



An Roinn Caiteachais  
Phoiblí agus Athchóirithe  
Department of Public  
Expenditure and Reform



# Open Government Round Table

Inaugural meeting, 19<sup>th</sup> November 2021



# Aspirations of Round Table members <sup>1/2</sup>



- Transparency – access to info – ambitious / achievable actions – international standards.
- Legislation being progressed on transposing the EU Whistleblowing directive; Ethics legislation; lobbying and review of Freedom of Information Act.
- National Action Plan be SMART and meaningful – improve the process – decision making is complex so aim to get ‘best possible’ result that gets the job done – meets needs and rights.
- Contribution of policy areas – National Community Development Strategy, including role/position of the proposed Civic Forum within the existing landscape.



# Aspirations of Round Table members 2/2



- Potential transformative change – be collaborative – meeting of minds – trust/satisfaction – facilitate culture change – standardise how we engage – see external views reflected back, not box ticking.
- ‘Stay true’ to the values – strive to work together – co-create – participation beyond inform / consult – inclusive.
- Connection – range of stakeholders – differing valid stakeholders’ perspective - complexity of decision making / prioritisation / trade-offs.
- Local government role often closest to the citizen and communities.
- National Action Plan to achieve meaningful change – how to bring people we work with in the change – digital inclusion etc. – ability to own and shape policy.
- Transparency – evidence based approach – co design and messaging.



# Dáil discussion on Open Government Partnership



Dáil Éireann 16<sup>th</sup> November 2021 [video](#)  
(starts at 7:03:20 for 2 minutes).

- “Ireland is **fully committed** to uphold the Open Government Partnership principles of open and transparent government”.
- “It is a cornerstone of the process that the **Round Table members will collaborate on the issues to develop the next Open Government national action plan commitments** through this multi-stakeholder process, with the active engagement of citizens and civil society”.
- “There are **no predetermined issues...**to be addressed”.

# Open Government - Overview



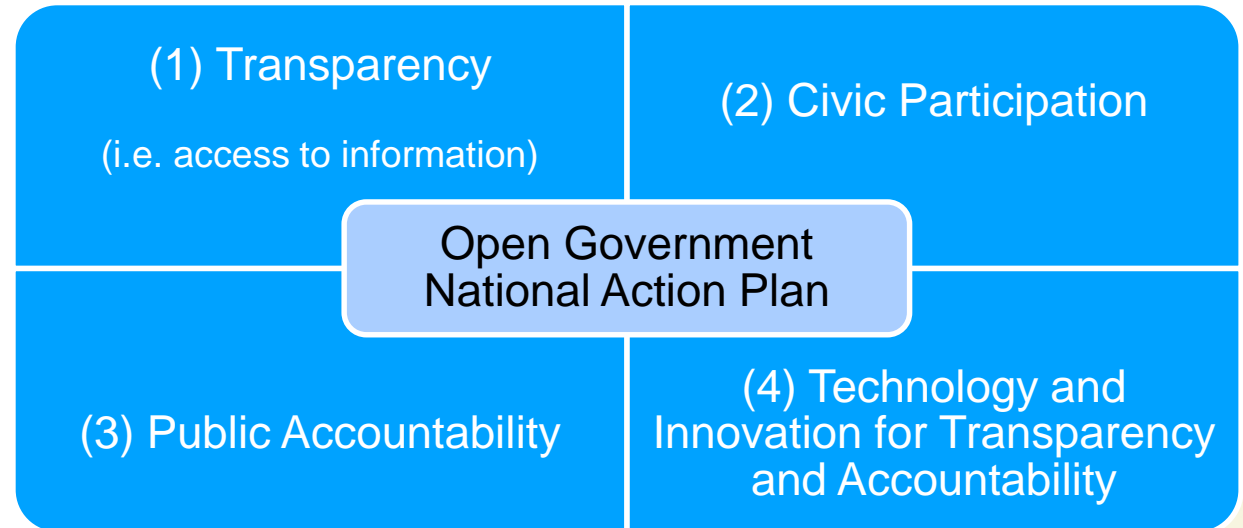
**What:** Open government is a culture of governance that promotes the principles of transparency, integrity, accountability and stakeholder participation in support of democracy and inclusive growth (OECD, 2014).

