

# Scottish Parliament 2024 People's Panels Evaluation

Final Report

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## 2. Introduction

The Scottish Parliament delivered two People's Panels in 2024. The first one, which took place in February and March 2024, was titled [The People's Panel reviewing the Climate Change \(Scotland\) Act 2009](#) (PPCC), and sought to answer the following two questions:

- How effective has the Scottish Government been at engaging the public on climate change and Scotland's climate change targets?
- What else (if anything) could the Scottish Government do to inform and involve the public to help meet Scotland's climate change target?

The second one, which run between October and November 2024, and was titled [The People's Panel on reducing drug harm and deaths in Scotland](#) (PPDH), was tasked with answering the following question:

- What does Scotland need to do differently to reduce drug related harms?

A group of citizens, representative of the Scottish population, was chosen for each panel. Twenty-three participants (later reduced to 21) took part in the PPCC, and another twenty-three participated in the PPDH.

As a team of academics from the University of Edinburgh, we were commissioned to independently evaluate the two People's Panels that took place in 2024. This report presents the results of the evaluation, which focuses on the design, implementation, outputs, outcomes, and impact of the Panels. Our evaluation approach involved working closely with the Scottish Parliament to ensure a robust and collaborative assessment process. The evaluation was initiated through an open recruitment and tender process, during which we developed a detailed proposal outlining our methodological approach. This ensured that our evaluation framework was aligned with the objectives of the Scottish Parliament and the specific needs of the project. Following the successful tender, we held a workshop to present our proposed methodology and gather feedback from key stakeholders.

Throughout the evaluation, we collaborated closely with the Scottish Parliament Information Centre (SPICe) and the Participation and Communities Team (PACT). SPICe provided essential project management support, assisting with logistical elements such as data facilitation, clearance for the parliamentary building, and access to key participants. Our engagement with SPICe and PACT took the form of iterative workshops and offline communications, where we discussed and collaboratively refined our evaluation methods and materials.

This ongoing dialogue helped shape our approach, which incorporated panel observations, surveys, and interviews. Based on our findings of the PPCC, we drafted an interim report and facilitated discussions on implementing recommendations for the upcoming PPDH. The Scottish Parliament actively engaged with these insights, applying lessons learned to improve the structure and execution of the second Panel. This collaborative effort showcased the receptiveness of the Scottish Parliament for continuous learning.

The Evaluation Report is structured as follows:

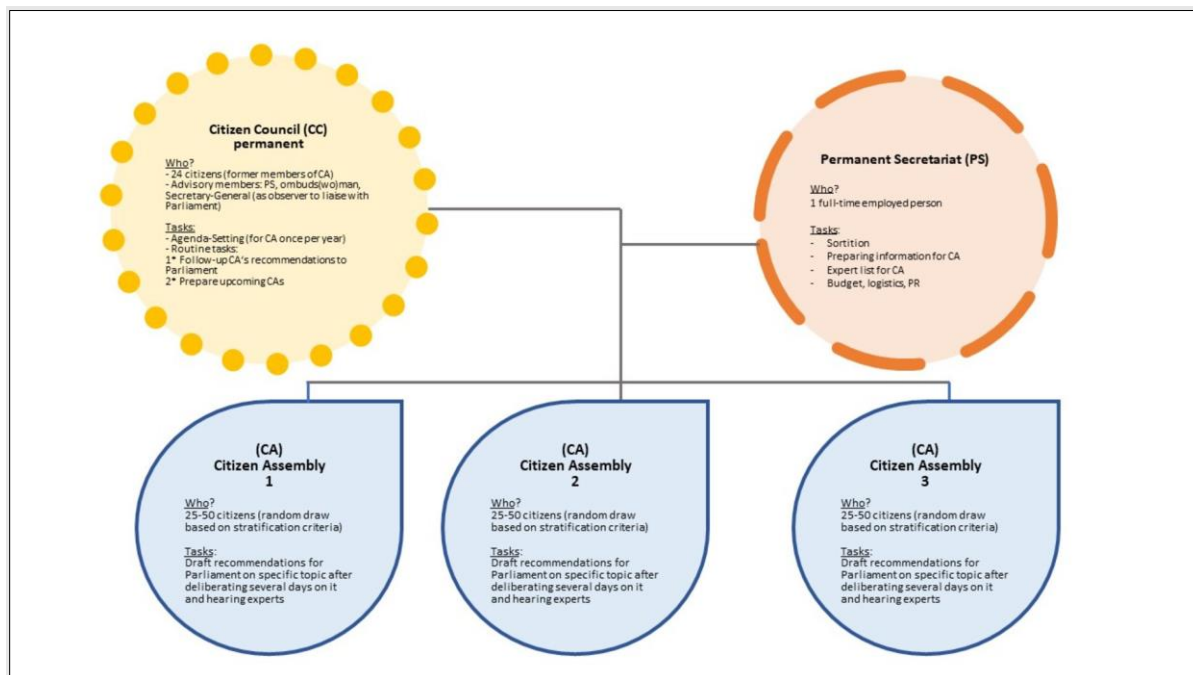
- First, we present a review of the relevant academic literature, which informed the approach to the evaluation.
- Second, we proceed to address our evaluation themes and answer the evaluation questions by looking at both panels in detail. We first provide the analysis for the first Panel (Climate Change) and then offer an update of the results based on the analysis of the second Panel (Drug Harm and Deaths). These sections are structured according to the evaluation themes (with evaluation questions and criteria being set out in Appendix 1):
  - Panel composition.
  - Evidence provision.
  - Design and facilitation.
  - Motivations and Expectations of, and Impact on Participants, and,
  - Impact Expectations on the Scottish Parliament.
- We close the report with a summary of our main conclusions.
- We summarise the methodological approach and tools used to undertake the evaluation in an Appendix. Detailed data tables and figures can also be found in the appendices.

### 3. Background

There is now a widespread understanding that citizen deliberation is not an alternative, but an important complementary process to representative democracy (Curato et al., 2021). Despite this consensus, very few Parliaments or Legislative Systems have managed to successfully experiment with, much less institutionalise deliberative democracy. To date, most mini-publics are run by the administrative or executive branch of the state. When implemented, deliberative democracy is mostly used for specific “high-stakes” legislation, (e.g., the case of participatory constitutional reform in Iceland and Chile) or other controversial issues (for example, the emblematic deliberation around abortion in the Republic of Ireland). Despite their potential, a major critique of this model is that it conceives participation as one-off events rather than a permanent infrastructure. Thus, it obstructs a deeper process of embedding deliberation in parliamentary systems.

Nonetheless, notable, and more permanent experiences do exist. Among them, the Ostbelgien model is perhaps the most well-known (Macq & Jacquet, 2023; Niessen & Reuchamps, 2022). Permanent Bürgerdialog (PBD), set up by the German-speaking Community of Belgium is said to be the first permanent randomised Citizen Assembly working in tandem with a Parliament. The figure below summarises the governance model behind this permanent Citizen Council.

**Figure 1.** Governance of the Ostbelgien Citizen Council. Publicly available in [www.buergerdialog.be](http://www.buergerdialog.be)



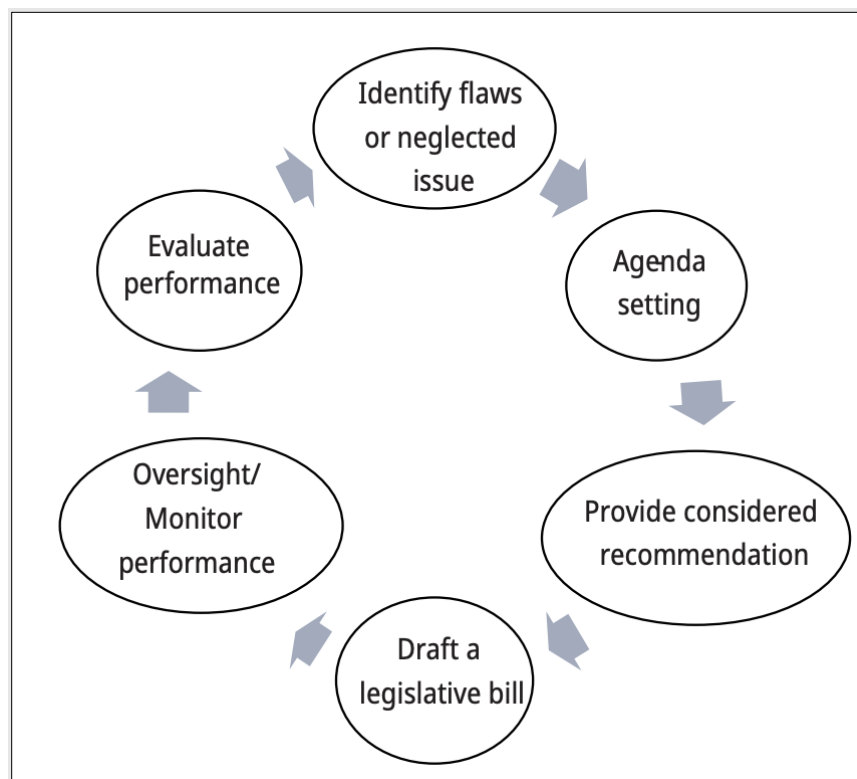


Other models focus more directly on the relationship between elected parliamentarians and their constituents. For instance, Deliberative Town Halls have been implemented in the US and Australia (Alnemr et al., 2023; Neblo et al., 2018). However, the Town Hall model seems to lack a more robust theory of change, as decision-making in parliaments does not rely on changing the mind of one official, rather on affecting the cross-party collaborative work of Committees.

Setälä (2021) asserts that the functions of deliberative mini-publics can complement Parliaments in three main roles: (1) an advisory role when mini-publics provide recommendations to Parliament, mainly in the pre-legislative period. (2) A collaborative role when deliberative processes involve elected representatives who work neck and neck with citizens, and (3) a scrutinising role when mini-publics are employed to check representative decision making. Out of those, Setälä asserts that the scrutinising role shows the most normative promise but also requires the most careful institutional design, especially as parliament seek to scrutinise themselves through deliberative processes.

The recent specialised literature has presented different stages and formats in which citizen deliberation could complement the legislative function of parliaments on a regular basis. These range from pre-legislative work to post-legislative work. Figure 2 presents a cycle of what constant deliberative engagement can do for parliamentary work by Brigitte Giessel (2023).

**Figure 2.** Different functions of citizen deliberation according to Geissel (2023).



There are of course many different ways and formats in which scrutiny functions can be completed with citizen participation. Citizens can be invited to support Regulatory Impact Assessments, Legislative scrutiny, Programme auditing, and Post-legislative Scrutiny (Murphy, 2020).

In conclusion, while the institutionalisation of deliberative democracy within parliamentary systems remains limited, several promising models and functions have emerged. The ongoing challenge lies in transforming citizen deliberation from a series of isolated events into a permanent, integrated infrastructure within legislative processes. The Ostbelgien model and various town hall formats illustrate different approaches, each with their own strengths and limitations. Ultimately, the evolving literature underscores the potential of mini-publics to enhance parliamentary work through advisory, collaborative, and scrutinising roles. In this context, the People's Panels format of the Scottish Parliament holds particular promise. By embedding citizen deliberation more systematically within the legislative process, these processes have the potential to underscore the innovativeness of the institution and elevate its reputation on the world stage.

## 4. People's Panel reviewing the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009

### 4.1. Panel Composition

According to the available documentation, the recruitment process was managed by [the Sortition Foundation](#), who have been used for all similar activities within the Scottish Parliament to date. Following standard practice within the Deliberative Democracy field, the selection process followed a Stratified Random Sampling approach. In this approach, participants are selected randomly but filling specific quotas so that they better represent the population.

The democratic sortition process was conducted by the Sortition Foundation, which has credible expertise and documented experience in this task. The selection algorithm used by the Sortition Foundation is open-source and [can be found online](#). Overall, the algorithm used by the foundation seeks to make compatible representation across demographic quotas, but also ensure an equal chance of being selected. The Foundation also produces detailed technical reports as part of its approach, providing evidence that the selected participants were indeed representative of the population. As an external partner, the Foundation adds additional layers of independence and safeguarding to the process, reinforcing the credibility and impartiality of the selection procedure.

