HOW IS SOCIAL POLICY MADE?

Factors influencing how policy is made

1. Societal Values-impacts what policies are made and how they are developed
2. The Constitution- in ROI this imposes both constraints and provides protections
3. The Good Friday Agreement (1998) has impact on policy in NI
4. . European Union- has substantial influence in ROI
5. The UK government - legislates for NI on UK wide or international matters
6. In ROI Partnership approach to policy making eestalished since 1987. Today Public Participation Networks (PPNs) bring together community, voluntary, environmental and social inclusion groups to impact local decision making. PPNs are nationwide and administered by local authorities
7. In NI the local councils manage a Community Planning Process . This was introduced in 2015 to ensure local people and communities can engage in planning for their local areas.
8. Media-can influence policy debate

Key Factors in Policy Making

1

INPUTS
- Issues - gap identified/needs not met
- Pressure eg: public opinion, activism, communication with politicians, media coverage
- Evidence - what data is available

THE POLITICAL SYSTEM
- The political system, influenced by economics, politics and society's needs, translates inputs into the policies we see.

2

3

OUTPUTS INCLUDE
- These policies take the form of policy statements across local, regional and national level, legislation, and regulations
- These are normally drafted by civil servants

DIMENSIONS OF POLICY MAKING IN IRELAND AND NORTHERN IRELAND

1

THE LEGISLATURE
- In Ireland - Dail and Seanad - where laws are made
- Northern Ireland - Stormont, devolved parliament, or UK parliament on UK wide issues

THE EXECUTIVE
- The elected government implements the laws through it's executive powers to make policy and to implement it

2

3

THE JUDICARY
- In ROI appointed by President to interpret and uphold laws
- In NI appointed by First Minister and Deputy First Mnister to interpret and uphold laws

Stages in Policy Cycle

Monitoring
Policy monitored for effectiveness by eg:
- citizens, civil society,
- experts, interest groups,
- officials, frontline workers
- Can lead to further policy revisions

Identification
- A problem or issue is indentified by eg. citizens, civil society, experts, interest groups, elected representatives
- A decision to address it is made

Implementation
Actions to make the policy work eg:
- procedures revised
- agencies/bodies created
- new services introduced

Discussion
- Discussions to identify solutions involve eg. citizens, civil society, experts, interest groups, public consultations, parliamentary hearings
- Practice of co-design is used to co-create policy solution

Decision
- A policy solution is adopted by government approving a new law/regulation,
- A strategy is published or rules are amended
- Funding is released