**Why:** Civil Society's role in addressing the challenges of our time; OGP declaration (2014) and Programme for Government commitment.



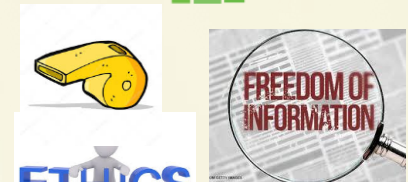
**How:** Open Government Partnership process.

**Output:** National Action Plan (every 2 years), to progress the values, independently reviewed.



**Outcomes:** Previous actions:

- (i) Referenda (Marriage Equality)
- (ii) Legislative Reform
- (iii) Open Data



# Open Government - Values and Scope



## Transparency (i.e. access to information)

Is the proposed action disclosing more information, improving the quality of the information disclosed, improving accessibility of information to the public or enabling the right to information?

## Civic Participation

Is the proposed action creating or improving opportunities, or capabilities for the public to inform or influence decisions? Is the proposed commitment creating or improving the enabling environment for civil society?



# Open Government - Values and Scope cont'd



## **Public accountability**

Is the proposed action creating or improving rules, regulations, and mechanisms to publicly hold government officials answerable to their actions?

## **Technology and innovation to enhance the above values**

Is the proposed action enhancing the use of technology and innovation to enable public involvement in government and will enhance at least one of access to information, public participation, or public accountability?




# Milestones achieved since August 2021...



- ✓ Open Government repository - gov.ie webpages (*required*)
- ✓ Round Table multi-stakeholder forum, with co-created terms of reference – (*required*)

## Public influence has reached consult level

- ✓ Public call for expressions of interest to join the Round Table...  
(Reach approx. 30,000 via social media & email campaign - 317 clicks - 22 applications)
- ✓ Public call for submissions for the next and future national action plans...  
(Reach approx. 30,000 via social media & email campaign - 202 clicks - 18 submissions – 41% unconnected & 59% connected, 41% from/linked to Round Table members)
- ✓ Public sector Round Table members nominated by Secretary Generals.  
 ... maybe even an international impact award (✓ application; ✓ campaign).

Ireland  
Open  
Government  
Partnership





# Open Government Partnership requirements



“In 2021, it will be vital for Ireland to ensure a **robust and participatory co-creation process** to develop its next open government action plan, following delays in the submission of two consecutive action plans (2018-20 and 2019-21), which has led to it being placed under procedural review”.