Demographic variables used to form the panel include:

- Gender
- Age
- Ethnicity
- Disability
- Education
- Geography

Additionally, the sampling method incorporated a substantive position criterion, namely “climate worry” in the form of a Likert-type question ranging from “Not at all worried” to “Very worried”. The demographic baseline information for this question was obtained through a UK-wide national survey but using the average responses of the Scottish sample. [The database used can be found here](#).

To assess the impact of recruitment on the deliberative process, we focused on participants' perceptions of representativeness and diversity. The final survey taken at the end of the deliberative process allows for some indication of perceptions about representativeness and diversity among participants.

Participants were asked to respond to these statements by marking on a scale from 1 to 6, where 1 is “Not at all” and 6 is “Extremely”. The table below shows the descriptive measures of those items and compares them with the average of the whole subscale.

**Table 1.** *Survey items on participant representativeness and diversity.*

Variable	Average	Standard Deviation
Representative of Scotland	4,76	0,89
Diverse perspectives on the issue	5,05	0,36
Whole subscale	4,96	0,67

In general, the survey findings indicate that participants expressed a “moderate” to “very” strong feeling that the Panel represented the broader population of Scotland. Furthermore, their perception of diversity of views was slightly higher, with a predominant “very” response. The difference between the perceptions of representativeness and diversity of views was not statistically significant using a Welch Two Sample t-test ( $t = -1.023$ ,  $df = 30.046$ ,  $p\text{-value} = 0.3145$ ), but it does show more variance among participants. This means that some participants did indeed only feel that the group was “somewhat” representative.

In the interviews, participants expressed similar views. As a participant said: “I feel that everyone that had attended from the length and breadth of Scotland's different age groups, different backgrounds, different economic situations”.

#### **4.1.1. Recommendations**

Based on these findings, we recommended that Scottish Parliament continues and expands its practice of including diversity of thought in its selection procedure

## **4.2. Evidence Provision**

#### **4.2.1. Description of the learning process and evidence provided**

According to the available information and internal interviews with Scottish Parliament staff, for the People's Panel on Climate Change a Stewarding Board was formed in late 2023 to, among other things, decide on the relevant expertise and evidence needed to support citizen deliberation around these questions. External members of this Stewarding Board include Andy Yuill, Jess Pepper, Professor Lorraine Whitmarsh, Rafael Jiménez-Aybar, and Sam Gardner. These members represent the academic community and the private sector. The Stewarding Board, including members of the Scottish Parliament's Participation and Communities Team (PACT) and with the advice of subject matter specialists from the Scottish Parliament

Information Centre (SPICe), decided on which content to select and which specific speakers may deliver that expertise.

According to an internal interviewee, when contacted, experts were very receptive to an invitation to speak. It was therefore easy to find people to speak about the relevant subjects. This interviewee attributed the smoothness of recruitment to Parliament being the organising institution.

It is also worth noting that the evidence materials were not developed to be studied by participants in isolation (for instance, by reading). Instead, all the content was to be delivered primarily in oral presentations, conversations and Q&As. Participants had retrospective access to all the materials through a digital platform, where power point presentations, summaries of evidence and responses to the questions of citizens were uploaded and available at any time during the process.

All the sessions except the last one (Session 16) were designed by PACT, with input from the steering group and SPICe research, but with no input from the participants. Session 16, on the other hand, was co-designed. At the end of Weekend 1, participants were asked to propose more organisations and individuals they wanted to hear from. Participants suggested a wide range of stakeholders, from artists and sports people to youth organisations and businesses, among others. Participants were then given two votes to support options that they or other participants had proposed. These results were filtered by the facilitators and 10 organisations were invited (although only 9 could be present in the end).

The sequence of topics of the evidence sessions seems to have followed a funnel logic, starting with the broader issues to then progressively narrow down and zoom in into the core of the Panel questions: public engagement. The format of the sessions also varied. The first evidence session (Session 3) was the only one with an explicit playful format, which aimed at familiarising participants with the building and each other, while learning about Parliament and the parliamentary process. The rest of the sessions were a combination of expert presentations followed by Q&A or conversations with experts and representatives of various organisations.

In addition, between weekends 1 and 2, PACT asked the Scottish Government to answer several questions that participants had raised during the first weekend, after they were agreed during an online session with the panel members. The questions were sent to the Scottish Parliament on 15 February 2024, and the answers were printed and left on the tables in the main room for all participants to access during the second weekend.

#### *4.2.2. Credibility and diversity of witnesses and evidence*

Overall, witnesses were credible in the sense that they displayed credentialed expertise based on their institutional affiliation and/or educational background. However, according to our observations, trust from participants depended on the organisation they were representing or the topic they were covering. During

the first weekend, a few participants expressed doubts about some of the evidence around climate change presented by climate experts, for example. In addition, the representatives of the Scottish Government faced more critical questions than any other expert witness, which may show the lack of trust that some participants felt towards them.

Interviewed participants agreed that the evidence covered the depth and breadth of the relevant topics. An interviewee said that “the evidence itself, I thought was reasonably high quality” and “We heard from a reasonable range of people”. Another one pointed out that participants “learned a lot of kinds of information”.

However, an internal interviewee noted that the stakeholders selected were very favourable to the net-zero transition, and that voices from people who could be negatively impacted by Scotland’s transition to net zero were missing. This interviewee referred to a situation in which a business organisation who could have represented these voices did not accept the invite to come to the panel, and the stakeholder who replaced it was a “cheerleader for the Net Zero transition” who will probably benefit economically from the transition, unlike many businesses in Scotland.

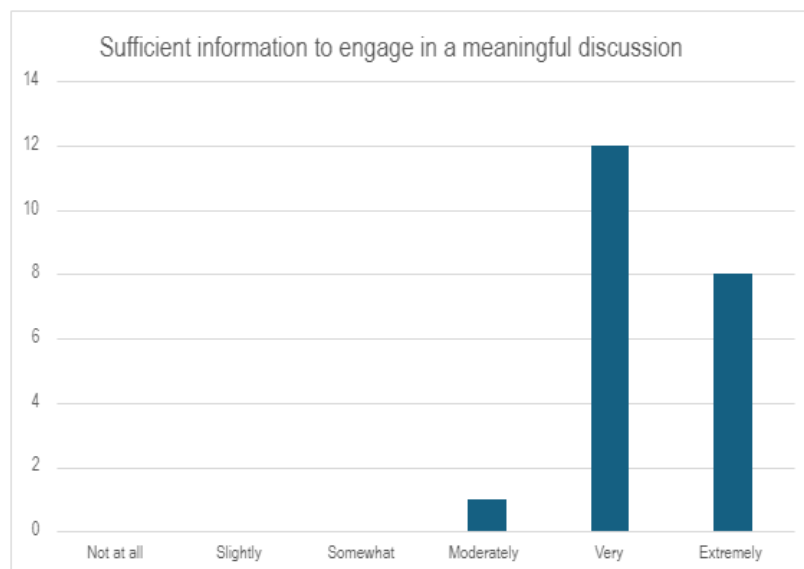
In another internal interview, it was also noted that there was a “heavy focus on academia” and more creativity to increase the diversity of expert witnesses may be beneficial in the future.

**Figure 3.** Results of the survey question: Did experts offer balanced and diverse views on public engagement in climate change?



Most participants were positive about the balance and diversity of views presented by experts, with over 70% of them responding “very” or “extremely” to the survey question above.

**Figure 4.** Results of the survey question: *Did you have sufficient information to engage in meaningful discussions?*



This survey question provides data about the confidence participants had in the evidence received to engage in meaningful conversations, rather than to answer the panel questions. Nonetheless, it gives an indication that participants agreed that the information received was sufficient to perform their role adequately.

Based on our observations of the panel, we interpreted that the group struggled to link recommendations to the evidence heard during the process while drafting recommendations. During the voting rounds to select recommendations, a few participants made comments along these lines. Participants were hardly using any evidence at all, and when they did, it seemed to be limited to the evidence seen the day before, but almost never evidence from the first weekend. Our observations were backed by one of the interviewees, who said:

“So, I feel like a lot of the recommendations that we put forward are quite good in their own right, but the evidence part of the statement is really weak or lacking or calls on a single example because we didn't really have any time in the process to go back to previous evidence and sift it”.

Many participants admitted to having limited knowledge about public engagement efforts by the Scottish Government prior to their involvement in the process. Consequently, the information they received during the Panel made a significant and favourable impression on them. As one in-depth interviewee mentioned:

“For public engagement with the Scottish Government, I wasn't aware that they regularly engage with the public. So, I was intrigued and I'm very impressed. I mean I can't imagine what more they could have done”.

It must be noted that the collective statement co-produced with participants in the Panel did manage to link evidence and learnings to respond to the first remit question. Our evaluation only reflects that methodologically, it was less emphasised throughout the Panel and that was reflected in participants views.

There appears to be a tension between the types of evidence being presented, promoted, and encouraged. On the one hand, the process is based on the principle of democratic knowledge, and participants are constantly reassured that their experiences and previous knowledge are valuable for the task at hand. “Everyone in the room is an expert because of their lived experiences” was a message repeated by the facilitation team over the course of the panel sessions. However, scientific evidence and expert knowledge were given primacy and were a requirement to underpin recommendations. The language used by the expert witnesses was also radically different from the participants’: it was impersonal and supported by data. Moreover, the deliberative activities, especially during the first weekend, were framed in very abstract, vague terms (i.e. “What are the principles of public engagement”?), which made it very hard for participants to derive contributions from personal experience.

#### *4.2.3. Recommendations*

Based on the findings and observations detailed in the previous sections, we made several recommendations to the Scottish Parliament:

- Mapping groups of people who are particularly affected by the policy or law being discussed, especially disadvantaged groups or stakeholders negatively impacted by it.
- Exploring the possibility of combining evidence provision sessions with deliberative sessions, instead of opting for a sequential design where the latter happen a month after the former.
- Using the online sessions exclusively as a refresher of key evidence.
- Reducing the number of experts and increasing the time participants have available to engage with them.
- Making the relationship of each evidence session with the purpose of the Panel more explicit and explaining to participants how specific evidence could help them answer the Panel question(s).

### **4.3. Design and Facilitation**

The design and facilitation of the panel demonstrated a high level of quality and attention to detail, ensuring a robust and inclusive deliberative process. In preparing for the sessions, facilitators effectively constructed



the deliberation space by setting up the physical and digital environments to support participants' engagement. Rooms were prepared with all relevant materials, and the Your Priorities platform was used to provide general context. During the initial sessions, participants were given extensive information about the nature of people's panels, and the Convener of the committee that would use the recommendations explained their role first-hand and formally inaugurated the event.

To enforce procedural rules, facilitators adopted a collaborative approach by allowing participants to define deliberative guidelines themselves. A final list of rules, which included conversation guidelines and tips for deliberation, was then printed and referenced throughout the event. Emphasising group self-regulation, facilitators encountered no significant challenges such as aggression or dismissal, reflecting the effectiveness of this approach.

Facilitators also excelled in encouraging reason-giving and creating a safe space for participants. They provided consistent positive reinforcement and designed a variety of participation opportunities, including individual idea sharing, small-group ideation, individual voting, plenary discussions, and plenary voting. Participants frequently noted how the process prompted them to reflect on the evidence presented and engage deeply with diverse perspectives.

Regularly changing the composition of sub-groups ensured that participants had ample opportunities for mutual exchange and that a broad range of topics and viewpoints were covered by multiple voices, fostering rich deliberation.

Finally, facilitators played a key role in summarising discussions, aggregating input, and guiding decision-making. During small-group discussions, they acted as note-takers, systematising intermediary outputs such as conversation guidelines and deliberation tips, which were then printed and returned to participants in subsequent sessions. A carefully devised multi-stage voting procedure enabled participants to engage gradually and thoughtfully with decision-making, ensuring both clarity and inclusivity in the process.

