mode	Direct expenditure and accountability	Monitoring / delegated accountability/performance monitoring (Curtis, 2006)	Delegated indirect expenditure/partnership models of delivery
Role of civil society	Civil society as advocates	Civil society as contracted delivery agents	Advocate, partner and delivery agent
Citizens – welfare relationship	Citizen rights	Client responsibilities and obligations	Citizen rights & responsibilities within a community support framework
Role of benefits	'Benefits as social entitlement' (Gilbert 2013)	'Benefits contingent on responsibility' (Gilbert 2013)	Benefits as part of an array of responses to address deepening societal needs.
Conditionality	'Unconditional benefits' (Gilbert 2013)	Conditionality, inducement, punishment	More flexible, voluntary engagement
Locus of responsibility for welfare	Emphasis on state's responsibility for collective citizens' welfare	Emphasis on individual citizen responsibility for their own welfare – blame for inaction.	State, working with family and community – shared responsibility
Locus of welfare risk	State assumes responsibility for risk e.g. health insurance	Increased individual risk responsibility e.g. health insurance	State, family and community and individual
Social inclusion logic	Inclusion vis income redistribution and voluntary labour market re-integration	Inclusion induced integration into the labour market – moral underclass undertones	Integrated inclusion logics / solidarity core
Perceived Weakness/ Strength	'Dependency creating' / disempowering claims	Atomistic and stigmatising / promote self-sufficiency & empowerment /	Demands high levels of administrative innovation & flexibility / harnesses collective capacity

Figure 4:   McInerney's Ghost in the machine: From the traditional welfare to the enabling state(s) (McInerney 2018)

2.3.2   Governance: Civil Society and Youth Work

This section presents literature in relation to civil society, its restrictions and its potential in governance. It further focuses on the potential for youth work to bring the rights of

young people to decision making processes. As mentioned above it considers the multiple roles that civil society (including youth work organisations) plays in the specific Irish history and context and ongoing principle of state subsidiarity which formalises civil society in policy making, implementation and service delivery.

Civil Society

In 2016 the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights presented a powerful argument for the necessity of an active and encouraged civil society:

> If space exists for civil society to engage, there is a greater likelihood that all rights will be better protected. Conversely, the closing of civil society space, and threats and reprisals against civil society activists, are early warning signs of instability. Over time, policies that delegitimise, isolate and repress people calling for different approaches or legitimately claiming their rights can exacerbate frustrations and lead to instability or even conflict
> (United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights 2016)

A strong civil society has been identified as being central to a well-functioning democracy (Crotty & Schmitt 1998, Edwards 2014, Larragy 2014, McInerney 2013), and necessary for full governance. At this moment in time fears grow internationally about freedom of civil society, in light of the rise of increasingly authoritarian regimes who have targeted civil society groups, particularly those focused on human rights and the inclusion of minorities, in public policy.

Civil Society can be described in very broad terms as *"encompassing all the organizations and associations that exist outside of the state…and the market"* (Carothers 1999 pp 19-20). With additional focus, civil society it has been described as 'An intermediate realm situated between state and household, populated by organised groups or associations which are separate from the state, enjoy some autonomy in relations with the state and are formed voluntarily by members of society to protect or extend their interests, values or identities' (Manor et al 1999 pp. 3-4, cited in McInerney 2014 p. 84).

Crotty (1998) has further described civil society as:

> Those non-governmental groups and institutions within a society that focus and direct into politically accessible channels the interests of their constituents. Their key features are their independence from political control; the political space allowed these institutions to evolve and prosper; and the capacity of such agencies to direct member needs into political channels.
> (Crotty 1998 p. 9)

O'Connor and Ketola (2018), maintain that despite the diverse activities engaged in, there is 'Common Ground among Civil Society Organisations', which include being a legitimate expression of people exercising their fundamental human rights; expressing interests and values; being independent and autonomous; involving and facilitating voluntary as well as collective action. They further maintain that 'Many, but not all, civil society organisations are also characterised by their attempts to realise a public benefit from their activities, or to promote the "common good"' (O'Connor & Ketola 2018 p. 4).

Limiting Civil Society

As outlined above, civil society has played a significant role in governance in Ireland. This has been included in the Social Partnership model and across a number of interagency oversight committees such as the National Drugs Task Force and the National Youth Work Advisory Committee. Civil society also influences public policy through lobbying and advocacy on their issues – work which GBTI+ advocates have proven to be very effective at.

In recent time, in addition to concerns being raised internationally about the freedom of civil society, worries have simultaneously been raised domestically.

Infrastructure and Funding

Brian Harvey's 2012 report for Irish Congress of Trade Unions notes that while government expenditure decreased by 4.3% between 2008 and 2012, funding to civil society was disproportionately cut by 15%, concluding that 'by the end of the IMF programme, we may be looking at a voluntary and community sector a third smaller than it was before the start of the crisis'. A Community Foundation of Ireland report (2018) indicates that the non-profit sector saw funding losses of between 35% and 40% and a staffing drop of 31% following the recession.

In addition to the huge shrinking of the civil society space due to a decade of austerity measures, concerns have been voiced about an anti-advocacy approach from state funders to civil society groups. As O'Connor and Ketola (2018) put it

> the Constitution of Ireland clearly indicates that criticism of Government policy is part of the rightful liberty of expression (Article 6.1.i), yet some public agencies have made it abundantly clear that they do not support publicly funded organisations having a voice in public deliberation of policy, even when the same organisations have independent funding, which in some

cases subsidises the public service being delivered.

<div align="right">(O'Connor and Ketola 2018 p. 40)</div>

Crowley (2012) argues that civil society voices of dissent have grown cautious, saying,

> Funding relationships have to be sustained and the state is the core funder for much of the sector. So, protest remains unvoiced in the public arena, dissent is diminished and advocacy is limited within careful boundaries. An agenda for survival has taken over. (Crowley 2012 p. 2)

Another worry is the effect of competitive tendering processes on community organisations. As O'Connor (2016) attests

> competitive tendering and the scale of the service commissioning contracts, which have begun to create distinctions between larger organisations that can manage these challenges successfully and smaller, community-based organisations who are effectively excluded.

<div align="right">(O'Connor 2016 in O'Connor and Ketola 2018 p. 40)</div>

McInerney remarks that these financial relationships and restrictions can result in a situation where

> Unfortunately, civil society, like public administration, is increasingly caught up in the war of ideas between New Public Administration and New Public Management and finds its autonomy increasingly squeezed. In particular, many civil society organisations are now increasingly encouraged and/or required to deliver services on behalf of the state. (McInerney 2014 p. 90)

Regulatory Burden

Concurrent with cuts in state funding to civil society, a series of significant compliance-related duties were introduced by government for civil society organisations. In 2009 the Charities Regulator (and the Charities Act) and the Revenue Commissioners introduced accounting and governance procedures requiring non-charities to register as companies. This was followed by the Companies Registration Office (and the Companies Act); the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR); the Register of Lobbying (and other requirements of the Standards in Public Office Commission (SIPOC) such as the Electoral Acts); Garda Vetting; the Health and Safety Authority; HIQA (Health Information and Quality Authority). Regarding programme staffing and employment, if (co-)funded by statutory agencies, government departments and agencies such as Tusla, the HSE and Pobal also set specific compliance requirements (The Wheel 2019, Carroll & Barron 2019).

The combined effect has meant that many civil society organisations that focus on various aspects of equality are under-resourced and over-burdened. According to The Wheel:

> charities have experienced a very significant increase in the range and intensity of legal, regulatory and funding-related compliance requirements in recent years but no additional funding has been made available for the accompanied administrative and finance work. Moreover, it is not realistic to expect charities to fundraise from the public for money that can support the additional administrative and finance costs that compliance with multiple reporting requirements entails.
>
> (The Wheel 2020)

McInerney (2014) points the dissonance between Irish government recognition of civil society groups internationally (as expressed in 2006 White Paper on Irish Aid) and the lack of recognition for such groups' role domestically.

> To practice, there is little evident valuing by government of the ideal of an independent civil society as a component of a healthy democracy. This contrasts with the clear recognition by the Irish government of the role of civil society organisations in countries many thousands of miles away. For civic engagement to take place and for democracy to deepen there is a need for citizens and civil society organisations alike to express their voices without fear of control, domination or recrimination.(McInerney, 2014 p. 89)

Core to concepts of Civil Society is the concept of Active Citizenship. The National Economic and Social Forum (NESF) defined active citizenship as

> the active exercise of social rights and shared responsibilities associated with belonging to a community or society; the concept is broader than just a formal or legal definition and encompasses social, economic and cultural rights and obligations.   (NESF, 2003 p. 136)

Within this context the following section discusses literature relating to youth work in Ireland, its various positionalities, histories and its role in promoting active citizenship, social and political engagement and policy change.

Youth Work

Ireland, is one of the few countries in Europe in which a definition of youth work is explicitly set out in legislation, where it is defined in the Youth Work Act (2001) as:

> A planned programme of education designed for the purpose of aiding and enhancing the personal and social development of young people through their voluntary involvement, and which is complementary to their formal, academic or vocational education and training and provided primarily by

voluntary youth work organisations.

(Youth Work Act, 2001, Part 1, Section 3)

In 2010, Jeffs and Mark offered core features of youth work which included voluntary participation, education and welfare, being collective and associative in nature, and being ethical in nature (Jeffs & Mark, 2010 pp. 1-4).

Reflecting on decades of practice, research and policy developments Devlin (2017) offers an expansive, rights-based vision of youth work in which:

- young people are full and active partners in youth work, participating meaningfully in making decisions and in programme planning and implementation;
- youth work should aim to empower young people and give them a voice, individually and collectively, and it should uphold and promote the rights of children and young people as citizens (such as those set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child);
- youth work should aim for openness and inclusiveness and for the active promotion of equality; no individual young person, and no group of young people, should feel excluded or diminished in a youth work context;
- youth work has a community dimension and a social purpose; it has benefits for adults as well as young people; it strengthens social solidarity and contributes to positive social change;
- youth work, like all good education, should be experienced as both challenging and enjoyable, fulfilling and fun, enriching and uplifting, for young people and for adults. (Devlin 2017 p. 84)

History and Subsidiarity

Youth work 'emerged as part of the broad charitable and philanthropic movements of the 19th and early 20th centuries concerned with 'rescuing' (or controlling) needy, destitute and troublesome children and young people' (Devlin 2017 p. 82).

As with other social, education and health services in Ireland (such as hospital care and formal education), the principle of 'subsidiarity' has been a defining characteristic of youth work provision. As Devlin elaborates, the principle 'most explicitly and systematically developed by Catholic intellectuals in Germany', means that 'the state should only have a secondary ('subsidiary') role in providing for people's care, welfare and education' (Devlin 2008 p. 95).

The State exists for the common good, and that common good is best achieved when families and individuals are enabled to fulfil their proper destinies … The State does not

exist to do for individuals and families and other associations what they can do reasonably well themselves (Kavanagh 1964 p. 57, cited in Devlin 2008 p. 95).

This long-standing subsidiarity approach to the delivery of state services in Ireland can be seen to pre-empt the shift from the welfare state to the Enabling State outline above. In effect, Ireland never had a traditional welfare state and core characteristics of the Enabling State, such as subcontracting of services, has a longer history than in other jurisdictions.

This principle in practice means that the majority of youth work in Ireland is carried out by civil society organisations which are often funded by the state. Traditionally this principle, which also in-line with Catholic social teachings, embeds the primacy of the family, has meant that youth work has often been delivered by religious organisations.

In its 1990 report 'Equality Now for Lesbians and Gay Men' the Irish Council for Civil Liberties (ICCL) highlighted how in 1985 the National Youth Council of Ireland (NYCI) refused associate membership to the National Gay Federation's youth group. It also noted how Comhairle le Leas Oige (which later became the City of Dublin Youth Services Board) decided to not re-register the youth group in 1986, despite the fact that it had been registered since 1981 (ICCL 1990 p. 43). In 1988 Senator David Norris, speaking at the NYCI General Assembly in Wexford, criticised the NYCI's continued refusal to accept the National Gay Federation's youth group as a member (McAleer, 2018 p. 56). In 1992, the National Gay Federation's youth group was accepted into the NYCI, following a two-thirds membership vote in favour of acceptance, which, according to McAleer (2018 p. 62), 'was a significant marker in NYCI's history and the start if a change in youth politics'.

In 1993 Hurley and Treacy (1993 p. 47) offered their "Models of Youth Work - a sociological framework" which they stated 'were to provide a theoretical framework to guide youth work practice'. The models included: Critical social education; Radical social change; Personal development and Character building. The critical social education model is based on an analysis that society is inequitable and that societal structures impede on young people's lives. Therefore, youth work through this model is concerned with raising young people's awareness of how the social values and state institutions have negative consequences for them and activities are centred upon seeking change to this norm (Dunne et al 2014 pp. 56-57).

Current Position and Opportunities

As is the case with other aspects of civil society the youth work sector and youth work organisations have been badly impacted by economic recession and an extended period of austerity policies from the Irish government. Melaugh (2015) found that

> austerity is having a significant and indeed detrimental impact on youth work identity and practice in Ireland. At a national level, there is a tension between institutional recognition and the cumulative impact of disproportionate cuts which limit the ability of the sector to offer quality youth work practice. The findings offer an insight into the structural and psychological impact of austerity at the level of practice.   (Melaugh 2015 p. 115)

As youth work most often focuses on providing services to young people from disadvantaged communities the reduction in youth work organisations capacity to work with young people with ever-increasing need is particularly striking.

In national policy terms, significant changes have occurred, however, which can be seen to improve the status of youth work and to provide opportunities for improving the status of young people in public policy. As Devlin points out the Education and Training Boards Act 2013, places the state's responsibility for youth work 'on a full statutory footing' and the National Policy Framework for Children and Young People (Better Outcomes, Brighter Future) and the National Youth Strategy provide opportunities for the youth work sector and youth work professionals, including when it comes to collaborative and interdisciplinary work for young people (Devlin 2017 p. 85)

Conclusion

This section has presented literature related to governance in Ireland. It has considered the role of public administration, its relationship with civil society and the opportunities within the system for civil society to advocate for LGBTI+ young people to be included in public policy.

The next section aims to further deepen this understanding through the presentation of a number of public policy theories and frameworks. Each is presented to build on the literature on LGBTI+ young people and governance and to provide a framework for presenting the findings and discussion chapters. Central to this section is the work of John Kingdon, in particular his Agenda Setting Framework. As mentioned earlier this framework was adapted in a variety of ways, including to form the basis for interviewee selection and the structure of the findings chapter. The following section pays close

attention to Kingdon's work, while also adding and adapting it to form a congruent operational framework which will be introduced in the discussion chapter.

2.4   Section C: Public Policy Theory

'Ideas are the stock in trade of social scientists; practical problems are the stock in trade of government'

(Hogwood 1981)

Hogwood (1981) in his introduction to *Journal of Public Policy* draws attention to the difference in outlook between academics and government policymakers and proposes that 'a good study in public policy should use social science concepts to penetrate more deeply into a problem, and also link the issue at hand with more general theories of the policy process' (Hogwood 1981).

John (2003) identifies the recurring problem experienced by scholars when seeking to apply theory to our understanding of public policy. He asserts that unlike most aspects of political science, which concentrate on specific institutions (such as parliament) or activities (such as voting), the study of public policy has to incorporate all political activity, (John 2003 pp. 482-483). Examining public policy necessitates a focus on, amongst others, political parties, governance, public administration systems, public opinion, media, voting, interest groups, local and international governments. John posits,

> The heterogeneity of the institutions under study and the complex networks among them preclude sequential sorts of explanation and rule out the use of theories that seek to understand how democratic a policy is, such as pluralism and its successors.   (John 2003 p. 483)

Taking John's (2003) observations as a starting point this section outlines a number of theories and frameworks to understanding public policy formation.

Stachowiak (2009), in her *Pathways for Change: 10 Theories to Inform Advocacy and Policy Change Efforts,* outlines ten social science theories of policy change relevant to advocacy, which are of particular relevance to civil society groups. She identifies five as being global – broad theories on how policy change occurs. These include: 1. "Large Leaps" or Punctuated Equilibrium theory 2. "Policy Windows" or Agenda-Setting framework 3. "Coalition" theory or Advocacy Coalition Framework 4. "Power Politics" or Power Elites theory 5. "Regime" theory. She further outlines five, as she describes, tactical theories, including: 1. "Messaging and Frameworks" theory 2. "Media Influence"

or Agenda-Setting theory 3. "Grassroots" or Community Organizing theory 4. "Group Formation" or Self-Categorization theory 5. "Diffusion" theory or Diffusion of Innovations, (Stachowiak 2013 p. 2). This is not an exhaustive list, but this chapter draws on it with a view to answering the research question.

The study of public policy, the processes by which governments take action on certain 'problems', has focused attention on how problems are defined. Stone (1989) suggests that defining a problem is like telling a story which identifies harm, describes what causes it, identifies those who are causing the harm and claims that the government is responsible for stopping it (Stone 1989 p. 282). Kingdon (2003 p. 109) differentiates between an ongoing condition and a problem, saying that 'conditions become defined as problems when we come to believe that we should do something about them'.

In considering how issues reach the policy agenda, Cobb and Coughlin (1998) propose two types of policy actors – policy agenda 'expanders' and policy agenda 'containers'. The former works to have new policies proposals put on the agenda. This can be pursued by refining and reshaping issues so as to gain support for them. The later works to prevent such proposals from reaching the agenda because they or their constituents will be affected, and/or the status quo better suits them (Cobb and Coughlin 1998 p. 417). Similarly, Riker (1986) characterizes agenda setting, in part, as a battle between those who try to convince politicians and the public that change is needed and those who oppose it.

In the early 1990s, Baumgartner and Jones (1993) advanced the 'punctuated equilibrium' model of policy development, in which rather than seeing policy formation as either stable and incremental, or chaotic and random, they suggest that 'the system shifts rapidly from one stable point to another' (Baumgartner & Jones 1993 p.17). They posit that once an idea gets attention it can expand rapidly. This can occur for a number of reasons but primarily because of external events – such as a social crisis – or events within the political system such as a change in government bringing with it a new policy agenda.

Agenda Setting Framework

Kingdon (2003) offers a framework for exploring public policy agenda setting, that is, how certain issues make it onto an agenda that require public policy responses while others do not. His focus is not on the entire public policy making process, such as parliamentary voting or policy implementation, but on how issues:

came to be issues on the governmental agenda in the first place, how the alternatives from which decision-makers chose are generated, and why some potential issues and some likely alternatives never came to be the focus of serious attention. (Kingdon 2003 p. 1)

He defines 'agenda' as 'the list of subjects or problems to which governmental officials, and people outside of government closely associated with those officials, are paying some serious attention to'. He further differentiates between the 'governmental agenda', the issues which are getting attention, and the 'decision agenda' the subjects on the governmental agenda which have been progressed to a point where they are up for active decision, (Kingdon 2003 pp. 3-4).

Kingdon (2003) describes policy analysis an 'untidy' area of study, an area of pre-decision, where ideas and people and politics meet and where the outcome is neither predictable nor random.

Kingdon's (2003) framework is not a linear or rational model of policy making. It takes into account many complex factors and actors and accepts that there is a messiness in the real-life experience of this work. He identifies three streams in the process of agenda-setting:

- The Problem Stream. This refers to the process of defining an issue or condition as a problem and persuading decision-makers to pay attention to it. Kingdon (2003 p. 109) maintains that conditions, for example, poverty, only become problems when we believe we should do something about them. In turn, we come to believe we should do something for many reasons including routine indicators (research), crises, social values and how and in what category the problem is defined (Kingdon 2003 pp. 90-113).

- The Policy Stream. This refers to the process whereby solutions to problems are produced. There can be many policies and alternatives. These tend to be a joint effort across the policy community but are ultimately led by the civil service within public administration.

- The Politics Stream. Kingdon maintains that elected officials are the most influential grouping in the policy agenda-setting process (Kingdon 2003 pp. 21-44). Actions within this significant stream are in turn influenced by elections, changes in positions, (e.g., chairs of parliamentary committees), political culture and ideology and critically in this study, 'national mood' which refers to

politicians' readings of popular opinion and how policy proposals might fair within such a 'mood' (Kingdon 2003 pp. 146-164).

John Kingdon Agenda Setting Framework
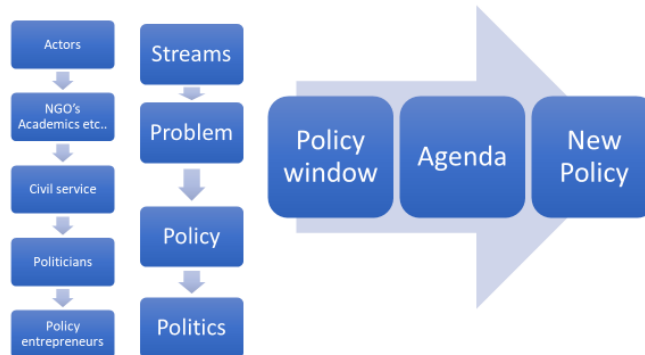
Figure 5:   Kingdon Agenda Setting Framework (Adapted to this study)

Figure 5 is a visual representation of Kingdon's agenda setting framework as it has been adapted for this study. It includes categories of actors in the policy process, in line with how they are applied here.

Kingdon maintains that the policy three streams exist independently of each other but when they are joined together (or coupled) during a period he refers to as a 'policy window' then a new item can be placed on the agenda, (Kingdon 2003 pp.165-175). Policy windows open for a variety of reasons, including a change in government or a crisis but can quickly close again if the policy solution fails, if the crisis passes or if people feel that the problem is fixed. (pp.165-182).

As Kingdon (2003 p. 196) presents it this process may involve some 'dumb luck', but it is not random – primarily because of the participants involved in the process, who are deeply invested and knowledgeable about their issues. These include 'visible participants', such as elected officials, media and some interest groups, who tend to set the macro agenda and who turn to the 'hidden participants' such as civil servants and researcher specialists who produce 'alternatives' or a series of policies from which a solution is chosen (Kingdon 2003 p. 68).

Amongst these participants, he introduces the character of the *policy entrepreneur*, an individual anywhere within the policy system who is willing to invest their energy promoting a particular issue and policy solution. According to Kingdon (2003 pp. 180-191) these entrepreneurs stand out and drive changes because, a) they have a claim to

hearing (due to their expertise or because, b) they represent a community, c) they are politically connected and d) they are tenacious and persistent. It is through their preparedness and ability to negotiate and broker that they can bring the agenda-setting streams together and exploit a policy window so as to get their issue on the agenda.

In addition to the politicking around policy choices, Kingdon makes an argument for the strength of the idea (policy solution) itself. Quoting Victor Hugo's maxim 'Greater than the tread of mighty armies is an idea whose time has come', he posits that how robustly an idea has been prepared, is a very significant influence on why certain ideas get on the agenda, (Kingdon, 2003 p.125). This focus on the strength of ideas within the policy making systems (Kingdon 2003 pp. 131–3) has been a significant contribution to the field.

Advocacy Coalition Framework

Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith's 'Advocacy Coalition Framework' seeks to explain complex policy making systems which involve multiple actors, ambiguity and uncertainty and long-term processes. Cairney (2012) maintains that this framework is ambitious and that it seeks 'to produce what we might consider to be the closest thing to a general theory of policy-making'.

Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith maintain that people involved in the development of public policy are motivated to turn beliefs into action and that coalitions are formed by

> people from a variety of positions … who share a particular belief system – i.e. a set of basic values, causal assumptions, and problem perceptions – and who show a non-trivial degree of coordinated activity over time.
>
> (Sabatier 1988 p. 139)

Beliefs are the "glue" that keeps a large number of actors together. There are three main types:

1) Deep Core Beliefs - "underlying personal philosophy," (Sabatier 1993 p. 30);

2) Policy Core Beliefs – 'fundamental policy positions', for example the balance between government (Sabatier 1993 p. 31);

3) Secondary Aspects, which relate to the funding, delivery, and implementation of policy goals (Sabatier 1993 p. 31).

The notion is that there are a set of core ideas and values in public policy and that coalitions form around these ideas. These ideas, and the coalitions of actors around them, can adapt to changing environments. This can result in movement between coalitions, often based on what works and is strategically beneficial to achieving a desired policy

outcome at a given time. Core to this framework is the ability of the policy process and those involved to adapt while holding onto core values and beliefs.

This framework presents a broad and complex array of actors who work to influence public policy, which broadens the notion of policy communities. As Jenkins-Smith and Sabatier put it:

> Our conception of policy subsystems should be broadened from traditional notions of iron triangles limited to administrative agencies, legislative committees, and interest groups at a single level of government to include actors at various levels of government, as well as journalists, researchers and policy analysts who play important roles in the generation, dissemination, and evaluation of policy ideas. (Jenkins-Smith and Sabatier 1993a p. 179)

This framework posits that policy processes can vary greatly – from highly politicised and public issues with many actors, to technical, specialist areas where decisions and processes happen out of public sight.

As with Kingdon, Jenkins-Smith and Sabatier speak to the important role of ideas policy making processes, including to how rigorous technical, evidence-based arguments reduce risk to political capital amongst members of the policy community.

Raw political power may carry the day against superior evidence, but the costs to one's credibility in a democratic society can be considerable. Moreover, resources expended—particularly in the form of favours called in—are not available for future use. Thus, those who can most effectively marshal persuasive evidence, thereby conserving their political resources, are more likely to win in the long run than those who ignore technical arguments. (Jenkins-Smith and Sabatier 1993b pp. 44–5).

Stachowiak (2013 p.7) points to the framework's particular relevance to civil society groups, stating that 'Advocates who use this theory believe that policy change happens through coordinated activity among individuals and organizations outside of government with the same core policy beliefs', and posits that the framework allows for strategies for policy change including influencing like-minded decision-makers to make policy changes, affecting public opinion via mass media and changing perceptions about policies through research and information exchange (Stachowiak 2013 p. 8).

Narrative Policy Framework

Fisher (1984) argues that human decision making and communication takes place through the production and exchange of symbols, signs and 'good reasons' – which are influenced by history, biography, culture and character. The world is a set of competing narratives which we must choose between. Fisher further makes the case that this is particularly the case when it comes to what he describes as 'public moral arguments' – non-technical arguments which involve competing values (Fisher, 1984 p.12). It is clear from recent global and national debate that LGBTI+ rights have been framed in a 'public moral argument' manner. In Ireland, this came to an ultimate head in the 2015 Marriage Equality Referendum campaigns. Many aspects of LGBTI+ rights, beyond marriage, have also been framed in this way – including LGBTI+ children and young people's access to education and, as stated earlier, the very existence of LGBTI+ young people has long been at the centre of public debate.

Frank (2010) maintains that cultural narratives are intrinsically linked to power and certain narratives exert dominance over others. Reinsborough and Canning (2010) speak of 'control mythologies' that work to support the 'status quo' and the need for advocates for social change to engage in narrative change in different ways to traditional interventions. They speak of how activist strategies have traditionally been to intervene at physical points such as 'points of production' (labour strikes for example) or 'points of decision' such as government. In contrast, they maintain that narrative change work entails engagement at the 'point of assumption' which can involve creating new narratives that can effectively and emotionally challenge 'control mythologies'.

Developed in the 2000s the Narrative Policy Framework (NPF) asserts that it is important to appreciate that power of policy narratives. McBeth et al state:

> Politicians, political strategists, and media reporters understand intuitively that how a story is rendered is as important to policy success and political longevity as are which actions are undertaken.   (McBeth et al 2015 p. 173)

They further claim that an understanding of the role of narrative in public policy processes is important because policy debates, 'are necessarily fought on the terrain of narratives, constituted by both formal institutional venues [e.g., in parliaments] and informal venues (e.g., media, interest group websites, Twitter, YouTube, blogs)'. Beyond these debates,

> narratives are often asserted to affect the policy process at different points—
> policy decisions, implementation, regulation, evaluation, and so forth. Thus,

the NPF contends that understanding the role of narratives is critical to understanding the policy process, on various terrains and at multiple junctures within said process.   (McBeth et al 2015)

NPF focuses on four policy narrative elements: 1) Setting, (the often taken for granted backdrop such as specific legal and constitutional parameters, geography, economic conditions); 2) Characters, (victims, villains, heroes); 3) Plot, ('provides the arc of action where events interact with actions of the characters and the setting'); 4) Moral of the story, (the policy solution) (McBeth et al 2015 p. 176)

NPF further examines three levels at which narrative operates within policy making: 1) micro level – how individuals are influenced by narratives; 2) meso level – how coalitions and groups use narratives within policy subsystems; 3) macro level – how certain narratives are embedded in institutions and cultures and shape policy making.

The NPF marks a significant departure from the other frameworks outlined above but is relevant and connected to the policy developed in Ireland in the 2000s and through the period of focus for this study. It is significant to note that organised work to 'change the narrative' about LGBTI+ people and young people, as well as about issues such as abortion were taking place during this period. Although it is important to acknowledge that referendums have specific criteria and frameworks for exploration (which this study does not apply), when asked in an exit poll in 2018 why they voted in favour of repealing the Eight Amendment to the Constitution, 'People's personal stories covered in the media' was the most significant factor (McShane 2018 p. 111) which attests to the influence of stories in decision making.

Policy Community

The concept of 'policy community' is central to this current study. Its conceptualisation draws on a number of approaches. Paul Pross (1995 p. 265) offers a definition of policy communities as 'groupings of government agencies, pressure groups, media people, and individuals, including academics, who, for various reasons, have an interest in a particular policy field and attempt to influence it'. In Pross's (1995) view, the policy community is an insulating device to keep a grip on the process; indeed, he argued that most of the inside players in a policy community try to keep debate within the realm of the technical and routine.

Leslie Pal (2014) posits that policy community as 'the actors in a policy network, presumably those who share at least some common language and conceptual reference points but who may be opponents on the issue'. Opposition within a policy community, where members can be working for prevent each other's progress can be further understood in terms of Cobbs and Coughlin's (1998) 'Expander' vs 'Container' archetypes mention above – where a container works to prevent an expander from reaching their agenda goal and is motivated to maintain the status quo.

Kingdon (2003 p. 117) suggests that 'policy communities' develop around certain issues and tend to be 'intimate' and made up of interest groups, academics, specialists, and political advisors who know each other and who produce and exchange policy solutions. Members of such communities have in common a shared concern with policy problems occurring in a given policy area and their interactions with each other, in the course of which they develop policy alternatives (Kingdon 2003 p.117).

Jenkins-Smith and Sabatier (1993a p. 179) propose a complex array of actors are involved in policy development – within 'policy subsystems' which include journalists and media.

This current study applies the above concepts of policy community and sees it as complex, contested and ever-changing.

Problematising

Bacchi (2009), inspired by Foucauldian poststructural analysis, invites scholars to 'problematize' public policy development, to question taken for granted norms and to not interpret public policy as solely governments' best attempt to fix a pressing social problem. Bacchi (2009, 2012) developed an approach to policy analysis which she calls 'what's the problem represented to be?'. This approach does not accept problems to be necessarily true and seeks problematise or examine them in relation to the *culture, politics and historical period that produces them*.

This concern for cultural and historical context is a central feature of C. Wright Mills' foundational work 'The Sociological Imagination', where he posits that:

> the individual can understand his own experience and gauge his own fate only by *locating himself within his period*, that he can know her own chances in life only by becoming aware of those of all individuals in her circumstance and no social study that does not come back to the problems of biography, of history and of their intersections within a society has completed its intellectual journey.   (Wright Mills, 1959)

As outlined in Chapter 1, sexuality and LGBTI+ identity exist in a significant social cleavage in Ireland, in opposition to religious and conservative ideals and institutions. The experiences of LGBTI+ young people are particularly fraught due to the dominance of the Catholic Church in the Irish Education system. Such broader historical, cultural and theoretical considerations need to be considered when we examine the status of LGBTI+ young people in public policy.

