

Synopsis of 'Citizen Engagement-Envisioning Energy Futures' Seminar

With guest speaker Prof. Evelina Trutnevyte University of Geneva
22nd Oct. 2019, ERI, Lee Building, UCC-Cork



Overview and key messages

Prof. Brian Ó Gallachóir from UCC gave a welcoming address, delving into different layers of engagement, from research to policy and to grassroots climate action. This was followed by a presentation by Dr Niall Dunphy from UCC, who offered a critique on the role of citizens in the energy transition and the challenge of contesting dominant consumer led discourses.

The guest presentation was delivered by Prof. Evelina Trutnevyte who provided an overview of the use of Informed Citizens Panels as a research tool. These were used to explore citizen preferences of different low carbon energy portfolios in Switzerland. The process aimed to ensure that the panel had a foundational understanding of different energy sources and technologies. Findings highlight the value of the information led process in the selection of the portfolio, stability of knowledge regarding some energy sources over others, the value of energy autonomy and exploring local specificities in the creation of preferred portfolios.

Some discussion points from the audience

- Chaired by Dr Gerard Mullally, a variety of insights emerged from the discussion with the audience. The issue of national energy autonomy and ownership was stressed and all speakers agreed that this is a strong theme which drives greater acceptance of new energy portfolios
- The potential of Informed Citizens Panels as an outreach tool was highlighted with factsheets developed on different technologies now being used to organise events with children and youth.