One of the critical challenges observed centres around the explanation of the key concepts of the framing question. Particularly, we observed that the fundamental concept behind the remit, namely, public engagement required more over-viewing. Even though expert witnesses were invited during the "Effective Public Engagement on Climate Change", these presentations focused on general principles, like accountability and trust, rather than an overview of the different methods, spaces, or historical developments in public engagement in climate policy or science issues more broadly. For instance, Rowe and Frewer (2005) classically distinguish between invited spaces (e.g. top-down processes) and non-invited spaces (e.g. bottom-up processes). Beyond those distinctions, public engagement is practised through multiple types of methods, including art-based engagement, deliberation, multi-stakeholder dialogues, policy co-design, among others.

Another of the challenges identified during facilitation relates to time management. As Rountree et al (2022) put it: "Time management starts as a structural decision in the design of a deliberation, but it impacts the

framing of the process by facilitators and participants” (p.154). In other words, how time is managed by designers and facilitators has an impact on the dynamics and perceptions of participants.

However, time management is very tricky for deliberative processes, both because the time available to design the processes and the time available to run them is very limited. As one internal interviewee said succinctly: “There's never enough time, is there?”. Against this background, time management evaluation and recommendations should be considered within a widely constrained process. Nonetheless, time-related decisions did appear as an issue for participants and were also observed during the sessions.

Although time-related complaints had already been evident in the first weekend, as participants wished to have more time to ask questions to experts, the main point of conflict in terms of time allocation can be pinpointed to the very last two days. According to the agenda of the second weekend of the panel, the second day was designed to focus on both hearing more evidence and feedback from other organisations, and then producing first drafts of recommendations. The third and last day, which was an hour shorter than the second, focused on recommendation review and final voting. The challenge as we perceived it, lay in that the final vote was also the only plenary discussion (not just vote) of all individual recommendations and perhaps the most critical moment of the process, since the final selection of recommendations and their wording is the main output of the process.

This was reflected by participants in the final survey:

- “I think everything went smoothly. If I had to make a recommendation, I think another day would help polish the final recommendations to the committee.”
- “More time to consider options would be nice. Timing is tricky and it needs to be managed carefully. Generally, this was done well but it did feel like the session where we drafted recommendations was too short. Another 10-15 mins at each station could have generated more fleshed out and well worded ideas, it felt like some recommendations that were important fell because of this”.
- “Perhaps allocating a little bit more time for discussions and deliberation”.
- “Sometimes it was a bit rushed and there was not enough time to do everything”.

Moreover, the time allocation for the last group vote was the central theme of concern for many of the participants in our in-depth interviews and in the survey comments. As one participant asserted:

“I just felt the space at the end to do the most important work, which was the wording and the associated voting thereafter... We didn't have enough time to do that properly”.

The final challenge we identified that impacted deliberation aspects relates to the design of the process. This people's panel at the post-legislative scrutiny stage, was acting both as a scrutiniser of the work of the Government and as a recommender of future action. These two functions stemmed from the two questions that framed the deliberative process:

- **A scrutinising role:** How effective has the Scottish Government been at engaging the public on climate change and Scotland's climate change targets?
- **A recommending role:** What else (if anything) could the Scottish Government do to inform and involve the public to help meet Scotland's climate change target?

In terms of the process design, these two separate functions only materialised clearly towards the end of the process, when participants were asked to elaborate a collective statement to answer the first (evaluative) question of the Panel and to draft recommendations to answer the second one.

Both through our observations and interviews with participants and even internal staff, we found that it was hard for organisers to find a balance between providing evidence, time, and space to carefully fulfil both roles and answer both questions. The focus of the process and the constantly emphasised output of the Panel was the recommendations. A participant put it clearly:

“Our work did tend to focus on the future facing stuff, which was the second question. I think there was less time and less resource committed to us answering the first question”.

To provide an overview of participants' broad assessment of the deliberation in the panels, we adapted Caluwaerts & Reuchamps's (2023) Citizen Assembly Evaluation Survey (CAES). This adaptation followed recommendations by the authors to add the specific issue and actors in the wording of the items, but it also shortened the survey given the time constraints associated with citizens having to take time out of deliberation to fill out the form. **Table 9.** Participants responses to questions on various aspects of the deliberations displays the results of the survey considering items from the Quality of Participation, Quality of Decision-Making and Quality of Independence subscales.

Participants were very positive about the work of the facilitation team, except for time (more on this in the next section). The survey findings were supported by qualitative data. We gathered several very positive statements about the work of the People's Panel organizing team, specifically referring to their task of including everyone and making people feel valued:

- “Taking part in this was great for me as even though I have learning disability I was not excluded, and I felt included and valued”.
- “I was valued for participating and I was listened to”.
- “It made me feel special and valued” are some of the statements we gathered.

During the panel sessions, one of the youngest participants expressed that facilitation was very good and referred explicitly to the facilitators' ability to guide the conversation, take care of everyone and make sure that everyone had a chance to participate if they wished to. This person compared this to other settings in which they had witnessed poor facilitation and believed that the facilitation in the People's Panel constituted a great example of good facilitation. Another interviewee (also on the younger end of the spectrum) echoed these thoughts and said: “[The facilitators] were amazing throughout, very helpful, very kind, very good at moderating the discussions. I have nothing bad to say about them. They were fantastic”. Beyond the more

technical considerations we have presented in this section, we believe that participants' perceptions are the best measure of success.

Diversity of thought around climate change also proved challenging for the facilitation of the panel. According to the internal interviews, this diversity was anticipated and prepared for in the work prior to the Panels. As one Parliament staff put it:

"We've had that across risk assessments. We had discussions across all of the facilitation team prepping ourselves, making sure that we were all comfortable with some of the conversations that might come up, asking SPICe researchers to help with that in terms of responses, making sure that we had the right research in hand. Those conversations pre panel were absolutely crucial to that as well."

During an interview, another member of staff mentioned that PACT did not only anticipate people being sceptical of climate change, but also people experiencing climate anxiety. However, in practice, climate scepticism proved to be a greater challenge. As that interviewee mentioned:

"We knew because of the group of people, representative of the public at large, that would mean that there'll be a smaller number of people that sit on the scale of not being worried about climate change so much [...] So, what we did as facilitators was constantly check in with one another about that person or those people with it".

These preparations were reflected in the Risk Assessment form of the activity, that stipulated who would be responsible for attending to participants experiencing distress. But also, to some degree, by the Safeguarding Checklist that members of staff discussed with participants beforehand in which they were asked (among other things) to state whether there were any topics they would prefer not to discuss.

Additionally, a part of the internal inclusion strategy focused on having participants create conversation guidelines that explicitly mentioned the importance of tolerance. Those guidelines were printed, put in the wall, and revisited during the sessions.

In terms of organisational preparations for the facilitators' teams, according to our internal interviews, PACT benefits from having staff with significant professional experience either in deliberation or participation more broadly. Nonetheless, on this occasion the Design and Delivery team decided to also include members of SPICe and the Clerking team to also provide facilitation. To support their involvement, a detailed Master Facilitation plan was developed. It included who was responsible for what specific actions during the whole process and what specific questions and outcomes were expected of each activity. Beyond that, according to internal interviews, they received help from SPICe to prepare in terms of climate change content.

The facilitators who did not participate in the Design and Delivery team, were invited to take part in weekly meetings starting three weeks prior to the Panels. According to internal interviewees, this allowed for capacity building across the team and for facilitation skills to be picked up. The Design and Delivery team started those weekly meetings before, approximately three months prior to the Panel.

#### *4.3.1. Recommendations*

Based on these findings, we recommended the following actions:

- That the Scottish Parliament breaks down the key concepts in the framing questions with participants and prioritises the central concept that articulates the remit of the Panel.
- That Parliament ensures the final plenary deliberation and voting are allocated sufficient time, with priority over other activities (ideally at least two and a half hours).
- That the design of the final day includes dedicated time for deliberation in the plenary session.
- That the process incorporates a gradual approach to the selection of recommendations. This could involve an initial round of voting to identify highly consensual recommendations, with subsequent deliberation focused on refining potentially consensual proposals or drafting minority reports.
- That e-voting technology is utilised to expedite the process.
- That, in future Panels, facilitators receive a facilitation guide, which includes tailored content on managing dialogue, handling conflict, posing follow-up questions, probing for justification, active listening, and ensuring balanced time distribution, among other key aspects relevant to the Panel's topic.
- That the roles of participants—whether as evaluators or contributors to recommendations—are clearly identified and considered when designing activities and facilitation strategies.

### **4.4. Motivations and Expectations of, and Impacts on Participants**

#### *4.4.1. Motivations and Expectations*

Through a qualitative analysis of the responses, we have identified 8 types of objectives: Self-improvement, political participation, impact, learning, new experience, engagement with others' views, empowerment, and none (see **Table 11**. Personal objectives according to participants).

As can be interpreted from the responses, learning objectives were the most prevalent among participants at the outset of the deliberative process (mentioned by 15 participants). These include the expectation of gaining knowledge about the Panel's core topics and the functioning of political institutions. Six participants also looked forward to hearing and engaging with other people's points of view. A third important category of objectives, mentioned by five participants, had to do with the impact they expected their participation to have, the change they could make and their contribution to society through their participation in the panel. Taking part in the process itself and expanding their political engagement and participation was identified as an objective by three participants. The other four types of objectives were mentioned by at most two participants.

In the post-panel survey, we identified six categories of favourite parts: engagement with others, which refers to meeting new people, hearing different points of view and engaging in conversations and discussions; collaboration, which refers to working together; participation, which involves taking part in the panel; deliberative democracy, when participants valued the democratic and deliberative elements of the process; process design, which emphasised the good organisation of the process and the good work of the organising team; Impact, when they highlighted the expected outcomes of the process and how these could bring about change; experience, when they focused on the value of experiencing being in the Parliament and being involved in the Panel; and learning, which refers to the knowledge acquired (see **Table 12. Favourite part of the Panel**).

While before the panels took place most people expected to learn a lot about climate change and the Parliament, after taking part what most people valued was the possibility to engage with others and collaborate (work with) with fellow citizens. More than 75% of participants reported their favourite element of the Panel being related to engagement with others and/or collaboration. To dig a bit deeper into how personal objectives transformed into most valued elements of the process, we linked each participant's responses before and after the Panel (see **Table 13. "Pre-post" comparison between personal objectives and favourite part of the Panel**).

We can see a shift from more individually centred goals before participation, mostly focused on Learning, to more collective aspects being highlighted in the aftermath, with an appreciation for being involved in discussions and working with others. We also observe a shift from a passive approach where participants expected to be the recipients of new knowledge, to a more active one where they valued being engaged, being an actor in the process and making things happen in collaboration with other people. Therefore, rather than meeting the expectations of participants (or not), what the process seems to do is to change their conception of what is valuable.

We also asked participants to rate their overall experience and whether they thought that the Scottish Parliament should run more People's Panels. The answers were overwhelmingly and unequivocally positive on both cases, as shown in **Table 2. Overall experience ratings**.

**Table 2.** Overall experience ratings.

Variable	Mean	St. Deviation	Corresponding label*
Participating in People's Panel was a positive experience	5.76	0.44	Extremely
The Scottish Parliament should run more processes like this People's Panel	5.67	0.58	Extremely

\*Qualitative label that reflects the approximated average value

The interviews confirmed the survey findings. All participants reported being very happy, and even “proud”, to have taken part in the Panel and felt it had been worth their time and efforts. The following quote summarises the general feeling perfectly:

“And if there's anything like this in the future, I would certainly recommend anyone to take part because it's so important, very important to be taking part in these people's panels. I think that is a really good thing.”

#### *4.4.2. Impact*

The evaluation of the impact of the panel on participants was structured around the following guiding questions:

- Did the participants gain knowledge during the process?
- Did they change their opinion?
- Did the panel have a meaningful impact on participants?
- Did it change their attitudes to political participation?

Participants feel they acquired relevant knowledge on all critical issues involved in the Panel. This is particularly clear in the cases of knowledge regarding “how the Scottish Parliament monitors the impact and implementation of new laws” that changed from Not at all/Slightly to Moderately. Also relevant are the changes in knowledge about “the role of public engagement in climate change policy” that changed from Slightly to Very.