Foucault (1977 pp. 185-186) wrote extensively about sexuality, its historical location, creation and its relationship with power and political governance. He described his method of analysis as 'thinking problematically' where the purpose is not to look for a specific answer or conclusion but to explore how an item (or 'object') is 'questioned, analysed, classified and regulated' at 'specific times and under specific circumstances' (Deacon 2000 p. 127). In this way, Foucault's approach, which Bacchi draws on, is not to argue for or against a specific position on a specific policy issue but to 'inquire into the terms of reference within which the issue is cast' (Bacchi 2012 p. 1). Foucault's interest is to dismantle an object, very often 'sexuality', to demonstrate that our understanding of the object is based on taken for granted assumptions and to show how unstable our understanding is and the historical circumstances through which this understanding has been developed. This is an important perspective to include in analysis and is applicable to discussing sexuality and LGBTI+ identity – areas which are fraught with conflicting perspectives in the public sphere in Ireland. This study is bound to a historical timeframe (1993-2015) and as such, Foucault's work in this area – which invites us to make explicit the relevance of history in our understanding of issues – is particularly relevant.

Bacchi challenges the notion that public policy is the government's best attempt to deal with 'problems', suggesting that government (often unconsciously) is active in creating what we understand to be the 'problem' because of the policy they create. She suggests that by working backwards from our conventional understanding and looking at a social policy we can see the 'problem' and how it is represented (Bacchi 2012 p. 2).

Bacchi draws on Cox (1986) to critique problem-solving theory, which they see as predominant in public policy making. Cox says that problem solving theory:

> Takes the world as it finds it, with the prevailing social and power relationships and the institutions into which they are organized, as the given framework. The general aim of problem-solving is to make those

relationships and institutions work smoothly by dealing effectively with particular sources of trouble. (Cox 1986 pp. 208-9)

Here Cox maintains that problem-solving is conservative and value-laden rather than neutral and functional.

2.5 Conclusion

The three sections of the literature review have been presented to bring together areas of scholarship, which while distinct, here help in the consideration of the impact of civil society on the changing status of LGBTI+ young people in Irish public policy.

They also point to gaps in analysis which provide the lines of inquiry for this study. Of particular note is the minimal presence of LGBTI+ young people in the scholarly work relating to Irish public policy. What is further striking is the absence of policy change towards LGBTI+ young people in reviews of policy developments towards the LGBTI+ community in Ireland, and indeed the suggestion that the inclusion of LGBTI+ young people (particularly in relation to homophobic and transphobic violence and mental health) in specific youth policy 'tends to isolate one negative aspect of LGBT experience while wider heteronormative aspects…are not questioned' (Dukelow and Considine 2017 p. 370). It seems to me to be extraordinary that protections from discrimination of LGBTI+ adults, through equality employment legislation, for example, is presented as progress, while protections for LGBTI+ young people from violence in schools is presented as 'isolating one negative aspect'. This contradiction, together with a growing body of policy analysis which frames policies to tackle homophobia and transphobia towards young people as damaging to them, and in so doing fails to see long term organised social and policy change in relation to LGBTI+ young people in Ireland. This points to a significant gap in this area. It also points to the necessity to bring together the areas of LGBTI+ youth identity, governance and public policy theory over an extended period of time so as to develop a deeper and more considered view of the changes for LGBTI+ young over the past number of decades.

This review of literature has dealt with vision and values, such as equality and anti-oppressive practices, it has dealt with ideas, such as public policy theory, and it has dealt with action – such as the activity of public administration, civil society and youth work.

As outlined above, John Kingdon's Agenda Setting framework forms a core aspect of the organising and analytical framework of this thesis. Key informants were invited to participate in this study based on their position within Kingdon's notion of policy community, adapted for this study to mean 1. Civil society, 2. Public service, 3. Politics. Chapter 4 – the findings chapter, is structured on the basis of his multiple streams framework.

For the purpose of this study, however, I have adapted Kingdon's framework significantly and introduce this adaptation to form the basis of Chapter 5 – the discussion chapter. I do this to reflect this study's finding that Kingdon's work is not entirely applicable in this context and needs to be augmented in a number of ways. Chapter 5 will do this by further foregrounding Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith's 'Policy Advocacy Coalition Framework' (1993) McBeth's 'Narrative Policy Framework' (2015) and Baachi´s 'Problematisation' (2009) theories. This framework, which forms the basis of the discussions chapter, further departs from Kingdon by emphasising the centrality of Civil Society in policy development, due to its access to the political system and its formalised role in governance through the tradition of 'subsidiarity' as outlined in this chapter above. The role of community organising and development in public policy processes - particularly where they relate to self-organised minority communities, is included in the framework, which also takes account of the significance of public campaigning and narrative change work when it comes to policy change on contested social issues.

CHAPTER 3:   RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1   Introduction

In Chapter 2, I describe my position in relation to this research – as an actor and advocate for social and policy change over the period covered by the research. In locating myself in this research, the aim is to ensure that the reader is clear that I have had an active role in the work described and indeed am part of the 'policy community' discussed. Elaborating on this ensures that ethical issues of subjectivity and access to key informants for interview are surfaced, and as such, can be considered in the analysis.

This chapter locates myself as researcher and details the approach taken to this study. It makes explicit the theoretical assumptions underpinning the research and how the

findings from the research are interpreted. This chapter begins by exploring my personal ontological and epistemological stance, outlining the rationale for adopting an interpretive qualitative approach.

3.2   Position as researcher

3.2.1 Ontology, Epistemology and Worldview

In this section, I make explicit a research philosophy which guided my research strategies, designs, data collection and data analysis. To do this it is necessary to align with a set of beliefs or epistemological assumptions called paradigms (Morrison cited in Briggs & Coleman 2007 p. 19), described as "the set of common beliefs and agreements shared between scientists about how problems should be understood and addressed" (Kuhn, 1962).

As Kvale and Brinkman (2009) put it, the importance of making research paradigms explicit is because

> they enable you to explain your methods…each research paradigm comes with its own standards for evaluating the quality of research…fully understanding the assumptions that undergird the techniques you use gives you confidence to build on the strengths and offset the weaknesses of those techniques.   (Kvale and Brinkman 2009)

Research paradigms differ according to their ontology (nature of reality), epistemology (the relationship between the research and what is being researched), axiology (role of values), rhetoric (the language of research) and methodological assumptions (the process of research) (Creswell 2007).

Ontology and Epistemology

The key ontological questions related to 'whether or not there is a social reality which exists independently of human conceptions and interpretations, and closely related to this, whether there is a shared social reality or only multiple, context-specific ones' (Ritchie et al 2013 p. 5). In general, social science has been directed by two overarching ontological positions concerning these issues – realism, (reality exists independent of our understandings and beliefs) and idealism, (no external reality exists independent of our beliefs and understandings). Researchers' positioning and worldview influence their ontology. I believe that the social world is complex and is understood by people, including

members of the policy community, who are the subject of this research, in different ways and at different points in time. From this position, it is my belief that people are active in the construction of their social world, (Becker 1970) and so multiple and changing interpretations of reality are evident.

Cohen, Mannion and Morrison maintain that ontological assumptions lead to epistemological assumptions that in turn define methodological considerations and eventually determine instrumentation and data collection methods (Cohen et al 2007), as well as the role of the researcher and how findings are interpreted (Rubin & Rubin 2012 p. 22). One's epistemology is a theory of knowledge of 'what is, that may be organised into different series of thoughts' (Taysum 2010 p. 65) and should concern the principles and rules by which one can decide whether and how social phenomena can be known, and how knowledge can be demonstrated (Mason 1996).

I position myself as a social constructionist/interpretivist researcher in this work, based on a belief that social reality as subjective and constructed.

Worldview and Axiology

The nature of my work as a social justice advocate, as well as the scope and vision of the Department of Applied Social Studies at Maynooth University, has brought me to having an 'Advocacy and Participatory Worldwide' in this study.

As Creswell outlines,

> An advocacy/participatory worldview holds that research inquiry needs to be intertwined with politics and a political agenda. Thus, the research contains an action agenda for reform that may change the lives of the participants, the institutions in which individuals work or live, and the researcher's life. Moreover, specific issues need to be addressed that speak to important social issues of the day, issues such as empowerment, inequality, oppression, domination, suppression, and alienation. The researcher often begins with one of these issues as the focal point of the study   (Creswell 2009 p. 9)

Kemmis and Wilkinson (1998) maintain that a key feature of advocacy and participatory research is that it has a focus on changes in practice and as such researchers advance an agenda for change. (Creswell 2009 p. 10)

While this research process did not intend to change the lives of the participants, who are professional key informants, the study has been undertaken with the intent to share learning and insights with other civil society advocates seeking to affect policy change,

as reflected in the research questions. There is an implicit and explicit 'change agenda' in this work. Its focus on oppression, opportunities for policy change and its conclusionary reflections are aimed at sharing learning with others.

My social constructionist/interpretivist position and advocacy/participatory worldview are consistent with adopting a qualitative research approach.

3.2.2 Qualitative Research

Holliday (2007 p. 53) maintains that 'qualitative researchers … can easily underestimate the need for detail in their description of procedure, thus overlooking an important aspect of the demonstration of rigour'. In order to avoid such risks, this chapter continues by presenting a detailed description of the research design, describing the data collection process, the analysis of data and the ethical framework used during the research, particularly in light of my 'insider-researcher' position.

As Silverman (2000) asserts:

> "the straightforward character of a quantitative methods chapter unfortunately does not spill over into qualitative research reports. At first sight, this simply is a matter of different language … But these linguistic differences also reflect broader practical and theoretical differences between quantitative and qualitative research."   (Silverman 2000 p. 234)

Silverman's approach to qualitative research necessitates the recognition of the contested theoretical underpinning of methodologies, the contingent nature of data chosen and the non-random character of the cases studied.

Denzin and Lincoln (2011) propose, however, that despite the inherent diversity within qualitative research, it can be described as:

> A set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. These practices transform the world. They turn the world into a series of representations, including field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings and memos to self … qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them.
> (Denzin and Lincoln 2011 p. 3)

The nature of this study and the questions it aims to answer necessitate the adoption of a qualitative approach. The research aims to explain how insights from the Irish policy community contribute to the understanding of civil society organisations' role in the

changing status of LGBTI+ young people in Irish public policy, how policy changed, why it changed and what learning can be shared. As Rubin and Rubin put it, "Qualitative interviewing projects are especially good at describing social and political processes, that is, how and why things change" (Rubin & Rubin 2012 p. 3).

3.3   Position in Relation to Data Collection

As the interpretivist researcher tends to rely upon the respondent's views of the situation being studied and recognises the impact on the research of their background and experiences (Creswell 2009), I did not stand removed from the research but instead was 'a respondent observer' (Carr & Kemmis 1986). The view taken is that through this 'social interaction' new knowledge is created, in keeping with the interpretivist tradition.

Kvale (2007) posits that interview knowledge has seven key philosophical features. It is:

1. Produced – it is socially constructed in the interaction between interviewee and interviewer.
2. Relational – it is 'inter-subjective' – created 'inter-view' – as in between the views of the interviewer and participant.
3. Conversational – it is developed through the conversational process of negotiating meaning.
4. Contextual – it is created in specific contexts and such knowledge is not necessarily transferable.
5. Linguistic – it is produced through the medium language, which raises issues about transcription and the difference in oral and written language.
6. Narrative – it is produced through storytelling.
7. Pragmatic – it is concerned with usefulness and how it can be applied in the world.   (Adapted from Kvale 2007 p. 55)

This study approaches the work of knowledge generation as a co-creation process in which both interviewee and interviewer are active. I approached data collection in line with Rubin and Rubin's approach of qualitative interviews being 'conversations in which a researcher gently guides a conversational partner in an extended discussion' and in acknowledgement that 'in qualitative interviews, each conversation is unique, as researchers match their questions to what each interviewee knows and is willing to share' (Rubin & Rubin 2012 p. 4).

As such, this study adopted a 'conversational partnership' approach to interviewing key informants,

> A conversational partnerships approach necessitates a strong ethical framework because they, like all relationships, involve and create obligations. One obligation is to help the interviewee feel protected and comfortable during and after the interview. When interviewees tell you in detail about their experiences, they expose themselves to you and trust that you will not violate their confidence or criticize them.
>
> (Rubin and Rubin 2012 p. 83)

Conversational partnerships also demand reciprocity and emotional engagement, "rather than just asking and listening, sometimes researchers may need to answer some of the same questions about themselves that they have posed to the conversational partner" (Rubin and Rubin 2012 p. 84). As Jaquie Aston put it, "I believe that a certain amount of disclosure is essential. It facilitates a sense of trust and mutuality and it increases the comfort level of the narrator" (Aston 2001 p. 147).

3.4   Research Strategy

3.4.1 Ethical Consideration

This research was approved by the Research Ethics Committee at the Department of Applied Social Studies at Maynooth University. The ethics committee identified that the research was not with a 'vulnerable' group. Although this does not affect the rigour in which the research was undertaken it does inform the approach, particular to interviewing professional key informants. The application process and considerations of the committee proved insightful and clarifying in developing an ethical approach to this research. In addition, ethical considerations were made explicit through ongoing reflexive discussions with my academic supervisors. This thesis forms part of a taught professional doctorate programme which included classroom inputs on research ethics and significant opportunity to discuss ethical issues with fellow doctoral students.

3.4.2 Selecting Interviewees

Interviewees were approached and invited to participate on the basis that they had been involved in work to improve the status of LGBTI+ young people over the period of this study. This process of purposive sampling was initiated due to my own work in the area. With reference to literature, I contend that each interviewee can be seen to be part of the

'policy community' (Kingdon 2003, Jenkinson-Smith & Sabatier 1993, Pal 2014, Pross 1995). Interviewees were categorised according to their position within the policy community.

A Matrix of Experience

I invited participants from each category who had a variety of experience and who were positioned in particular roles from which their involvement was located.

Civil Society participants came from LGBTI+ organisations. who advocated directly for policy change; mainstream youth organisations, who's involvement came about through specific advocacy initiatives, as well as through the general principle of equality for all young people; and actors from the media – who were active both in reporting on and in developing media about LGBTI+ young people.

Public Service participants were each invited to take part based on their involvement in the development and implementation of LGBTI+ youth inclusive policies. Each participant had been involved at a senior level in this work across four government bodies – the Department of Education and Skills, the Health Services Executive, the Department of Children and Youth Affairs, and the Equality Authority.

The political participants were each former Government Ministers; two had been Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, and one had been Minister for Education and Skills.

It is significant to note that a number of participants occupied various relevant roles and as such were invited to participate as I believed they could bring a variety of insights.

In addition to their location, I approached each participant due to my understanding that each had been involved in their area over an extended period. This period varied considerably but in a number of cases, interviewees had been contributing towards LGBTI+ rights, or equality and human rights, over the twenty-two-year period covered by the study, and beyond.

My intention was to compile a varied matrix of perspectives from which rich insights could be garnered (as depicted in **Figure 6**, which follows).

Politicians	**Department of Children and Youth Affairs**	**Department of Education and Skills**		
Number of participants	2	1		

Public Service	Department of Children and Youth Affairs	Department of Education and Skills	The Equality Authority	Health Services Executive
Number of participants	2	1	1	1
Civil Society	LGBTI+	Mainstream Youth	Media	
Number of participants	4	1	2	

Figure 6:   Interview Matrix of Experience

Some, but not all, of the participants requested anonymity in the study. Because of this, contributions of each participant are presented anonymously, including through the use of pseudonyms, as outlined in Figure 7 below, and through the removal of obvious personal markers – such as the name of the organisation and location from which they come.

Pseudonym	Category
Michelle	Civil Society
Bridget	Civil Society
Andrew	Civil Society
Enda	Civil Society
John	Civil Society
Olivia	Civil Society
Maria	Civil Society
Peter	Public Service
Sean	Public Service
James	Public Service
Louise	Public Service
Mary	Public Service
Patrick	Politician
Claire	Politician
Michael	Politician

Figure 7:   Interview Categories and Pseudonyms

3.4.4 Interviews and Interviewing

Each interviewee was contacted by email with an outline of the interview request, the research information and consent forms (please see *Appendices 4 and 5*). All interviewees who were contacted agreed to participate. Negotiating a time and location to each interview proved difficult. This was because of two main factors. Firstly, I was living in Inishowen, Co Donegal, a four-hour journey from Dublin where most of the interviewees where located. In addition, the nature of some participant's work – which involved international travel and limited time posed issues with scheduling. It became apparent during the process that it would not be possible to meet all participants in person and that it would be likely that I would 'lose' certain key informants if this was the only option. As a result, in consultation with my thesis supervisors, it was agreed that interviews would be carried out in a mixture of in-person and via telephone settings.

It was my preference to carry out all interviews in-person and I feared losing some valuable engagement, including body language and informal communications. There is limited literature on the substantial differences between in-person and via telephone interviewing. Irvine notes:

> The empirical evidence base on what difference using the telephone makes to the qualitative interview process and the resulting data is currently fairly small and based mainly on impressionistic accounts rather than systematic mode comparisons. However, researchers who have published first-hand reflections conclude that, on the whole, concerns about rapport or loss of meaning are somewhat exaggerated or unfounded (Irvine et al 2010 p. 5)

I designed an interview guide with a set of guiding questions (please see *Appendix 4*). A broad open interview guide was chosen, in line with the conversational partnership approach. As Patton explains:

> The interview guide provides topics or subject areas within which the interviewer is free to explore, probe and ask questions that will elucidate and illuminate that particular subject area, to word questions spontaneously, and to establish a conversational style—but with the focus on a particular subject that has been predetermined.   (Patton 1990 p. 283)

Audio files and paper copies of each interview transcript were stored in an encrypted folder on my laptop. Participants were given copies of the transcribed interviews

3.5   Data Analysis

Both Deductive and Inductive

This study applied elements of both deductive and inductive analysis. It was guided by Kingdon's agenda-setting framework (2003), which was used to identify and categorise key informant interviewees and also to carry out analysis in combination with other public policy theories. Interviewees were also asked about their insights into working with others in the 'policy community' and as such this concept also guided analysis.

The significant inductive element was introduced through paying close attention to interviewees, key concepts and commonalities which they articulated. Core areas which emerged through inductive analysis include, for example, the mobility of interviewees in terms of their positionality in the policy community (moving from public service to civil society for example) and their sense of being part of a 'we' which was active in seeking

the inclusion of LGBTI+ young people in public policy. This inductive analysis was enabled through the formal and rigorous adoption of the Braun and Clarke (2006) approach to thematic analysis which is described below.

Thematic Analysis

A number of methods of analysis were considered for this study, including discourse analysis, content analysis and interpretative phenomenological analysis. It was decided to approach the work using a thematic analysis due to its flexibility, its rigour and its compatibility with both the methodology (key informant interviews) and the use of software (NVivo). I took great care ensuring adherence to rigour and decisions made are fully backed up by appendices which demonstrate the sequence of the work and present an 'audit trail'. Please see *Appendix 5* for the codebook and audit trail information.

The analysis of data gathered through interviews was processed by NVivo, a computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software which I used to organise, code and enable the analysis of the data. This software programme provided a valuable platform for housing a wide variety of data, including interview transcripts, literature, media articles, organizational documentation and drafts of this thesis.

Thematic Analysis as Applied

Analysis of interview data began by listening back to the recordings and then through transcribing of each interview. The time spent in this process allowed for a deep familiarity with the data ahead of the next stages of analysis.

Braun and Clarke's Six-Step (eight phases) Approach

According to Braun and Clarke (2006), the six-step approach comprises of eight phases for conducting thematic analysis as highlighted in training from QDATRAINING (2019). The methodology was applied to the selected data according to this six-step approach.

The first phase, following transcription, involved reading all data, taking notes of initial ideas. The next involved broad participant-driven open coding of all interview transcripts recorded from the research study. Significant features were coded in a methodical manner across the complete dataset, collecting data relevant to each code. These codes were allocated distinct labels and descriptions (Maykut and Morehouse, 1994). Details of this open coding stage are presented in *Appendix 5a* of the codebook. A screenshot of the NVivo interface is provided in **Figure 8**, which follows.

Figure 8: Open Coding Screenshot

Phase three of thematic analysis involved gathering codes identified in phase 2 into categories of codes by collating all data deemed relevant to each potential theme and categorising each into a framework that made sense for further analysis of the data. This phase also included distilling, relabelling and merging recurring codes generated in phase 2 to ensure that all labels and definitions for inclusion accurately reflected the coded content (*Appendix 5b* within the codebook).

This was the 'searching for themes' phase. Themes were identified using the following techniques adapted from Ryan and Bernard 2003 pp. 89-94):

- Repetition. Many themes re-occurred throughout all the transcripts.

- Indigenous categories—terms used by policy community members to describe their worlds. These included for example 'social justice analysis', 'youth voice' 'all politics is local' 'sector' 'duty of care' 'equality'.

- Similarities and differences. Data which highlighted particular areas of contrast and comparisons were noted – particularly differences in how, for example, public servants view the public service (at times innovative) versus how civil society described it (at times 'conservative').

- Metaphors and analogies as used by participants to describe broader conditions, such as 'first follower', 'blazing a trail', 'valley of the squinting windows'.

The fourth phase of thematic analysis involved breaking down the reconfigured themes into further sub-themes or 'coding on', to present a greater understanding of the aspects under review such as varying views, beliefs, behaviours, negative cases, and attitudes,

coded to these categories and to offer clearer insights as to the meanings contained therein. (*Appendix 5c* within the codebook).

Phase five involved data reduction by consolidating codes from the previous three coding cycles into more abstract, philosophical and literature-based codes in order to create a final framework of themes for reporting purposes (*Appendix 5d* of codebook).

The sixth phase involved writing analytical notes against the higher-level themes to succinctly summarise the content of each category and its codes, and propose verifiable findings against these categories. These memos (*Appendix 5e* of codebook) considered the five key areas:

1. The content of the cluster of codes on which it was reporting (what was said).
2. The patterns where relevant (levels of coding for example).
3. The background information recorded against participants and any patterns that existed in relation to participants' profiles (who said it).
4. Situating the codes in the storyboard – meaning, considering the relatedness of codes to each other, and their importance to addressing the research question and sequencing disparate codes and clusters of codes into a story or narrative which is structured and can be expressed in the form of a coherent and cohesive chapter.
5. Consideration of primary sources in the context of relationships with the literature as well as identifying gaps in the literature.

I combined phase seven and eight of Braun and Clarke's (2006) model to form the basis for writing the findings chapter and, together with further reflection on the literature to inform the analysis in the discussions chapter.

In addition to analysis of interview data, I collected a series of documentation which I used to inform the data analysis process and which I have included at various points in the findings and discussion chapters. These included eighty-three articles returned in an Irish Time archive search of LGBT youth between 2003 and 2015 and documentation from BeLonG To over this period – including outputs (submissions, research, briefings, curriculum) and internal documentation, including strategic plans. This process constituted a form of documentary analysis. Having been collated, the articles and BeLonG To outputs were analysed and in doing so were related back to the literature review themes and the interview data. This document analysis supported findings

from the interviews through providing confirmatory information. This added to the developing understanding at key stages of the analysis.

The following figures, **Figure 9** and **Figure 10**, are screengrabs of NVivo which indicate where these documents (Irish Times articles and organisational documents, respectively)were stored on the system.
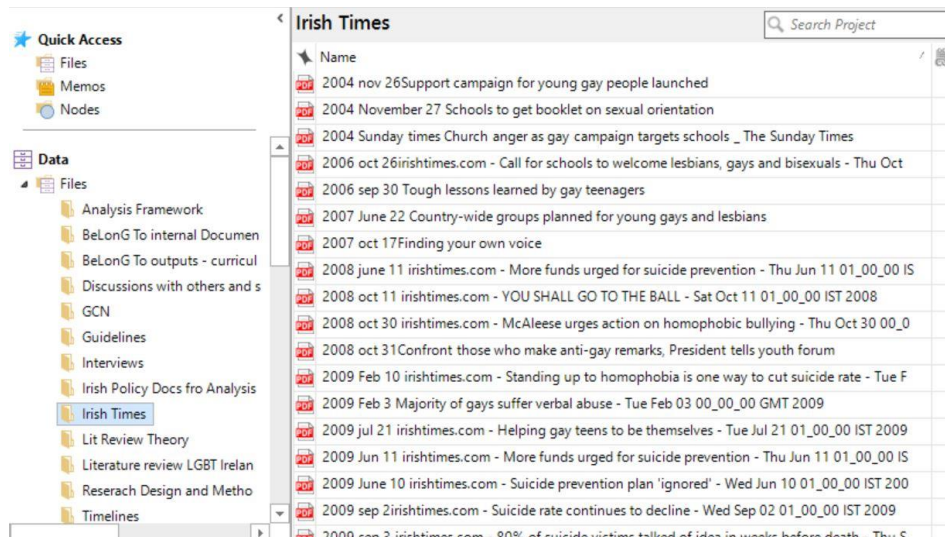
Figure 9:   Irish Times Articles Catalogued in NVivo
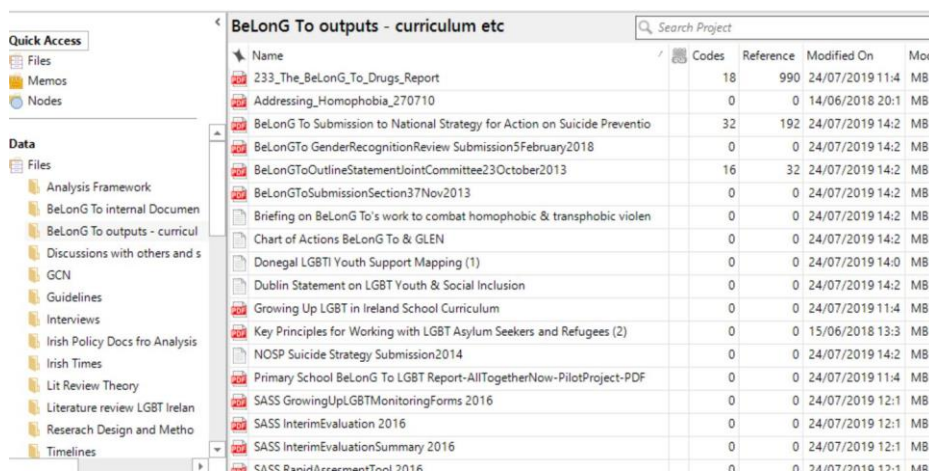
Figure 10:   BeLonG To Documents Catalogued in NVivo

3.6 Reflexivity

Throughout the research process, I maintained a reflexive diary, in line with a recommendation of the Research Ethics Committee at the Department of Applied Social Studies at Maynooth University. This built on my ongoing journaling which I learned from youth work practice and have engaged in for most of my professional career. For this research, I invested time in writing observations after each interview, including about tone, thoughts on interpersonal dynamics and reflections on my relationship to the interviewee and its influence on process (see **Figure 11** for a sample of a diary entry/page). The intention was to learn and grow as an interviewer – bringing learning from each interview process to the next – and to consider the interview process when analysing the data.
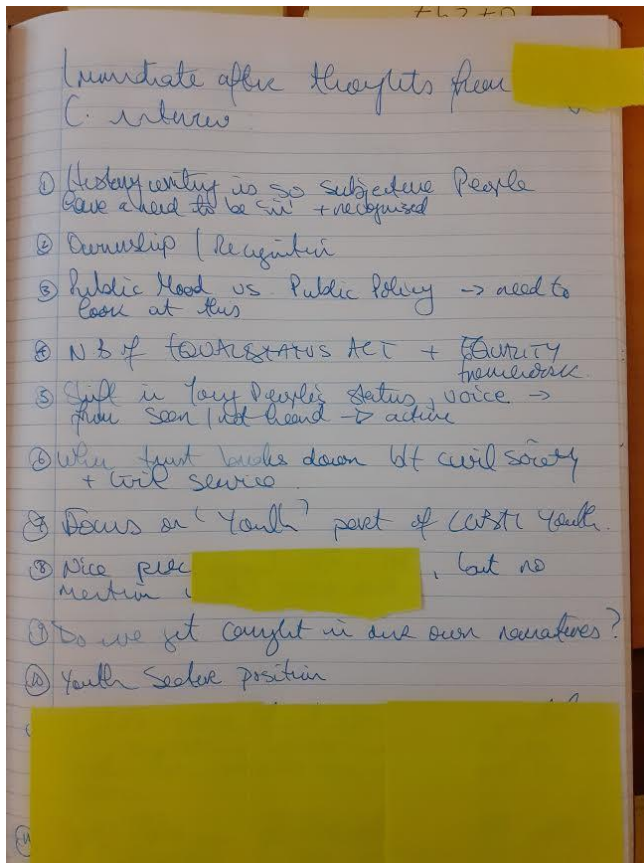
Figure 11: Example of Reflexive Journal

I was conscious of relational ethics – including informed consent, safeguarding participants anonymity. To various degrees, I have personal relationships with the research participants. In a relatively small country and LGBTI+ and policy field, I must

respect interviewees' integrity as well as the personal relationships involved. Due to these relationships, it is possible that interviewees could share information they might not otherwise. To safeguard against overexposure, I have worked rigorously to ensure anonymity and to reflect on my position in relation to participants throughout.

The limitations of this research are clearly defined and evident through examination of the research sample and the size. The sample selected, while made on a fitness for-purpose basis and to match a thoughtful matrix of experiences, captures only a small portion of experience of the many participants in policy development. Despite these limitations the research has provided valuable insights which may have implications for both policy and practice. This is an innovative exploratory study which can form the basis of considerable further work in this area.

3.7 Conclusion

This chapter presents my methodological approach to undertaking this research. It iterates a research paradigm (social constructionist/interpretivist position and advocacy/participatory), which informed an approach (qualitative). It further outlined a research strategy to inviting participants, collecting data and analysing it through a combination of inductive and deductive thematic analysis. It presented ethical considerations, actions taken to safeguard the process and the reflexivity which was required.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents findings from interviews conducted with fifteen individuals which were carried out for this study. Each person had been involved in processes to affect change in the position of LGBTI+ young people in Irish public policy 1993-2015 and was invited to take part in this study based on this involvement.

Data is presented to respond to the research questions:

How did Civil Society influence public policy in relation to LGBTI+ young people in Ireland 1993-2015?

It also addresses the following two sub-questions:

a) How did LGBTI+ young people become included in Irish public policy (what changed and why)?
b) What lessons can these insights offer Irish civil society organisations seeking to influence policy change?

As some, but not all, interviewees did not want to be identified in this study all contributors are presented anonymously using pseudonyms, as outlined in the previous research design chapter,

This study adapts John Kingdon's (2003) Agenda Setting Framework and uses it in two ways to organise this findings chapter. Firstly, interviewees were invited to participate in the study on the basis that they are or were part of the policy community. As discussed in the literature review, Paul Pross (1995 p. 265) describes policy communities as 'groupings of government agencies, pressure groups, media people, and individuals, including academics, who, for various reasons, have an interest in a particular policy field and attempt to influence it'.

Secondly, drawing on Kingdon's (2003) framework this chapter is laid out in three parts. The first focuses on the 'problem stream' and the processes of defining issues as 'problems' and persuading decision-makers to pay attention to them. The second is the 'policy stream' and refers to the processes by which solutions to problems are generated, including through interactions between various members of the policy community. The third is the 'politics stream' and refers to work with the political system to enact policy change. As

the focus of this study is on the 'contribution of Civil Society' each of these sections focuses on how civil society organisations 'inserted' themselves into each of these streams.

In addition to the presentation of data from the fifteen key informants, data from a documentary analysis of LGBTI+ civil society organisation BeLonG To and newspaper articles are introduced to provide confirmatory information. This documentary supplementation and confirmation also aided in the development of the thesis' analysis.

4.2 The Problem Stream

This section presents findings which relate to how civil society presented LGBTI+ youth issues in such ways as to get them onto the policy agenda. It is about civil society's work to define the 'policy problems' in need of 'policy solutions' and the strategies which it undertook to get these issues noticed and accepted. This includes discussion of issue framing, movement building and strategies to change public opinion.