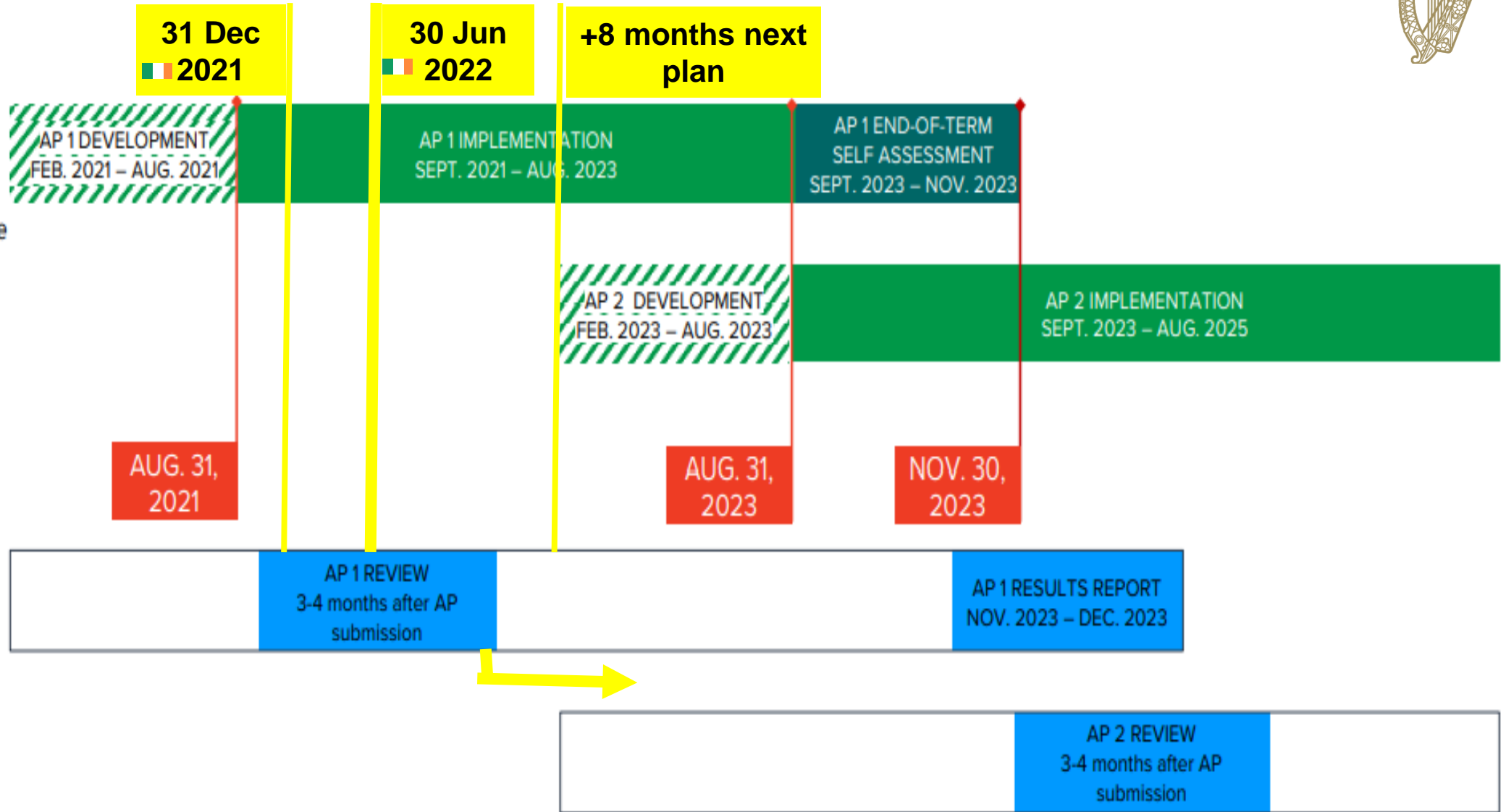
OGP Letter (April 2021).



# Open Government Partnership timelines



**OGP Members** will draft their action plan jointly with civil society and continuously implement commitments. They produce and update their online repository at least twice a year. An End of Term Self-Assessment report is submitted on conclusion of implementation.



**IRM Products** will monitor development and implementation. The distinct products contribute to the learning and accountability in OGP processes.

# Next Steps - for Round Table consideration 1/3



## This week:

1. Civil Society and Secretariat to arrange the **publication of the Civil Society election outcome** and the declaration on their selection process on Gov.ie.
2. **Civil Society nominee** to co-create Round Table values and ways of working.
3. Secretariat to organise **Minister of State global conference input**.
4. Secretariat to **publish the agenda and meeting pack** for the inaugural Round Table.
5. Secretariat to send **18 personalised acknowledgements for submissions** received outlining the immediate next step and when they can expect a Round Table decision (suggest mid Feb 2022).
6. Secretariat to **publish the proposed actions submitted** (mindful of any redaction requests).



# Next Steps - for Round Table consideration 2/3



## Next week:

7. Secretariat to circulate a **shortlist of possible actions appropriate for Dec 2021**.
  
8. Secretariat to circulate a **long list of topics**, together with a summary of the public submissions received; relevant Programme for Government updates and previous commitments updates (mostly complete).
  