However, the limitations of this analysis must be kept in mind when interpreting these results. On the one hand, the small number of participants (and thus, limited degrees of freedom) is an important limitation of the comparison, but more critically, it must be stated that perceived knowledge does not mechanically equate to “actual” knowledge.

Participant interviews and observations support the survey findings. Participants expressed in multiple occasions that taking part in the panels had increased their knowledge of climate change and the actions being taken by local communities, organisations, and public institutions to combat it across Scotland.

In addition, participants also reported an increase in their understanding of different viewpoints. When asked to rate the following statement: “As a consequence of my participation in the People’s Panel, I have come to understand different viewpoints relating to public engagement in climate change”, 95% of respondents answered Very or Extremely.

#### *Did they change their opinion?*

To further explore how learning impacted participants' views in practice, we asked them to state the importance of public engagement before and after the Panel. Capturing opinion and learning changes on this issue was crucial, as public engagement in climate change policy was the central concept of the remit

of the panel. Specifically, we used the open-ended question “Why do you believe that policymakers need to (or do not need to) engage with citizens in Climate Change decisions?”.

Through a qualitative comparison of statements, we can identify a diversity of response trajectories. In many cases, the representation of importance didn’t significantly change after the panel, as participants mobilised similar concepts and arguments. **Table 19** in Annex 2 shows examples of this.

In other cases, we can interpret a somewhat enriched argument after panel participation. What we observe is a transition from an acceptability-based argument (i.e. using public engagement to convince people of a specific policy) to arguments that recognise the importance of engagement to improve policy in the first place. **Table 20** shows examples of this.

Notably, in a few cases, we observed that original responses had an incipient rights-based position (i.e. as citizens and as affected citizens we have a political right to participate, even if it does not change or improve the policy), but these tended to lose emphasis in the final responses. **Table 21** depicts these cases.

We insist that this interpretation cannot be generalised and must be taken in context. However, it is consistent with our observation, the available documentation and the final recommendations that supports the interpretation that right-based approaches to participation were not at the centre of the discussion. Conversely, the specialised literature has emphasised the importance of asserting the right to participate as a core principle of environmental citizenship (Ryan et al., 2023).

#### *Did the panel have a meaningful impact on participants?*

There are many ways in which deliberative processes impact participants beyond policy outcomes. These impacts are sometimes referred to as spillover effects. According to van der Does and Jacquet’s (2023) systematic review, the spillover effects of mini-publics (such as the People’s Panel) can be grouped into five broad themes:

- Evaluation of democracy and politics (general appraisal of politics and democracy)
- Community attitudes (changes in civic relations with community of origin)
- Policy preferences and voting intentions (support and evaluation changes to specific policies)
- Knowledge, internal efficacy, and skills (learnings and knowledge gains)
- Civic and political engagement (willingness to further engage in democratic politics)

Regarding the impact on participants’ overall assessment of political institutions and the democratic system, we find that the participation in the panel improved their (self-reported) positive feelings towards the Scottish Parliament. More than 90% of participants responded “Very” or “Extremely” to the statement: “I feel like participating in the People’s Panel has improved the way I feel about the Scottish Parliament and the work it does to hold the Scottish Government to account”. This shows the positive impact that the panel had on the understanding and assessment of the work of the Scottish Parliament by citizens. In the interviews, one of the participants highlighted that “I learned that the civil servants do a lot of the work in the background, which I didn’t realise before. (...) It’s like a big engine that runs everything behind the scenes”. This quote



summarises the effect that it can have to be invited into the institutions and see how they work and what they do close-up.

Political efficacy was another important spillover effect of participation in the panels. Participant interviews showed that the process had an unequivocal positive impact on their internal efficacy. All the interviewees expressed their satisfaction for having taken part in the process. They were able to identify the value of their contributions to the deliberation, which ranged from representing a certain age group to bringing in specific knowledge gained through professional and live experiences.

One of the interviewees gave a moving testimonial that speaks to the deep, transformative impact that being chosen to take part in a deliberative panel can have. Taking part in the panels seems to have given a new dimension to her life, renewed her sense of purpose and redefined her role in society. She mentioned being energised by her participation and said “I’m retired now, thinking oh, well, that’s me. I’m finished. But I’m not finished. Not at all finished. I’ve still got a lot to go on”. She continued:

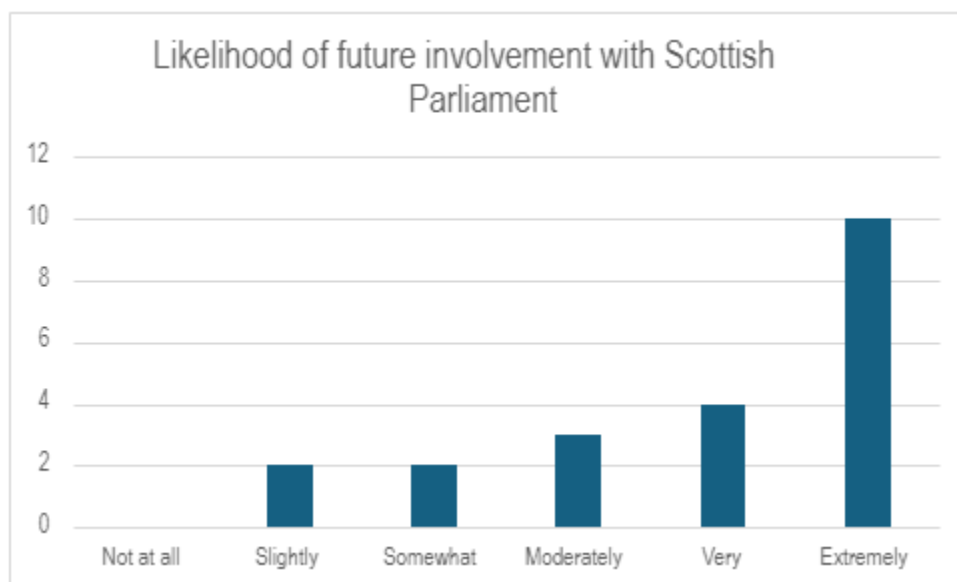
“I thought it was wonderful, really, really wonderful, a great experience. And something that I can take forward, as well and be quite proud of as well, but the experience was amazing. And I thought that my voice was so relevant because I’m in my 70s now and I thought, well, I’ve still got a voice, I still get to dream. (...) It was just so, so good. To speak to my daughter and my grandchildren about [her participation in the Panel] just puts a smile on my face. To think that I took part in something that’s so important, so relevant, and to pass on to my grandson, (...) it feels really good to have taken part in that. And I think people’s panels would be a great thing to do for the future.”

This powerful statement speaks to the positive effect that taking part in deliberative panels can have on people, especially concerning their sense of self-worth and internal efficacy.

*Did it change their attitudes to political participation?*

As shown in **Figure 5. Likelihood to get involved in Scottish Parliament work**, most participants believed they would likely get involved in Scottish Parliament work.

**Figure 5.** *Likelihood to get involved in Scottish Parliament work*



In informal conversations during the panels and latter interviews with participants, these results came to live and became more concrete, as people expressed their willingness to get more involved in local initiatives to tackle climate change. A participant told us “I’m a serial non recycler. I didn’t particularly care about climate change before this weekend. This weekend has completely changed my perspective”. This learning and change of view led her to seriously consider setting up a climate action group in her neighbourhood. Learning about local, specific initiatives, like the Climate Hubs, gives people the ability to see themselves taking part and engaging with local communities and (political) initiatives for the betterment of society.

#### **4.4.3. Recommendations**

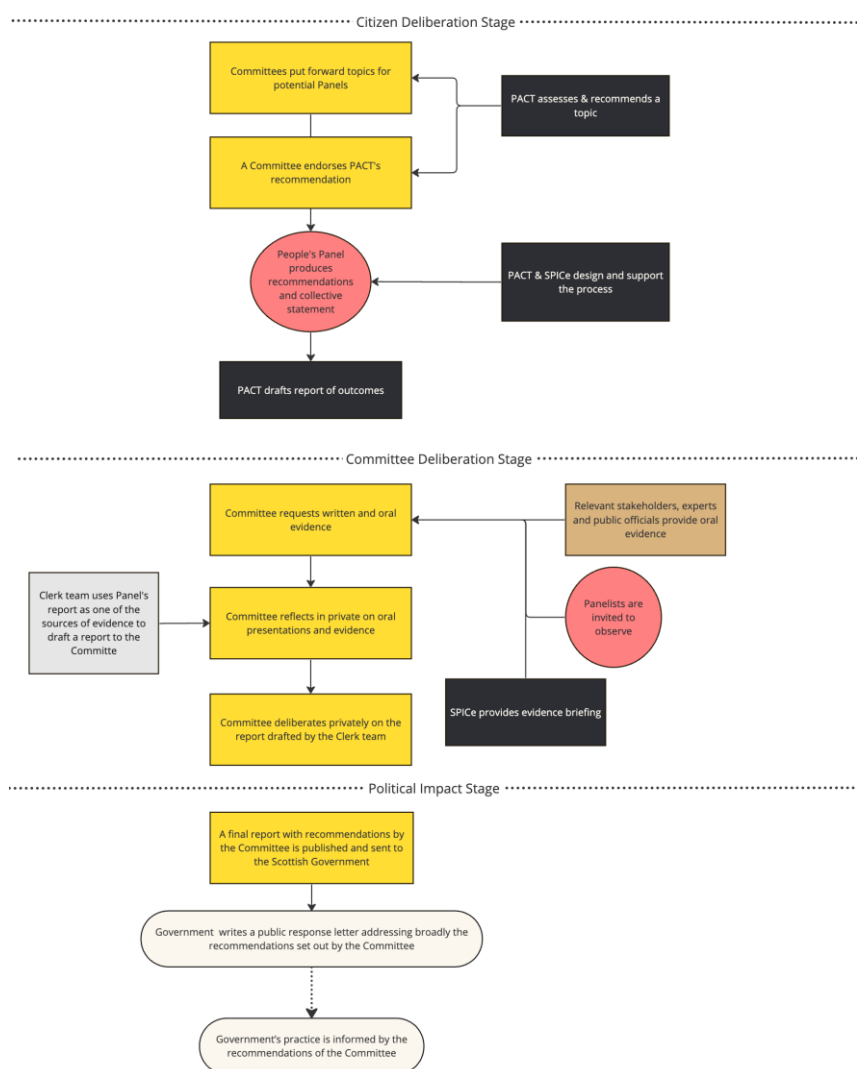
Our only recommendation on this section was that the facilitation plan includes spaces that allow participants to acknowledge their distrust of the Scottish Parliament, and potentially for Parliament to explore mechanisms to argue for their trustworthiness.

### **4.5. Impact Expectations on the Scottish Parliament**

The overarching promise of this deliberative exercise is to influence the PLS work of the Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee to scrutinise Scottish Government in its efforts to engage the public for Net Zero. According to the official website, “Participants will produce a set of recommendations that will be incorporated in a report and then presented to the Committee. It is intended that the recommendations will feed directly into the Committee’s scrutiny of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act.”

However, how this influence takes place will be less linear and requires some context for its understanding. In practice, this process requires multiple stages and actors giving input besides citizens alone. **Figure 6** depicts a reconstruction of the likely pathway of a People's Panel based on available information of previous PLS processes and internal interviews.

**Figure 6.** *Reconstruction of the likely pathway of a People's Panel.*



Broadly speaking, we identify three distinct stages within this pathway. The People's Panel is a first stage, that begins well before citizens sit at the table. Parliament Staff, particularly PACT and SPICe, work closely with Parliament Committees and their support teams to help them decide the remit and objectives of the deliberative events. Thus, this designing stage is critical in understanding the impact of the People's Panel, as it sets the scope, objectives, and users of the citizens' recommendations.

After the public deliberation stage, a parliamentary deliberation stage begins. It is important to highlight that Committee work is deliberative. Committees consider the range of evidence they receive and produce an integrated, view that includes their own voice, as political actors elected democratically. In that sense, from internal interviews with Parliament Staff, we can interpret that citizens' recommendations will be used as a source of evidence that will be triangulated with others, both in the form of evidence from stakeholders, public civil servants, and experts, or as evidence briefs created by SPICe (the Scottish Parliament Information Centre).