4.2.1   Civil Society as Initiators

Concepts and descriptions of Civil Society have been outlined in the literature. Although there are many nuances to it, here its function is seen to be in 'safeguarding, protecting, and promoting the position of marginalized or excluded groups' and a space in which 'people mobilize to bargain, negotiate, or coerce other actors in order to advance and promote their interests' (Banks et al 2015).

Amongst interviewees the role of Civil Society in being initiators and drivers of policy change was highlighted, with one participant saying:

> Civil society organisations - they're always the drivers of change, it's very rare for change to come from within the system. So, you have NGOs and at certain points, you can have key champions within the system, but it's almost always the NGO's who drive the issues.   (Michelle, Civil Society)

Participants also spoke about the social analysis which LGBTI+ civil society groups brought. The coalition-building developed amongst LGBTI+ and other minority groups in the 1990s was discussed, as was the later analysis for working with LGBTI+ young people in the 2000's through BeLonG To:

> I think the approach BeLonG To took in terms of always having that focus on the young person in the context of bigger society and a focus on what needs to change in that society so these young people are in a better place … That identification of where the change needs to happen in the broader policy arena.
>
> (Michelle, Civil Society)

A number of participants lamented the lack of political leadership, with one placing that in contrast with leadership from civil society:

> I don't see Political leadership for Equality, really. I can't see political leadership for equality anywhere. There was a little bit of political expediency in it along the way. So, do I get that excited about the politicians who did it, I don't really. What I do get excited about are those social movements and the societal leadership.
>
> (Peter, Public Service)

Issues related to the 'legitimacy' and 'authenticity' of civil society groups emerged in the data. A strong component of these perceptions related to LGBTI+ civil society groups being from and of the community they advocated for.

Speaking about BeLonG To one participant said:

> If BeLonG To had not been there to lead the way, that others then could follow. I mean a lot of what's happened wouldn't have happened, because no organization I think would have … taken it on … even if they [mainstream organisations], had been committed to it and would have taken it on they wouldn't have had the legitimacy to take on the issues.
>
> (Bridget, Civil Society)

Civicus World Alliance for Citizen Participation maintain that 'legitimacy refers to perceptions by key stakeholders that the existence, activities and impacts of Civil Society Organisations are justifiable and appropriate in terms of central social values and institutions' and that 'an organisation is legitimate if it makes sense, has respectable people, competence and knowledge of the topic (organisational Curriculum Vitae)' (Civicus, 2010).

Interviewees from the public service spoke about the legitimacy of LGBTI+ civil society groups in terms of competence and knowledge:

> I think the LGBTI+ work of BeLonG To was based on expertise. I think some of the work now, I see it now, is based on ownership. And that is an interesting dynamic in terms of the ethics and the ideology.
>
> (Sean, Public Servant)

The same interviewee who worked as a civil servant in a government department spoke about how LGBTI+ civil society provided a critical space to explore social justice approaches to working:

> appreciation of equality issues and principles of social justice…one thing that people who I think are committed to principles of social justice [about], they've interrogated that… if [people] haven't interrogated, I would say…they shouldn't be in the space. They need to interrogate and challenge themselves and others.   (Sean, Public Service)

4.2.2   Framing

In this section, the significance of how LGBTI+ issues, and LGBTI+ youth issues, in particular, were framed in policy terms over the period 1993-2015 are discussed. Fraught with complexity and contestation, this section presents the significance of how and why certain policy 'framing' was used by civil society groups at specific moments in time and how such framings were received within the policy community.

Framing Gay and Lesbian Identity Post-Decriminalisation

Framing gay and lesbian people's issues post-decriminalisation, in an environment where the first principle of there being a legitimate gay and lesbian identity was not widely accepted, was *hugely challenging to civil society groups. As one interviewee put it:*

> At that time, we were…searching for policy windows if you like, literally to make that case [for] the acceptance of there being a lesbian and gay identity.

The same participant continued:

> …decriminalisation…was about decriminalising sexual relations between men, but there's more to gay identity than sexual relations and between men, you know, it's a life…you're whole being is affected, that's what we were trying to put forward.   (John, Civil Society)

The first step in this acknowledgement of identity was naming it. As one participant remembered:

> One of the first meetings that I had…with the Equality Authority, the big issue they [LGB Civil Society] brought was… 'We want you to say, gender, marital status, family status, sexual orientation… I mean it was at one level a fairly petty ask. And yet at another level, quite a profound ask…thinking back on the battle we had to get… LGB named and the Social Partnership Agreement shows why they were so concerned on it.
>   (Peter, Public Service)

Interviewees who were involved in the development of an equality infrastructure in Ireland, and who were focused on finding ways of framing LGBTI+ rights spoke about 'shoehorning' and uncertainties in relation to presenting the issues within accepted policy narratives. This sense of using available opportunities while searching for the correct framing and narrative is a significant finding in this research.

One such narrative was poverty, and the Combat Poverty Agency, with the Gay and Lesbian Equality Network, developed the research report *Poverty, Lesbians and Gay Men: The Economic and Social Effects of Discrimination* in 1995.

> It was shoehorning and I don't think it was accepted by some people at all. And even now, it's a stretch because lesbian and gay people are a large population group rather than that being a group where all people are poor. So, what we had tried to do was build the human rights aspect to poverty - that poverty impacts even more severely on lesbian and gay people who were already poor, and then increase the risk of poverty for those who are, for example, coming out and might lose their jobs. I suppose it was radical at the time of bringing in a much stronger focus on the causes of poverty and the structure that actually creates poverty.   (John, Civil Society)

While aligning with available policy opportunities, interviewees also reflected on the development of coalitions between LGB groups and other minority groups to find framings which better reflected the needs of their communities:

> There was a kind of parallel process going on as well, which is the kind of coalition-building if you like, you know, that Pavee Point and GLEN and disability groups…were coming together…creating common cause and, and that was all generated by the more radical elements within each movement if you like…so everyone was trying to get out of that poverty model.
> (John, Civil Society)

Another framing, which in part moved away from the 'poverty model' was Community Development. The same interviewee said,

> The reason we kept focusing on it, [Community Development], was actually that it was the only game in town if you like, once the equality legislation was through, there was a sense of 'well we reached a point' because no one was thinking of marriage - there wasn't marriage anywhere in the world so people weren't thinking in those terms at all. We were trying to think what could we do in Ireland on the ground and the community development space was the only thing available.   (John, Civil Society)

Equality and Human Rights Framing

The significance of Ireland's Equality legislation was discussed by many interviewees. The Equality Employment Act came into effect in 1998, five years after decriminalisation. As one interviewee puts it:

> the Employment Equality Act…I think it was just so much easier to do than decriminalisation. Decriminalisation broke the back of something, that was a big ideological thing and it was a harder thing to argue for it because with decriminalisation you're arguing about sex and Irish people were awkward about talking about sex. So then the Employment Equality Act was a little bit easier to argue about because we moved forward… it was harder for people to say, 'well I think gay people should be sacked'… or you know…I'm sure some people felt we shouldn't be in it, but it was harder to exclude... at the time.
> (John, Civil Society)

As another interviewee put it

> The Equal Status Act in terms of specifically naming sexual orientation was really important. This was then used across policy, which often talked about 'upholding the spirit as well as the letter of the Equal Status Act'.
> (Bridget, Civil Society)

The particular significance of the Equal Status Act 2000 in the development of interventions to support LGBTI+ young people emerged strongly. This included in the development of LGBTI+ youth services and actions to combat homophobic and transphobic bullying in schools.

As one respondent, who worked within the government department which provided the funding to establish BeLonG To put it:

> The Equal Status Act was used as a justification, so without that that piece of policy there, that project [BeLonG To] probably wouldn't have stood out from all the other applications that we would have received. So that was the reason for the funding there. It says in light of the above, it was decided to include this application in the 2003 funding allocations…when we were looking at the Equal Status Act for 2000… we recognised…that there was an onus on the department … to support minority groups.
> (Mary, Public Service)

Interviewees also spoke about how the Equal Status Act provided a much-needed lever for interventions in schools, the site of much homophobic and transphobic violence:

> There were champions in the department [of Education] and schools, but they needed something so they could say 'we have no choice'. So it isn't that they

didn't want to do it, but they could use it as a lever saying, 'It's not that I'm really mad keen on this but we've no choice', which is a much more powerful argument. (Peter, Public Service)

The lever provided by the Equal Status Act was discussed in The Irish Times in October 2006 in an article reporting on the BeLonG To and Equality Authority campaign *Making Schools Safe*. That article reported on Chief Executive of the Equality Authority, Niall Crowley, highlighting that victimisation on the grounds of gender or sexuality was prohibited under the Equal Status Acts. He is reported as saying

> A person who is responsible for the operation of an educational institution must ensure that any person who had a right to be there is not harassed or sexually harassed…the responsible person will be liable for the harassment or sexual harassment unless he or she took reasonable, practicable steps to stop it. (The Irish Times, October 26, 2006)

LGBTI+ Young People at Intersections

The position of LGBTI+ young people at intersections of discrimination was recognised in interviews. As one interviewee put it:

> Because to move forward progressively on an LGBT youth issue is harder than on an LGBT issue, I think. There's a double whammy of stigma and stereotyping…the idea of exploring the intersections as the road forward I think is really interesting. (Peter, Public Service)

As outlined in the literature above this 'double whammy' restricts LGBTI+ young people economic independence and geographic mobility, key factors to avoiding homophobia and transphobia. Generations of LGBTI+ left home, and indeed the country so as to be safe to come out, these options are not available when you are a teenager. It also restricts their political participation - under eighteen-year-olds being barred from voting and hence have limited political influence.

Framing Positive Image of Being LGBTI+ to Young People and Families

With the establishment of BeLonG To much consideration was given to how to present LGBTI+ youth identity to varying audiences – including LGBTI+ young people themselves, families, schools, politicians and policy makers.

The decision to present explicitly positive images of LGBTI+ identity, to begin the work of counteracting narratives of hopelessness, was discussed by research interviewees.

> I remember that there was a desire within BeLonG To, to convey positivity, that positive representation, or affirmation and telling positive stories was always important. Right from the very beginning. And definitely, when you think about those early groups in BeLonG To, the need for positivity to counter all of the challenges and the stigma that these young people were facing. The idea that it can't all be doom and gloom that actually this is something that should be celebrated. (Olivia, Civil Society)

Interviewees spoke considerably about witnessing the positivity in public campaigns (which are discussed in section 5.5), at LGBTI+ youth events and at the "Gay Prom", a celebratory ball which occurred for three years in a row 2009-2011 (The Irish Times, 2008).

The Prom, while a celebration, was also created because LGBTI+ young people were often not allowed by their schools to bring their same-sex partners to their Debs Balls. Many were experiencing harassment in school and didn't have the opportunity to attend their own debs, due to factors such as bullying, feeling unsafe, or unwelcome by their school.

This need to highlight the reality of the homophobia and transphobia as experienced by LGBTI+ young people, so as to change attitudes and change government policy while also maintaining the message that it is positive to be LGBTI+ and young, was an ongoing challenge and friction which is identified in this research.

For some key informants, the shift towards presenting a positive image of what it meant to be young and LGBTI+ was of great significance due to their own experience of growing up in a previous generation in Ireland:

> When I was growing up, I was an isolated gay boy. I had no sense of community or that I was part of an oppressed group. I thought I was wrong, damaged and that I deserved everything I got (Peter, Civil Society).

Framing Bullying and School

All interviewees discussed issues of homophobic and transphobic bullying in schools. In many ways, it can be seen as the defining policy issue when it comes to LGBTI+ young people.

The emerging and practice-based evidence of the extent of homophobic and transphobic violence in schools created a strong sense that action needed to be taken to support LGBTI+ young people in those spaces.

As one participant put it:

> …Homophobic bullying, family rejection, peer rejection … all of the issues that interplay with that, like homelessness, addiction, self-harm, and it was just huge. It just felt huge. It's hard to look back, actually, even to just think how it was in 2003, never mind 1983. It was a … nightmare.
>
> (Andrew, Civil Society)

Other interviewees who spent time with LGBTI+ youth groups also remarked on this sense of urgency in response to the dire situation young people were living in:

> I got a sense that in Ireland there were young people that were really struggling and having a really terrible time, at home and at school.
>
> (Olivia, Civil Society)

The issue of bullying had a currency and resonance within the LGBTI+ community itself. One interviewee reflected on why he felt the LGBTI+ community was so supportive of efforts to address bullying in school:

> I mean 2003 was 10 years after decriminalisation. And the youth thing had always been for me tied up with bullying, because I was so badly bullied when I was a kid. I was very invested in having a voice somehow, some kind of voice. I wanted to voice the issue and I wanted to voice my own experience because I knew that my own experience wasn't isolated and I knew that it was still happening to other children.
>
> (Enda, Civil Society)

The same respondent went on to surmise about BeLonG To's positive reception in the LGBTI+ community:

> I'd say the support for BeLonG To itself…is rooted in…we've all been young, we've all been alienated, particularly in rural areas where we were. We grew up on an island that was monochrome and overtly oppressive, you know, well, I know many, many of my contemporaries who were really badly bullied at school.
>
> (Enda, Civil Society)

The resonance of homophobic and transphobic bullying within broader society is reflected in a number of media articles from this time. Of particular note is the reporting of a speech from then President of Ireland Mary McAleese at the launch of a network of

LGBTI+ youth groups. An Irish Times article from October 2008 headlined *'President Mary McAleese has called for an end to the bullying of gay people in Ireland',* described how the President 'urged those present to 'refuse to go along with the loud voices of prejudice', saying that 'being gay was not a choice, but more akin to a life discovery'. The same article reports that "the President also made the link between her own experience growing up with sectarianism in Belfast and homophobia, saying that the two were first cousins. 'Nobody should have to suffer because of their sexual orientation in this country'" (The Irish Times, October 31, 2008).

Bullying was a reality for young people, it resonated with the LGBTI+ community and it was a language which was understood. It was also a 'policy hook' which was underpinned by existing legislation and policy. As another participant said:

> If marriage was the issue, then schools were the locus. That's why that [Stop Homophobic Bullying in School Campaign 2008] was so important. In terms of culture, schools were and probably still are rotten with homophobia and that's a real issue…That's why I was really pleased to be getting into schools. Because I felt the Equal Status Act applied to it, I think the homophobia in schools was actually illegal, but we couldn't get people to take cases [under the Equal Status Act] So bullying was the route in all right yeah.
>
> <div align="right">(Peter, Public Service)</div>

The legal and policy context was not overtly obvious to the education system and took some time and output from civil society - including seminars, research, toolkits, campaigns and submissions. This work served to crystalize this understanding and by 2013 the case for schools' legal obligation to prevent homophobic and transphobic bullying was made explicit in the Department of Education's Action Plan on Bullying and mandatory guidelines. 'Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools' (Department of Education and Skills, September 2013). These procedures have a legal basis in the Education and Welfare Act 2000 and as such all schools are legally obliged to implement them. The procedures say, that schools must include homophobic and transphobic bullying in their definition of bullying and must document and report on such incidents. Importantly these procedures also oblige schools to take proactive, educational and preventative measures to create school cultures that are safe for LGBTI+ young people.

As one interviewee who was involved in developing the Action Plan on Bullying and mandatory guidelines put it:

Schools knew they needed to do this. The case was well made. What the plan and procedures did was to move the discussion from 'we should do this' to 'we have to do this now'. (Louise, Public Service)

As an important insight into the shifting status of LGBTI+ young people in Irish public policy – framing the issues as 'bullying' provided the legal a policy framework needed for the government to place legal obligations on schools to support LGBTI+ young people.

Mental Health Framing

As a result of advocacy from LGBTI+ civil society groups, LGBTI+ people were named as an 'at-risk group' requiring additional intervention from the state in the area of suicide prevention in *Reachout: National Strategy for Action on Suicide Prevention 2005-2014* (BeLonG To 2004).

The relevant sections of the strategy simply read:

Marginalised groups often experience discrimination and can be vulnerable to self-harming behaviour. Such groups include lesbians, gays, bisexual and transgender people, asylum seekers, homeless people and the traveller community…according to the BeLonG To Youth organisation lesbians, gays, bisexual and transgender people are more likely to be medicated for depression and are more likely to engage in alcohol misuse, drug abuse and deliberate self-harm. (BeLonG To 2004)

In turn, two actions were included in the National strategy:

15.1 Determine the risk of engaging in suicidal behaviour associated with belonging to a marginalised group.
15.2 Develop services, supports and information/education resources to improve mental health and well-being and reduce any increased risk of suicidal behaviour among marginalised people.
(Health Service Executive 2005 p. 37)

Referring to the significance of the strategy as a lever to further systemic change one interviewee said:

I mean I know the HSE… poo-poos government policy, but you know, you could always bring people back to say, well it's government policy. You know, that supports what I'm doing and if people are then refused, or said, you can't do it, then you can refer back to the policy. So, I think that was the real breakthrough when we got that section on the LGBT community into the policy document. And I was looking at it this morning. I mean it was, it was fairly kind of motherhood and apple pie, it gave us the leverage to get into a conversation, you know? (James, Public Servant)

In 2005, this was the first major national strategy in which LGBT young people are included and it is significant that it is in the area of mental health. As one respondent said:

> It was just the reality of the matter. We were working with young people who were self-harming and I know too many LGBT people who have completed suicide. It was so important – that inclusion in 2005. It was taking the issue seriously and it, of course, resulted in a lot of support that would never overwise have been there for queer youth. (Andrew, Civil Society)

An increasing mainstream recognition of the mental health impact of homophobia and transphobia is evident in significant media coverage of the issue. One such article from the Irish Times in 2009, refers to this author's contribution to the Oireachtas Committee on Health, which stated

> Michael Barron, director of BeLonG To, a national service for gay and transgender young people, said a significant minority of young LGBT people were at risk of self-harm and suicide, largely because of the stress associated with prejudice and discrimination. "The Oireachtas committee report clearly recognises the risks for LGBT people and for people from marginalised groups," he said. (Irish Times, June 11, 2009)

Further advocacy from LGBTI+ Civil Society groups resulted in sustained mental health-focused investment in the LGBTI+ community. Indeed, from 2005 to 2015, the HSE's National Office for Suicide Prevention invested over two million euros in LGBTI+ community organisations, making it one of the largest funders in the LGBTI+ community in the decade leading up to the Marriage Equality Referendum. (Please see *Appendix 8* for details of HSE's National Office for Suicide Prevention investment in BeLonG To and GLEN).

It is also significant that as well as funding services the HSE's National Office for Suicide Prevention funded BeLonG To to 'provide a national voice' for LGBTI+ young people – which allowed for the development of a broader LGBTI+ youth advocacy platform. In this way, the framing of issues concerning suicide prevention and mental health promotion allowed for broader engagement with systemic change, advocacy for policy change and research.

4.2.3   Movement Building / Youth Work

The role of direct youth work with LGBTI+ young people in influencing the policy agenda emerged as a significant theme in the data analysis. Youth work practise itself

was discussed as was the fact that the primary advocacy organisation in the space was also a direct youth work service.

One interviewee, whose son attended BeLonG To, remarked on the importance of the organisation´s approach to youth work:

> Because I know when my son went, young people weren't met with this message, 'we're going to help you with your problems'. Which could easily have been the approach – 'oh you poor thing'. But it was that the young people don't have any problems, it's the world around you, that needs the fixing. And you can work with us to do that.   (Michelle, Civil Society)

As one interviewee put it:

> What I would have seen in BeLonG To, it didn't grandstand and try and speak or (carry out) mediation on behalf of young people and their problems. And it didn't give a fatalistic presentation… It was really based on the interests and the needs and abilities and aspirations of children and young people and I thought 'That's what very good youth work is.   (Sean, Public Service)

One of the striking features from the data is an acknowledgement of intentional youth empowerment practices. One interview participant recalled:

> It really struck me in the moment of being on that march [1] with the young people, not…only where they empowered enough to go on the march and say we're gay and we are not having this, But they had the facility to communicate with each other to, to make that happen…it was in that moment, it was very clear to me that that was a huge shift in terms of not only engagement but of empowerment and like I could understand what you were doing in BeLonG To suddenly more, because it was about facilitation for empowerment, for self-empowerment.   (Enda, Civil Society)

This organised visibility was further commented on in relation to public events and campaigns.

> I remember the launch of the campaign[2] and the participation of BeLonG To members, quite powerfully all right. And it was very meaningful. People were really participating and sadly, that's a little bit rare in the professionalised world of community and voluntary work. And I'm not saying, BeLonG To wasn't professional, it was professional, but it was

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[1] The march referred to here was a demonstration in response to several attacks on LGBTI+ people outside of an LGBTI+ bar in Dublin in 2005

[2] The interviewee is referring to the launch by Minister for Youth Affairs Sile De Valera of the Equality Authority and BeLonG To Stop Homophobic Bullying in School Campaign in 2006

professional to the extent that it could also live with the chaos and the reality
of peoples' lives. (Peter, Public Service)

This space for young people to politically engage was identified as movement building
by another research participant:

> I believe that it played a momentous role in that change…in that, it has
> professionalised the idea of youth engagement and youth groups and the
> spreading of youth groups across Ireland, the connectivity of youth groups to
> each other across Ireland - spearheading that movement of youth groups. It
> is all of one piece - it's a movement up, it's a movement of people upwards
> (Enda, Civil Society)

Meeting and hearing directly from LGBTI+ young people had an impact on policy makers
and politicians. One policy maker who contributed to this research recalled:

> I remember going down to Galway for a launch – it was with the President
> there. I remember [going to] to an LGBT youth group in the evening and I
> was really struck by - here's a group of people, young people who really,
> really care, and really want to do something. And it's very, it's kind of rare
> sometimes that you get that kind of connection with, you know, with a
> campaign and with an initiative. And that kind of helped too.
> (James, Public Servant)

The launch referred to was for BeLonG To's National Development Project – which was
a programme to support the development of LGBTI+ youth projects throughout the
country. It began in 2007, was launched by President Mary McAleese in 2008, and
supported over twenty specific LGBTI youth projects by 2015.

The development of an infrastructure of LGBTI+ youth work projects began in with
support from the HSE's National Office for Suicide Prevention for the express purpose
of tackling isolation and amongst LGBTI+. BeLonG To's 2008 strategy noted:

> Since early 2007 BeLonG To has been working to support the development
> of designated LGBT youth groups outside of Dublin. This work has been
> carried out through using BeLonG To's 'Start-Up Pack', which is a manual
> for good practice of establishing and sustaining a group. It contains a step-
> by-step guide and an accreditation scheme. Once a group is established it
> works with BeLonG To on gathering evidence of Quality practice in 6 areas.
> When this is completed successfully, they become part of the BeLonG To
> Network of LGBT youth groups. (BeLonG To, 2008, p. 35)

The significance of youth work as a professional practice also emerged in the data, which is of particular significance when considered beside the 'moral panic about youth' which opponents of LGBTI+ rights engaged in, as highlighted in the introduction and literature review chapters above. As one participant stated:

> The youth work was absolutely crucial. First of all, because it enabled BeLonG To to do its work. but also I remember at a parents' evening one of the parents, it was a father actually, and he kept asking (a youth worker) about her qualifications and she was able to talk about the standards that applied around how you work with young people in a youth work setting.
>
> (Michelle, Civil Society)

The effect of meeting with LGBTI+ youth groups was also commented on by politicians:

> I remember being in a very small town being presented by the LGBT youth group with the work they were doing on LGBT rights. I thought this is amazing. I was going around the country because I lived all over the place…everywhere I went I was conscious - there would be in many, many places, it was urban and rural - youth groups were sensitive to LGBT youth issues or that had special LGBT initiatives. (Claire, Politician)

4.2.4 Strategy

As mentioned in the section above, in 2006 the HSE's National Office for Suicide Prevention made a significant financial investment in BeLonG To which allowed the organisation to take on a stronger role as 'a national voice for LGBT young people and their issues' (BeLonG To, 2008).

The following year the One Foundation approached BeLonG To, making an initial strategic planning investment in the organisation. The One Foundation became aware of BeLonG To through both organisations work within the youth mental health space. The initial investment was spent on a year-long strategic planning process, subsequently, the foundation invested €1.4 million over six years 2008-2013.

As one interviewee put it:

> What happened couldn't have happened without the One Foundation. I just see that as the before-and-after [the One Foundation investment] The amount of time, expertise and money they invested…to support us to develop long-term strategic plans. The organisation was…transformed. Services were doubling annually and the advocacy work really took off. It was all driven by having spent all that time planning, building communications and political

strategies - long-term advocacy strategy looking at where we wanted for LGBT young people. (Andrew, Civil Society)

BeLonG To produced two strategic plans over this period 2007-2011 and 2011-2013, which contained much of the advocacy for policy change goals which were pursued (Lyons 2013).

This strategy was also commented on by an interviewee from the Public Service.

> But certainly, none of the other special interest groups or organizations made the same impact, you know. Maybe they weren't coming to us. They were just busy doing their own…piece. The way maybe BeLonG To was originally when it started in 2003 before [there was] obviously a clear long-term strategy that [BeLonG To] could speak with us and others about.
>
> (Mary, Public Service)

The 2008-2011 strategy contained a clear articulation of plans to affect structural and policy change. Please see *Appendix 9* for an overview of BeLonG To's 2008-2011 Strategy.

4.2.5   Campaigns and Narrative Change

The significance of various public awareness campaigns was widely discussed by interviewees. These included campaigns in the early and mid-2000s to address homophobic bullying ('So Gay', 2004 and Stop Homophobic Bullying in School, 2006) and the ongoing Stand Up! Support Your LGBTI+ Friends campaign (2010- ongoing annually). These campaigns are depicted in **Figure 12**, overleaf.

A number of television documentaries about the LGBTI+ community had featured on Irish television in the 1990s. These included an RTE feature in the 1990s which focused on being lesbian and gay in rural Ireland and *Did Anyone Notice Us* in 2000.

The television documentary series *Growing Up Gay* in 2010, which focused specifically on LGBT young people, was described as a 'watershed' moment on the way to Marriage Equality by one interviewee who said:

> One of the watershed moments in the timeline for marriage equality was the Growing up Gay documentary timing. This was prime time TV. Everyone in Ireland watched it and if they didn't they heard about it. It really demystified, personalized, humanized and made it real… I think more than any TV show or any person in the media in Ireland had gotten before and this was in people's living rooms and they were ordinary kids from ordinary towns and villages all over Ireland. And it was just, a lot of rural kids as well as urban

kids and so it was just phenomenal because there was somebody in that show that everybody watching could relate to. (Maria, Civil Society)

Speaking of the decision to make the documentary one respondent said:

> Well, it was a really significant decision to do it, for it to go out. I remember afterwards…the almost astonishment that the response was so universally positive. All of a sudden there was no barrage of horrible hate. And that's huge because it was moving from the silence and… where through all that many years of work it became possible for LGBT young people to speak out in Middle Ireland on prime-time TV. (Michelle, Civil Society)

The significance of the Growing Up Gay documentary series was also highlighted by The Irish Times review which stated

> In Growing Up Gay, director Aoife Kelleher's superbly made documentary, four teenagers talked about the challenges of life in school (hellish), coming out ("you worry that the wrong people are going to find out") and parental reaction (ultimately positive for all of them). The teenagers who took part were astonishingly brave in their honesty, particularly Zoë and Patricia from Ballybeg in Waterford who were both 16. Living in a small town is never easy for anyone who is different – the young people in Dublin had more opportunities to see that they weren't the only teenage gays in the urban village. (The Irish Times, April 24, 2010)

It is a significant finding of this research that the public awareness campaigns described here were undertaken as part of a series of written strategies to 'promote positive recognition of LGBT young people' (BeLonG To 2008, 2011).

2006 Stop Homophobic Bullying in School campaign was launched by Minister for State in Education. This partnership with the Equality Authority was endorsed by the TUI, ASTI, NAPD, the Gardaí, ISSU and NPC.

2010 Growing Up Gay is aired as a two part TV series on national broadcaster RTE

2013 Stand Up! LGBT Awareness Week is supported by Department of Education and Skills as part of Action Plan on Bullying

2004 So Gay! Campaign went to all schools through Institute of Guidance Counsellors and youth services through National Youth Council of Ireland

2010 : Stand Up! LGBT Awareness Week was launched to tackle homophobic & transphobic bullying and to encourage friendship between LGBT young people and other young people, with the support of actor Colin Farrell.

2011 BeLonG To's Stand Up video reaches 1 million viewers on YouTube - goes on to reach 2 million +.

2015 BeLonG To Yes Marriage Equality campaign – coalition of children and youth organisations and online ads (It's in Your Hands and Bring Your Family With You)

Figure 12:   LGBTI+ Youth Awareness Campaigns 2004-2015

One senior public servant contributor stated of the significance of LGBTI+ youth awareness campaigns:

> Stand Up! campaign is huge and is well recognized now, right across government departments. It has increased the profile… of [LGBTI+] young people. That's really huge.   (Mary, Civil Servant)

4.3 The Policy Stream

This section presents findings about how LGBTI+ civil society groups worked with other members of the policy community, in particular with Public Servants, to develop viable policy solutions to the 'problems' which were developed, written and discussed.

4.3.1   Research & Submissions

Setting the Scene – Post-Decriminalisation

Findings demonstrate that the development of an evidence base on the needs, exclusions and rights of LGBTI+ people, and LGBTI+ young people, in particular, was a core element of the work of LGBTI+ civil society groups. This work was in turn core to the development of viable policy solutions which over time changed the status of LGBTI+ young people in public policy. This was an area which posed serious issues for civil society groups in the early 1990s, requiring a reframing in the understanding of how minority communities are researched. As one respondent stated

> They (Civil Society groups) were dealing with the civil servants [who] kept saying, well, you show us the numbers and we'll put protection in place. Our point was always, well you put the protections in place and then we'll show you the numbers because you're not going to see the people until they're protected.   (John, Civil Society)

Here we can see how LGBTI+ civil society groups needed to make visible to others the discrimination and stigma they experienced, so as to be able to bring about change. To do so, however, they had to challenge taken-for-granted processes, such as the process of data gathering itself, which was fraught with biases that disadvantaged a highly stigmatised and not yet fully visible community. In a sense LGBTI+ advocates had to, in

Baachi's sense, 'problematise' (Baachi, 1999, 2009) policy making and question the rules of engagement and seek to alter them so as to be able to progress policy change.

Notwithstanding this considerable challenge, civil society groups did gather evidence on the realities for LGBTI+ people in Ireland. This largely began with the 1995 Combat Poverty / GLEN report discussed in section 5.2 above. This report provided the evidence for the Equality Authority to establish an LGB task group which produced '*Implementing Equality for Lesbians, Gays and Bisexuals'* (Equality Authority, 2002)

As one interviewee who was centrally involved in this process put it:

> I think it had a big impact because we got the National Economic and Social Forum (NESF) to consider the report. We brought state agencies, [government] departments and LGB organizations together to consider every aspect of equality for Lesbians Gays and Bisexuals people. So, it had chapters on health, chapters on employment, chapters on education. And it was agenda-setting in that it was bringing together a lot of knowledge. But putting it all together in the one report. And I think that was an important moment.
>
> (Peter, Public Service)

Evidence to Act in Schools

This 'agenda-setting' function of research created by civil society carried on into later work with the Department of Education and Skills in relation to LGBTI+ young people.

When reflecting on the focus on tackling homophobic and transphobic bullying in the Department of Education's Action Plan on Bullying (2013), one Public Servant interviewee stated:

> …because we did our homework, there was plenty of evidence there to show that LGBT bullying was an issue, and it was an issue for kids in primary and in early secondary, because we had gathered all the research. We could stand over what we said in it. Because that 'Supporting LGBT Lives' research, that had been carried out a couple years beforehand, which showed the full extent of it. So yeah, I think the amount of work that we did ... and I think we did do a lot of work and a lot of research in a short space of time. It paid off.
>
> (Louise, Public Servant)

As discussed in section 5.2 above, civil society invested much time and energy in highlighting the issues of homophobic and transphobic bullying in schools. Core to this work was the creation of an Irish research evidence base. The significance of research into LGBTI+ experiences in schools was highlighted by one respondent who stated:

It [homophobia and transphobia] really happened in the school space. That's what struck me from the [civil society research]. We couldn't get into the schools. We were trying to go in through management and they weren't interested. In terms of you have to have policies in place. It's a legal obligation, that mention LGBT people. We were looking for cases but obviously, no one would come forward. So the research was so important because it showed what was going on, the extent of it all.