9. **All Round Table members will then have one week to:**
  - i. Vote for top 2 shortlist proposed actions to be submitted in draft to OGP (Dec 2021).
  - ii. To add to the long list of topics which will be considered by the Round Table at January 2022 meeting.
  - iii. To rank red / amber / green (initial) the public submissions with reason(s) which will enable Secretariat to distil decision parameters.



# Next Steps - for Round Table consideration 3/3



## Before Christmas:

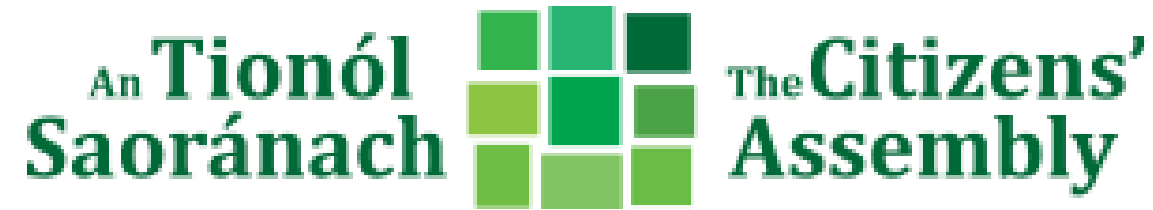
- 10.** Secretariat to engage with relevant colleagues; to draft two proposed actions for Round Table consideration. and submit as draft to OGP with long list.
- 11.** Secretariat to circulate meeting dates for 2022.
- 12.** ...if Ireland wins the international award, communication campaign needed!

## Into New Year:

- 13.** Secretariat to continue to engage with colleagues to across the system to obtain reasoned responses on the public submissions.
- 14.** Next meeting (19<sup>th</sup> Jan) Round Table to consider draft Round Table ‘reasoned decisions’.
- 15.** Subject to Round Table decision, Secretariat to circulate the Round Table’s ‘reasoned decision’ on the public submissions by mid Feb 2022. (‘involve’ level)



# Open Government Partnership Citizens' Impact Award?



*The 'Irish Citizens' Assembly and our Deliberative Democracy Journey' is in the running for an international OGP Citizens' Impact Award [here](#).*

*....**announcement at the global conference 15<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> Dec 2021** [here](#).*

## **Our pitch:**

Ireland is proud of the momentous changes that deliberative democracy has achieved in our society, including through the Citizens' Assembly, which places the citizen at the heart of important legal and policy issues facing Irish society. Ireland has had two constitutional amendments passed which originated as proposals put forward by deliberative democracy exercises: advancing marriage equality as recommended by the Convention on the Constitution in 2013, and replacing the Eighth Amendment, which concerns abortion. The approach enabled a mature and informed debate of highly charged topics by citizens chosen at random to represent the views of the people of Ireland.

# ‘Ask me anything’ session



**Críona Brassill**

Department of Public Expenditure & Reform,  
Reform Division,  
Open Government lead

*Open Government Partnership – National Point of Contact*

*OECD Working Party on Open Government delegate.*

*(in addition to other policy areas)*



# ‘Ask me anything’ session 1/2



- Any plans to map current initiatives?
  - Relevant Programme for Government commitments [identified](#) and updates sought; coordinators asked to flag other relevant initiatives (e.g. Review of Freedom of Information Act); and update on previous commitments (mostly complete).
- What challenges did public sector Round Table members foresee:
  - ‘way of working’ to be agreed for prioritisation and drafting negotiations.
  - Practicality of 2 year focus for deliver of commitments – need for SMART & actionable – how the group decides to prioritise and select?
  - Clarity on the process – unified understanding of any high level commitments.





# ‘Ask me anything’ session 2/2



- Round Table members are the ‘deciders’ on prioritisation – focus on those commitments that ‘make a difference’.
- The role of each Round Table member is to have an active part in co-development, there is no external consultant.



# Míle buíochas / Thank you