The output of the Committee's process is usually a report or letter with recommendations for the Scottish Government. The Scottish Government is expected to provide a response within two months of the publication of a committee report. The response should address all recommendation made to the Scottish Government. We also believe it is important context that Government is not legally bound to provide a response and that the response itself is not legally binding.

In that sense, the pathways that connect citizens' recommendations to policy change are quite complex and filled with uncertainties. This is an important context that should be kept in mind while exploring perceptions of impact by participants.

To have a broad view of the expectations of participants about the political impact of the Panels, we asked them during the final survey about their perceptions about the clarity of the pathway to impact, their perceptions of the willingness of politicians to take up results and the impact of the panel on its ultimate objective, namely, to hold the Government to account.

**Table 3.** *Measures of expected political impact of the panel.*

Variable	Mean	St. Deviation	Corresponding label*
It was clear from the start what was going to happen with the recommendations	3.90	1.89	Moderately
Politicians will consider the People's Panel's recommendations	3.48	1.29	Somewhat
The People's Panel will help hold the Scottish Government to account	3.95	1.24	Moderately

\*Qualitative label that reflects the approximated average value

Results indicate that participants did not have full clarity about the pathways and motivations for impact, and thus their perceptions that it will hold Government into account are weakened. The results are clearly not completely negative, but they are notably below participants overall satisfaction with the event or perceptions of learning.

We identified some gaps in how citizens represented the pathway to impact and how staff members have perceived it in their experience. For instance, at least some citizens have the expectation that the Committee's work will centre on their findings, which is different from the perception that the findings will be considered as an important, but one of many, forms of evidence. Moreover, the importance of attending the sessions for the chances of substantively impacting on the Committee's work is not necessarily present in how participants talked about their expectations, neither in the in-depth interviews nor during our observations of the Panels.

This is also highlighted by the Citizen Participation and Public Petitions Committee report "Embedding Public Participation in the Work of the Parliament", particularly in the section "Accountability and follow-up". This report acknowledges that it is up to MSP to decide and take responsibility for the final recommendations, as elected representatives, but also indicates that conducting a Panel implicitly commits Committee to generating accountability on how people's opinions were used.

To further explore how participants would measure the success of the initiative, we asked them to define what success would mean for them in the context of the People's Panel. **Table 25. Definitions of Panel success by participants** shows the responses of all participants who responded to that question, ordered by us abductively into three main categories.

Our analysis shows that seven participants explicitly stated that the panel could be considered successful if the Scottish Government implements the recommendations. Another nine participants, while not linking success so directly to the implementation of recommendations, still considered that communication/ listening to the ideas and recommendations of the panel was the key element to determine the success of the process.

The interpretation of these results can be varied. On the one hand, most participants place a lot of weight on the political outcome of the process, that is, the consideration and take up of recommendations by the Scottish Government. At the same time, we have seen that their hopes of this happening are not high, but this doesn't seem to negatively affect their satisfaction with the participatory process. These results could have an impact on the spillover effects of the mini-public, which shortly after the conclusion of the process are very positive, but as highlighted by the academic literature (van der Does & Jacquet, 2023) could change with time. In order to understand the mid and long-term effects of these findings on external efficacy, it would be necessary to track the fate of recommendations and the views of participants over a longer period of time.

Finally, since time has passed after the Panel on Public Engagement with Climate Change, we have received more information showcasing its actual impact on policy. According to public records of Parliamentary discussions, the impact of the People's Panel on the Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Bill was significant in shaping both legislative scrutiny and public engagement. The Panel's report and recommendations prompted discussions within the Committee, particularly around the importance of local-level engagement and honest communication regarding Scotland's climate change

challenges. The Cabinet Secretary for Net Zero and Energy reflected on the Panel's call for "truth and honesty" about the scale of the emissions reduction effort and the need to focus resources on high-impact areas.

The Committee referenced the Panel in its Stage 1 report, recommending that the Scottish Government provide clear proposals for public engagement in the upcoming Climate Change Plan. The Panel's call for a simpler, more transparent action plan, as well as accessible information for non-experts, was also reflected in the Committee's recommendations. The Panel's push for increased public participation led to potential amendments being considered during Stages 2 and 3 of the Bill, with Amendment 8 ultimately being agreed upon. This amendment requires the government to outline plans for public consultations on future climate change plans, ensuring that public engagement remains a central component of climate policy. The unanimous support for Amendment 8 serves as more direct evidence of the impact of the People's Panel in shaping legislation.

#### *4.5.1. Recommendations*

Based on these findings, we recommended that the complexity of political impact be explained to citizens using creative or context-specific methods and communicated more extensively through complementary materials. We also recommended that future evaluations of People's Panels and similar activities incorporate data collection and analysis after the Committee has concluded its work.

## 5. People’s Panel on reducing drug harm and deaths in Scotland

### 5.1. Panel Composition

The People’s panel on reducing drug harm and deaths in Scotland (shortened hereafter to People’s Panel on Drug Harm or PPDH) followed a similar selection procedure led by the Sortition Foundation, ensuring a rigorous and transparent process. Substantive criteria were also applied to ensure that participants not only reflected Scotland’s demographic diversity but also represented the distribution of opinions on drug regulation in the country.

The People’s Panel on Drug Harm yielded similarly positive results. Survey responses reveal that participants, on average, perceived the process as even more representative than the previous Panel, both in reflecting the Scottish population and capturing the diverse perspectives on drug harm. Overall, participants regarded the panels as “very” to “extremely” representative of the population and the range of views on the issue.

**Table 4.** *Survey items on participant representativeness and diversity.*

Variable	Average	Standard Deviation
Representative of Scotland	5,4	0,5
Diverse perspectives on the issue	5,3	0,8
Whole subscale	5,35	0,66

Notably, the People’s Panel on Drug Harm brought together participants who not only represented a wide diversity of opinions on the issue but also a range of personal experiences. Through our interviews, we observed that many participants had first-hand experience with the negative effects of drugs and their potentially fatal consequences. As one participant shared: “I have been around addiction my whole life. From a very early age right up to now, even at the present moment, I’ve got addiction around me. Unfortunately, I lost a couple of sisters, too. Yeah. So when I got asked to take part, I thought, Yeah, I’ll put my bit back into society.” For many, the topic of drug harms was deeply personal, and their direct experiences underscored the pressing need to improve Scottish policies on this issue.

#### 5.1.1. *Improvements made and further recommendations*

PACT followed our recommendation to continue to expand its practice of incorporating diversity of thought in its selection procedures. We continue to assert that hiring external and auditable organisations for delivery, like the Sortition Foundation, remains relevant. However, we recognise that Parliament may benefit

from exploring new providers over time. Additionally, we encourage consideration of alternatives to random sortition, including community-based selection methods or approaches that give greater priority to those most affected by the issues under discussion.

## 5.2. Evidence Provision

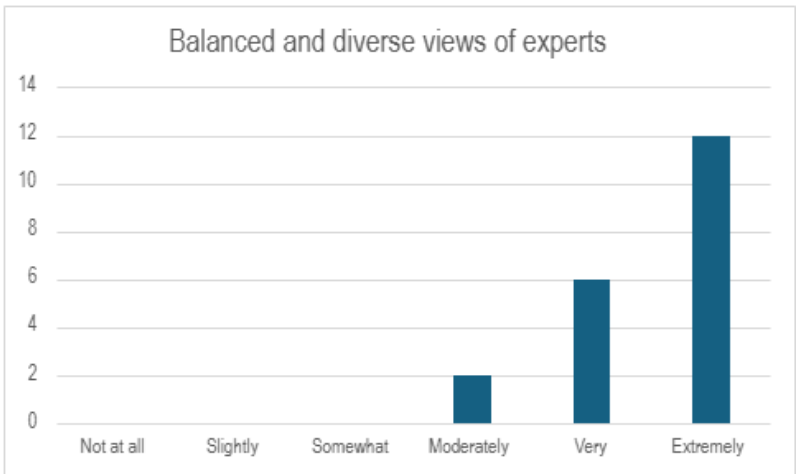
### 5.2.1. Description of the learning process and evidence provided

For the People’s Panel on Drug Harms’ evidence provision, the main modification regarding evidence provision was that PACT undertook a mapping exercise to identify key topics related to drug harms, based on the work conducted by the Drug Deaths Taskforce. Seven themes were then identified, and participants heard evidence on all of them on the first weekend. Participants then picked four topics on which to hear more evidence on the second weekend. Therefore, the PPDH included elements of co-design with guidance from the organising team.

### 5.2.2. Credibility and diversity of witnesses and evidence

In the PPDH, most participants considered that the evidence provided by experts was extremely balanced and diverse (see **Figure 7**). Interviewed participants valued the presence of third sector organisations as well as the testimony of people with lived experiences. The diversity and balance of evidence is also captured by a statement from one of the participants: “Hearing the evidence from different people” made them reflect and even “change [their] mind a few times” about certain topics.

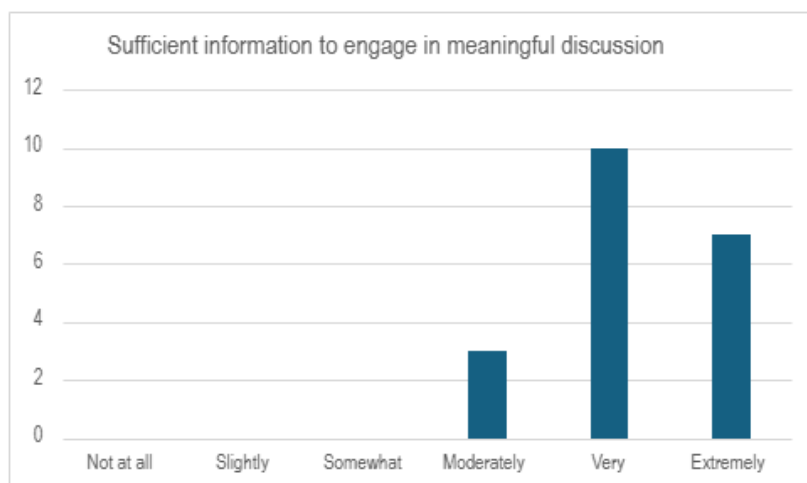
**Figure 7.** *Balanced and diverse views of experts.*



Participants also considered that they had sufficient information about drug harm reduction to engage in a meaningful discussion with the other participants. Apart from the wealth of evidence, interviewees also highlighted that the way in which information was delivered, with a clear path and guidance from the organisers, was very helpful.



**Figure 8.** Sufficient information to engage in meaningful discussion.



In that regard, another innovation introduced by the organising team was a template with three prompts for reflection and discussion: what is working well, what could be improved, what could be done differently. Facilitators found this guide very useful for participants to integrate the evidence into the deliberations and, ultimately, recommendations. Thus, evidence was weaved into the discussions and drafting process in a purposeful and conscientious manner.

### ***5.2.3. Improvements made and further recommendations***

PACT followed most of our evidence provision recommendations. PACT and SPICe conducted a thorough topic mapping before engaging with the Stewarding board, which helped to frame the scope of the People's Panel and guided the selection of evidence providers. The presence of speakers with lived experience and/or from the third sector was crucial for the participants, as reported by themselves, to have a deeper understanding of the impact of drug harms and deaths.

We recommend that topic and stakeholder mapping exercises continue in the next panels and that the testimony of people with lived experience remains a central element in evidence provision. We continue to encourage Parliament to consider inviting people who may be negatively affected by the policies proposed, in order to achieve an even greater balance of views.

Most importantly, the team designed the Panel so that evidence and deliberation were more intertwined. Participants received prompts to constantly link the evidence heard to the Panel question and, as a result, participants organically and deliberatively built on each piece of evidence to craft recommendations throughout the two weekends. These design improvements should continue to be applied in the future, as they showed to enhance understanding of complex issues and reasoning that incorporated the evidence heard.

Online sessions remained as a mixture of evidence review and deliberation, but participants were asked to do less (compared to the PPCC) in order to reduce digital fatigue and maximise their focus. We recommend

that this approach of using online sessions primarily to ponder the evidence received and consider what additional evidence may be needed, rather than also focusing on recommendations, continues.