(Peter, Public Service)

The research into school experiences initially 'lifted the lid' on what was happening, confirming what young people were saying to youth workers, as outlined in the youth work section (5.3) above, and then also provided justification for policy interventions.

The first public event in this work to build the evidence base for policy change in the Irish education system was a seminar on homophobic bullying held in Trinity College Dublin in 2006. This seminar was held as a partnership between BeLonG To and the Children's Research Centre at Trinity College and brought together Irish education stakeholders and international experts. This seminar deepened the work of the Children's Research Centre at Trinity College in the area and the department would later carry out a significant study into the experiences of LGBTI+ youth in Ireland. The seminar also provided a platform for BeLonG To to develop a relationship with the Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) Support Service of the Department of Education. SPHE went on to co-design the first Department of Education lead teacher training programme on LGBTI+ issues. This programme was delivered to many teachers in the coming years. At this time BeLonG To began to support a number of key research projects. These included a study the School of Education in Trinity College, who explored the experiences of homophobic bullying amongst LGBTI+ young people themselves (Minton et al 2006, 2008).

Research and Drug Use

The inclusion of LGBTI+ people initially in the Dublin North Inner City Drugs Task Force Strategy and later in the National Drugs Strategy was also supported by the development of research in the area. This was highlighted by one interviewee:

I had heard of it anyway locally that the North Inner City Drugs Taskforce was supporting BeLonG To, and was providing funding for BeLonG To. It was one of those ones that…put pressure on The National Drugs Strategy because it was the only drug task force that was specifically providing funding to an LGBT organisation and to do drugs-related work, and there was research to show why. (Michelle, Civil Society)

In 2007, BeLonG To, with the support of the government Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, commissioned and published the report *"Drug Use Amongst Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Young Adults in Ireland"*. The study found that "drug use is widespread amongst LGBT young people and is more prevalent than recorded in comparable studies probing drug taking within the youth population generally" (Sarma 2007 p. 7) a finding which highlighted concerns around isolation, bullying and high-risk behaviours amongst LGBT youth (Sarma 2007 p. 7). National Drugs Strategy (interim) 2009-2016 Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs cited this research two years later.

Research and Mental Health

The largest scale research during this period was the 2009 study 'Supporting LGBT Lives: A Study of the Mental Health and Wellbeing of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender People' (Mayock et al 2009). This research was mentioned by most interviewees for this study. The research was funded by the HSE's National Office for Suicide Prevention and carried out by the Children's Research Centre at Trinity College, who had developed an ongoing working relationship with LGBTI+ civil society. This research co-commissioned by LGBTI+ civil society groups the Gay and Lesbian Equality Network (GLEN) and BeLonG To.

The primary focus of that study was mental health and as such it contains very significant findings about the mental health impact of homophobic and transphobic bullying on LGBTI+ young people. In the researchers' words:

> Those who experienced homophobic bullying and/or lack of acceptance by significant others as a consequence of their LGBT identification were particularly susceptible to depression, self-harm and/or suicidality' (Mayock et al 2009, p.37).

The researchers summarise their findings on the effects of stigmatization, bullying and exclusion on the mental well-being of LGBTI+ people:

> Collectively, the findings on mental health indicators suggest that the stigma and discrimination that surround LGBT identification can result in an extremely negative experience of being LGBT. This causes many to experience depression, and a significant minority to engage in self-harming behaviour and to experience and/or act upon suicidal thoughts.
>
> (Mayock et al 2009, p.104)

The findings of this report were used to frame advocacy for policy change towards LGBTI+ young people over the coming years, including to develop core messages in the campaign for marriage equality in 2015. Irish Times journalist Anna Carey wrote the book *Belong To Yes: Voices from the Campaign* which outlines how messaging about the mental health impacts of homophobia and transphobia on LGBTI+ young people's mental health was core to marriage equality messaging (Carey, 2015).

The use of research and practice evidence in the form of submission and advocacy to government was discussed. As well as developing the research evidence base, it is important to note that interviewees spoke about LGBTI+ Civil Society groups providing government departments and ministers with evidence in the form of briefings and submissions.

> Under safe and protected there's the reference again to the LGBT youth and homophobic bullying in schools and other settings. So, when I was trying to draft an action for the National Youth Strategy…it was BeLonG To that we went to, to help us word it. (Mary, Public Service)

Evidence-based submissions about the lived experience of LGBTI+ young people, and the solutions they included had a significant impact on government policy. As one Civil Servant said

> The NGO's were providing us with the evidence. The research was undeniable and the submissions were clear about what needed to be done.
> (Louise, Public Service)

4.3.2   Coalitions

The powerful effect of coalitions of organisations, civil society, public service and political emerged as a finding in this study.

The work of the Community Platform and later the Community and Voluntary Pillar (Larragy, 2014) in the 1990s in perusing an expansive vision of Equality in Social Partnership negotiations and the development of Ireland's Equality legislation was compellingly described by some interviewees in this study:

> I would have probably been part of forming the community platform, which was to try and be a launching pad to put representatives into social partnership. But without every organisation having to be there. I believe very much in everybody shouldn't have to be at the table, but the person at the table had to be trusted to bring forward all the agendas. So that was the principle of that. (Peter, Civil Service)

Other coalitions discussed included for the *Stop Homophobic Bullying Campaign* 2008 (BeLonG To, Equality Authority, Pobal, The Gardai, The National Association of Principals, the National Parents Council and the Teachers Union of Ireland) and the ever-expanding coalition of the *Stand Up! LGBT Awareness Week* – which includes the Department of Education and Skills and the Department of Children and Youth Affairs.

This coalition-building is seen as a process of developing policy solutions to issues affecting LGBTI+ young people. It is the bringing together the various state and non-state actors with whom LGBTI+ young people interact and in so doing agreeing a shared agenda, including to combat homophobia and transphobia and to ensure equality of outcome from services.

One interviewee acknowledged this history of religious involvement with youth work as an early barrier to progress on LGBTI+ youth rights, and the extent of patient coalition building that LGBTI+ civil society engaged in:

> You have to remember how conservative the youth sector was – even still in 2003. The influence of Catholic Social Teaching was so present. When the NYCI supported the BeLonG To So Gay! Campaign against homophobic bullying in 2004 – there was considerable push back. When you think about it there wasn't even youth sector consensus on the Children's Referendum in 2012.   (Bridget, Civil Society)

The coalition of equality, youth and children's right's organisation which BeLonG To convened to campaign for a yes vote in the 2015 marriage equality referendum was widely discussed.

BeLonG To YES was a coalition of children's and youth organisations supporting a yes vote in the marriage equality referendum. It included the ISPCC, Barnardos, Foróige, Youth Work Ireland, the Migrant Rights Centre, Headstrong, Yes Equality, the Children's Rights Alliance, Pavee Point, EPIC, the Institute of Guidance Counsellors, the UNESCO Child and Family Research Centre and the National Youth Council of Ireland. (Barron, 2016).

The respectful approach to this coalition-building was highlighted – one which drew on longstanding relationships, aligned the coalition with individual organisation's missions was highlighted by several interviewees. As one put it:

> It was the work behind the scenes about awareness-raising and education of the youth and children's rights sector you know that we didn't have access to. Because of the years and years of working with people building trust because

you go to their stuff so they go to yours, they know you, you're a trusted
group, a trusted brand.   (Maria, Civil Society)

This respectful approach to coalition building is verified by two letters, accessed for this study, from BeLonG To to the National Youth Council of Ireland (NYCI) and to the Children´s Rights Alliances requesting that they join the BeLonG To Yes Coalition for Marriage Equality. (BeLonG To 2015 (a) and BeLonG To 2015 (b)). I wrote both letters. In the letter to the National Youth Council of Ireland, reference is made to the fact that the organisation had previously refused to join the coalition, when their board voted against involvement. The letter respectfully asks them to reconsider:

> The National Youth Council of Ireland has shown great leadership in the youth sector and we really believe your experience and standing would lend great credibility to this campaign. We ask that the council give time to reconsider your previous decision and see fit to lend your support to this important battle for young people's rights in Ireland. A 'Yes' vote in the Civil Marriage Equality Referendum is a hugely important opportunity to tell LGBT young people that Ireland and Irish people value and respect them. They really need this! (BeLonG To, 2015 b)

Following a full NYCI membership vote on the issue the organisation joined the coalition. The active process of securing this support was carried out over many months.

The process of securing the support of the Children´s Rights Alliance for the BeLonG To Yes Coalition for Marriage Equality was similarly carried out over many months. It began when I was voted by members to join the board of the organisation in the summer of 2014. In February 2015 I formally wrote to the Children´s Rights Alliance requesting their membership of the coalition. The letter to the organisation appealed to their core mission and included the paragraph:

> We believe that the involvement of the Children's Rights Alliance in this coalition would be critical to its success and that your involvement would complement the core mission of your organisation, "To realise the rights of children in Ireland through securing the full implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child" as well as to a number of your main objectives, including "To act as a charity for the benefit of children in Ireland regardless of race, religious belief, gender, family status, sexual orientation, disability, social and economic status, membership of the Traveller Community (BeLonG To, 2015 b)

The importance of this coalition in addressing the major outstanding issue of the referendum campaign was outlined by one interviewee:

> …we [the marriage equality movement] managed I think quite successfully to hammer them home on most of the issues around marriage being between a man and a woman, marriage being a church thing, most arguments we won. But the children one always was the difficult one. So, without having the children's rights organizations and the youth organizations out there, we would never have won that argument because you know pitting the gays against 'what about the children?' You know with having the children' rights organizations being able to come back and say 'well yeah, what about the children? What about the gay children?   (Maria Civil Society).

The framing, by BeLonG To, of marriage equality as a campaign about respect and inclusion of LGBTI+ children and young people was seen as centrally important to building a coalition of mainstream organisations. Such groups might otherwise not have considered marriage equality as a youth or children issue. Of particular significance was BeLonG To's work with both Former President and long-time supported Mary McAleese and Taoiseach Enda Kenny – both of whom chose BeLonG To as the site of the major referendum interventions and both of whom expressed concern for LGBTI+ children and young people as their central message.

The Irish Times report on the Taoiseach's meeting with LGBTI+ young people at BeLonG To, including how Mr Kenny met with young LGBT people and 'told them all political parties in Leinster House supported the referendum and said they had 15 days left to ensure people were sufficiently motivated and interested enough to actually vote' The newspaper also reported on how 'One young BeLonG To member, Alison Kershaw, broke down as she told Mr Kenny she had a girlfriend for more than two years and they had a happy, successful relationship' (The Irish Times May 7, 2015)

4.3.4   Relationships with Key Public Service Champions

A member of (non-LGBTI+) civil society spoke about a recurring issue of trust between the public service and civil society – particularly in relation to funding. As they said, "that lack of trust and that adversarial approach actually consumes so much time and energy" (Bridget Civil Society). Interviewees from the public services also expressed caution towards civil society advocacy:

> I think the more I see of things in public policy space… I think there was room for [civil society] advocacy… in a limited space. But the problem is too many people are involved in it and sometimes it can be a refuge, for those people.   (Sean Civil Society)

When it came to LGBTI+ civil society, the important role played by a number of key public servants in the changing status of LGBTI+ young people in public policy was discussed by interviewees. As one said:

> …they [politicians] are being advised by [civil servants] who would have been very supportive. So, it's really important people like Mary in particular who actually writes the speeches, frame the message, push forward the agenda, but they're never seen and they're never given credit to. But these things just don't happen. You need people there who are committed to kind of advancing it.   (Sean, Public Service)

The four interviewees from the Irish public service, (including 'Mary' referred to above), could be described as 'champions' – individuals who worked within their systems to advance the rights of LGBTI+ people. Indeed, study participants from both civil society and politics referred to them by name and spoke of the significance of their actions. These individuals described how they were motivated by a variety of factors – including knowing LGBTI+ family, friends, colleagues; their own social justice analysis and their own 'work ethic'.

They were also motivated to act through the development of positive and trusting relationships with LGBTI+ civil society groups. Interviewees described LGBTI+ civil society groups as 'sound', 'thinkers and doers' with BeLonG To being referred to as 'a solid group…so any proposals coming in from the group would have gotten, due attention'. Another spoke of LGBTI+ civil society groups being open and transparent – "anytime we went to BeLonG To to look for information or support or anything [they] came back with the stuff, without any angle on it".

4.4 The Politics Stream

This research confirms the widely documented reality that politicians are very conscious of public opinion and shifts in cultural attitudes (Kingdon 2003, Roachefort & Cobbs 1995, Sabatier 1988). It also finds that they are motivated to act on the basis of changing public opinion, which in turn was reflected to them by LGBTI+ civil society groups. Further findings indicate that the creation of positive working relationships between civil society and politicians was vital in supporting policy changes.

4.4.1   Public Opinion and Cultural Shifts

A broad social movement away from deference to the Catholic Church, including away from its teachings about LGBTI+ people emerged from interviews. As one politician stated:

> The period of undue deference to religion came to an end. The period of undue deference to political institutions came to an end and, of course, too, the financial institutions, so there was a period where central authority or any received Catholic social teaching were at their most vulnerable. There was real public unrest and a sense that everything was crashing down. I think the atmosphere was very, very positive for social change on issues that the country was fed up with being preached at about. The Ryan Report came out and the Murphy Commission Report had come out and there were just endless reports about the inadequacies of child protection, historically and currently, the Church was caught at a minimum speaking out of both sides of their mouth. Something had to give. Yes, it was all awful, but also ripe for social change.　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　(Michael, Politician)

A number of respondents spoke about the growing unacceptability of Catholic Church teachings on LGBTI+ identity.

> It's really a dramatic change. It's a change in the Catholic Church as well. It's people feeling more independent. I think you'd have to look at the church as well as part of it because undoubtedly the church's attitude toward homosexuality has just marginalized people so much – it was so cruel – and people started to see it as cruel and upsetting. And then the [clerical sex abuse] scandals. That changed the power relationships in our country. And then we had to think 'why have we let this go on for so long' 'why haven't we supported these children and young people.　　　(Claire, Politician)

Across the interviews, a strong connection was made between the unveiling of clerical sex abuse and growing support for the LGBTI+ community, and in particular for LGBTI+ children and young people. The release of the Cloyne Report in 2011, in the early days of a new Fine Gael-Labour Coalition government, provoked an unprecedented response from the Irish state. The report indicated that the papal nuncio, acting on behalf of the Vatican, had refused to cooperate with the criminal investigation.

Taoiseach Enda Kenny's statement on the matter in the Dail in July 2011 is widely viewed as a turning point in church: state relations. His speech included the following passage:

> [T]his is not Rome. Nor is it industrial school or Magdalene Ireland, where the swish of a soutane, smothered conscience and humanity and the swing of a thurible ruled the Irish Catholic world. This is the Republic of Ireland in 2011. It is a republic of laws, rights and responsibilities and proper civic order

where the delinquency and arrogance of a particular version of a particular kind of morality will no longer be tolerated or ignored. (Irish Times, July 20, 2011)

Writing about the significance of this moment, Anne-Marie McAlinden, said

Taoiseach's speech during the parliamentary debates on the Cloyne Report…is a defining moment in Irish political and legal history and in the nature of Church-State relations in Ireland, which offers a unique opportunity to make a permanent break with the past. The previous mixed and ambiguous relationship of Church and State in Ireland has taken a new turn and is no longer amorphous or undefined. Over the last few years, since the abuse scandals first began to emerge, the historically indulgent attitude of the State to the Catholic Church has been dramatically reversed (McAlinden, 2013).

This decreasing deference towards the Catholic Church as a result of the exposure of clerical abuse of children can be seen to have been significantly helpful in improving the status of LGBTI+ young people – particularly when framed within child protection and safety terms, as they were from 2011 onwards.

One interview participant suggested that this may have provoked a response from the Department of Education at this time, as one respondent suggests:

I think that probably as a department they realise the duty of care they have to young people. And I think they began to become generally aware of this after the Ryan Report. I don't know how specifically they'd have talked about but everything that happened in all of the institutions run by the Church which the Department of Education actually had a responsibility for it.

(Michelle, Civil Society)

An interesting feature of the interviews in relation to the education system and the workings of the Department of Education is that interviewees seem to see the work to support LGBTI+ young people in schools and the work to secularise education as part of the same drive.

One political figure reflected on the changing attitudes of civil servants in the Department of Education indicating that Department officials' opinions on LGBTI+ issues and secularism (interchangeable) were similar to those of the rest of a changing Ireland:

The [homophobic] bullying would have fitted into the same kinds of bracket (as secularising schools). It was something that had to change, and we were going to change it. When there are champions, those who are convinced and who are articulate - three or four principal officers and in two cases assistant

secretaries both indicated to me privately that they supported my secularism, and that they themselves were of the same opinion.   (Patrick, Politician)

4.4.2   General Election 2011: A Changing Policy Relationship

The General Election in 2011 brought to power a Fine Gael- Labour Coalition Government, in which long-serving Labour TD, Ruairi Quinn became the Minister for Education. Just two years earlier the publication of the Report of the Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse (CICA), (commonly known as the Ryan Report), detailed the shocking scale of physical, sexual and emotional abuse suffered by children in institutions run by a range of Catholic Orders, but which were funded and inspected by the Department of Education. Responding as Labour Party opposition spokesperson on Education in 2009, Mr Quinn said of the Department of Education and Skills:

> There is a continuing culture of deferment and obedience to the Catholic Church and its religious orders in the Department of Education and Science that has continually frustrated getting answers to simple questions. Either officials in the department are members of secret societies such as the Knights of St Columbanus and Opus Dei and have taken it upon themselves to protect the interests of these clerical orders.   (Regan, M., The Irish Examiner 2009)

Remarking on how Minister Quinn championed LGBTI+ issues and challenged religious ethos issues one Civil Servant respondent commented:

> I suppose you might not get every minister who would have wanted to do what Ruairi Quinn wanted to do, because he was an atheist and he was quite happy to rattle people's cages on issues. So not every minister would have maybe taken it on as ... The minister was determined to try and drive change in the system, so maybe other ministers might not have pursued as many issues in that area as he did.   (Louise, Public Service)

In 2011 the new Government established the first dedicated Department to focus on children and young people which also provided an opportunity to further the development of LGBTI+ youth policy.

> It was the first department [for Children and Youth Affairs] …it was a moment in time: a new Department, a New Minister, somebody with a background with families, children, background in social work, community development, equality, particularly.   (Claire, Politician)

The new department was to focus on delivering on a number of commitments in the Programme for Government, including:

- The holding of a Referendum in relation to the rights of children under the Constitution.

- The establishment of a Child and Family Support Agency on a statutory basis in order to fundamentally reform the delivery of child protection services and remove responsibility for these from the Health Service Executive (HSE).

- Implementing the recommendations of the Ryan Report, including putting the Children First: National Guidance on a statutory footing and legislating for the use of 'soft information' (Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, 2011 p. viii)[3].

These commitments were strongly focused on 'child protection' in the wake of the Ryan Report. This focus on child protection provided a significant link to work to combat homophobia and transphobia. In July 2013 the Special Rapporteur on Child Protection, (a position appointed by the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs) in his sixth annual report to Government highlighted homophobic and transphobic bullying, it's impact on children and young people, saying:

> It is recommended that homophobic and transphobic bullying in schools should be considered a child protection issue. As such, schools need to address homophobic and transphobic bullying through rigorous prevention and intervention measures"   (Shannon, 2013, p.104).

It is of significance to note that the Special Rapporteur on Child Protection had developed an ongoing working relationship with LGBTI+ civil society in the years preceding this 2013 report and addressed the launch of the BeLonG To Stand Up! Campaign in 2012.

A number of participants talked about the significance both of the focus on child protection, the 2012 referendum on children's rights and the fact that there was a new dedicated Department with new energy as a contributing factor to advancing equality and LGBTI+ young people in public policy.

4.4.3   Relationship Building with Politicians

> People think that policy is something that's totally objective. Of course, it's driven by values. It's driven by experience. It's driven by things you want to see changed and by your experience.   (Claire, Politician)

Another politician spoke about issues they had with a particular senior civil servant whom they believed was blocking their agenda to develop anti-homophobia and transphobia

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[3] https://www.dcya.gov.ie/documents/StatementofStrategy2011_2014.pdf

policies and that their political advisors told them that there was 'pushback - there is no issue around bullying and certainly no such thing as bullying as regards to homophobic bullying. There was a section of the civil service…that was very cautious' (Patrick Politian).

As with the public service, the development of positive working relationships between politicians and LGBTI+ civil society was discussed. Politicians spoke about feeling 'welcome and well-received' at LGBTI+ events and meetings and also spoke about receiving 'considered and sound' advice from LGBTI+ groups. One politician stated that "gay, transgender youth wasn't spoken about until… [BeLonG To] made us listen" and spoke about the organisation being, 'present in the Dail and media. [BeLonG To] were also a very professional group and people liked to work with [it]'. The significance of relationships between LGBTI+ civil society and the political system was discussed by all the politicians interviewed, as was the importance of relationships in the negotiation of policy change. This speaks well to notions of a 'policy community' in which actors from different locations can come together to develop coalitions. It also speaks to the specificities of policy development in an Irish context, in which this policy community is relatively small and civil society access to politicians is possible.

One politician spoke about finding a balance in challenging various positions and forming respectful relationships. They said:

> There's a good balance. You have to be robust, but you'll get very little done if there isn't respect. Respect doesn't mean you have to bend the knee it just means acknowledging that individuals have their own constituencies and their own stakeholders and they have to be respected, so that's. I thought that in our [LGBTI+ civil society and ministerial] relationship that worked well.
> (Michael, politician)

Another political interviewee spoke about the significance of how department officials discussed LGBTI+ civil society, saying 'I remember people within the Department speaking very highly [LGBTI+ civil society's] ability to negotiate and bring people with [them]'.

4.5   Conclusion

This chapter has presenting findings from interviews with key informants from across the policy community. In doing so it has presented key themes including the role of civil

society as initiator in the area of 'problem definition' which was necessary to progress LGBTI+ youth issues onto the policy agenda. This involved processes of framing issues in different ways in response to available and accepted frameworks, which demanded flexibility. Findings in relation to the significance of development LGBTI+ youth work and of the building and dissemination of a research and evidence base on the circumstances for LGBTI+ young people have also been presented. Coalition building has been discussed as have the significance of supportive actions from public servants and politicians at various moments. Together the findings point to engaged relationships across the policy community, during a process whereby LGBTI+ young people became more prominent in public policy development.

The next chapter builds on these findings to discuss five key areas which emerge from this data and offer new insights into how civil society influence government policy in relation to LGBTI+ young people during this period.

CHAPTER 5:   DISCUSSION

5.1   Introduction: Vision into Action

The previous chapter presents this study's findings pertaining to how civil society influenced public policy in relation to LGBTI+ young people in Ireland 1993-2015. This chapter discusses these research findings, alongside the context presented in Chapter 1 and literature introduced in Chapter 2, to develop an analysis. This, in turn, foregrounds for discussion a series of key insights which emerge from this study, with a view to sharing learning with civil society organisations seeking to influence public policy.

The findings chapter was structured in line with Kingdon's policy agenda-setting framework (Kingdon 2003). While this is a relevant organising framework and provides valuable and flexible insights into policy making, this discussions chapter adds further depth, complexity and analysis through the reintroduction of other public policy theory which was outlined in the literature chapter. Of particular significance is Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith's 'Policy Advocacy Coalition Framework', which allows for discussion of the importance of beliefs, relationships and coalitions, the Narrative Policy Framework (McBeth et al 2015) and Problematisation (Baachi 2009) – both of which enable consideration of the work to challenge taken for granted assumptions and the role of awareness-raising campaigns in policy change – aspects which were important in the development of LGBTI+ youth policy in Ireland 1993-2015.

This study reveals that LGBTI+ civil society engaged in organised strategic processes of turning vision, values and ideas into action for the express purpose of developing a society, including public policies, which would be inclusive of LGBTI+ young people. This strategy is outlined in organisational documents cited in this study and discussed by research participants. The purposefulness of this long-term strategic approach is a key finding of this study. Discussion of this process of consciously translating vision, values and ideas into tangible actions for policy change forms the basis of this chapter.

The vision and values, which formed the basis of the work of civil society, were ones of equality for all. The ideas which accompanied this were to present an image of a society where LGBTI+ young people experienced equality and in so doing to promote optimism and in 'narrative change' on how LGBTI+ youth were seen in society. These ideas allowed for a new unapologetic presentation of LGBTI+ young people (who had long

been stigmatised or invisible), which in turn allowed for public discussion of issues which needed to be addressed through policy change and for the development of various coalitions to work towards these changes.

The actions developed to manifest the vision, values and ideas into realities focused on public awareness campaigns, critical engagement of LGBTI+ young people through youth work, and active strategic engagement with government (public service and politicians) to develop LGBTI+ youth inclusive policies.

5.2 A new adapted framework for understanding civil society's role in public policy development

This process of turning vision, values and ideas into action, of making beliefs and imagination actionable, is often the invisible work of civil society. This chapter makes these processes explicit with a view to sharing learning with other civil society organisations seeking public policy change.

In order to do this a significantly adapted version of Kingdon's Agenda Setting Framework has been developed and is presented here. In addition to Kingdon, it draws on Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith's 'Policy Advocacy Coalition Framework' (1993), the Narrative Policy Framework (McBeth et al 2015) and Problematisation (Baachi 2009). It departs in significant ways from these frameworks and theories, particularly as it:

- Centralises the role of civil society across key aspects of policy development, from framing the problem to policy implementation
- Focuses on the significant role played by community organisation and community development in public policy formation
- Highlights the importance of civil society driven narrative change and problematisation in the development of policy, particularly on issues which are subject to 'public moral arguments' (Fisher 1984 p. 12), such as LGBTI+ youth rights
- Acknowledges the direct relationship between civil society and the political system (both through lobbying and work to change public opinion) and the formal relationship which civil society has in policy making and governance in Ireland, due to the tradition of subsidiarity, as outlined in the literature.

The following framework was developed for this study, in response to the literature and the findings.
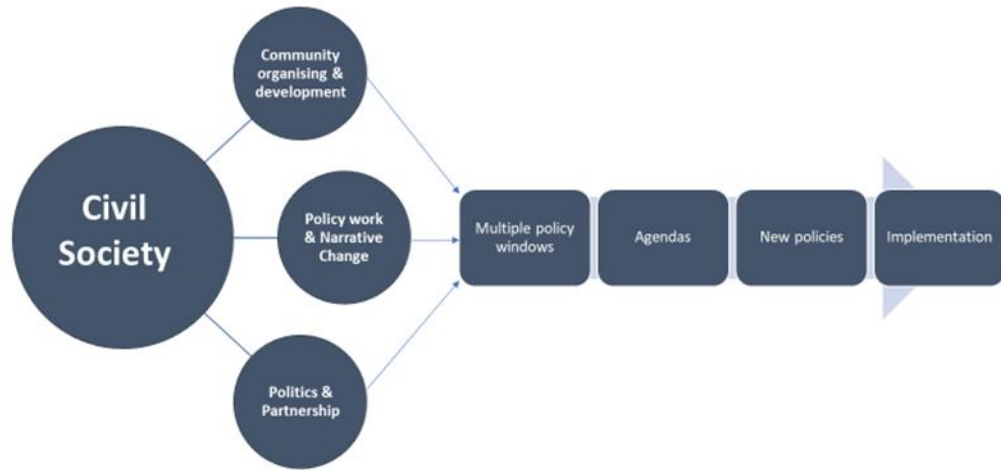
Figure 13: Framework for civil society role in public policy development

Civil society

In the introduction to this study I describe myself as an 'academic activist'. I have spent the past two decades advocating with minority communities, particularly the LGBTI+ community, for full access to their rights. This has included frontline youth and community work, public campaigning and public policy development. I bring this civil society activist experience to this study and to the development of this framework. This activist perspective is in-line with an approach to promoting equality in Ireland which, 'has traditionally lent towards a focus on activism to mobilise, politicise and organise people who experience inequality and discrimination' (Crowley 2015 p. 5).

This perspective, together with the literature and findings has led me to place Civil Society at the centre of this framework. In doing so this allows for the role of civil society in all aspects of policy development processes to be considered and in so doing allows for the research question to be answered.

As outlined in the literature chapter, Kingdon includes the character of the *policy entrepreneur*, a driven individual anywhere within the policy system who is willing to invest their energy promoting a particular issue and policy solution (Kingdon 2003 pp. 180-191). This study confirms this to be the case, and acknowledges the key role played

by skilled and persistent individuals in promoting the inclusion of LGBTI+ young people in public policy over the twenty-two-year period in question. This study further, however, suggests that LGBTI+ civil society collectively demonstrated the qualities of the *policy entrepreneur* including:

- Having a claim to hearing due to their expertise on the topics
- Having claim to hearing because they represented a community
- They were or became politically connected over time
- They were tenacious and persistent
- They negotiated and brokered at key moments (such as during government formations) to exploit policy window opportunities.

It is significant to note that civil society activism by its nature is innovative and entrepreneurial - seeking out and attempting to find new opportunities for social change. Kingdon (1984, p.131; 123) describes policy solutions whirling around in a 'policy primeval soup'. This study finds that, in this innovative and creative spirit, civil society is a core 'recipe-writer' for the 'soup' of policy ideas and hence gave birth to many of the policy processes described.

Community organising and development

Core findings of this study, as outlined the findings chapter above and further described in detail in this chapter, relate to the central role played by community organising and development in advancing the position of LGBTI+ young people in Irish public policy. This work included:

- Organising – creating LGBTI+ organisations and infrastructure
- Strategising – developing long term measurable plans for social and policy change
- Community development and youth work – adopting social justice education and awareness raising approaches
- Collective action and coalitions – working in partnerships and collaboratively with other communities for shared goals.

Policy work and narrative change

In order for LGBTI+ civil society to engage in public policy development was necessary for it to challenge some basic (prejudiced) assumptions and to alter the 'rules of the game'. So as to do this it:

- Carried out a series of public campaigns aimed at changing public perceptions (including those of policy makers) on LGBTI+ identity
- Carried out targeted work of ´narrative change´, such as 'reclaiming' issues of child protection and bullying.
- 'Problematised' policy making processes, such as convincing public servants that requiring demographic statistics on the LGBTI+ community was not possible or desirable
- Partnered with a wide variety of other minority communities to work on the development of Equality legislation
- Undertook a long slow process of 'equality mainstreaming' whereby LGBTI+ youth became included across a wide variety of mainstream policy

This was carried out in-line with the Narrative Policy Framework

Politics and partnerships

This study finds a close and direct working relationship between civil society and politicians. This relationship is revealed in interviews with politicians who speak of the significance of these direct relationships, the role played by civil society in generating policy solutions, lobbying them and in influencing public opinion through campaigns.

It is also significant to note the formal role of civil society within the policy community which is enabled by the tradition of subsidiarity, where 'the state should only have a secondary ('subsidiary') role in providing for people's care, welfare and education' (Devlin 2008 p. 95). This has meant that civil society has long played a significant role in the working of the state, most traditionally in the delivery of services.

Multiple windows and agendas

This study has considered policy development over a twenty-two-year period and as such is concerned with multiple and varying policy windows. These have included sexual abuse scandals in the Catholic Church, which allowed for a greater movement towards

secularism and work on homophobic and transphobic bullying in schools and general elections and programme for government negotiations.