### **5.3. Design and Facilitation**

The People's Panel on Drug Harm followed a similar high-quality facilitation and design strategy as previously described, with added measures to support participants' well-being during the process. Recognising that many participants may have direct experience with the issue of drug harm, which could trigger emotional responses, specific "self-care" guidelines were introduced. These guidelines, which were printed throughout the room, provided recommendations to help participants manage emotional moments and maintain their comfort throughout the deliberations. Additional materials were also made available, ensuring that participants had the necessary support to engage meaningfully while taking care of their emotional and mental health during the process.

In the previous Peoples' Panel on Public Engagement with Climate Change, the challenge lay in the need for a clearer explanation of the concept of public engagement, including its various methods and historical context. The framing question was broad, and expert presentations focused on general principles like accountability and trust, rather than offering a comprehensive overview of concrete public engagement methods and spaces. As a result, participants struggled to fully grasp the concept, making it harder to engage meaningfully with the issue at hand.

In contrast, the People's Panel on Drug Harm avoided this challenge by focusing directly on the core issue of drug harms. The entire design and learning opportunity centred around this topic, providing a clear and consistent explanation of the process. The specific focus on drug harms ensured that participants immediately understood both the purpose and the process. In that sense, we observed a marked improvement in how facilitators and organisers grounded the learning phase of the process.

Moreover, in the People's Panel on Drug Harm, the challenge balancing dual roles was effectively addressed by focusing solely on one guiding question, rather than two. Unlike the previous panel, where the process design had to balance two distinct roles—scrutinising the government's efforts and recommending future actions—the People's Panel centred on a single, clear objective: to provide recommendations regarding drug harms. This streamlined focus removed the complexity of balancing evaluative and propositional roles, allowing participants to engage more deeply with the topic at hand.

However, time management remained a challenge, as observed in the previous panel. While a new voting procedure was introduced—where rotating small groups voted on each recommendation before they were presented for final plenary voting—this did not fully resolve the issue. The plenary session remained the only opportunity for collective discussion, which limited the time available to explore the nuances of the recommendations before finalising them.

This constraint led to some discussions around the level of detail and refinement in the final drafting, highlighting that despite improvements in the voting process, additional time for plenary deliberation could further enhance the quality and depth of the outcomes. Participants mentioned during interviews and in the survey that introducing an additional day of deliberation could address this issue, though they acknowledged the practical challenges of implementing such a change. It is worth noting, however, that time management concerns appeared less frequently in the survey when participants were asked about areas for improvement.

**Table 10. Participants responses to questions on various aspects of the deliberations PPDH.** displays the results of the survey considering items from the Quality of Participation, Quality of Decision-Making and Quality of Independence subscales.

The survey results related to design and facilitation, adapted from the Citizen Assembly Evaluation Survey (CAES), indicate high levels of participant satisfaction across multiple dimensions. Participants overwhelmingly felt they had ample opportunity to express their views and that no one dominated the discussions, both rated as "very." Time allocation for discussions was also rated "very", though, as noted earlier, time management remains an area for potential improvement. Parliamentary staff were highly commended for ensuring inclusive participation (rated "extremely"), and the final recommendations were perceived as reflecting participants' ideas (rated "very"). Moreover, group discussions were seen as influencing the final recommendations beyond the vote (rated "very"). Importantly, participants reported no pressure to conform to recommendations (rated "not at all"), highlighting the integrity of the deliberative process. Overall, the results point to a well-facilitated process with robust participant engagement and inclusivity.

### *5.3.1. Improvements made and further recommendations*

PACT took steps to implement several of our key recommendations regarding the design and facilitation of the Panel.

The recommendation to break down key concepts in the framing questions and prioritise the central concept articulating the remit of the Panel was followed. Similarly, the team ensured that the final plenary deliberation and voting were given priority in the schedule. A gradual approach to the selection of recommendations was also adopted, incorporating an initial round of voting to identify highly consensual recommendations, with deliberation focused on amending potentially consensual proposals. Additionally, the PPDH focused only on the recommending role of citizens, and in doing so, avoided much of the complexity of a dual role (scrutiniser and recommending) that we observed in the PPCH.

However, some recommendations were not fully implemented. The final plenary session did not include dedicated time for deliberation, which led to some dissatisfaction from participants expecting to have a say in the final plenary. Because of this, we recommend that more deliberation time is given to participants in the final plenary session.

Additionally, while e-voting technology was considered, the process ultimately relied on Mentimeter for topic selection but reverted to manual voting for deliberation and decision-making. This may be explained by the difficulties of a diverse group of citizens handling technology independently. We recommend that alternative solutions be explored, including the provision of tablet computers with easy-to-use interfaces that are pre-configured for voting purposes.

Overall, while key aspects of our recommendations have been integrated into the Panel's design, there remain opportunities for further refinement in future iterations.

## 5.4. Motivations and Expectations of, and Impact on Participants

### 5.4.1. Motivations and Expectations

For the PPDH, we repeated the categorisation and comparison exercise between expected outcomes (pre-panel) and favourite elements (post-panel). Similarly to the previous panel, learning objectives were predominant among participants, and the panel process did not disappoint: aspects related to learning were reported as the favourite part of the experience by a majority of the post-panel survey respondents. Participants found evidence providers inspiring and reported learning most from them, particularly those sharing lived experiences.

As in the previous panel, we observe a shift (albeit less clear) in the elements valued by participants before and after participation. The idea of active discussion with others is largely missing in the pre-panel survey and respondents used passive and individual verbs to refer to their engagement with other people's points of view (hear, gain knowledge from, etc.). After taking part in the Panel, respondents valued the deliberation process itself, as well as the organisation and facilitation aspects of the Panel, and treasured the opportunity to actively discuss issues with other citizens to reach consensus and enact decision-making. More detail can be found in **Table 14. Expected outcomes of participation (PPDH)**, **Table 15. Favourite part (PPDH)** and **Table 16. "Pre-post" comparison between personal objectives and favourite part of the PPDH**.

We also asked participants to rate their overall experience and whether they thought that the Scottish Parliament should run more People's Panels. The answers are extremely positive on average, as shown in **Table 5. Overall experience ratings PPDH**.

**Table 5.** Overall experience ratings PPDH.

Variable	Mean	St. Deviation	Corresponding label*
Participating in People's Panel was a positive experience	5.75	0.44	Extremely

The Scottish Parliament should run more processes like this People's Panel	5.6	0.6	Extremely
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\*Qualitative label that reflects the approximated average value

### 5.4.2. *Impact*

The participants of PPDH reported an increase of knowledge or familiarity with all the key themes related to the panel, similar to the results in the PPCC. Improvements on the knowledge of the work of Parliament and solutions available to reduce drug harms are especially remarkable, as participants went from somewhat to very knowledgeable on these two issues (see **Table 18. Pre-post comparisons on learning perceptions**). However, the limitations of the analysis for the previous panel are even more present in this one, because the number of observations that could be paired were only 15.

In the interviews, participants gave more detail about the areas in which they gained knowledge, and a recurrent theme was the role of the third sector in addressing drug harms.

Finally, 86% of participants responded “Very” or “Extremely” to the following statement “As a consequence of my participation in the People’s Panel, I have come to understand different viewpoints relating to drug harm reduction”.

#### *Did they change their opinion?*

In the PPDH, we asked participants “Why do you believe that policymakers need to (or do not need to) engage with citizens to decide how to reduce drug harms?” before and after taking part. On this occasion, we observed that the arguments given by almost all participants changed, at least slightly, to add or modify one or more dimensions of their understanding.

We see, for instance, that many participants highlighted the importance of lived experience either before or after the panel, as shown in **Table 22. Arguments that touch on lived experience**. We observe different trajectories: some participants nuance their arguments further after the panel regarding the importance of engaging with people with lived experience, while others decrease their emphasis on the political function of engagement to highlight the value of lived experience. We also see the opposed movement: a participant who before the panel highlighted lived experience, after the panel focused on engagement as a political right of citizens in democratic systems.

Another identifiable trend is the relationship that participants establish between a greater diversity of views and better policy decisions (either before or after taking part in the panel). This is one of the principles of deliberative democracy and citizens appear to consider it a key argument in favour of more citizen engagement, although we cannot conclude whether this line of argument increases or decreases after taking part in the panel. Some examples can be seen in **Table 23. Arguments linking citizen engagement with better policy**.

Finally, there are a few participants that, after taking part in the panel, consider it a function of citizen engagement to push policymakers to implement good policy and to force them to be braver. In this group, we could also include those who seem to favour more direct democracy in our political systems and one participant who links citizen engagement with cross-party cooperation. See **Table 24. Arguments referring to government action.** for further detail.

Our analysis shows that the value of lived experience as knowledge and a strengthened ability to call government to action where the two core arguments resulting from the participation in the panel.

*Did the panel have a meaningful impact on participants?*

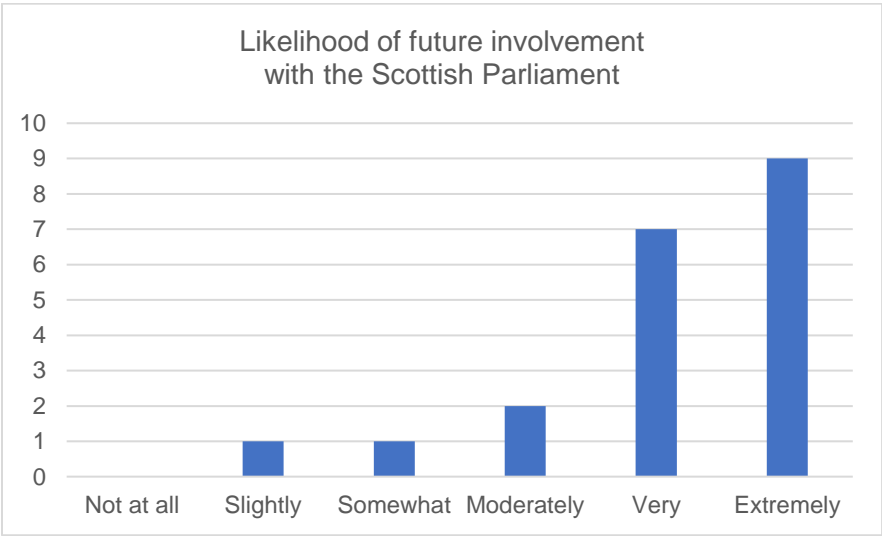
The results for the PPDH are like those of the previous panel. 76% of participants considered that the way they feel about the Scottish Parliament and the work it does to hold the Scottish Government to account was extremely or very much improved by participating in the People’s Panel.

Regarding their (internal) political efficacy, in the interviews participants expressed satisfaction in having taken part in the panel and the role they played. As observed in the previous panel, this time they could all give reasons why their input and perspective were valuable. Arguments ranged from their professional and lived experience, to their soft skills (ability to listen, open-mindedness and reasoned judgement).

*Did it change their attitudes to political participation?*

The results for the PPDH are very similar. As shown in **Figure 9**, Over 75% of participants consider it very or extremely likely that they will get involved in the work of the Parliament in the future.

**Figure 9.** Likelihood of future involvement with the Scottish Parliament (PPDH).



Both in the survey and in the interviews, participants were impressed by the care and thoughtfulness of the organising team and considered it an important factor for the success of the panel, their positive experience and their willingness to contribute to similar initiatives. This evidence shows that the experience of political

participation is key to initiate a virtuous cycle by which citizens sustain and deepen their political engagement.

#### ***5.4.3. Improvements made and further recommendations***

Overall, participants were extremely positive about their experience of taking part in a People's Panel. Feedback remains consistent around the excellent care given by the organising team, which participants identified as a key element for success. Indicators of internal efficacy showed very positive results as well, in line with the previous panel, which indicates that partaking in deliberative panels enhances one's sense of self-worth as a citizen.