The Cyclical nature of policy development and civil society´s role in policy implementation

The model also recognises that the processes in which civil society engage in policy development with government is not linear (as presented by Kingdon), nor are they hermetically sealed, with the development of a new policy as a discrete endpoint. These processes are, the study maintains, cyclical and civil society is positioned throughout (both by itself and by the state) as a driver from initial concept development through to policy implementation, evaluation, review and policy redevelopment. This process is represented in the following diagram:
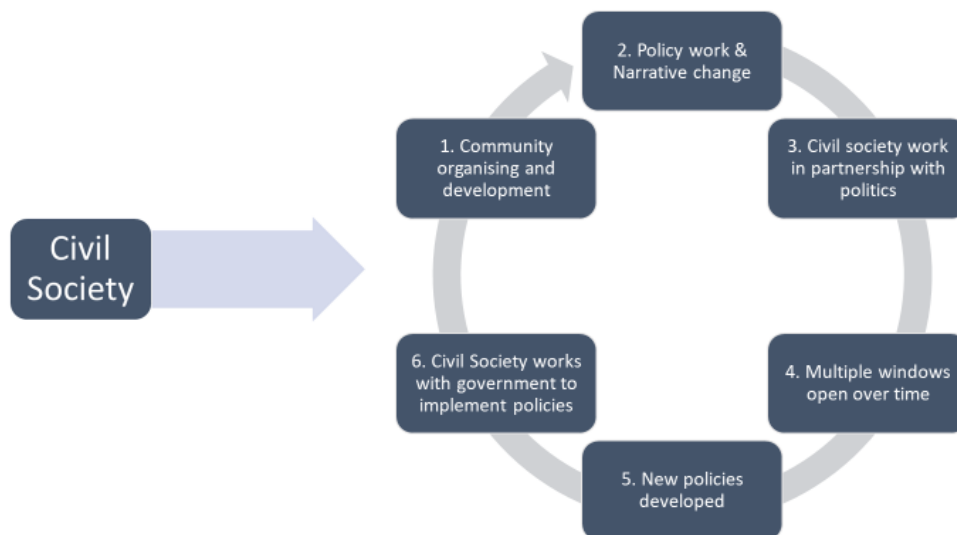
Figure 14: Cyclical framework for civil society role in public policy development

The rest of this chapter is presented in three parts, in line with the above framework 1. Community organising and development, 2. Policy work and narrative change and 3. Partnerships.

In considering community organising and development, the first section discusses the impact of active youth work on policy change. This includes how critical social analysis

ideas were turned into consciousness-raising strategies, and how youth work became an active vehicle for policy change. The development of a national LGBTI+ youth work infrastructure empowered young people and provided opportunities for youth engagement with politicians and public servants. The urgency and moral imperative to turn visions and values into actions which youth work processes created is further discussed. It further challenges a growing body of academic work, described as 'counter-narratives' (Bryan & Mayock 2012, Bryan 2019), which interpret policy responses to homophobia and transphobia as presenting a damaging, victimising and fatalistic narrative of LGBTI+ young people and posits that such perspectives fail to account for the long term community organising and community development strategies engaged in by civil society.

The second section relates to policy work and narrative change and firstly considers the policy framing of LGBTI+ young people through a vision for equality. This discussion includes how equality acted as a core value for advocacy for policy change, which allowed for flexibility in adopting other sub-framings to address urgent inequalities at different times. It goes on to analyses the significance of the use of the idea of optimism and how it served to 'change the narrative' about LGBTI+ young people is examined. Here the function of optimism in the face of oppression is discussed, as is its impact on encouraging non-LGBTI+ actors to join coalitions for policy change towards LGBTI+ young people. The significance of claiming the public narrative on youth and family, which went to the heart of opposition to LGBTI+ rights, is also discussed. Finally, this section discusses the inclusion of LGBTI+ young people within mainstream policy, away from significant public attention, during a period of significant focus to the 'big ticket' items, particularly marriage equality. This section discusses the impact of this incremental 'mainstreaming' work, the opportunities it opened and the community building, including resource and infrastructure building, which it enabled and which was brought about by policy work and changing the narrative on LGBTI+ youth.

Finally, the last part of this chapter discusses Partnerships between civil society and the state. In light of increasing concerns for the shrinking of civil society space and retreat from multi-agency governance, factors which demonstrate significant and active cooperation between the state and LGBTI+ civil society. This is presented with a view to potential opportunities to further build on this work. Again, this study finds that vision and values formed the basis by which civil society and the state worked in collaboration for the inclusion of LGBTI+ young people in public policy.

5.3 Community Organising and Community Development

5.3.1 Youth Work: Consciousness Raising, Movement Building, Organised Visibility, Urgency

Overview

This section discusses the link between direct youth work, the urgency it created and advocacy for policy change. Interviewees spoke about the impact of intentional consciousness-raising, youth empowerment and the application of 'social analysis' through youth work practice. They also spoke about 'organised visibility', where politicians and policy makers met directly with LGBTI+ young people and learned first-hand about their experiences, which needed policy responses.

Social Analysis and Consciousness Raising

If youth work is to have any impact on the problems facing young people today then it must concern itself with social change. This implies that youth work must have a key role both in enabling young people to analyse society and in motivating and helping them to develop the skills and capacities to become involved in effecting change.

      (National Youth Policy Committee 1984 p. 116, cited in Devlin 2018 p. 86)

This thirty-six-year-old Irish vision for youth work's potential role in social change resonates with the findings of this current study. As highlighted in the previous chapter, the influence of youth work practice on the development of LGBTI+ youth inclusive policies emerge from the data. Its significance arose from the use of a particular social analysis approach to youth work.

BeLonG To was developed by people who came from a variety of youth, community and social justice work positions - who made explicit in the organisation's documentation, training etc., a motivation to affect 'social change' (BeLonG To, 2008). In keeping with this impetus, from its establishment BeLonG To adopted a 'critical social education' model of youth work. The intention of this model is to support young people to take actions to improve their and other young peoples' lives.

As Hurley and Treacy put it, youth work from a 'critical social education' perspective:

Recognises that young people are victims of injustices in society; challenges the values of society since they are seen to promote inequality through the maintenance of the status quo; and develops consciousness-raising strategies as a core curriculum approach.   (Hurley & Treacy 1994 p. 40)

They go on to highlight how this model of youth work brings it and young people into the political sphere:

The foundation of the model is that if young people can be made critically aware of their social and political situation they will be motivated and mobilized to seek change within the structures of institutions that impact negatively on their life situations. This emphasis on youth work contributing to social change enters youth work   and   young   people   into   the   political arena.   (Hurley & Treacy 1994 p. 41)

Young's presentation of oppressed social groups, as outlined in detail in the literature review, is very helpful in clarifying why specific anti-oppressive interventions are needed to support LGBTI+ young people. Interviewees suggested that social analysis contributed considerably to organisations becoming involved in advocacy for policy change, for example when BeLonG To could have remained a service delivery only organisation. Its approach to working on a variety of social exclusion areas, beyond homophobia and transphobia. Over the focus period of this research, BeLonG To delivered youth empowerment training programmes and supports to young people to exercise agency and voice, in keeping with its vision of 'An Ireland where Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) young people are empowered to embrace their development and growth confidently, and to participate as agents of positive social change' (BeLonG To Annual Report, 2012).

The Urgent Moral Imperative to Act

The theme of urgency emerged throughout the data, and is mentioned in the framing section above. What is clear from some of the interviewees who worked with LGBTI+ young people, and indeed from my own experience of working with LGBTI+ young people for the majority of the timeframe covered by this research, is that the exclusion, oppression and violence experienced by young people demanded urgent responses. Youth work practice provided vital direct supports to many young people and this direct work with young people instilled in a passion and a sense of responsibility in youth workers and policy advocates to seek urgent change. This was particularly the case in relation to homophobic and transphobic bullying and mental health support. This moral imperative

and urgency to act is in line with the ethics of youth work, particularly youth work with a political motivation with marginalised young people. As outlined in the EU Commission and Council of Europe Youth Partnership's *Ethical standards in youth work and how they support education and career pathways of youth workers working paper,* such ethics include 'challenging of negative stereotypes…oppressive attitudes…promoting positive images and examples of young people's lives' (EU Commission and Council of Europe Youth Partnership 2013 p. 13).

Youth Sector as Advocacy Platform

As outlined in the literature the relationship between LGBTI+ youth supports and the youth sector in Ireland has had a contentious history, particularly in advance of decriminalisation in 1993.

The journey of the National Youth Council of Ireland from the exclusion of a gay and lesbian youth group in the 1980s to its support for the So Gay! Campaign in 2004 and the Marriage Equality Referendum in 2015, can in and of itself act as a map for changing status of LGBTI+ young people across Irish society. The NYCI and the youth sector provided a great deal of support for youth work with LGBTI+ young people, particularly from the 2000s onwards. It provided an infrastructure from which to advocate for LGBTI+ youth rights. It also included NYCI nominations to interagency governmental oversight committees such as the National Youth Work Advisory Committee and to the Advisory Council for Better Outcomes Brighter Future (children and youth strategy 2014-2020). From 2006 onwards these committees included LGBTI+ advocates and as outlined in the data, and provided significant platforms from which to advocate for the inclusion of LGBTI+ young people in mainstream youth policy.

Youth work as a professional, structured methodology for working with young people was also discussed by interviewees, who saw it as providing a safety to counteract fear and stigma and with a framework for expansion of LGBT youth supports.

Movement Building and Organised Visibility

The development of youth work supports and youth work practice for LGBTI+ young people was identified in this study as movement building.

This movement-building rooted in youth work practice was core to the development of the LGBTI+ youth policy agenda in significant ways. Firstly, the agenda of BeLonG To

was set by the issues which emerged through youth committees within the organisation's structures. Secondly, the organisation ensured that politicians and policy makers had opportunities to hear directly from LGBTI+ young people. These 'organised visibility' opportunities occurred at events, ministerial meetings and meetings with government departments. The effect was to bring decision-makers into proximity with LGBTI+ young people so that they could understand and feel how inequality was being experienced by young people. In addition, the development of a considerable network of LGBTI+ youth work projects throughout the country, operating through a critical social education model, helped develop a network of young activists. The influence of this became apparent in the Marriage Equality Referendum where LGBTI+ youth projects in many areas played central roles in canvassing and persuading.

5.3.2 Challenging a 'counternarrative' and seeing policy change as a component of long-term community organising and development strategies

Some scholars have written about what they see as the harm caused by focusing on the inequalities experienced by LGBTI+ youth at this time. Byran and Mayock (2012) argue that "the dominant image invoked by many researchers, as well as organisations advocating for LGBTI+ youth, has been that of an isolated, victimised, and largely powerless young person who is 'at risk' of self-harm and suicide", (pp. 12-13). This study challenges these notions.

This research posits that these 'counter-narratives' fail to acknowledge the broader equality underpinning of work with LGBTI+ young people, the reality of the urgencies which present themselves in LGBTI+ community youth work and schools and the nature of public policy development processes which as outlined above, necessitate the presentation 'problems' in need of solutions. As Kingdon outlines, issues become public policy problems when harm is identified and government action is seen to be required, for example in the case of violence in schools.

This current study also suggests that such counter-narratives fail to acknowledge the overwhelmingly positive and organised framings of the LGBTI+ communities through LGBTI+ youth services in local communities, Pride festivals, local community events, families, media, and the growth in social and political representation. It overlooks extensive community organising and development work during this period - based on equality and anti-oppressive practices and consciousness-raising education.

These omissions demonstrate a distance from the day-to-day urgencies experienced by LGBTI+ young people and the deep community resonance that the issues of bullying and the impact of homophobia and transphobia have, as outlined by LGBTI+ interviewees who spoke about their own experiences in these areas. Such policy (only) analysis, detached from the excluded community it speaks of, fails to appreciate that the work to tackle homophobia and transphobia in schools is an engagement by the LGBTI+ community as part of a wider activist drive to address institutional and structural sources of inequality, which is embedded in a wider mission, focused 'on social change and developing alternative forms of society' (Crowley 2015 p. 5). The effect is to create a dissonance where LGBTI+ community groups, whose day-to-day work is in the realities of LGBTI+ young people's lives, are presented through arguments based on a limited academic policy analysis as causing harm to their own communities. It also indicates a lack of appreciation for long-term multi-layered strategies developed by LGBTI+ civil society.

The following diagram **(Figure 15)** created for this study, outlines the long-term interconnectedness of strategies to improve the education system with and for LGBTI+ young people.
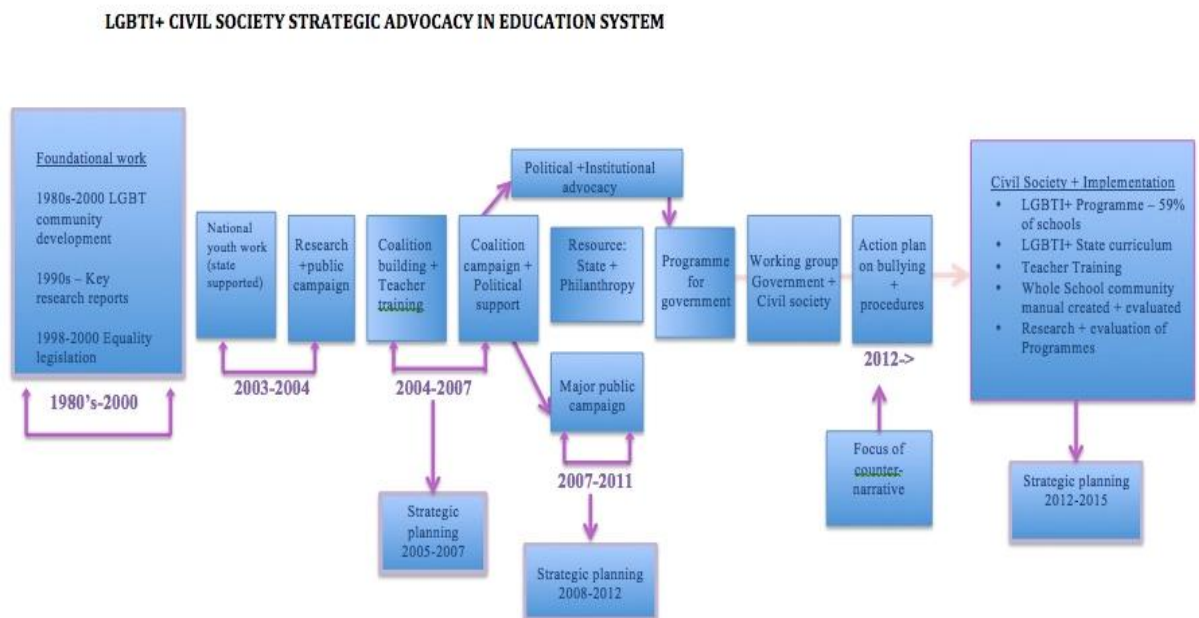
Figure 15: Civil Society Strategic Advocacy in Education System

It is noteworthy that the counternarrative only considers the 2013 Action Plan on Bullying and procedures, without reference to the decade of work with the education system in advance, the implementation of the procedures and plans, or the combined effect this work had on the lives of LGBTI+ young people.

Within anti-bullying and mental health policy, opportunities existed for community empowerment. For example, the National Office for Suicide Prevention resourcing BeLonG To to 'provide a national voice' for advocating for LGBTI+ young people and supported the creation of a network of LGBTI+ youth empowerment projects. It is significant to note that the anti-bullying procedures referenced here refer to ' *the promotion of school cultures that are welcoming of diversity; and the recognition that elimination of homophobic and transphobic bullying will lead to improvements in school climate for all students',* supported an LGBTI+ curriculum (Growing Up LGBT in Ireland, 2012) and resulted in the Department of Education and Skills support for the annual *Stand Up! Support Your LGBTI+ Friends* celebratory campaign for schools. *The LGBTI+ Safe and Supportive Schools* model outlined in the introduction to this study takes a 'whole school-community' approach to the inclusion of LGBTI+ young people not just in their schools but with their wider community – the anthesis of isolating one negative aspect of young people's identities. These initiatives, while responding to the impact of homophobic and transphobic violence, presented the solution as being one of empowering young people, civic engagement and challenging heteronormative structures.

A striking feature which emerges from the data in this study is the mobility adopted by the policy community in improving the status of LGBTI+ people, and young people in particular, in Irish public policy. At various moments in time LGBTI+ policy responses were being developed towards younger people, older people, drug use, sexual health, mental health, partnership rights (including marriage equality), immigration (including international protection to people seeking asylum), education, child protection, poverty, and community development. This study considers these initiatives 'in the round', rather than through isolating aspects of a small number of policy documents.

5.4 Policy Work and Narrative Change

5.4.1   Framing Equality and Tangible Inequalities

Overview

As outlined in the literature chapter 'The promotion of equality in Ireland has traditionally lent towards a focus on activism to mobilise, politicise and organise people who experience inequality and discrimination' and equality, in the Irish tradition, 'has a particular engagement with people who experience inequality and their organisations. There is a concern within this tradition about institutional and structural sources of inequality in society' (Crowley 2015 p. 5).

Equality legislation (the Employment Equality Act, 1998 and the Equal Status Acts 2000-2015) were core levers for policy change in relation to LGBTI+ young people. Within this equality framing, there was also an imperative to act and to apply available sub-framings (such as bullying, mental health, child protection) and to create sub-framings where they didn't exist (such as framing the marriage equality debate as, in part, being about the inclusion of LGBTI+ young people in Irish life). Applying this approach to framing demanded flexibility, mobility and risk-taking, in an activist tradition. It resulted in complex multi-layered framing systems, aspects of which could be applied in a variety of circumstances.

This sub-framing is contested in literature, for example speaking of LGBTI+ young people and mental health has been presented as negative and fatalistic (Bryan and Mayock, 2012; Bryan 2019), but this research contends that this framing must be seen as part of a broader, conscious and organised effort of a marginalised community seeking to achieve greater equality and parity of esteem through strategic mobilising, politicising and organising. It finds that drawing conclusions on civil society's impact on young people solely based on limited policy analysis serves to displace the issues and misrepresent the work of the LGBTI+ community over this period. It fails to consider civil society's framing of mental health within the context of the long-term social justice strategies of LGBTI+ civil society.

Equality

As presented in the previous findings chapter, research participants discussed the significance of Ireland's Equality legislation in providing a central basis from which to advocate for LGBTI+ inclusive policies across a wide spectrum of areas. These included advocating for a government funded LGBTI+ youth organisation, for the inclusion of LGBTI+ people, and young people in particular, in a wide variety of government policies, and indeed formed the basis of work with government to advocate for marriage equality for same-sex couples.

Interviewees who were involved in the development of the country's Equality legislation spoke about difficulties, in the 1990's post-decriminalisation, in finding an authentic policy framework for the expression of LGBTI+ identity until the 1998 Equality Employment Act, and the 2000 Equal Status Act.

Initially, it was vital that sexual orientation was named in legislation (transgender identity was later included in the 'gender' ground). As one interviewee put it the equality legislation 'changed the game' so that arguments against LGBTI+ rights had to become arguments against equality for all, while another suggested that the legislation helped reframe LGBTI+ inclusion from something which public bodies and services would like to do into something that they were obliged to do.

Data from this study indicates that in addition to the direct positive effects of the equality legislation on the development of LGBTI+ inclusive policy, Equality also operated as a belief amongst members of the policy community interviewed. While this could be expected from LGBTI+ advocates and equality specialist, participants from mainstream civil society organisations, from the public service and politicians used equality language.

As outlined in the literature, Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith's 'Policy Advocacy Coalition Framework' maintains that people involved in the development of public policy are motivated to turn beliefs into action and that coalitions are formed by

> People from a variety of positions…who share a particular belief system—i.e. a set of basic values, causal assumptions, and problem perceptions—and who show a non-trivial degree of coordinated activity over time.
>
> (Sabatier 1988 p. 139)

This adaptation is apparent in arguments for the economic value of Equality (Equality Authority, 2008) and specifically in framing of LGBTI+ youth rights in terms of mental

health and anti-bullying (Department of Education and Skills 2013). Coalitions have formed involving LGBTI+ rights organisations and employers' groups in relation to the marriage equality referendum, and LGBT youth rights organisations and education stakeholders, including religious groups, around the anti-bullying agenda (BeLonG To, Stand Up Campaign 2010-2015).

Framing Inequalities

The mobility of equality framing was significant in LGBTI+ youth issues reaching the policy agenda. In particular, it allowed advocates to enunciate how inequality was experienced and how it felt in the daily lives of LGBTI+ young people, primarily through homophobia and transphobia and their impacts.

Research carried out between 1998 and 2015 demonstrated the tangible impacts inequality had on young people's lived experiences, including their ability to engage in school and the damage they were causing to young people's mental health (Barron and Bradford 2008, Mayock et al 2009, Minton et al 2008, Norman et al 2006). Interviewees for this study spoke about their frustration in 'shoehorning' LGBTI+ issues into available policy frameworks, but it is of importance to note that such frameworks accurately corresponded to how inequality was experienced by LGBTI+ people. There was need for policy interventions in the areas of poverty (LGBTI+ were vulnerable to poverty due to marginalisation), community development (the LGBTI+ community was not safe or accepted enough to be open), bullying (LGBTI+ young people experienced harassment in schools), mental health (practice and research demonstrated that LGBTI+ young people were at elevated risk of poor mental health) and child protection, (some LGBTI+ children's experiences of violence could accurately be described within Ireland's child protection framework).

Rochefort and Cobb (1995) have advanced seven categories which influence how a problem is framed – referring to causality, severity, proximity, crises, incidence, novelty and problem population. The linked problems of bullying, poor mental health and child protection can be seen to satisfy enough of these categories so that LGBTI+ youth issues were framed in a way that is serious enough to provoke a policy response. Kingdon writes of how changing the category in which a problem is placed can improve its chances of reaching the policy agenda (Kingdon, 1984 pp. 112-114). With this in mind the repositioning of LGBTI+ youth issues into the categories of bullying, mental health and

child protection, can be seen to have influenced their progress, as can the proof of the scale of problem through research (Mayock et al, 2009, Minton, 2008, Norman, 2006).

In addition to frustration at 'shoehorning' LGBTI+ issues into policy schema, interviewees expressed some conflict and discomfort with the presenting of LGBTI+ youth issues in 'problem' frames. They discussed the need to 'keep in check' this presentation and highlighted the importance of promoting positive non-fatalistic images of being LGBTI+ and young. The conflict arose from the desire to promote hope, optimism and agency while also experiencing a moral imperative to take action to lessen the all too real burden being experienced by many LGBTI+ young people.

5.4.2   Queer Optimism

"In these bleak times, imagine a world where you can thrive"
Gary Young, Guardian Newspaper January 2020

Overview

This research finds that framing LGBTI+ youth advocacy in optimistic terms allowed for movement building and the generation of policy solutions. This optimism was born out of a place of deep oppression which necessitated urgent solution-finding. Such optimism was demonstrated through public campaign messaging, with research participants speaking about experiencing it in their engagement with LGBTI+ advocates. To present this optimistic vision, advocates engaged in a conscious process of 'narrative change', which rejected oppressive stereotypes and in an equality activist tradition, presented 'alternative forms of society'. One interviewee described this vision as a presentation of a 'new normal'.

The term 'queer optimism' is the title of a 2008 book by Michael Snediker in which the author proposes an alternative to a focus in queer theory "which has privileged melancholy, shame, and the death drive" and which alternatively takes positivity seriously and worthy of consideration (Snediker 2008 p. 3). While this current study does not engage in a queer theory analysis, I believe, through my own personal and professional experience that taking optimism seriously is vital to working for social justice. This has been particularly the case when working with young people who need to be able to imagine a hopeful future.

Control Mythologies and the Necessity of Optimism

As outlined in the literature presented in Chapter 2, LGBTI+ young people can be seen as an oppressed social group, in Iris Young's terms, who were subjected to marginalisation, powerlessness, cultural imperialism and violence (Young 1990 p. 41). Such violence is institutionalised and systematised, for example within the education system, the health system, religious institutions and family structures. This homophobia and transphobia is premised on deeply embedded multi-layered and intersectional stigmas, where, in Goffman's terms the LGBTI+ young person has for generations been *"reduced in our minds from a whole and usual person to a tainted and discredited one"* (Goffman 1963 p. 3).

As discussed in the literature review, Reinsborough and Canning (2010 p. 39), speak of 'control mythologies' that work to support the 'status quo', and encourage advocates for social change to engage in narrative change work at the 'point of assumption' to challenge these mythologies at an emotional level and to create new narratives. In addition, Fisher argues that such narrative change work is particularly significant when it comes to 'public moral arguments' (Fisher 1984 p. 12). It is clear from a wide array of literature presented earlier (Nolan & Larkin 2016) that LGBTI+ issues were located within a public moral argument over this period of time and that the 'control mythologies' included stories of gay men being a risk to children, homosexuality being evil, LGBTI+ identities being contagious, being LGBTI+ was a choice, the promotion LGBTI+ identity was undermining the fabric of society by challenging gender roles and that there were not many LGBTI+ young people. The sheer weight of these control mythologies was referred to by research participants.

The data from this research indicates that LGBTI+ advocates engaged in narrative change work to challenge these narratives in planned, purposeful and strategic manners, and that such work, in turn, influenced the ability of the policy community to improve the status of LGBTI+ young people in public policy.

Envisioning and Imagination

The data indicates that work to improve public attitudes towards LGBTI+ people and work for policy change were consciously interwoven throughout the period from 1993-2015. This began with work to have gay and lesbian people's identity recognised. In their 1995 book *Gay and Lesbian Visions of Ireland: Towards the Twenty-First Century* Eoin

Collins, Ida O'Carroll and contributors presented a vision of Ireland, just two years after decriminalisation, in which lesbian and gay people were present, visible, active and contributing. This set a positive and visionary tone for how LGBTI+ advocates would engage in public discourse over the following two decades. The authors were not 'speaking back to' homophobic arguments but were presenting alternatives. This can be seen in terms of 'radical imagination' which Haiven and Khasnabish argue is essential and is 'to imagine the world, life and social institutions not as they are but as they might otherwise be' (Haiven & Khasnabish 2014 p. 229).

This approach was continued by BeLonG To in the 2000s, initially through its name – emphasising that LGBTI+ young people 'belong to' their community and wider society and then through a series of public awareness campaigns that consciously presented a vision of a society which was inclusive of LGBTI+ young people. This approach became visible in the 2006 campaign in partnership with the Equality Authority to address homophobic and transphobic bullying in school, which included a series of posters depicting teenagers in school with the slogan *'She's [or He's] Gay and we're cool with that'.* The *Stand Up! Support Your LGBT Friends* campaign was launched in 2009, and further developed this positive narrative. The first (of many) online ads for this campaign was created with a number of well-known young Irish actors. It centred around the line, 'We all have gay friends who stand by us during tough times, so we need to stand by them when they need us too, so stand up – show your support for our lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender friends'. This simple line dismissed (without directly addressing it) a prevalent idea that there weren't many LGBTI+, presented LGBTI+ people as active agents, (who 'stand by us during tough times'), and invites non-LGBTI+ people to join in the vision for a more inclusive Ireland through the call to action to stand up.

This invitation to an optimistic and inclusive Ireland became the core of BeLonG To campaign messages such as 'It's in your hands' 'Bring your family with you' and questions such as 'what kind of Ireland do you want young people to grow up in?'. This warm, inviting and inclusive vision can be seen to culminate in the primary message from the BeLonG To Yes marriage equality campaign on May 26th 2015, when it became clear that the referendum had passed:

The Irish people, via the ballot box, have given each and every gay child and young person in Ireland — and across the world — a strong and powerful message that they are loved, they are cared for, and don't need to change who they are…. This is a generation with open, kind hearts, a generosity of spirit and a great capacity to love. They have gone to the polls in their thousands and are responsible for this

historic victory for their gay brothers and sisters
(Barron in Carey 2015 p. 1).

The purposefulness of this approach was referred to by interviewees and corroborated in BeLonG To documentation analysed for this study. BeLonG To strategy published in 2008 identified two connected 'campaigns' One campaign was described as *'LGBT positive recognition campaign (long term)'* to affect policy change in the education system, it's objectives were to "creation of mandatory structures and processes within schools that promote LGBT positive recognition" and the "inclusion of LGBT people and issues into the broader school curriculum".

The second was to be a public awareness campaign, the rationale for which was to support and interact with the policy change work:

The removal of homophobia in society and true positive recognition for LGBT young people is ultimately a long-term objective… it is important to establish awareness and recognition of LGBT youth in all settings where young people are likely to engage with their peers and other professionals. This will set useful groundwork in terms of gradual changes in the attitudes and behaviours of those working and interacting with LGBT young people. This positive change will also support and help to add public voice to our longer-term work around positive recognition for LGBT young people at the institutional level.(BeLonG To 2008 p. 41)

Data gathered from the interviews for this study indicates that this public campaign had significant impact on both the LGBTI+ community, their families and on policy makers.

Reclaiming the Youth and Family Narratives, and their Policy Implications

As outlined in the introduction, in Ireland opposition to LGBTI+ rights has focused on 'moral panic' towards young people. Groups such as Family Solidarity campaigned against the decriminalisation of homosexuality in the early 1990s on the basis that it would corrupt young people. Opposition to anti-homophobic and transphobic bullying campaigns in the early 2000s argued that they risked confusing young people into thinking they were gay. In a Sunday Times front-page article in February 2004, entitled *'Church anger as gay campaign targets schools'* Bishop of Achonry, and member of the Council for Education of the Irish Episcopal Conference, Thomas Flynn put forward such an argument when saying:

I am not sure there are many teenagers who are gays…I would be afraid that young people who feel different from their peers, for whatever reason, would identify with

this campaign even if they are not that way inclined.

<div align="right">(McDonald, The Sunday Times 2004)</div>

The act of establishing an LGBTI+ youth project and public policy advocacy platform can be seen to go to the very heart of the 'public moral argument' while it refused to engage in debates about the legitimacy of LGBTI+ youth identity.

This optimistic presentation of social and policy change towards LGBTI+ young people, which didn't 'speak back to' oppressive narratives can be seen in terms of 'the angel shift' as detailed in the narrative policy framework. As opposed to the 'devil shift', where, 'actors will exaggerate the malicious motives, behaviours and influence of opponents', (Weibleet al 2009 pp. 132–133), the angel shift, involves policy actors foregrounding their ability to solve a problem and de-emphasising the opposition or villains (McBeth et al 2015)

5.4.3 Between the Landmarks: The Inclusion of LGBTI+ Young People within Mainstream Youth Policy

Richardson proposes that the LGBTI+ movement progressed through the claiming of rights in three areas - rights based on sexual practice (decriminalisation), rights-based on recognition of identity (anti-discrimination policy) and of rights within social institutions (marriage equality) (Richardson 2000).

The recording of public policy through the landmark events – such as Decriminalisation and Marriage Equality – which bookend this study – can make invisible the changes and movement building beyond and behind these events. They also essentialise important aspects of people's lives and leave unmentioned the inclusion of LGBTI+ young people across mainstream policy. Work for such inclusion necessitated extensive solidarity work, a position that equality is for all, an anti-oppression analysis and an appreciation that young people live at intersections.

The reality of the intersectional nature of being LGBTI+ and young in Ireland at this time, as outlined in the introduction and literature, necessitated a great deal of coalition building, openness, mobility and complex combinations of issue framing and varying emphasis at different times.

Much of the inclusion of LGBTI+ young people in Irish public policy over this period was within mainstream youth policy, rather than with LGBTI+ specific policy. As such

it can be overlooked in assessments of LGBTI+ public policy progress. (Dukelow & Considine 2017 p. 370). Some of the most significant advances were in the areas of mainstream education, youth, drugs and alcohol, health policies as outlined in the introduction. This approach, which this research highlights, can be seen in terms of 'Equality Mainstreaming' (The Equality Authority 2003) in relation to LGBTI+ young people - where the drive is that LGBTI+ issues are considered within all policies that relate to young people.