Our only recommendation to improve the experience and impact of the panel on participants was related to trust, as we have observed in both panels that citizens come into the Parliament with some reservations around the interests that motivate MSPs. After the PPCC, we recommended that the facilitation plan included spaces that allow participants to acknowledge their distrust of the Scottish Parliament, and potentially for Parliament to explore mechanisms to argue for their trustworthiness. We acknowledge that the lack of trust in politicians is an issue that goes beyond Scotland and is influenced by a myriad of factors. The goal of this recommendation was to give citizens the chance to express their concerns before and during their participation in the panel and to give Parliament the opportunity to address them. This exercise in itself is likely to foster an environment of trust and reduce suspicious, sceptic and even cynical attitudes towards the political establishment, which may affect the participants' experience.

To implement this recommendation, PACT introduced an exercise at the beginning of the Panel which asked participants to describe Parliament in one word. While this is a good starting point, in practice most people understood that the question referred to the building, and therefore the exercise did not create a safe space to voice reservations. We encourage the designing team to continue exploring avenues for participants to express their lack of trust and for Parliament to directly address them.

### **5.5. Impact expectations on the Scottish Parliament**

In terms of expectations of impact for the Peoples' Panel on Drug Harm, we observed similar results to those noted in previous panels. As reconstructed earlier, the pathway from the inception of the Panels to achieving policy impact is highly complex, requiring navigation through multiple layers of decision-making and institutional processes. However, the organising team implemented improvements this time, enhancing the introduction at the start of the process. Notably, they included a dedicated space for participants to openly voice their trust or distrust in Parliament, fostering a safe environment for these expressions and building a foundation for engagement.

**Table 6.** Measures of expected political impact of the panel.

Variable	Mean	St. Deviation	Corresponding label*
It was clear from the start what was going to happen with the recommendations	4,45	1,66	Moderately
Politicians will consider the People's Panel's recommendations	3,6	1,18	Moderately
The People's Panel will help hold the Scottish Government to account	4,4	1,09	Moderately

\*Qualitative label that reflects the approximated average value

As in the previous iteration, the survey results reflect a “moderate” level of confidence in the political impact of the panel. While participants rated clarity about what would happen with the recommendations as "moderately" clear, trust that politicians would consider the recommendations received a similar "moderate" rating. Participants also expressed moderate confidence that the People's Panel would help hold the Scottish Government to account. These findings suggest that while participants recognised the potential of the panel to influence policy, there remains room for strengthening perceptions of political impact and trust in the process. The inclusion of safe spaces for discussing trust may serve as a stepping stone towards this goal in future deliberative initiatives.

As in the previous panel, participants' definitions of success were broadly grouped into three themes. First, many participants focused on recommendations being actioned, defining success by the implementation of their suggestions, particularly if it led to tangible reductions in drug harms or deaths. Second, good communication was seen as crucial, with participants emphasising the need for regular updates on how their recommendations were being considered and acted upon. Lastly, substantive listening emerged as an important factor, where success was tied to how well the Scottish Government incorporated the panel's ideas.

#### *5.5.1. Improvements made and further recommendations*

PACT has taken steps to address several of our recommendations regarding the expectations of impact on parliamentary processes.

The complexity of political impact was also explained to participants using more creative and situated methods, and complementary materials were used to enhance communication. However, while these improvements were made, a crucial degree of the messiness involved in achieving impact remains unclear to participants. We recommend that Parliamentary service explores new ways of explaining impact, such



as videos or presentations that illustrate cases where recommendations were adopted and cases where they were not, including explanations of why certain recommendations were not taken forward.

One key recommendation that was not implemented was the inclusion of data collection and analysis after the Committee had concluded its work. Instead, there are plans to develop an "impact framework" to explore the effects of participation on parliamentary scrutiny, aiming to improve feedback loops. While this is a positive step, we encourage further integration of post-implementation evaluation to better assess long-term impact.

Overall, while significant progress has been made, continued refinement is necessary to enhance communication regarding the influence of public participation on parliamentary decision-making, considering what can best be described as the messiness of the pathways to impact within political systems.

## **6. Conclusions**

### **6.1. Panel Size and Composition**

The democratic sortition process of the Panels was outsourced to the Sortition Foundation, registered company with a credible track record of designing democratic lotteries. The sortition process itself followed a stratified approach that provides evidence that the final composition of the Panel resembles key socio-demographic characteristics of the wider Scottish population. Innovating from standard practice, the Scottish Parliament added a substantive criterion for representativity, that is, representation of thought and not only of socio-demographic characteristics. Namely, the organisers asked the Sortition Foundation to use available survey data to make the panel better reflect the diversity of thought around Climate Change.

During the panels, participants also perceived that the Panels were representative of Scotland, especially in socio-demographical terms. For the People's Panel on Drug Harm, the Scottish Parliament followed our recommendation to continue its practice of incorporating diverse perspectives into its selection processes beyond socio-demographic representativeness. While we continue to advocate for the relevance of engaging external, auditable organisations, such as the Sortition Foundation, to manage participant recruitment, we also recognise that exploring new service providers over time may help diversify and explore new recruitment procedures.

In that sense, we encourage the Parliament to consider alternatives to random sortition for deliberative mini-publics. These alternatives could include community-based selection methods that draw on local networks and knowledge or approaches that prioritise participation from individuals and groups most affected by the issues under discussion. Such methods can complement sortition and foster inclusion of those typically absent from decision-making.

### **6.2. Evidence Provision**

The People's Panels included a broad range of evidence and witnesses. Overall, we found that experts were credible and trusted by participants. Evidence given by people with lived experience and practitioners on the ground was especially well-received.

In the People's Panel on Climate Change, participants showed difficulties in using the evidence received to address the Panel questions. We found that the introduction of a mapping exercise in the People's Panel on Drug Harm, as well as guides to help participants link the evidence heard to their mission as panellists, improved citizen's ability to make the most of the evidence.

Overall, in both Panels, participants were satisfied with the quality and quantity of information they had access to and believed it was sufficient and adequate to perform their functions. We recommend that the

Scottish Parliament continue to expand its practice of inviting speakers who can emphasise the lived experiences of those most affected by the relevant policy areas. Looking ahead, we observe that there is room to strengthen the structure provided to expert speakers, ensuring they more clearly identify the pros, cons, and limitations of their expert advice. This approach can help avoid overreach and ensure a more balanced and transparent presentation of information to support informed deliberation.

### **6.3. Design and Facilitation**

The design and facilitation of the panels were highly effective, ensuring a robust and inclusive deliberative process. Facilitators created an engaging environment by preparing both physical and digital spaces and providing participants with relevant materials. They offered clear explanations of the mini-public concept and the role of the MSP leading the committee. Facilitators adopted a collaborative approach by allowing participants to establish deliberative guidelines, which were followed throughout the event. They encouraged reason-giving, created a safe space for participants, and designed diverse participation opportunities like small-group ideation, individual voting, and plenary discussions, fostering deep engagement. They also summarised discussions, aggregated input, and guided decision-making through a structured multi-stage voting procedure, ensuring clarity and inclusivity in the process.

Our analysis revealed design challenges during the People's Panel on Public Engagement with Climate Change. The framing questions of the People's Panel on Public Engagement with Climate Change can be considered particularly complex. They involve, at a minimum, deliberation and learning around climate change, public engagement, climate policy, the workings and roles of the Scottish Parliament and Scottish Government, post-legislative scrutiny, and the specific case of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act of 2009 which was later amended by the Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Act of 2019 Scottish Government Net Zero bill. Many of these topics were sufficiently covered by the first weekend of the Panel. Many more could have been discussed. For instance, both internal and participant interviewees expressed a desire for specific evidence, such as more information from community actors or more knowledge about emerging technologies. Nonetheless, the key concept of this panel's questions was public engagement in the context of climate policy.

Another challenge posed by the two framing questions was that they created two different dimensions for the Panel's scrutiny role – as both the evaluator of actual policy, and the recommender of new policy. In other words, the efforts and the time had to be divided between providing an assessment through a collective statement and thinking of new ideas for the future. We found that it was challenging for the organising team to strike the right balance between the two, and the process tended to focus more on the second question (which elicited the recommender role of the Panel) than on the first one (which related to

the Panel's role of scrutiniser). More time and activities could have been allocated to integrate the evidence and answer the first question.

Time management is a notoriously challenging task in the design of deliberation processes, given the conflicting interests of ensuring that sufficient evidence and knowledge has been put at the disposal of participants, and that they have plenty of time to discuss the issues and then make decisions. All this while seeking to minimise the amount of time we ask citizens to devote to these processes. This difficulty is perfectly captured by the next quote, resulting from interviews with members of staff: "There's never enough time, is there?". Despite this structural challenge, it is important for deliberative processes to invest heavily in the most critical parts of the deliberation.

During our evaluation we noticed that participants showed particular frustration with how little time they had for the final plenary session in which recommendations were revised, approved or rejected. There are good reasons behind this frustration if we consider that the final selection of recommendations and their wording is the direct output of the Panel. Participants pointed out specific recommendations were dropped because of the lack of time to amend their final wording. It is important to keep in mind that the selection process was gradual and not all weight was put on the final vote and plenary session. But most of the deliberation of this gradual decision-making took place in small group discussions. In practice, the Panel had one hour and twenty minutes to hold this plenary discussion. This time limitation restricted the possibility of strengthening recommendations and allowing minority statements to be produced on a systematic procedure.

These challenges were addressed in the following People's Panel on Drug Harm, where organisers made notable improvements. The explanation of the core concept was grounded in an effective manner, with citizens expressing clarity around the implications of drug harm in Scotland. Additionally, the problem of the dual role was addressed by limiting the Panel to one guiding question, enabling participants to better understand their role in the process. Additionally, the issue of time allocation was tackled more effectively by introducing a more fluid small-group voting system, which allowed for better time management during discussions. While participants expressed a more positive view of time allocation compared to the previous panel, the challenge of providing enough time for the final plenary deliberation persisted. Despite these improvements, ensuring adequate time for final discussions and decision-making remained a critical area for future refinement.

Overall, we found that participants were very positive about facilitation. Facilitators were successful in making participants feel included and listened to, and in capturing the key points of the deliberation. The facilitation team was well-trained to deal with diverse participants and diverse views, and the principle of inclusion was embedded into the design of the process.

## **6.4. Motivations and Expectations of, and Impact on Participants**

Overall, our analysis found that the impact of both Panels on participants was very positive. All measures of learning improved significantly, as did participants' views of the Scottish Parliament. Generally speaking, the process also enriched the conception that participants had of climate change and drug harm.

One of the aspects that was most enhanced by partaking in the Panel was internal efficacy, or participant's belief that they had a valuable contribution to make not only to the discussions in the context of the Panel, but also beyond it. This is related to another positive finding, which is the increased willingness to engage in community initiatives and consider lived experience as a valuable source of knowledge for policymaking.

Nonetheless, we found that the panels did not have the same positive impact on two crucial aspects: trust in politicians and external efficacy (or the conviction that the work of the panel would be taken on by the Parliament and the Government), which are closely related. The lack of trust in politicians is a wider societal issue that is hardly addressed by one or two deliberative processes. The same is applicable to external efficacy.

However, we did not observe spaces in which those concerns could be expressed by participants and addressed by the Parliament. Moving forward, we recommend creating more structured opportunities for participants to voice their trust and efficacy-related concerns, alongside exploring strategies to address and mitigate these issues during the process.

## **6.5. Expectations of impact on Parliament**

Given its institutional design, the pathway to impact that connects citizen opinions to actual policy change is particularly layered. It involves Parliament staff working with Committees in identifying a framing question and thus pre-defining who the user - and therefore the use - of the information will be. After the citizen deliberation phase, their recommendations will go through different political translation processes. As far as our results show, recommendations by citizens will be used as one of the many sources of evidence available to the Committee in their task of scrutinising government. After the hearings conclude, a report with recommendations is agreed privately by Committee members and then sent to the Scottish Government who respond. Both the report and any response are published.

Contrary to the complexity and multi-stage process required for any political impact of Panel recommendations, participants of the panel held a much more direct expectation of how their efforts would be used. Participants tended to believe that their recommendations would be addressed on a point-by-point manner by Parliament (or even the Government) as the sole or solely important relevant source of information. Participants did, however, gain a lot of understanding regarding the workings of Committees through the role-playing activity in which they addressed a fictional case playing as Committee members.

This example shows the potential of using more creative and contextual methods to add nuance to participants' understanding of political systems.