While the 'big-ticket items', which are referenced in social policy anthologies – such as the Decriminalisation, the Equal Status Act, Marriage Equality Act were discussed throughout interviews, so were the less visible inclusions – such as National Strategy for Action on Suicide Prevention (2005), the National Drugs Strategy (2009), Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures (2014) and the National Youth Strategy (2015). These inclusions can be seen to come about through the well-trodden path of civil society advocacy influencing agenda setting and in turn the coming together of a policy community to develop public policy. The work of civil society to advocate for Department for Education and Skills Action Plan on Bullying and mandatory anti-bullying procedures for schools can be seen to follow this path as illustrated in **Figure 16**, below:
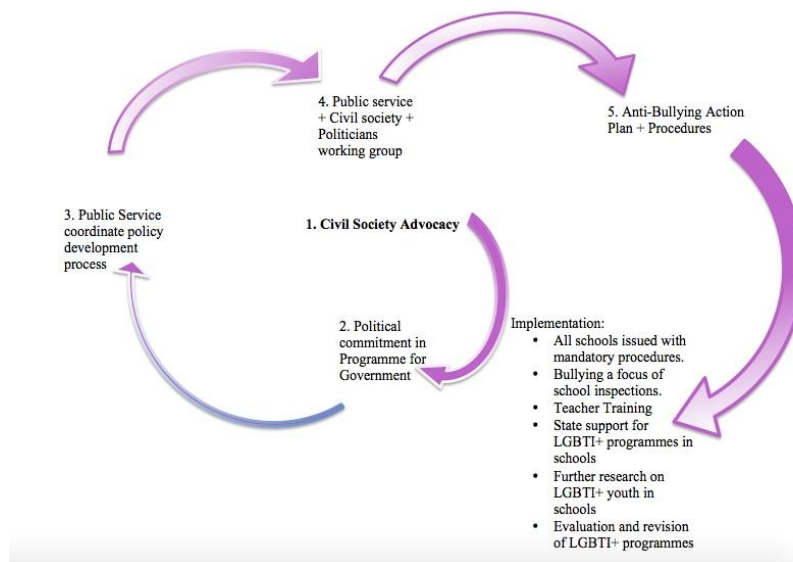
Figure 16: Process of Policy Community Development of Action Plan on Bullying

This is a process of civil society advocacy to the political system, the activation of the public service to develop policy, the collaboration of civil society, public service and

political system in the development of policy, and the production of policy by the public service. This process is commonly used by civil society groups and is familiar to public servants and politicians. It is significant that LGBTI+ community advocates knew how to 'play the game', used general elections and programmes for government as opportunities and were prepared and equipped to work with the civil service in these processes.

While knowledge of how to action specific aspects or 'set pieces' of advocacy for policy change is significant, what is more remarkable is civil society's long-term strategic and planned approach. This consciously brought together public awareness campaigns, the building of an LGBTI+ youth support infrastructure and advocacy for policy change. Of further note are the actions taken by civil society to work with government to implement the policy change, indicating that the production of policy was not seen as an end in and of itself. In terms of implementation, state investment in LGBTI+ civil society is an important feature, as is LGBTI+ civil society's use of such resource to advocate for further policy change, to change attitudes and to provide direct youth work to LGBTI+ young people.

The work of LGBTI+ civil society to improve mental health policy towards LGBTI+ young people can be understood in the context of long-term strategy to reduce isolation, through the development of community infrastructure, and increase acceptance, through public awareness. The diagram provided in **Figure** , developed for this study, represents the relationship between youth work, research, advocacy for policy change and, in-line with the framework created for this study (Figure 13 above) emphasises policy implementation during the period of this study.
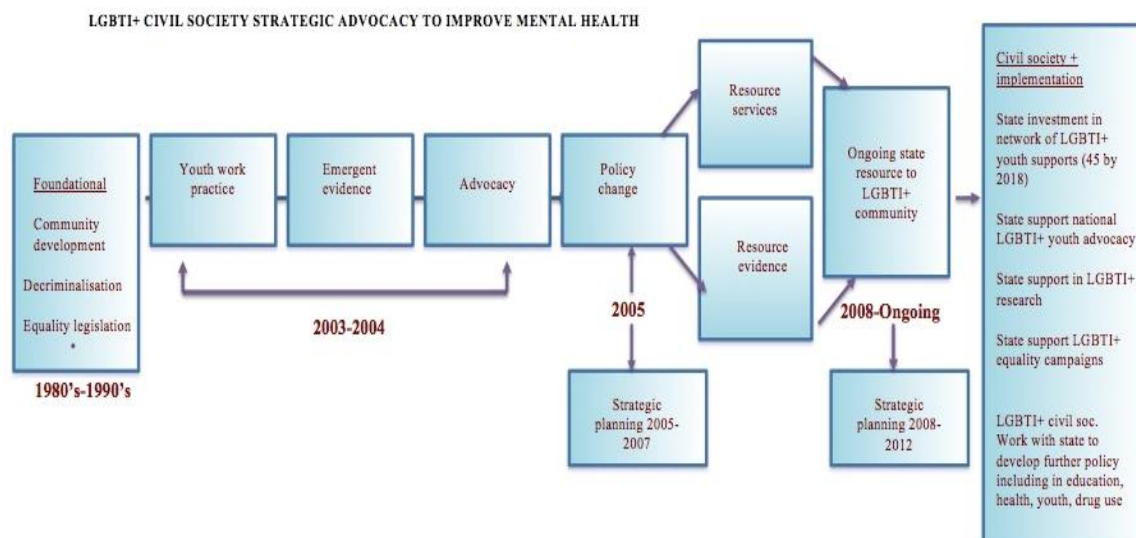
Figure 17: Civil Society Interventions to Improve Mental Health Amongst LGBTI+ Young People

5.6 Partnerships

5.5.1 Policy Community Commitment to LGBTI+ Young People During This Period – a Reason for Hope?

As outlined in chapters one (context) and two (literature) an understanding of the specificities of how policy change occurs on particular issues, in particular historical period and locations, is vital in developing an appreciation of the dynamics of policy development. As such there are limits and contingencies on applying the experience of policy development in Ireland over this period of time to different issues and time periods. Having said that, the findings of this study provide some hope for the capacity of the state and civil society to work together on substantial and contentious public policy issues.

Frictions Between Policy Community Strands

Research participants expressed frustration with those located in different areas of the policy community. These frictions, on one level, contain an interpersonal element (people just don't get on) but more significantly when seen in terms of governance and civic engagement in decision making, point to serious concerns as outlined in the literature, particularly when seen in terms of the involvement of civil society actors in governance. As McInerney points out

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More recently, however, the commitment to 'governance' as a way of engaging with and solving a host of complex issues had been diminished and has been replaced by a retreat to more traditional approaches to decision-making, in the process eschewing the formal input of civil society partners in favour of a politics and bureaucracy approach to problem-solving (McInerney 2014 p. 25).

Additionally, as outlined in the literature, such frictions must be seen in the light of evidence of a shrinking civil society as a result of a decade of austerity policies, the decrease in philanthropic funding and the increase in regulatory burdens (Harvey 2012, O'Connor & Ketola 2018). With these important considerations in mind, this research finds that members of the policy community worked well together in key policy development initiatives.

Multiple 'We' - Identities and Relationships in the Irish Policy Community

A striking feature of the data is how interviewees refer to themselves as 'we' – as advocates for LGBTI+ young people, regardless of where they are positioned in the policy community. This includes civil society advocates, public servants and politicians. This multiple 'we' and sense of community can be, in part, explained by the fact that I, as an insider and actor in the policy change being discussed, was interviewing each and the use of 'we' relates to the immediate conversation, and interviewees are recounting situations where we were both present. It can also, in part, be explained by the fact that all of the interviewees were active in the policy community and as such were accurately part of a collective 'we' – a group of people who worked together on specific projects which were being discussed, for example, a public servant who worked on the inclusion of LGBTI+ young people in the National Children and Young People's Strategy Framework.

Another particularly Irish explanation is that members of the policy community change roles and are at different points in time part of civil society, at others, part of the public service, and indeed at other moments are politicians. Two of the interviewees occupied all three positions at various times. This allows for a proximity and understanding of others' positionalities. The relatively small scale of the Irish policy community is a striking feature of it. Interviewees commented on the comparative ease with which civil society groups can access government. The adage that in Ireland 'all politics is local' is widely used, while this study confirms that in Ireland policy making is deeply relational.

Seen Through an Enabling State+ Lens

When viewed through McInerney's Enabling State+ framework attributes of collaborative work between the state and civil society to develop LGBTI+ inclusive public policies can be seen to contain aspects of four of the five 'core relational and transformational capacities', in relation to the public service's 'capacity to engage in multiple sites and forms of governance' (McInerney 2019 p. 13).

With reference to McInerney's model, this study finds that public servants demonstrated capacities in:

1. Leading and Collaborating – the public servants interviewed can be described as 'champions' who took certain risks, for example advocating for the state to fund and LGBTI+ youth service in the early 2000s and for a central focus on homophobic and transphobic bullying in anti-bullying policy, against opposition as outlined in the findings.
2. Legitimising – through supporting LGBTI+ advocates to engage in various fora, including the co-hosting of an EU Presidency conference on LGBT youth and social inclusion public servants were engaged in legitimising LGBTI+ civil society groups.
3. Listening – through involvement in LGBTI+ youth conferences and events, public servants heard directly from LGBTI+ young people in their 'own voices'. As outlined in the findings chapter, one public servant described an engagement as 'powerful', 'meaningful' and reflective of the 'chaos and the reality of peoples' lives'
4. Learning – although this research has not elicited the extent to which interviewees learned about LGBTI+ young people through the processes described, it is noteworthy that public servants cited research about LGBTI+ young people and recounted needing to do their 'homework' on the issues.   (McInerney 2019 pp. 13-18)

The fifth capacity outlined by McInerney, 'licence', refers to the public service providing its members with permission and support to engage with innovative and multi-agency forms of governance. As this study did not engage with public service management processes it is unable to comment on that area.

As noted in the literature, Public Sector Duty presents opportunities to the realisation of McInerney's vision for a public administration which is enabled and actively engaged with civil society. As Crowley suggests Public Sector Duty offers 'a gentle potential for systems change – it is in law and is a good lever. If done well it can unleash different kinds of champions' (Crowley 2019 p. 10) within the public service. This study highlights public servant champions of equality and highlights the potential for further equality focused multi-agency work.

5.6   Conclusion

This chapter has brought together research findings, context and literature to highlight five key areas of learning which emerge from this research. In doing so the chapter outlines how LGBTI+ civil society worked to bring vision, values and ideas into action for policy change.

In doing so it introduced a new adapted policy development framework, drawn on Kingdon´s Agenda Setting Framework. Its significant adaptations include:

- Focusing on the role played by civil society across key aspects of policy development
- Centralising community organising and community development in public policy
- Focusing on the role played by narrative change in the development of public policy, particularly on issues which as subject to 'public moral arguments', (Fisher 1984 p. 12)
- Highlighting the direct relationship between civil society and the political system and the formal relationship which civil society has in policy making and governance in Ireland through the tradition of 'subsidiarity'

It discussed the overarching framing of LGBTI+ young people in terms of equality, which allowed for various focuses on tangible inequalities and various times. This required multi-level strategies by LGBTI+ civil society to translate the ideal of equality into a reality of policy change and community building. The strategic use of optimism and imagination and campaigns of narrative change claimed a space in public life for LGBTI+ young people – a group that has long been invisible and stigmatised.

The significance of youth work as a vehicle for building community infrastructure, as a methodology for consciousness-raising and as a platform for advocacy for policy change, is central to the story of how LGBTI+ civil society worked to translate ideals into actions. This chapter further examined how the 'quiet inclusion of LGBTI+ across mainstream public policy' was organised through long-term strategic focus on incremental policy change. Finally, this chapter ends on a note of hope for governance and the engagement of civil society with the state. Drawing on McInerney's Enabling State+ framework it claims that public servants demonstrated aspects of 'core relational and transformational capacities' when engaging with LGBTI+ civil society. When seen together with the levers

to further equality which arise from Public Sector Duty, these point to significant potential for partnership between civil society and the state in the area of equality.

CHAPTER 6:   CONCLUSION

6.1   Introduction

LGBTI+ young people have long been positioned at the heart of public moral arguments on issues relating to sexuality, gender, and religion in Ireland. Such arguments were ever-present throughout debates on decriminalising homosexuality in 1993, where this study begins, through to debates in the marriage equality referendum and gender recognition act in 2015, where it ends. Community and youth work practice, alongside decades of research show the toll this discourse has taken on previous and current generations of the LGBTI+ community has had far-reaching and devastating effects. It is in these urgent conditions that civil society advocacy for policy change in relation to LGBTI+ young people took place.

It is also the context in which this study set out to answer the questions; 1) How did civil society influence public policy in relation to LGBTI+ young people between 1993-2015? and 2) How did LGBTI+ young people become included in Irish public policy (what changed and why) in those years? This chapter offers concluding observations through answering these questions with a focus on sharing lessons with civil society organisations seeking to influence policy change and implications for the field of inquiry.

A rigorous research strategy was applied to developing answers. This included a sampling process whereby key informants were approached on the basis that they had contributed in significant ways to the inclusion of LGBTI+ young people in Irish society during the period in question. This study makes the case that each participant can be described as a member of the Irish policy community in relation to LGBTI+ youth issues. Drawn from civil society (LGBTI+ and mainstream), the public service and politicians, participants had vast experience in their fields and offered deep insights into often invisible policy development processes. The data collected was systematically analysed using Braun and Clarke's (2006) six phase guide to thematic analysis, with the aid of NVivo computer software. The rigour of this analysis is outlined in the codebook in the appendices.

Research findings were presented in Chapter 4 using Kingdon's Agenda Setting model (Kingdon, 2003) as an organising framework. To discuss the findings in Chapter 5, frameworks and theory from the literature chapter are reintroduced. These include the Advocacy Policy Coalition (Jenkins-Smith & Sabatier 1993), and Narrative Policy

Framework (McBeth et al 2015), community development and youth work theory (Devlin, 2008; Jenkinson, 2013) and the Enabling State+ framework, (McInerney, 2018). The framework developed for this study emphasises the centrality of civil society across public policy development and, crucially, implementation processes.

6.2 How did civil society influence public policy in relation to LGBTI+ young people and what lessons can be shared with other civil society organisations seeking policy change?

The findings present key insights into how civil society influenced public policy in relation to LGBTI+ young people. They demonstrate that civil society engaged in organised and sustained processes of turning vision and values into actions for social and policy change.

It did so through a number of key, long-term strategies which are represented in **figure 13,** presented in the discussion chapter above, and re-presented here:
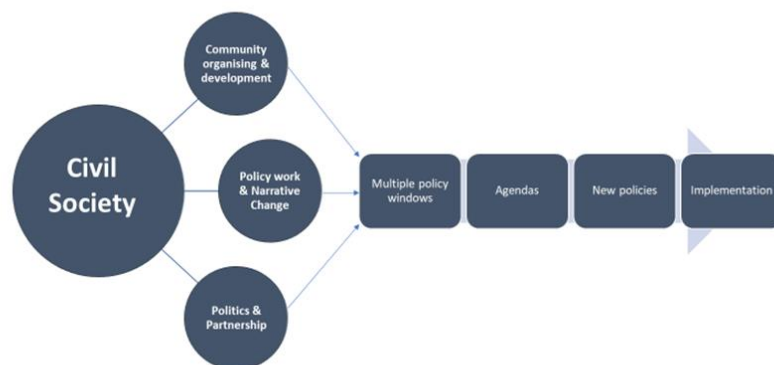
Figure 13: Framework for civil society role in public policy development
Civil society

Civil society exerted influence on public policy in relation to LGBTI+ young people in a number of key ways, which are presented here with a view to sharing learning with civil society organisations.

Legitimacy and centrality of Civil Society

LGBTI+ civil society's ability to operate in the public policy space was bolstered by the fact that it was seen as legitimate. This sense emerged because it was part of the community it advocated for, and in the case of BeLonG To, it was a front-line service. Its legitimacy was furthered by its ability to develop research and evidence, secure funding, define social problems in policy terms, and engage in policy development processes with public servants and politicians. Key policy development processes discussed in this study occurred over a decade or more and LGBTI+ civil society's ability to 'stay the course' and work with others in the policy community over extended periods contributed significantly to its impact. Civil society's centrality and legitimacy is, drawing here on John Kingdon's Policy entrepreneur descriptor, enabled by:

1. Its expertise on the topics, as they relate to their community
2. Its representation of the community or communities impacted
3. Its ability to develop political connectedness over time
4. Its tenacity and persistence
5. Its ability to negotiate and broker at key moments (such as during general elections and government formations), build coalition
6. Its mobility and ability to exploit policy window opportunities.

Community organising and development

Critical to how civil society influenced public policy in this arena was its engagement in long-term process of community organising and development. Closely linked to the notion of legitimacy above, this work included:

1. Organising – creating LGBTI+ organisations and infrastructure
2. Strategising – developing long term plans for social and policy change
3. Community development and youth work – adopting human rights-based education and awareness raising programmes
4. Collective action and coalitions – working in partnerships with other communities for shared goals.

Critical community youth work practice was central to how civil society influenced public policy in this area. The approach to youth work applied by BeLonG To was based on a vision of youth work which should 'empower young people and give them a voice, individually and collectively, and should uphold and promote the rights of children and

young people as citizens' (Devlin 2017 p. 84). This approach included programmes of consciousness-raising and activism amongst LGBTI+ young people and opportunities for them to speak directly with public servants and politicians, which participants in this study indicated influenced their work on policy development. Youth work also provided a vehicle for building a movement through the development of a network of LGBTI+ youth groups across Ireland, which grew from one in 2003 to forty-five by 2018 (BeLonG To 2018). The purpose of these groups was to provide support to young people so that they wouldn't be forced to leave their geographic communities in order to 'come out'. This network of youth groups also functioned, as one interviewee observed, to build a 'movement of people upwards' who played a significant role in normalising LGBTI+ identity within their families and communities, including through their role in campaigning for marriage equality in 2015.

The development of research and documentation of inequality towards LGBTI+ people was central to strategies for policy change. Key reports in the 1990s were of great significance in this area – including *Poverty-Lesbians and Gay Men: The Economic and Social Effects of Discrimination* (Combat Poverty Agency & GLEN/Nexus 1995) and *HIV Prevention Strategies and the Gay Community* (GLEN/Nexus 1996).

The production of a documented organisational strategy was a key factor in how civil society focused its work on policy change over lengthy periods. In the case of BeLonG To, strategies developed with the support of The One Foundation in 2008 and 2011, (covering the six-year period 2008-2014), contained plans to affect key policy changes which occurred. The resourcing of these planning processes what key to the organisation's capacity to develop multi-annual strategies. The organisation's 2008 strategy included plans for the development of mandatory procedures for schools in relation to homophobic and transphobic bullying, which would become a reality when the Department of Education and Skills issued anti-bullying procedures for all schools in 2013.

Policy work and narrative change

Core to this work was a vision for an equal society. The presentation of this vision demanded that civil society engage in processes of narrative change (McBeth et al, 2014) so as to be in a position to engage with politicians and public servants. This work includes:

1. Public campaigns aimed at changing public perceptions (including those of policy makers) on LGBTI+ identity

2. Targeted work of ´narrative change´, such as 'reclaiming' issues of child protection and bullying

3. 'Problematising' (Baachi, 2009) policy making processes, such as circumventing the requirement for demographic statistics

4. Playing a key role in the development of overarching legislation to enhance the rights of marginalised communities (such as equality legislation)

5. 'Mainstreaming' – undertaking long-term processes of advocating for the inclusion of LGBTI+ youth in mainstream policy

The presentation of LGBTI+ youth issues in an equality framework had a number of key advantages. Firstly, it brought a vision for LGBTI+ young people together with an existing and accepted framework that was underpinned by legislation. Secondly, it allowed for multiple focuses on urgent inequalities, such as anti-LGBTI+ violence in schools, poor mental health, and discrimination towards LGBTI+ teachers. As such it allowed for mobility and flexibility which were important during this period of fast paced change, while also holding a solid vision of equality for all.

This research further finds that, aligned to a vision for equality, LGBTI+ civil society engaged in strategic use of optimism. This involved the projection of an image of an ideal Irish society where LGBTI+ young people were fully included, and despite provocation, did not 'speak back' to the more dominant homophobic and transphobic public discourses. This strategy, described in this study as 'Queer Optimism', (in reference to Snediker's 2008 book of the same name), is akin to the notion of 'radical imagination' - imagining 'the world, life and social institutions not as they are but as they might otherwise be' (Haiven & Khasnabish 2014 p. 229). It is also influenced by the activist equality tradition in Ireland which has focused on 'social change and developing alternative forms of society' (Crowley 2015 p. 5). This queer optimism was initially necessary for LGBTI+ civil society to work with young people who were experiencing deep oppression, who were starved of positive images of being LGBTI+ in Ireland, and who needed hopeful roadmaps to the future. In relation to policy change, queer optimism became a strategy for building support and coalitions and for developing policy solutions based on the ideal outcome for young people. These ideal outcomes were reflected in civil society campaigns which were designed to change public narratives on LGBTI+ identity and

included such slogans as *'She/he's gay and we're cool with that'* and *'Stand Up! Support your LGBTI+ friends'*.

Politics and partnerships

For politicians, the historical mistreatment of the LGBTI+ community was highlighted as a motivating factor, as were commitments to the separation of church and state, and as with public servants, a belief in equality was significant. As outlined in previous chapters the significance of good working relationships with LGBTI+ civil society was also discussed as an influencing factor for both politicians and public servants. Civil society engaged with politics and key government partnerships in a number of strategic ways:

1. Developing close working relationship with key public servant champions who in turn presented civil society policy solutions as legitimate to politicians.

2. Through public campaigning, changing public opinion on related issues. They in turn, through research and public opinion polls presented public support for change to politicians – making it politically 'safe' to act.

3. Developing direct working relationships with politicians through lobbying, parliamentary committees, and presenting policy solutions to politicians. This was particularly evident at key comments such as general elections, the development of programmes for government and in response to pressing public concerns (such as youth mental health and bullying).

4. Fulfilling the historical role played by civil society in the Irish tradition of state 'subsidiarity', where by the state plays a secondary role in people lives, particularly in the areas of education and health (Devlin, 2003). This is particularly evident in the arena of policy implementation as outlined in figures 13, 14, 15, 16, in the discussion chapter)

6.3   How did LGBTI+ young people become included in Irish public policy (what changed and why) and what lessons can be shared with other civil society organisations seeking policy change?

The policy change described in this study should be seen as cyclical, and involving these key recurring stages:

1. Community development and organising
2. Policy work and narrative change

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3. Civil society partnerships and politics
4. Multiple windows of opportunities opening over time
5. New policies being developed and enacted
6. Civil society working with government to implement new policies.

These cyclical phases are represented in figure 14 above, which is represented again here:
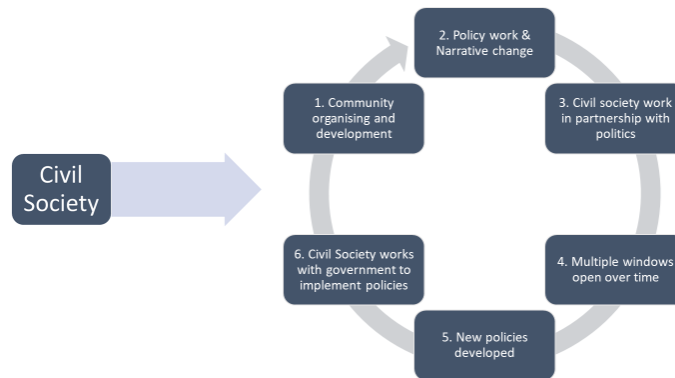
Figure 14: Cyclical framework for civil society role in public policy development

Within this model the policy change described in this study can be seen in three phases: 1) the agenda setting phase, 2) the policy development phase and 3) the policy implementation phase.

The agenda setting phase can be seen to begin with the 1990 Irish Council of Civil Liberties publication *Equality Now for Lesbians and Gay Men*, cited in the literature chapter. It outlined a robust initial agenda for the inclusion of gay, lesbian and bisexual young people in government policy. This agenda setting continued through to the 2000's where BeLonG To provided a central platform for advocating for government recognition and support of LGBTI+ young people. In the 2000's policy solutions were developed by civil society and began to be accepted – as seen in the National Youth Work Development Plan in 2003, the National Strategy for Action on Suicide Prevention in 2005 and the National Drugs Strategy in 2009. In the 2010's, these policy solutions were accepted across a wide variety of mainstream youth, health and education public policies. This can be seen as a process whereby subjects first reach the 'governmental agenda' where they get attention, and then are moved onto the 'decision agenda' where government makes decisions on action on these subjects (Kingdon 2003 pp.3-4). When considering how and

why LGBTI+ youth issues reached the decision agenda for policy change it is significant to note that they formed a core element of an embedded 'public moral argument' (Fisher 1984 p. 12) where there was significant opposition to their advancement. As such it was necessary for civil society to engage in processes of 'narrative change' (McBeth et al 2015) to change public perceptions of LGBTI+ young people, including by providing opportunities for 'organised visibility' where politicians and public servants to meet directly with LGBTI+ young people to learn about their lived experiences.

Civil society in policy implementation

The implementation of policy concerning LGBTI+ young people has contained a strong focus on action from LGBTI+ civil society, funded by the state, through service level agreements. This can be seen to be in line with the Irish state's tradition of subsidiarity (Devlin 2008) and with New Public Management's approach to public administration which seeks to reduce state involvement in the provision of services and the day-to-day life of its citizens (Savoie 1995, McInerney 2018). It also indicates that minority and marginalised community organisations are often best placed to advocate on behalf of their communities, and to do so they need to be supported by the state. It is of significance that in 2006 the HSE resourced BeLonG To to 'provide a national voice' for LGBTI+ young people, which enabled the organisation to engage in widespread advocacy for policy change. As a strong civil society is central to a well-functioning democracy (Crotty & Schmitt 1998, Edwards 2014, McInerney 2014), and in light of growing evidence of a shrinking civil society space, the effectiveness of state support for LGBTI+ civil society during this period offers helpful examples of work to ensure freedom of civil society in the current climate.

The LGBTI+ youth policy change work that largely came to fruition in the 2010's was significantly bolstered by the work of LGBTI+ adult organisations. The influence of the Gay and Lesbian Equality Network, Marriage Equality and the Transgender Equality Network Ireland in both influencing the public narrative about LGBTI+ identity and in working with politician and public servants is a notable feature of this study.

The motivation of the public servants who participated in this study is a key factor in explaining why policy change in this area occurred. The nature of the public servants' positions means that their work is often invisible to the public, despite the fact that they write policy and coordinate the processes. Interviewees spoke about being motivated to act on LGBTI+ youth issues due to a sense of social justice and a belief in equal treatment.

As McInerney points out, and this research echoes, 'public officials, like all other human beings, embody a whole host of beliefs, values, dispositions, prejudices and biases that may cause them to act in a certain way' (McInerney 2014 p. 32). This research finds that public servants were motivated by values and beliefs in equality, which in reference to the Advocacy Policy Coalition framework provided 'the glue' which brought actors in the policy community together (Sabatier 1993 p. 30). It also finds that in line with McInerney's Enabling state+ framework they demonstrated aspects of 'core relational and transformational capacities' in their engagement with LGBTI+ civil society groups – including by legitimising such groups and my listening and learning directly from LGBTI+ young people (McInerney 2019 pp. 13-18).

6.4   Contribution to the Field

This study adds to the field of inquiry in a number of ways. It sheds light on aspects of recent LGBTI+ activist history in Ireland which have not been discussed in literature. It does so by providing space to people within the LGBTI+ community and those outside of it who through virtue of their position and conviction furthered the rights of LGBTI+ young people, often out of the public eye. Furthermore, it invites discussion of the role of public policy within the broader lived experience of LGBTI+ young people. It posits that social policy analysis to date has too often overlooked significant developments by presentation through landmark events. It further suggests that current social policy analysis which makes claims about negative impacts of anti-homophobia and transphobic policy on young people fails to consider the community organising and community development and multi-layered public policy, narrative change and service development strategies which were in action during this period. This research moves beyond a documentary policy analysis and invites others to see policy change in the round and for the purpose of improving lives. In doing so it presents a newly adapted framework which is transferable to policy change on key social issues which impact on the lives of minority and marginalised communities.

6.5   Future research

This is an innovative exploratory study which can form the basis of considerable further work in this area. The study provides the basis for further research into the relationship between self-organised community development from minority communities, campaigns of narrative change on social issues and policy change. It challenges traditional academic

social policy narratives and in so doing opens up space for further 'activist' interpretations of public policy development – both in Ireland and internationally.

It also provides the basis for further examination of a number of key areas including the role philanthropic funding of advocacy for progressive social policy change and the role of youth work as a platform for policy change.

In relation to LGBTI+ community studies in Ireland, which to date have largely focused on pre-decriminalisation histories and on the ´big ticket´ legislative changes (such as the Marriage Equality referendum) this study forms a basis for further and deeper examinations of societal change in the 1990s, 2000s and 2010s. This is an under-examined extended period which saw very significant change in the acceptance of LGBTI+ in Irish society and a period of unparalleled mainstreaming of LGBTI+ rights across government policy.

As outlined in the literature, there are significant concerns globally about the freedom of civil society to organise and advocate for social justice. This study touches on some of the relevant issues and foregrounds the impact that civil society can have when it is supported by the state. A great deal of further research could happen in this space which is rapidly changing

6.6   Conclusion

This study finds that civil society was the driving force behind policy change in relation to LGBTI+ young people in the period between decriminalisation of homosexual acts in 1993 and the introduction of marriage equality and gender recognition in 2015. A great deal of the work to affect this change happened quietly through the development of a research evidence base, the creation of viable policy solutions and the engagement in processes of relationship building with politicians and public servants. Other elements of the work were very public – such as campaigns to change how the country thought and spoke about LGBTI+ young people and through high profile media events. Its ability to manage multiple strategies on multiple issues was key to its approach along with its influence within the policy community. While there is a great deal of work to be done to reach a point where it can be said that LGBTI+ young people are fully included, and we know that equality gains can be lost, it is clear from this study that a vibrant self-directed

civil society is key to social progress. It is my hope that this study will provide insights and tools to future advocates seeking equality-based public policy change.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1:   Timeline of LGBTI+ developments from 1993-2015

Acts	Red
Policies	Orange
Strategies	Yellow
Campaigns	Blue
Organisations	Pink
Plans	Plum
Curriculum/Training with DES	Green
Significant research	Dark red
Public focusing interventions/mass media	Indigo

1993: Decriminalisation

1998: Equality Employment Act

2000: Equality Status Act

2003: National Youth Work Development Plan

2003: BeLonG To, LGBT youth organisation founded.

2004: 'So Gay'! – first schools focused campaign against homophobic bullying

2005: Department of Education Support Services Teacher Training- SPHE Support Service and BeLonG To develop first programme of teacher training about LGBT issues.

2005: Reachout: National Strategy for Action on Suicide Prevention names LGBT people

2006: Homophobic Bullying in School Seminar in Trinity College: Children's Research Centre, BeLonG To, Journal of LGBT Youth.

2006: Stop Homophobic Bullying in School Campaign - partnership between The Equality Authority and BeLonG To.

2006: Norman, J. & Galvin, M. (2006) *"Straight Talk: An Investigation of Attitudes and Experiences of Homophobic Bullying in Second-Level Schools"* Dublin City University

2006: Transgender Equality Network Ireland founded

2007: Marriage Equality organisation founded

2008: BeLonG To's National Network of LGBT Youth Services was launched by President Mary McAleese

2009: *Supporting LGBT Lives*, a national research study into LGBT mental health and wellbeing launched. Children's Research Centre, GLEN, BeLonG To

2009: National Drugs Strategy

2010: Stand Up! LGBT Awareness Week launched (runs annually)

2010: Growing Up Gay is aired as a two-part TV series on national broadcaster RTE

2010: BeLonG To launches its LGBT Asylum Seeker & Refugee Project

2010: Civil Partnership Act

2011: Fine Gael and Labour form government with commitment in programme for government to tackle homophobic bullying.

2011: Cloyne Report into clerical sexual abuse and statement from Taoiseach about separation of Catholic Church and Irish state.

2012: BeLonG To's Stand Up to homophobic bullying video reaches 1 million viewers on YouTube - goes on to reach 2 million +.

2012: International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia - BeLonG To speak at UNESCO in Paris and Department of Education and Skills Anti-Bullying Forum

2012: School Curriculum: *Growing Up LGBT in Ireland* SPHE curriculum developed with Department of Education, the Health Service Executive, BeLonG To and GLEN.

2013: National Action Plan on Bullying which emphasised schools' obligations to combat homophobic and transphobic bullying and support LGBT students.

2013: EU Presidency LGBT Youth and Social Inclusion Conference at Croke Park and Dublin Statement

2014: Better Outcomes, Brighter Future: National Policy Framework for Children and Young People 2014-2020

2015: National Youth Strategy 2015-2020

2015: Marriage Equality Referendum and Marriage Equality Act

2015: Gender Recognition Act

2015: Launch of LGBT Safe and Supportive Schools model

2015: Connecting for Life: Ireland's National Strategy to Reduce Suicide 2015-2020

2015: The Equality (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act

APPENDIX 2:   **UNESCO Case Study of Irish response to homophobic and transphobic violence in education settings**

Source: UNESCO (2016) *Out in the open: Education sector responses to violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression*. Paris: UNESCO

CASE STUDY IRELAND: DEVELOPING A COMPREHENSIVE RESPONSE TO HOMOPHOBIC AND TRANSPHOBIC VIOLENCE IN EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS

In 2013, Ireland adopted a new comprehensive national plan to address bullying in schools, including homophobic and transphobic bullying. Key steps in the process included:

- **2005: Producing evidence.** Through research, BeLonGTo, a youth NGO, identified a link between coming out and self-harm for LGBT children and young people. This led to the group being recognized as a key population in the National Suicide Prevention Strategy.
- **2009–2011: Widening the evidence base.** Two additional pieces of research, commissioned by NGOs, generated evidence about the mental health of LGBT people and the lives of older LGBT people, starting a national conversation about daily realities for the LGBT community.
- **2010: Pledging action.** Teachers' unions and LGBT and youth NGOs presented the evidence to political and education sector leaders ahead of a national election, asking for action. The political parties forming a government committed to developing anti-bullying policies (including addressing homophobic bullying) in their programme.
- **2012: Getting to work.** The Department of Education and Skills organized the first public anti-bullying forum and started an anti-bullying working group, which included policy-makers, experts and NGOs.
- **2013: A new policy.** The Ministers for Education and Skills and for Children and Youth Affairs jointly launched the National Action Plan on Bullying, which referred to homophobic and transphobic bullying. The plan included financial support for information campaigns, LGBT-sensitive school inspections and training teachers on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression issues. It also included incorporating homophobic and transphobic bullying into new mandatory anti-bullying procedures for all schools.
- **2015: Guidelines for implementation.** The government issued national anti-bullying procedures to help primary and post-primary schools to implement the National Action Plan on Bullying [149].

APPENDIX 3:   Key informant interview guide

Research Topic: What do insights from the policy community reveal about the contribution of civil society organisations to the changing status of LGBTI+ young people in Irish public policy 1993 to 2015?

Sub-questions:

a) How did LGBTI+ young people become included in Irish public policy when they did?
b) Why did LGBTI+ young people become included in Irish public policy when they did?
c) What lessons can these insights offer Irish civil society organisations seeking to influence policy change?

Biography

- Can you tell me about yourself and how you became involved in the work you do? (vary depending on the interviewee)
- Can you tell about how you first became involved in supporting policy change towards LGBTI+ young people?
- What do you believe were the motivating factors for your involvement?

Key areas of involvement

- Can you tell me about key initiatives relating to LGBTI+ young people and policy development that you were involved in?
- What were the key factors that supported that work?
- Were there challenges to doing that work?

Civil Society

- Can you tell me about your experience of working with Civil Society groups in this area? e.g., LGBTI+ community groups

Public Service

- Can you tell me about your experience of working with public service in this area? e.g., government departments, agencies

Political System

- Can you tell me about your experience of working with politicians in this area? e.g., TDs, government ministers

Key learnings

- Are there key learnings you would like to share with others about your experience?
- Is there anything else you would like to share?

Information Sheet

Dear

My name is Michael Barron, I am studying for a Doctorate in Social Science at Maynooth University. I am undertaking a study which looks back at the twenty-four-year period from 1992 to 2016 and seeks to explain how and why a shift in the status of LGBTI young people in public policy happened in Ireland.

Overview:

In May 2015 Ireland became the first country in the world to secure marriage equality by referendum. By a margin of almost two to one voters agreed to change the Irish constitution so that marriage rights were extended to same sex couples. Just twenty-three years earlier in 1993 the Irish state decriminalized homosexuality, the last European Union country to do so. Over the same period LGBTI young people went from being unnamed in any national public policy to becoming a public policy priority, culminating in the announcement of the world's first LGBTI+ National Youth Strategy in June 2016.

As a study grounded in my own experience of advocacy for public policy change this work aims to provide useful insights into real life national LGBTI policy development.

This study is carried out through policy analysis and through a small number of interviews with key informants who have particular insights into this topic.

Request to you:

Due to your experience and knowledge, I would like to interview you, as a key informant in this area. The purpose of the interview is to talk about your experience and your opinion in this area. Interviews will one to two hours and they will be tape recorded. The recordings will be transcribed and the electronic file wiped.

Storing your information:

You can choose to be identified in the study, or to be anonymous, in which case no personal information will be kept with the transcription. Only myself as researcher and my supervisors, Dr Hilary Tierney (⬛⬛⬛⬛⬛⬛⬛⬛) and Professor Maurice Devlin (⬛⬛⬛⬛⬛⬛⬛⬛) will have access to the transcript.

Your information will be kept confidentially and anonymously unless you agree to be named in the study – (please see overleaf)

It must, however, be recognised that, in some circumstances, confidentiality of research data and records may be overridden by courts in the event of litigation or in the case of investigation by a lawful authority. In such unlikely circumstances the University will take all reasonable steps within law to ensure that confidentiality is maintained to the greatest degree possible.

Participation is voluntary. It is completely up to you whether you take part or not. If you are happy to participate, you will be asked to sign a consent form (attached).

If you would like to know more about the interview and the project (before you make your choice), please do not hesitate to contact me on ▬▬▬▬ or ▬▬▬▬▬▬▬▬▬

If during your participation in this study you feel the information and guidelines that you were given have been neglected or disregarded in any way, or if you are unhappy about the process, please contact the Secretary of the National University of Ireland Maynooth Ethics Committee at research.ethics@nuim.ie or +353 (0)1 708 6019. Please be assured that your concerns will be dealt with in a sensitive manner.

Thank You,

Michael Barron

Email/Phone Number supplied

Consent Form for Research Participants

I confirm that I have read the information sheet overleaf.

I am satisfied that I understand the information provided and have had enough time to consider the information.

I understand that participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason and without any effect up to the point of publication.

I agree to participate in this study: Yes _____   No_____

I agree to being tape recorded: Yes _____   No_____

I am willing to be named in this study: Yes _____   No_____

I am willing to be named in subsequent

publications arising from this study: Yes_____   No_____

I want to be anonymous in this study: Yes _____   No_____

I want to be anonymous in subsequent

publications arising from this study: Yes_____   No_____

I am willing for the tape recording of my

interview to be stored in the Irish Qualitative

Data Archive at Maynooth University: Yes_____   No_____

_____

Name of Participant   Date   Signature

_____

Michael Barron   Date   Signature

APPENDIX 5:   **Codebook and Audit Trail**

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Codebook

Appendix 5a[4] - Codebook\\Phase 2 - Generating Initial Codes (Exploratory Coding)

Phase 2 - Generating Initial Codes (Exploratory Coding) - 158 codes developed in phase 2	Code Definitions for Coding Consistency	Documents Coded	Units of Meaning Coded
Advocacy for Policy Change	All work done by Civil Society to change gov policy - this crosses over with many other categories	13	62
BeLonG To	Main LGBT Civil Society organisation. LGBT youth appeared in no policy until after 2003 when BeLonG To advocated	20	205
Bullying	Entre point, framing, reality, research, push back to framing	7	8
Children's Rights Child Protection	Ryan Report Children's Referendum DCYA Child Projection 'movements happened concurrently	1	4
Culture Shifts	Ireland underwent very significant change over this period - boom and bust economy emigration immigration emigration. Also, a loosening of Catholic Church relationship with people and state.	1	1
Decriminalisation	Homosexual Acts were decriminalised in 1993	3	13
Department of Children and Youth Affairs	Was an office with junior Minister and became a full Department in 2011? Was a funder of BeLonG To and 'home' to much youth policy	3	22
Department of Education		9	48
Fear of jumping the shark	Fear that LGBT is now over emphasised	1	3
Fear of row back	Looking internationally and nationally at possible retraction of LGBTI Rights and the job isn't done	1	3
Focusing Events	As per John Kingdoms Policy Streams Model - key events shift issues	13	62
Funding	Resourcing the work to advocate for policy change	6	16
Gay Community News	Ireland's National LGBT magazine	1	10
Gender Recognition Bill 2015 and Review	n July 15, 2015, Ireland passed the Gender Recognition Act of 2015 that allows legal gender changes without the requirement of medical intervention or assessment by the state.[6] Such change is possible through self-determination for any person aged 18 or over resident in Ireland and registered on Irish registers of birth or adoption. Persons aged 16 to 18 years must secure a court order to exempt them from the normal requirement to be at least 18.[7] Ireland is one of four legal jurisdictions in the world	1	2
GLEN	Gay and Lesbian Equality Network - the other main LGBT org - working mostly on adult issues at this time	2	9
History of building Equality Infrastructure	Pre-Equality Status Act so 1993-2000	3	8
Human Rights Framework	Equality Legislation, Framing LGBT youth in terms of rights - education, safety, services etc.	7	23

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[4] Codebook -Phase 2 – Generating Initial Coding involved deconstructing the data from its original chronology into an initial set of non-hierarchical codes

Phase 2 - Generating Initial Codes (Exploratory Coding) - 158 codes developed in phase 2	Code Definitions for Coding Consistency	Documents Coded	Units of Meaning Coded
International Work	BeLonG To's work with UNESCO, an international collaboration of anti-homophobic bullying groups (Europe, US, S America, S Africa). This included presenting internationally and hosting international conferences in Ireland. This led to shared learning and strategies.	3	8
Intersectionality	Cross over identities and subpopulations such as LGBTI Migrant people etc.	4	9
LGBT as a legitimate identity	LGBT people being seen as owning a real identity, which is significant as we weren't previously	1	1
LGBT Family and Friends as motivators for non-LGBT actors	People acted to support policy change for LGBT youth because in part they knew LGBT people and had a personal experience with what change meant to them	2	5
LGBTI Inclusive language and policy	Working to ensure work and policy includes L + G + T + I - Also people's struggle with terminology	2	2
Liberation Movement LGBT	International and National Movement - largely since the 1970s	1	4
Marriage Equality Movement	Global Movement. Focused in Ireland from 2007 with the establishment of the MarriagEquality organisation	3	6
Marriage Equality Referendum	On May 22 2015 Marriage Equality Ref passed by 63%	6	15
Mental Health	Suicide Prevention, Framing, resourcing	5	18
Narrative Change Culture Shift	Media, Social Media, Campaigns, Movements	7	26
Oppression and Stigma	homophobia and transphobia, church opposition, political opposition, mental health	5	11
Personal Cost of being an LGBT Advocate	Concern for health and lack of career and financial progression resulting from spending life as an LGBT rights advocate, particularly while it was unpopular and while others were advancing in other fields	1	6
Personal motivations for promoting LGBT Rights	Encompassing all areas - LGBT family, friends, meetings, equality and social justice beliefs	2	12
Policy Community	Who are the Policy Community	13	79
Public Opinion	Large and overarching concept. Is measured in opinion polls (see Marriage Equality, EQUATE for relevant ones). Politicians are concerned with public opinion. Ultimately policy change is for and of the people / public	1	4
Recession	Ireland went into deep economic recession in 2008 - 2015	1	5
Reflections on broader social change towards LGBT people	Reflection on cultural changes and changes that encompass all	2	2
Religion as a motivator to support minorities	Religious teachings on equality and justice as motivator to support a marginalised community	1	2
Research as advocacy	The use of research to develop evidence, tools and framings for advocacy. This includes NGO - State - University partnerships. In this space some key large-scale studies can be seen as key levers for change	8	66
School	As a site both for homophobia / transphobia and for interventions - including significant policy change	7	13
Sheer extent of homophobia, transphobia, discrimination,	How prevalent hom/transphobia was as told by young people at BeLonG To and backed up over time by research	1	2

Phase 2 - Generating Initial Codes (Exploratory Coding) - 158 codes developed in phase 2	Code Definitions for Coding Consistency	Documents Coded	Units of Meaning Coded
violence experienced by LGBT young people			
Shifting LGBTI+ youth Identities	How younger people's sense of identity changed to be more fluid	1	7
Social Justice beliefs	Personal belief in social justice - an analysis and a value system	4	6
Solidarity	Community groups working together across issues, Allies, First followers	6	21
Stigma		11	41
The Catholic Church	In general, the Catholic Church, and in particular its relationship with LGBT issues and communities	7	11
Transgender Rights	Transgender Rights in Ireland, particularly as relate to youth, youth supports, gender recognition, safety in schools etc.	4	9
Visibility and knowing LGBT people	Knowing LGBT people as a motivation for people to act to improve policies towards LGBT youth	5	7
Youth driven movements	Young people developing and directing campaigns or joining campaigns. A sense that young people were particularly active in LGBT rights movement in Ireland	3	8
Youth Policy	Descriptions and Insights directly to exclusion / inclusion / Shifts in youth policy	4	15

Appendix 5b[5] - Codebook\\Phase 3 - Searching for Themes (Developing Categories)

Phase 3 - Searching for Themes (Developing Categories) - 153 initial codes mapped and collapsed to 15 categories of codes	Code Definitions for Coding Consistency	Documents Coded	Units of Meaning Coded
Civil Service - Government Departments and Agencies	This is a meta categorisation	5	12
Civil Society	The work of Civil Society Organisations in changing the status of LGBTI young people in Irish Public Policy. This is a meta category and will contain the following sub categories:	23	408
Culture Shifts	Ireland underwent very significant change over this period - boom and bust economy emigration immigration emigration. Also, a loosening of Catholic Church relationship with people and state.	10	52
Focusing Events	As per John Kingdoms Policy Streams Model - key events shift issues	15	79
Funding	Resourcing the work to advocate for policy change	6	16
Human Rights Framework	Equality Legislation, Framing LGBT youth in terms of rights - education, safety, services etc.	8	31
Miscellaneous	Variety of codes from data that don't have a 'home'	2	6
Oppression and Stigma	homophobia and transphobia, church opposition, political opposition, mental health	13	60
Personal motivations for promoting LGBT Rights	Encompassing all areas - LGBT family, friends, meetings, equality and social justice beliefs	9	26
Policy Community	Who are the Policy Community	4	25
Politicians	View of own role and view of others	12	33
Solidarity and Social Justice Guiding Principles	Community groups working together across issues, Allies, First followers	14	50
The Big Issues - Mental Health Bullying School Asylum Gender Recognition	The issues that LGBT young people 'presented with' and which formed the basis of the advocacy platform	10	31
The Catholic Church	In general, the Catholic Church, and in particular its relationship with LGBT issues and communities	10	15
Youth Policy	Descriptions and Insights directly to exclusion / inclusion / Shifts in youth policy	9	48

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[5] Codebook – Phase 3 – Searching for Themes – involved merging, renaming, distilling and clustering related coded into broader categories of codes to reconstruct the data into a framework that makes sense to further the analysis.

Appendix5c[6] - Codebook\\Phase 4 - Reviewing Themes (Coding on)

Phase 4 - Reviewing Themes (Coding on) - breaking down reorganised codes form phase 3 into sub-codes to better understand the meanings embedded within.	Code Definitions for Coding Consistency	Documents Coded	Units of Meaning Coded
Civil Service - Government Departments and Agencies	**This is a meta categorisation**	**11**	**92**
Civil Servants as engaged with other policy community (Civil Service, Politician)	**View of own role and view of others**	**6**	**21**
Changing more open culture in Civil Service	Civil Services changing with society and being open and innovative	2	6
Civil Service and Minister and politics	Relationship between civil service and the relevant Minister in policy change terms	2	3
Department of Children and Youth Affairs	**Was an office with junior Minister and became a full Department in 2011. Was a funder of BeLonG To and 'home' to much youth policy**	**3**	**22**
Funding LGBT	One of BeLonG To's main funders	2	4
Newly Established	Formed as a full Department (was an office) in 2011 - with new government and also the impact of Ryan Report and other areas	1	3
Relationship with BeLonG To	Key relationship in driving policy change towards LGBT youth. DCYA was the 'home' of most youth policy and also a funder.	3	13
Youth Policy	Government Policy towards young people	1	2
Department of Education		**9**	**48**
Department of Education Changing and Innovating	Movement and innovation within the Dept (note: at odds with some perceptions)	1	9
Duty of Care after abuse scandals	Ryan Report and others - including Louise O'Keefe case - sense that DES felt exposed and needed to act and be seen to act on safety of children and youth in schools.	2	4
History of Department of Education	Including of heavy religious influence	1	9
Pace of Change within DES	Sense that change happens slowly in DES	2	4
Ruairi Quinn as Minister 2011	RQ as first atheist Min for Ed with a reform agenda. He also had a long track record on LGBT rights and a commitment in Programme for Government	2	8
Sense DES as conservative	Perception DES is influenced by Catholic Church and is overall conservative and out of synch with a society which is more progressive	5	8

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[6] Codebook – Phase 4 – Reviewing Themes involved breaking down the now reorganised categories in to sub-categories to better understand the meanings embedded therein.

Phase 4 - Reviewing Themes (Coding on) - breaking down reorganised codes form phase 3 into sub-codes to better understand the meanings embedded within.	Code Definitions for Coding Consistency	Documents Coded	Units of Meaning Coded
Surprise of B2 progress with DES	In view of sense of DES being religiously influence and Catholic teaching on LGBT issues - surprise at how much work and progress happened	3	6
Health Service Executive (HSE)	**The Health Service Executive (HSE) (Irish: Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte) is responsible for the provision of health and personal social services for everyone living in Ireland, with public funds. The formed the National Office for Suicide Prevention and are the largest funder of LGBT work in Ireland**	**1**	**1**
HSE Investment	NOSP investment as a result of suicide prevention strategy. Largest funder at stages	2	5
Civil Society	**The work of Civil Society Organisations in changing the status of LGBTI young people in Irish Public Policy. This is a meta category and will contain the following sub categized:**	**23**	**412**
Advocacy for Policy Change - characteristics and strategies	**All work done by Civil Society to change gov policy - this crosses over with many other categories**	**14**	**128**
Changing framings terminology in policy	Framing the issue in different ways at different times depending on what works to get traction	3	3
Compromise	Comprise to affect change - and moral opposition to compromise	3	5
Door opening strategies	Early strategies to get heard and issue aired	4	5
Framing and Strategic Choices	Acting Strategically in response to circumstances and opportunities. This can be about framing and defining issues and also about changing direction and being opportunistic and responsive to external factors	7	12
Good working relationships	Significance of people coming well and openly together. This is of particular significance when it comes to people from the three classified groups working together - Civil Servants Civil Society and Politicians working relationships	4	13
Momentum	When an issue an advocacy issue has 'the wind at its back' and is seen to be progressing. This can include in terms of public opinion and profile	3	6
Policy windows Entry points	Points at which an opportunity to progress an issue arise	2	3
Research as advocacy	The use of research to develop evidence, tools and framings for advocacy. This includes NGO - State - University partnerships. In this space some key large-scale studies can be seen as key levers for change	8	66
Resistance to LGBT as legit issue amongst other groups	Largely when other civil society groups view LGBT rights as middle class and not as serious as economic inequality. Classic identity vs economic divide in advocacy	2	10
Restrictions on Advocacy	Government regulatory barriers - such as Standards in Public Office use of Electoral Act, burdensome reporting and regulation shrinking space and liberty to advocate	1	1
Urgency for policy change	When change is needed quickly, e.g., sense of urgency around violence and suicide towards / amongst LGBTI youth. Can be life and death	3	4
BeLonG To - Primary Advocacy Group	**Main LGBT Civil Society organisation. LGBT youth appeared in no policy until after 2003 when BeLonG To advocated**	**20**	**213**

Phase 4 - Reviewing Themes (Coding on) - breaking down reorganised codes form phase 3 into sub-codes to better understand the meanings embedded within.	Code Definitions for Coding Consistency	Documents Coded	Units of Meaning Coded
Advocating for legal and policy change	BeLonG To's work here - including on policies in mental health, education, equality, gender recognition, migration, marriage, workplace, health care	6	9
Authentic	Belief that the organisation is authentically representation LGBT young people and is focused young people and has legitimate claim to do so	6	18
BeLonG to Yes campaign for Marriage Equality	Campaign based on mobilising BeLonG To nationwide groups and networks and bringing together the main children and young people organisations	4	16
Bigger Stage Policy and Advocacy at BeLonG To	Move from service to advocacy for social and structural change	2	4
Combining capacities - bringing different skills and knowledge together	Bringing together youth workers, policy analysts, creatives (in particular) to advocate for LGBT youth rights	1	6
Establishing BeLonG To	Creating the organisation 2000-2003 - first state funded LGBT youth service. Established with grant from Department of Education which was significant later when advocating to Department of Education	4	6
Extent of homophobia and transphobia experience by LGBT young people	The urgency of acting due to the extent of what young people were telling BeLonG To staff, backed up by research	2	3
Flexibility and openness	The organisation being open to changing, growing, trying new directions, being creative	1	3
International Work	BeLonG To's work with UNESCO, an international collaboration of anti-homophobic bullying groups (Europe, US, S America, S Africa). This included presenting internationally and hosting international conferences in Ireland. This led to shared learning and strategies.	3	8
Legacies and History writing	What events and work is and hasn't been included in LGBT history writing	1	3
LGBT Youth Visible and speaking for selves	Youth leadership training and support at BeLonG To, including ensuring young people had platforms to vocalise needs and rights publicly. Comes from Critical Social Education model of youth work	6	9
MB Leadership	MB leading BeLonG To, the style, bringing people along, strategy, vision	8	18
Parents and Families	Involvement of Parents and Families in BeLonG To - including on Board and supporting LOOK parents' group. This is seen as significant as it wasn't an LGBT community vs family approach but an inclusive one	1	3
Providing evidence	Advocating from an evidence base. This includes commissioning research and carrying out need's analysis	3	4
Public Campaigns	From 2004 onwards BeLonG To ran many campaigns with view to influencing public perceptions of LGBT youth. These were often targeted as non-LGBT people and were aim at affected narrative change	8	24
Rural development of supports	Through work with National Office for Suicide Prevention BeLonG To developed a National Network of LGBT youth groups starting in 2007. By 2015 there were +30 groups (e.g., 4 in Donegal). Seen as significant in changing local attitudes and in mobilisation in Marriage Equality Ref	6	8
School Curriculum and Guideline Development	Work with Department of Education and DCYA and others to create school and service materials and teacher / worker training	1	3

Phase 4 - Reviewing Themes (Coding on) - breaking down reorganised codes form phase 3 into sub-codes to better understand the meanings embedded within.	Code Definitions for Coding Consistency	Documents Coded	Units of Meaning Coded
Social Analysis and BeLonG To	Critical Social Analysis: viewing issues as being structural discrimination, seeing inequalities as connected (poverty, identity). Importantly locating the problem as not being LGBT young people but society. Left-leaning analysis	6	18
Strategic Planning	The organisation developed 3-year strategic plans from 2007 onwards. / Most significantly - 2 funded strategic plans spanning 7 years funded by One Foundation. These included plans to change school system, build regional network and change public opinion.	2	2
Trustworthy and Solid	BeLonG To seen as reasoned, trustworthy, dedicated, serious, professional	12	29
Volume of Young People coming out and to services	Numbers of young people accessing BeLonG To drew dramatically over the years. From 50 in year one to +4,000 in 2015. It is commented on a lot in BeLonG To materials. Also, the scale of 'coming out' is commented on in general	1	1
Youth Leadership training and Critical Social Education	The model of youth work adopted by BeLonG To - includes working with young people as equal partners and organising for political change	1	5
Youth Work	Youth Work as a process of working with young people in a structured planned way. At BeLonG To the critical social education model of youth work was used and adapted which included an emphasis on political education and organising	5	12
Civil Society as engaged with rest of policy community (Civil Service, Politics)	**View of own role and view of others**	**6**	**22**
Youth Sector	Youth Work Youth Policy National Youth Council of Ireland - the sector in which BeLonG To partly resided and which promoted youth work and youth policy	2	9
Other LGBT Organisations	**Gay and Lesbian Equality Network Marriage Equality Gay Community News Transgender Equality Network Ireland - organisations whose work also contributed to policy change towards LGBT youth**	**3**	**21**
Gay Community News	Ireland's National LGBT magazine	1	7
Youth Issue of Gay Community News	Annual youth edited and content of national LGBT mag - conceived by BeLonG To	1	3
GLEN	Gay and Lesbian Equality Network - the other main LGBT org - working mostly on adult issues at this time	2	9
Liberation Movement LGBT	International and National Movement - largely since the 1970s	1	4
Marriage Equality Movement	Global Movement. Focused in Ireland from 2007 with the establishment of the MarriagEquality organisation	1	1
Building an ME Movement		1	2
Resistance to Marriage Equality within LGBT Community	Some in community thought it was the wrong focus or too much of a focus when compared with other issues	2	3
Parallel Civil Society and social change movements	**Other changes that were happening in an organised manner - with NGOs advocating - at the same time. Changes that were seen as cross pollinating with LGBT youth rights**	**1**	**4**
Children's Rights Child Protection	Ryan Report Children's Referendum DCYA Child Projection 'movements happened concurrently	1	4

Phase 4 - Reviewing Themes (Coding on) - breaking down reorganised codes form phase 3 into sub-codes to better understand the meanings embedded within.	Code Definitions for Coding Consistency	Documents Coded	Units of Meaning Coded
Shifting LGBTI+ youth Identities	How younger people's sense of identity changed to be more fluid	1	7
Transgender Rights	Transgender Rights in Ireland, particularly as relate to youth, youth supports, gender recognition, safety in schools etc.	4	9
Youth driven movements	Young people developing and directing campaigns or joining campaigns. A sense that young people were particularly active in LGBT rights movement in Ireland	3	8
Culture Shifts	**Ireland underwent very significant change over this period - boom and bust economy emigration immigration emigration. Also, a loosening of Catholic Church relationship with people and state.**	**10**	**52**
Decriminalisation	**Homosexual Acts were decriminalised in 1993**	**3**	**13**
Life as a result of decriminalisation	The effect and changes socially	2	5
Life Pre decriminalisation	What being criminal meant day to day	2	7
LGBT as a legitimate identity	LGBT people being seen as owning a real identity, which is significant as we weren't previously	1	1
Narrative Change Culture Shift	**Media, Social Media, Campaigns, Movements**	**7**	**26**
Media Strategies	Articulated strategies to further equality for LGBT youth through the media	3	6
Social Media	Articulated strategies to further Equality for LGBT young people using social media ~ (often part of campaign strategies)	3	5
Public Opinion	Large and overarching concept. Is measured in opinion polls (see Marriage Equality, EQUATE for relevant ones). Politicians are concerned with public opinion. Ultimately policy change is for and of the people / public	1	4
Recession	Ireland went into deep economic recession in 2008 - 2015	1	5
Reflections on broader social change towards LGBT people	Reflection on cultural changes and changes that encompass all	2	2
Focusing Events	**As per John Kingdoms Policy Streams Model - key events shift issues**	**15**	**86**
Anti-Bullying Action Plan 2013 (this can also fit in policy codes)	**Action Plan developed by Department of Education and Skills with BeLonG to and GLEN as a result of commitment in programme for government (2011) to tackle homophobic bullying. Here is largely seen as a focusing moment of change and also as an example of Civil Service, Civil Society and Political Systems working well together**	**4**	**24**
Working Group of DES BeLonG To and GLEN and example of Civil Service Civil Society and Politics working	In response to the programme for government commitment to tackle homophobic bullying the DES set up this working group. It was unusual in that it was DES plus two LGBT NGO's BeLonG To and GLEN. Other NGO's and stakeholders gave presentations and made submissions	1	7

Phase 4 - Reviewing Themes (Coding on) - breaking down reorganised codes form phase 3 into sub-codes to better understand the meanings embedded within.	Code Definitions for Coding Consistency	Documents Coded	Units of Meaning Coded
EU Presidency Conference 2013	BeLonG To with Irish Government and DCYA (who funded) held an international conference on LGBT youth and social inclusion as part of the EU Presidency in 2013 in Croke Park.	5	8
Gender Recognition Bill 2015 and Review	n July 15, 2015, Ireland passed the Gender Recognition Act of 2015 that allows legal gender changes without the requirement of medical intervention or assessment by the state.[6] Such change is possible through self-determination for any person aged 18 or over resident in Ireland and registered on Irish registers of birth or adoption. Persons aged 16 to 18 years must secure a court order to exempt them from the normal requirement to be at least 18.[7] Ireland is one of four legal jurisdictions in the world	1	2
General Election 2011	Elected Labour (Min) with Fine Gael. Significant with Ruairi Quinn as Min for Ed and Francis Fitzgerald and Min for Children. Both interviewed here.	3	7
Growing Up Gay TV Show	2010 - watched by 400,000 people per week for 2 weeks on prime-time TV. Cited as a focusing moment. It was made with BeLonG To over 5 years (conceived by Aoife Kelleher and Michael Barron) and told the story of young people from BeLonG To over 18 months. The mainstream nature and scale are seen as significant.	4	19
Marriage Equality Referendum	On May 22 2015 Marriage Equality Ref passed by 63%	6	15
President launches BeLonG To Network Galway	Mary McAleese as President of Ireland publicly supports LGBT youth and calls out homophobia. Significant at the moment and also as the beginning of a relationship which included her work with BeLonG to for Marriage Equality in 2015	2	2
Stand Up LGBT Awareness Week	Created by BeLonG To in 2010 - campaign with materials to all schools. Supported by Dept Ed after Action Plan on Bullying Annually a major media event. 2011 online ad for Stand Up! viewed by 2 million people - most of any advocacy campaign in Ireland. Widely cited across the world and translated into many languages.	3	8
Suicide Prevention Strategy 2005	LGBT people named as a priority group. BeLonG To's first submission to a strategy and advocacy on an issue (2003-2004) which was successful. It resulted in a significant financial investment in LGBT work by the HSE to a number of organisations from then to today	1	1
Funding	**Resourcing the work to advocate for policy change**	**6**	**16**
Department of Children and Youth Affairs	A main state funder and also the anchor funder (BeLonG To set up through this grant scheme)	1	3
Department of Education	Department of Education began funding Stand Up LGBT Awareness Week from 2013 and the Action Plan on Bullying onwards	1	2
HSE Investment	NOSP investment as a result of suicide prevention strategy. Largest funder at stages	2	5
One Foundation	Investing €1.5 million in BeLonG To over 7 years. Also provided non-financial supports including strategic planning, comms planning, capacity building and up skilling to professionalise the organisation	1	1
Human Rights Framework	**Equality Legislation, Framing LGBT youth in terms of rights - education, safety, services etc.**	**8**	**31**

Phase 4 - Reviewing Themes (Coding on) - breaking down reorganised codes form phase 3 into sub-codes to better understand the meanings embedded within.	Code Definitions for Coding Consistency	Documents Coded	Units of Meaning Coded
Equal Status Act as catalyst	The Equal Status Acts 2000-2015 ('the Acts') prohibit discrimination in the provision of goods and services, accommodation and education. They cover the nine grounds of gender, marital status, family status, age disability, sexual orientation, race, religion, and membership of the Traveller community.	5	7
History of building Equality Infrastructure	Pre-Equality Status Act so 1993-2000	3	8
Human Rights Framing in general	Framing LGBT youth issues and lives in terms of Rights as a helpful way of making progress	3	9
International Human Rights Bodies link to work	Analysis of LGBT youth rights linked to Ireland's commitments to international treaties and obligations. Also, International bodies cited work in Ireland on LGBT youth s good practice.	2	2
Rights - using the language in policy	A move the occurred which was significant and also resisted.	3	5
Miscellaneous	**Variety of codes from data that don't have a 'home'**	**2**	**6**
Fear of jumping the shark	Fear that LGBT is now over emphasised	1	3
Fear of row back	Looking internationally and nationally at possible retraction of LGBTI Rights and the job isn't done	1	3
Oppression and Stigma	**homophobia and transphobia, church opposition, political opposition, mental health**	**16**	**68**
Bullying	**Entre point, framing, reality, research, push back to framing**	**7**	**8**
As entry point to schools	Bullying was the entry point to LGBT issues in school. It was a real issue but also a friction at times as many felt it under valued the significance of homophobia and the need for full equality. Globally it became an entry point too - including for UNESCO - who named BeLonG To's work as good practice	7	8
Opposition to the work to support LGBT youth	Articulated opposition to supporting LGBT youth rights	5	11
Personal Cost of being an LGBT Advocate	Concern for health and lack of career and financial progression resulting from spending life as an LGBT rights advocate, particularly while it was unpopular and while others were advancing in other fields	1	6
Sheer extent of homophobia, transphobia, discrimination, violence experienced by LGBT young people	How prevalent hom/transphobia was as told by young people at BeLonG To and backed up over time by research	1	2
Stigma		**11**	**41**
Church and Institutions	Anti-LGBT Stigma resulting from Catholic and religious teachings against LGBT identities.	6	16
Discrimination on basis of identity	Homophobia, Transphobia, Biphobia. Discrimination based on Equal Status Act categories. Violence. Exclusion	1	2
Effect of Stigma	Damage caused by stigma - shame, psychological damage, physical, drug use, damaged education etc.	3	5
Invisible and Unmentionable	LGBT being invisible / in the closet as a result of stigma etc.	2	3

Phase 4 - Reviewing Themes (Coding on) - breaking down reorganised codes form phase 3 into sub-codes to better understand the meanings embedded within.	Code Definitions for Coding Consistency	Documents Coded	Units of Meaning Coded
Paedophilia	Common stigmatising narrative, including that adult gay men shouldn't be trusted with children. Particularly significant in the context of LGBT community youth work.	1	1
Stigma towards young people in general	Attitudes about young people being trouble or in trouble, not to be trusted, not having agency etc.	1	2
Visibility to Counter Stigma		3	11
Personal motivations for promoting LGBT Rights	**Encompassing all areas - LGBT family, friends, meetings, equality and social justice beliefs**	**9**	**26**
LGBT Family and Friends as motivators for non-LGBT actors	People acted to support policy change for LGBT youth because in part they knew LGBT people and had a personal experience with what change meant to them	2	5
Personal experiences of LGBT issues when growing up in Ireland	Interviewees own reflections on how LGBT issues were considered and experienced when they were growing up.	1	8
Religion as a motivator to support minorities	Religious teachings on equality and justice as motivator to support a marginalised community	1	2
Visibility and knowing LGBT people	Knowing LGBT people as a motivation for people to act to improve policies towards LGBT youth	5	7
Family who are LGBT	Family who are LGBT as a motivator to improve policies for LGBT youth	1	1
Meeting LGBT youth through BeLonG To	Politicians and Policy makers meeting real LGBT young people who explain why they need change as a motivator for these people to act. Also BeLonG To creating these opportunities	2	2
Policy Community	**Who are the Policy Community**	**4**	**25**
Media and Social media - does that sit in Pol Community now too	Sense that media and very influential in Irish policy development to such an extent that maybe they should be added to the policy community?	2	2
Relationships in the policy community	Describing who is in this group	2	23
Politicians	**View of own role and view of others**	**12**	**33**
Public Opinion	Large and overarching concept. Is measured in opinion polls (see Marriage Equality, EQUATE for relevant ones). Politicians are concerned with public opinion. Ultimately policy change is for and of the people / public	1	4
Solidarity and Social Justice Guiding Principles	**Community groups working together across issues, Allies, First followers**	**14**	**50**
Allies and First Followers	**Non-LGBT people who support LGBT youth rights, worked for inclusive policies. First followers - people in key positions who took leap of faith with LGBT advocates and in doing so helped make it safe for others to join.**	**8**	**24**
Allie Organisations and Communities		4	12

Phase 4 - Reviewing Themes (Coding on) - breaking down reorganised codes form phase 3 into sub-codes to better understand the meanings embedded within.	Code Definitions for Coding Consistency	Documents Coded	Units of Meaning Coded
First Followers	First follower theory is the concept that attracting an adherent to some kind of view or initiative is the first step toward beginning a movement that might seem unusual or out-of-step with the surrounding culture to the general population.	2	2
Intersectionality	Cross over identities and subpopulations such as LGBTI Migrant people etc.	4	9
Silos	Work happening in disconnected streams. Here often refers to the area of Equality, e.g., LGBT groups not working together with disability groups	1	6
Social Justice beliefs	Personal belief in social justice - an analysis and a value system	4	6
Solidarity as a value	A value system and approach - beyond specific circumstances	3	5
The Big Issues - Mental Health Bullying School Asylum Gender Recognition	**The issues that LGBT young people 'presented with' and which formed the basis of the advocacy platform**	**10**	**31**
Mental Health	**Suicide Prevention, Framing, resourcing**	**5**	**18**
Framing issues as mental health	Mental ill health as a result of discrimination (e.g., minority stress). Contested both from conservative groups and liberals who think LGBT youth were too closely framed in terms of mental health.	3	5
Mental Health Movement Crossing with LGBT Youth Rights Movement	Mental health was a social issue of considerable discussion at same time as LGBT youth. Sense the movements cross fertilised	1	1
Suicide Prevention and NOSP	National Office for Suicide Prevention set up as a result of Reachout: National Strategy for Suicide Prevention. Suicide was a very public issue with much national and international media attention	4	12
School	As a site both for homophobia / transphobia and for interventions - including significant policy change	7	13
The Catholic Church	**In general, the Catholic Church, and in particular its relationship with LGBT issues and communities**	**10**	**15**
Abuse	Widescale clerical abuse uncovered globally and in Ireland - Ryan, Ferns Reports etc	2	2
As barrier to change for LGBT people	Catholic Church anti-LGBT teachers and links to policy making as barrier to policy change for LGBT youth.	2	2
Attitudes towards	**Attitudes towards the Catholic Church and its social teaching changing in Ireland**	**4**	**4**
Church	Definition here	4	4
Church and School		6	7
Youth Policy	**Descriptions and Insights directly to exclusion / inclusion / Shifts in youth policy**	**9**	**48**
Better Outcomes Brighter Future National Strategy for Children and Young People	National Strategy for Children and Young People 2014-2020. Significant inclusion of LGBT young people.	2	2

Phase 4 - Reviewing Themes (Coding on) - breaking down reorganised codes form phase 3 into sub-codes to better understand the meanings embedded within.	Code Definitions for Coding Consistency	Documents Coded	Units of Meaning Coded
Drugs Policy	LGBT youth named in North Inner-City policy early, research, national drugs strategy	2	3
Exclusion of LGBT youth in policy - history	**No mention of LGBT youth in any government policy until 2003 and then 2005 - why?**	**3**	**7**
First Inclusion	National Youth Work Development Plan (2003) and Reachout: National Strategy for Suicide Prevention (2005) were first mentions. How and why?	3	6
LGBTI Inclusive language and policy	Working to ensure work and policy includes L + G + T + I - Also people's struggle with terminology	2	2
Mentions of LGBT in Youth Policy	**Selected policies that do include LGBT youth**	**7**	**26**
Anti-Bullying Procedures 2013	Developed as result of Anti Bullying Action Plan, which in turn came about due to programme for government commitment to tackle homophobic bullying in 2011	1	3
LGBT in BOBF	Mentions of LGBT in Better Outcomes Brighter Future 2014-2020	1	6
Mention of LGBT or variation across policy documents examined	As above	3	10
National Youth Work Development Plan	This plan sets out a strategy for the first five-year plan for the development of youth work in Ireland and is the first sustained examination of current youth services and their relationship with other aspects of youth policy and provision.	3	6
National Youth Strategy 2016	The aim of the National Youth Strategy is to enable all young people to realise their maximum potential, by respecting their rights and hearing their voices, while protecting and supporting them as they transition from childhood to adulthood.	1	1
The change - the inclusion of LGBT young people in policy now	The change to inclusion	2	4
Volume of policy	Sense that there is a lot of youth policy	1	1

Appendix 6d[7]- Codebook\\Phase 5 - Defining & Naming Themes (Data Reduction/Consolidation)
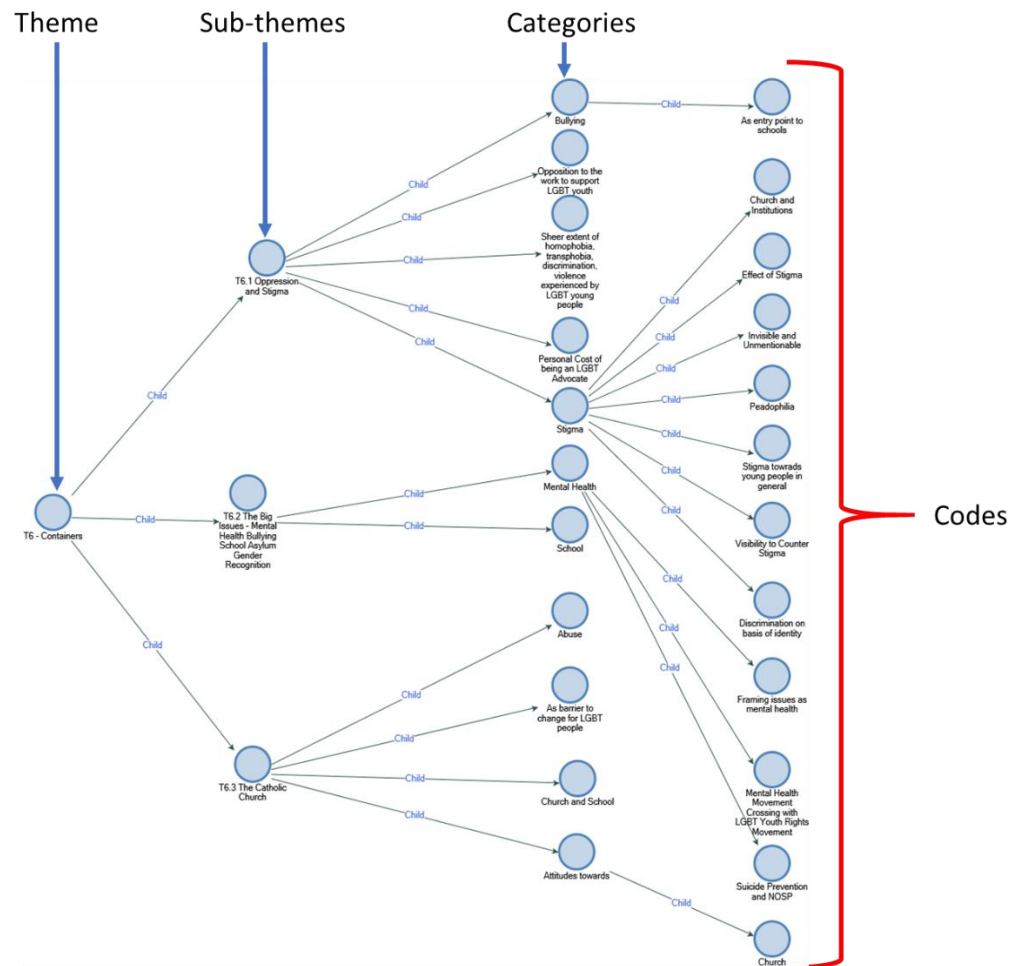
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[7] Codebook – Phase 5 – Defining and Naming Themes involved conceptually mapping and collapsing categories into a broader thematic framework.

Phase 5 - Defining & Naming Themes (Data Reduction/Consolidation) - 5 themes with 24 sub-themes defined and named in phase 5	Code Definitions for Coding Consistency	Documents Coded	Units of Meaning Coded
T1 - Civil Society - Problem Definition		**24**	**532**
T1.1 Civil Society Driver BeLonG To	Main LGBT Civil Society organisation. LGBT youth appeared in no policy until after 2003 when BeLonG To advocated	18	164
T1.2 Practice Driven Youth Work	Youth Work as a process of working with young people in a structured planned way. At BeLonG To the critical social education model of youth work was used and adapted which included an emphasis on political education and organising	11	53
T1.3 Evidence Driven Research as Advocacy	The use of research to develop evidence, tools and framings for advocacy. This includes NGO - State - University partnerships. In this space some key large-scale studies can be seen as key levers for change	11	70
T1.4 Framing and Strategic Choices	Acting Strategically in response to circumstances and opportunities. This can be about framing and defining issues and also about changing direction and being opportunistic and responsive to external factors	15	63
T1.5 Strategic Planning	The organisation developed 3-year strategic plans from 2007 onwards. / Most significantly - 2 funded strategic plans spanning 7 years funded by One Foundation. These included plans to change school system, build regional network and change public opinion.	13	38
T1.6 Narrative Change Momentum Public Campaigns	From 2004 onwards BeLonG To ran many campaigns with view to influencing public perceptions of LGBT youth. These were often targeted as non-LGBT people and were aim at affected narrative change	12	49
T1.7 Policy Entrepreneur		11	42
T1.8 Various themes with lower ranking etc,	Themes which are discussed less often or are in part covered elsewhere	5	30
T1.9 Civil Society as engaged with rest of policy community (Civil Service, Politics)	View of own role and view of others	7	23
T2 - Civil Service - Policy Solution		**16**	**168**
T2.1 Civil Service - Government Departments and Agencies	This is a meta categorisation	10	72
T2.2 Youth Policy	Descriptions and Insights directly to exclusion / inclusion / Shifts in youth policy	9	50
T2.3 Civil Servants as engaged with other policy community (Civil Service, Politician)	View of own role and view of others	8	46
T3 - Politicians - Political Solution		**15**	**42**
T3.1 Politicians	View of own role and view of others	12	29
T3.2 Public Opinion	Large and overarching concept. Is measured in opinion polls (see Marriage Equality, EQUATE for relevant ones). Politicians are concerned with public opinion. Ultimately policy change is for and of the people / public	1	4

Phase 5 - Defining & Naming Themes (Data Reduction/Consolidation) - 5 themes with 24 sub-themes defined and named in phase 5	Code Definitions for Coding Consistency	Documents Coded	Units of Meaning Coded
T3.3 General Elections 2011	This election is featured here both as part of the political scream but also as a 'focusing event - theme 5 below). The election brought about the most 'left leaning' parliament. The Programme for Government included a number of commitments to the LGBT community, including to tackle homophobic bullying in school	5	9
T4 - Expander and Container	**Macro Cultural and Contextual themes which impacted on the process of policy change**	**23**	**252**
T4.1 Expanders		18	159
T4.2 - Containers		20	93
T5 - Focusing Events		**19**	**98**
T7.1 Establishing BeLonG To	Creating the organisation 2000-2003 - first state funded LGBT youth service. Established with grant from Department of Education which was significant later when advocating to Department of Education	4	6
T7.2 Suicide Prevention Strategy 2005	LGBT people named as a priority group. BeLonG To's first submission to a strategy and advocacy on an issue (2003-2004) which was successful. It resulted in a significant financial investment in LGBT work by the HSE to a number of organisations from then to today	2	2
T7.3 President launches BeLonG To Network Galway	Mary McAleese as President of Ireland publicly supports LGBT youth and calls out homophobia. Significant at the moment and also as the beginning of a relationship which included her work with BeLonG To for Marriage Equality in 2015	2	2
T7.4 Growing Up Gay TV Show	2010 - watched by 400,000 people per week for 2 weeks on prime-time TV. Cited as a focusing moment. It was made with BeLonG To over 5 years (conceived by Aoife Kelleher and Michael Barron) and told the story of young people from BeLonG To over 18 months. The mainstream nature and scale are seen as significant.	4	19
T7.5 Stand Up LGBT Awareness Week	Created by BeLonG To in 2010 - campaign with materials to all schools. Supported by Dept Ed after Action Plan on Bullying Annually a major media event. 2011 online ad for Stand Up! viewed by 2 million people - most of any advocacy campaign in Ireland. Widely cited across the world and translated into many languages.	3	8
T7.6 General Election 2011	Elected Labour (Min) with Fine Gael. Significant with Ruairi Quinn as Min for Ed and Francis Fitzgerald and Min for Children. Both interviewed here.	5	9
T7.7 Anti Bullying Action Plan 2013 (this can also fit in policy codes)	Action Plan developed by Department of Education and Skills with BeLonG to and GLEN as a result of commitment in programme for government (2011) to tackle homophobic bullying. Here is largely seen as a focusing moment of change and also as an example of Civil Service, Civil Society and Political Systems working well together	6	27
T7.8 EU Presidency Conference 2013	BeLonG To with Irish Government and DCYA (who funded) held an international conference on LGBT youth and social inclusion as part of the EU Presidency in 2013 in Croke Park.	5	8

Phase 5 - Defining & Naming Themes (Data Reduction/Consolidation) - 5 themes with 24 sub-themes defined and named in phase 5	Code Definitions for Coding Consistency	Documents Coded	Units of Meaning Coded
T7.9 Marriage Equality Referendum	On May 22 2015 Marriage Equality Ref passed by 63%	6	15
	n July 15, 2015, Ireland passed the Gender Recognition Act of 2015 that allows legal gender changes without the requirement of medical intervention or assessment by the state.[6] Such change is possible through self-determination for any person aged 18 or over resident in Ireland and registered on Irish registers of birth or adoption. Persons aged 16 to 18 years must secure a court order to exempt them from the normal requirement to be at least 18.[7] Ireland is one of four legal jurisdictions in the world		
T7.910 Gender Recognition Bill 2015 and Review		1	2

Appendix 5e[8] - Example of flow from codes to categories to themes

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[8] Codebook – example of process of conceptually mapping codes to categories to themes for T6 - Containers

Appendix 5f[9] - Example of the role Analytical Memo

Phase 6 – Creating the Report (Analysis and Write-up)

Name	Files	References
T1 - Civil Society - Problem Definition	24	532
T1.1 Civil Society Driver BeLonG To	18	164
T1.2 Practice Driven Youth Work	11	53
T1.3 Evidence Driven Research as Advocacy	11	70
T1.4 Framing and Strategic Choices	15	63
T1.5 Strategic Planning	13	38
T1.6 Narrative Change Momentum Public Camp	12	49
T1.7 Policy Entreprenuer	11	42
T1.8 Various themes with lower ranking etc,	5	30
T1.9 Civil Society as engaged with rest of policy	7	23
T2 - Civil Service - Policy Solution	16	168
T3 - Politicians - Political Solution	15	42
T4 - Expander and Container	23	252
T5 - Focusing Events	19	98

Analytical memos were used to conduct a systematic review of the thematic framework developed in phase 5 to analyse, report and ask questions of data. Memos were used to reduce the data from series of nodes to a series of documents explaining outcomes of analysis of nodes. Later, memos themselves were reduced through editing out overlapping and less important content to cohere findings into a cohesive findings chapter.

BeLonG To as Civil Society drive

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"I think in terms of the sector, when I think of BeLonG To up to 2015 I think that when you can twin thinkers and doers in the same place, in the same people, that's what makes good organizations and really good services. This is what we and the sector should be modelling for young people and I think kind BeLonG To did that. - Civil Servant

One of the major findings of this study is the sheer extent to which the organisation BeLonG To was core to initiating and driving both social and policy change towards LGBTI young people in Ireland. When BeLonG To began operating in 2003 gay and lesbian young people were only mentioned in one government document (the National Youth Work Development Plan 2003-2007 which was published that same year). In the analysis of government policy from 2003-2015 BeLonG To were involved in every development after that point.

From analysis of the interviews the role played by BeLonG To, as a driving force behind the change in the status of LGBT young people in public policy is clear. Data analysis demonstrates that BeLonG To's contribution was spoken about more often than any other actor in the policy community (See figure 1). Indeed the data suggests that interviewees saw BeLonG To the organisation and LGBTI youth as intrinsically linked and interchangeable in terminology. Vary rarely was another organisation mentioned. Interviewees also regularly referred to myself as interviewer in the process, using phrases such as 'what you did was' or 'what you and BeLonG To did was'.

Based on this data, the characteristics and approaches adopted by BeLonG To which contribute to our understanding of the change in the status of LGBTI youth in public policy are discussed in this first section. After this, the rest of the discussion and analysis regarding the contribution of civil society to policy change often refers to the work of BeLonG To but is generalised so as to focus on wider concepts and processes.

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[9] Codebook – analytical memos were used to conduct a systematic review of the thematic framework developed in phase 5 to analyse, report and ask questions of data. Memo were used to reduce the data from series of nodes to a series of documents explaining outcomes of analysis of nodes. Later, memos themselves were reduced through editing out overlapping and less important content to cohere findings into a cohesive findings chapter.

Appendix 5g[10] - Example of the role of Integrated Annotations

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Example of annotation to integrate contextual factors such as coding assumptions, field notes and observations and researcher's thoughts and ideas during the encoding process

my head, but the stuff, kind of, you know ... The period of undue deference to religions came to an end. The period of undue deference to political institutions came to an end and, of course, too, the financial institutions, so there was a period where central authority or any received social teaching was probably at its most vulnerable. Public unrest, it may well have, you know, it's probably a hard thing to measure, but, I think the atmosphere was very, very positive for social change.

Annotations

Item	Content
1	Note - Ferns, Murphy, Ryan and Cloyne - which was at beginning of term of Fine Gael-Labour government. Enda Kenny and Eamon Gilmore's repsonse widely seen as watershed moment in Church: State relationship

Taiseach Enda Kenny's statement in the Dail
'[T]his is not Rome. Nor is it industrial school or Magdalene Ireland, where the swish of a soutane, smothered conscience and humanity and the swing of a thurible ruled the Irish Catholic world. This is the Republic of Ireland in 2011. It is a republic of laws, rights and responsibilities and proper civic order where the delinquency and arrogance of a particular version of a particular kind of morality will no longer be tolerated or ignored.'

[10] Codebook – example of annotation to integrate contextual factors such as coding assumptions, field notes and observations and researcher's thoughts and ideas during the encoding process

Submission to National Strategy for Action on Suicide Prevention 2004

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Youth and Suicide

BeLonG To Youth Project works with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender (LGBT) young people in Ireland. It provides one-to-one and group support for LGBT young people, aged 14 –23 years, to allow them to safely engage with confidence building, personal development and peer support. It also affords young people a space where they can experience inclusion, acceptance, social justice, fun and safety. BeLonG To believe that youth work offers an ideal opportunity for LGBT youth to address their issues and concerns, while enabling them to participate as equal citizens in a society which often denies their rights. The project is managed by a voluntary management committee and is funded through the City of Dublin Youth Services Board by the Youth Affairs Section of the Department of Education and Science.

Concerns of BeLonG To Youth Project BeLonG To presently works with young people who present with suicidal ideation and who have disclosed self-harm and attempted suicide. The project has designed youth programmes to enhance young people's self-esteem, self-image and to challenge their negative thinking in response to these disclosures. In 2004 BeLonG To referred five young people to the counselling services of The Northern Area Health Board due specifically to these disclosures and due to the project's fear for their safety. The experience of BeLonG To Youth Project suggests a link between the specific issues affecting LGBT youth and suicidal ideation and behaviour.

Issues affecting LGBT Young people who access BeLonG To Youth Project:

- Being bullied and victimised, particularly in school and in their local communities.

- Lack of peer support and fear of communicating this to family members.

- Marginalisation in school and local communities.

- Education: Lack of inclusion of LGBT sexuality in existing school programmes e.g. RSE.

- Family rejection.

- Poor self-image as a consequence of negative societal attitudes to their sexual identity.

- Drug and alcohol misuse, often as a coping mechanism for dealing with victimisation and marginalisation.

- Internalised homophobia – due to their experiences of homophobia.

Experiences of Members of BeLonG To Youth Project

The following are excerpts from research conducted by Barron (2004):

Homophobic Victimisation:

"There was stuff written about me in school, I was slagged going down the street, there was stuff thrown at me. I had to go to hospital in fourth year because someone pushed me off the stage. I had to move from that school to another one. I was bullied there as well…when I was in first year. I had a bottle thrown at the back of my head and also had to go to hospital. Whenever I'd go across to the shop, I'd just get slagged for being gay. I had to stand on my own, no one would talk to me unless they wanted a cigarette, or they wanted money" Billy (17)

"I was called ya faggot, ya bender, ya queer, ya faggot, ya puff, you know the ones. They [other students] used to copy the way I walked and talked. They used to rob me school books and it used to cost me £20 at the time to get new ones and I used to have to buy new books all the time cause they wouldn't give them back to me. Once they robbed me school bag and wouldn't give it back so I had to buy the whole lot again. Once too they threw incense on me. It was really really strong and I had to go home it was so strong". Tom (18)

Internalised Homophobia:

"It does have an affect [homophobic bullying], if people drum something into you a lot you're going to believe what they're saying because it's said enough to you". Billy (17)

"I have internal homophobia built into me by my peers over the years. Like I was told by my sisters and all that I was going to turn into a total camp, and you bring that with you". Mark (21)

LGBT Youth and Suicide

Stressors:

Irish and international research has identified 'gay-related stress' experienced by LGBT youth to be strongly related to 'coming-out' as LGBT, being discovered as LGBT, rejection and fear of rejection, and bullying and victimisation [1, 2, 7, 8, 11, 13, 19, 20]. Further, the experience of marginalisation and victimisation among LGBT youth has been clearly recorded in an Irish context [1, 4, 9, 10, 11, 17]

'A Survey of Teachers on Homophobic Bullying in Irish Second-Level Schools" carried out by the School of Education Studies, Dublin City University found that 94% of SPHE teachers in single sex schools and 82% in co-educational schools were aware of verbal homophobic bullying in their schools. This study also found that 25% of these teachers in single sex schools and 17% in co-educational schools were aware of instances of physical homophobic bullying. Again, in this study, 90% of teachers indicated that there was no mention of gay and lesbian related bullying in their school's bullying policy [17].

International studies have linked homophobic harassment, which is clearly endemic in Irish schools, with suicidal behaviour among LGBT youth [2, 13, 18, 20]. A recent study commissioned by the Northern Ireland Department of Education found that LGBT young people are:

- Five times more likely to be medicated for depression
- Two and a half times more likely to self-harm
- At least three times more likely to attempt suicide [20]

Young men and women of same-sex orientation have also been identified as one of a number of high-risk groups for youth suicide in a recent evidence briefing on youth suicide published on behalf of the UK and Ireland Public Health Evidence Group. [3]

Recommendations for Preventative Action

- Development of programmes to positively endorse diverse sexual identities in schools.
- Greater provision for designated LGBT youth work so that LGBT youth can meet peers in supportive environments and participate in programmes to enhance their self-esteem and self-image. Such LGBT youth services should maintain a specific focus on suicide prevention measures.
- The development of a national campaign to raise awareness about the presence of LGBT youth and about the specific issues which they face.
- Increased support for organisations supporting the parents of LGBT youth, specifically the 'Parents Support' group.
- Comprehensive and visible awareness and support campaigns to reach and support the parents of LGBT youth.
- Significant research to be carried out into the needs of LGBT youth and into the relationship between minority sexual identity and suicide.
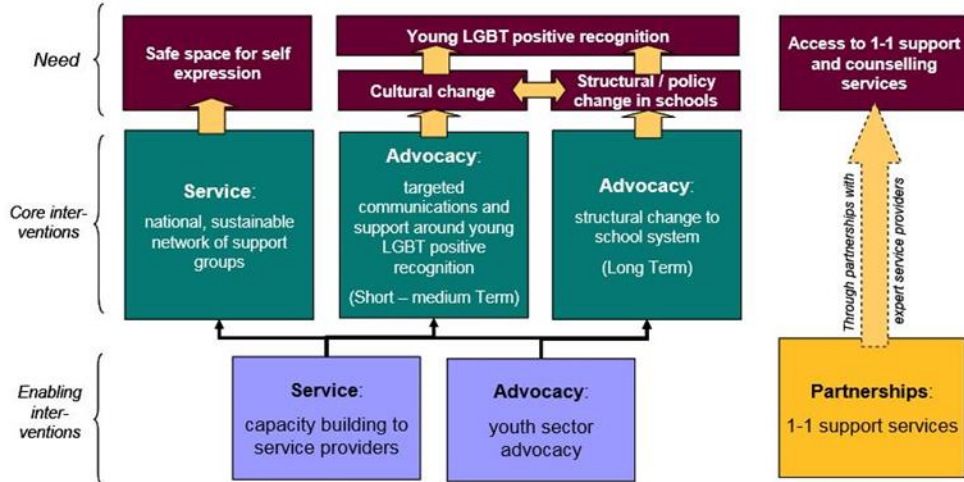
APPENDIX 7: **HSE's National Office for Suicide Prevention Funding to LGBTI+ organisation 2005-2015**

Year	BeLonG To	GLEN	Total
2005			
2006	€50,000	€70,000	€120,000
2007	€75,000	€33,000	€108,000
2008	€98,000	€27,500	€125,500
2009	€195,786	€166,000	€361,786
2010	€113,997	€74,675	€188,672
2011	€104,221	€72,199	€176,420
2012	€184,221	€52,815	€237,036
2013	€197,000	€232,750	€429,750
2014	€192,000	€145,843	€337,843
2015	€192,000	€105,000	€297,000

Total: €2,382,007

APPENDIX 8:   BeLonG To Strategy 2008-2011 overview

The diagram below summarises Belong To's strategy:

Strategic Component	Objective	Key Interventions
National Support Group Network	To ensure that LGBT young people throughout the country have access to safe youth supports in their areas	• To continue to develop our flagship service in Dublin. • Resource (know-how transfer and seed funding) new LGBT youth support groups in targeted locations • Identify and secure local funding to ensure local groups are funded in the longer term
LGBT positive recognition – short / medium term communications campaign	Promoting positive recognition of LGBT young people within schools and other settings; and offering targetted support to professionals working with LGBT young people	• Planning and execution of 3 year advocacy / communications campaign aimed at awareness raising around homophobia and young LGBT positive recognition
LGBT positive recognition – long term institutional / political advocacy campaign	To create mandatory structures and processes within schools that promote LGBT positive recognition	• Create a 'solution' in relation to school policy, structures and curriculum that promote LGBT positive recognition • Planning and execution of long term advocacy campaign aimed at structural change in the school system.
Youth sector advocacy	Maintaining visibility/voice in youth sector networks and pushing young LGBT issues up the agenda Supporting strategic components 1, 2 and 3	• Work with the Office for the Minister for Children, the National Youth Work Advisory Committee and key youth sector agencies to develop guidelines on homophobic bullying and the inclusion of LGBT young people • Work with the Office for the Minister for Children and other statutory funders to secure greater resources (inc. for national support group network) • To campaign with youth sector stakeholders to ensure key endorsements for our campaign around school policies and structures.
1 to 1 support services	Pursue partnerships that will allow 1-1 support to be offered (in parallel with growing the group support network)	• Work with these partners to create youth friendly two-way referral processes for LGBT young people (aligned and co-ordinated with with national support group network).
Capacity building	To enable service providers in selected sectors to understand the particular circumstances and needs of LGBT young people, and to tailor their services accordingly Program designed and target audiences chosen to support work in first 3 components above	• Deliver LGBT youth awareness training to target agencies and other service providers in specific sectors • Work directly with teacher training and youth worker training college courses to 'handover' LGBT youth awareness training over a 3 year period.