The People's Panel on Drug Harm showed improvements in explaining how the Panel feeds into the legislative system, as evidenced by slight improvements in citizens' perceptions of how the process will impact policy. As with the previous Panel, citizens continue to expect that their recommendations will be actioned as policy and that Parliament will establish clear communication pathways to inform participants about how their results have been used. Participation in the Commission discussions was more heavily emphasised in this iteration, highlighting the importance of keeping participants informed and engaged in the political process, thus fostering a clearer connection between citizen recommendations and legislative action.

## **6.6. General evaluation statement**

Throughout this process, we observed that Scottish Parliament staff dedicated a significant amount of time to designing a caring and formative space for citizens. Potential risks were identified in anticipation and plans were created to collectively mitigate those risks. The organising team showed capacity for learning and adaptation as they introduced small changes in the design of the second panel that improved the process even further. Expert witnesses were credible and were open to contribute, and the team of facilitators made everyone feel welcome and heard. This was one of the most valued and praised aspects by participants.

For participants themselves, this experience was extremely positive. They also showed improvements across learning outcomes, and a better understanding of the topics and institutions they interacted with. They also felt empowered. Some of the feedback we got from participants was highly emotional, reflecting how this civic space reconnected them with the political sphere. This was particularly the case for older participants who even expressed having challenged their own self-image of having “nothing left to contribute”, as well as the youngest ones, who for the first time in their life could participate in policy debates as equals with their fellow citizens.

Concretely, the Panels fulfilled their mission of drafting recommendations and two collective statements of their evaluation of Scottish Government. As independent and external evaluators we observed high-quality work throughout the process.

The comparison between the People's Panel on Climate Change (PPCC) and the People's Panel on Drug Harm (PPDH) offers an insightful opportunity to distinguish between different uses of deliberation within the policy cycle. The PPCC was centred on post-legislative scrutiny (PLS), which resulted in a dual role—both assessing existing policy and recommending new directions. In contrast, the PPDH focused on the pre-legislative phase, aligning more clearly with a singular role of providing recommendations.

We observed that the dual role in the PPCC presented significant challenges, particularly in balancing scrutiny with forward-looking policy suggestions. However, it also represents an innovative global practice, demonstrating the potential for deliberation to contribute meaningfully to PLS. Based on these findings, we conclude that deliberation in PLS should be pursued further, with the caveat that it is most effective in cases where clear and accessible summaries of existing policy can be provided to participants. This approach may require methodological adaptations but has the potential to yield more concrete and nuanced recommendations for policy improvement. Conversely, deliberation in the pre-legislative phase is likely to be more broadly applicable across different policy areas. However, its open-ended nature can sometimes result in an overwhelming number of suggested directions, requiring careful design to ensure focus and feasibility.

Overall, based on our independent assessment, we strongly recommend that the Scottish Parliament continues organising deliberative panels. We conclude that in-house professional staff carefully designed the process to maximise its benefits and make people feel engaged, valued, and listened to.

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## 8. Appendix 1. Evaluation Framework and Methodological Approach

### 8.1. Evaluation Questions

The Evaluation was structured around six topics: Panel Composition, Evidence Provision, Design and Facilitation, Impact of the Panel on Participants, Impact of the Panel on Parliament and Motivations and Expectations of Participants. Each topic included a number of evaluation questions to be answered.

During the inception phase of the Evaluation, we assessed the topics and the evaluation questions, and fine-tuned them to ensure that we could provide answers with the data to be collected. The table below shows the original evaluation questions (as proposed by parliamentary officials from PACT and from SPICe, the Scottish Parliament's impartial research service), and the final evaluation questions used by the Evaluation Team.

**Table 7.** Comparison between the original and final Evaluation Themes and Questions.

Original Evaluation Themes and Questions	Final Evaluation Themes and Questions
Panel Composition	Panel Composition
-	How was the democratic sortition process designed?
Are the participants diverse?	Are the participants diverse? Do they represent a diverse snapshot of the people of Scotland?
Do they represent a diverse snapshot of the people of Scotland?	Merged with question above.
What impact has the recruitment process had on the process?	What impact has the recruitment process had on the process?
Evidence Provision	Evidence Provision
Are the witnesses selected credible?	Are the witnesses selected credible?
Are the witnesses selected diverse in terms of range of ideas presented?	Are the witnesses selected diverse in terms of range of ideas presented?
Is the information presented robust and balanced?	Is the information presented robust and balanced?

Did the evidence presented provide crucial information to assist the participants in answering the question set?	Did the evidence presented provide crucial information to assist the participants in answering the question set?
Design and Facilitation	Design and Facilitation
Did the methods used and facilitation of the process support deliberation of high quality?	Did the methods used and facilitation of the process support deliberation of high quality?
Was facilitation inclusive?	Was facilitation inclusive and did it encourage respectful debate?
Did it encourage thinking and reason giving?	Included in the 1 <sup>st</sup> question of this theme.
Did it encourage respectful debate?	Merged with 2 <sup>nd</sup> question of this theme.
Did the process include sufficient accountability and feedback for the participants, as recommended by CPPPC?	This question is addressed in the section on Impact Expectations. However, since at the time of writing the process is still ongoing, no definitive answer to this question can be provided.
Understanding the impact of the panel on participants	Impact on Participants
Did the participants gain knowledge during the process?	Did the participants gain knowledge during the process?
Did they change their opinion?	Did they change their opinion?
Did the panel have a meaningful impact on participants?	Did the panel have a meaningful impact on participants?
Did it change their attitudes to political participation?	Did it change their attitudes to political participation?
Understanding the impact of the panel on Parliament	Impact Expectations on the Scottish Parliament
Did the process have impact on the Committee and its inquiry?	How is the process designed to impact the Committee and its inquiry?
Did the process influence the scrutiny process?	How did participants expect the panel to have a political impact?

What improvements could be made to the process for future deliberative events?	Not an evaluation question. Included as Recommendations and Learnings.
Understanding motivations and expectations of participants	Motivations and Expectations of Participants
What are the main drivers of participants' interest in partaking in the panel?	What were the main drivers of participants' interest in partaking in the panel?
Did the process meet participants' expectations?	Did the process meet participants' expectations?

While most changes were minor, there was a significant shift regarding the impact of the Panel on the Parliament. Given the timeline of the Evaluation<sup>1</sup>, we were not able to collect data to assess how the Panel impacted the Committee, its inquiry, and the scrutiny process. Therefore, what we collected were expectations of impact.

## 8.2. Methodological Approach

To address the complexity of assessing these deliberative processes, we proposed a mixed-methods approach. The combination of qualitative and quantitative methods has been deemed one the most adequate methodological approaches to studying and assessing democratic innovations such as deliberative mini-publics (Escobar and Thompson, 2019). More specifically, we used a convergent parallel design (Plano Clark & Ivankova, 2016). In mixed methods research, convergent parallel design refers to collecting and analysing both qualitative and quantitative data in tandem, and then comparing and relating the two sets of data to interpret the results.

Methodologically, we combined an analysis of the available internal documents from Parliament and academic evidence with a direct observation of the Panels (observation research). Additionally, we conducted in-depth interviews with both participants and Parliament staff, and we utilised surveys before and after the Panels in order to contrast them and describe the impact of participating. The table below summarises the primary data collection methods conducted for this Evaluation.

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<sup>1</sup> The Evaluation had to be completed before the end of March 2024, but the Committee's final report is not expected until later in the year.

**Table 8.** Summary of data collection methods.

Data collection method	Target respondents	Number of respondents/ interviewees	Time period of data collection
In-person Panel observations	N/A	Multiple informal interviews	2 – 4 February 2024, 1 – 3 March 2024 25 – 27 October 2024 15 – 17 November 2024
Online sessions observation	N/A	N/A	14 February 2024, 21 February 2024 6 November 2024 12 November 2024
Pre-panel survey	Panel participants	23 & 23	2 <sup>nd</sup> February 2024 25 <sup>th</sup> October 2024
Post-panel survey	Panel participants	21 & 22	3 <sup>rd</sup> March 2024 17 <sup>th</sup> November 2024
Participant interviews	Panel participants	4 & 4	4 – 15 March 2024 1 – 20 December 2024
Internal interviews	Committee clerks SPICe staff PACT staff	5 & 4	4 – 15 March 2024 1 – 20 December 2024

Overall, we employed four methods: 1) a review of available documentation and existing scholarship on the design of mini-publics in parliamentary systems; 2) an observation study of the unfolding of the panel; 3) semi-structured interviews with participants and key stakeholders, including members and staff of the Committee and the Scottish Parliament; and 4) survey methods to describe “pre-post” differences with participants.

The “pre-post” survey development involved several stages. The pre-panel survey was constructed by adapting Stephen Elstub, Jayne Carrick & Zohreh Khoban’s 2019 methodological design for the evaluation of the Scottish Parliament’s Citizens’ Jury on Land Management and the Natural Environment. This decision was made considering the importance of methodological consistency across processes to foster systematic and continuous improvement. The adaptation process itself was conducted with members of PACT and SPICe through online workshops. The post-panel survey was also informed by the 2019 evaluation process but included subscales that were adapted from Caluwaerts & Reuchamps’s (2023) Citizen Assembly Evaluation Survey (CAES). This adaptation was also conducted with the help of PACT and SPICe. The final survey design can be found in Appendix 3. Survey questionnaires.

Observation protocols were designed by the evaluation team with the objective of understanding how specific elements of the dialogue design impact its outcomes. The specific objectives of the observation were:

- To explore participants’ perceptions on panel composition
- To explore practices and dynamics of evidence provision
- To explore significant practices and moments of facilitation
- To explore discourse and interactional dynamics between participants

The observation protocol can be found in ‘People’s People’s Panel on Drug Harm

Pre-Panel Survey

Assessment of People’s Panel on reducing drug harms and drug deaths

### *8.2.1. Cross Committee on Tackling Drug Deaths and Drug Harm*

#### **Scottish Parliament**

#### **Pre-panel survey**

**Thank you for participating in the independent** evaluation of the Peoples’ Panel. Your time and insights help us improve future panels.

**This initial survey is to help find out what** the group thinks of drug policy and harm reduction in Scotland. The questions are designed to understand your motivations and expectations before you take part in the panel.

**The survey** is anonymous and is not a test, so please answer questions honestly so we can get an accurate picture of the views of the group.

#### **Anonymity**

To help us analyse your responses, we need to be able to link your answers to the other questionnaire you complete at the end of the process. To keep your responses anonymous, we ask you to form an anonymous identity (ID) code to put on both the questionnaires that you fill in.

Please form an identity code by following these instructions:

1. In the space below, list the first three letters of the town nearest to where you were born (e.g. Inverness becomes INV).

2. Follow this with the date and month of a memorable date of your choice (e.g. if your mum's birthday is the 1st February you would write 0102).

In this example the ID Code becomes INV0102. Please form your own ID code and write it below. You may also want to take a note of it for the second questionnaire that you will fill in at the end!

ID CODE

Please tell us why you decided to take part in this People's Panel.

What specific personal outcomes or benefits do you hope to achieve by participating in the People's Panel?

Why do you believe that policymakers need to (or do not need to) engage with citizens to decide how to reduce drug harms?



On a scale from 1 to 6, where 1 is “Not at all” and 6 is “Extremely”, how would you respond to the following questions?

	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Not at all	Slightly	Somewhat	Moderately	Very	Extremely
How much do you like talking about politics?						
How comfortable do you feel when voicing your political opinion?						
How interested are you in hearing the opinions of other people?						
How willing are you to read things or listen to people who challenge your own opinions?						
How valid do you think your opinion is in any situation?						
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Not at all	Slightly	Somewhat	Moderately	Very	Extremely
How much do you trust Members of the Scottish Parliament (MSPs) to act in the best interests of people?						

On a scale from 1 to 6, where 1 is “Never” and 6 is “Always”, how often have you done any of these following activities?

	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Never	Almost never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
Voted in an election						
Created or signed a petition						
Contacted a local councillor, MP or MSP						
Taken part in a public consultation						
Taken part in a demonstration or march						
Shared your views with a Scottish Parliament committee						
Taken part in volunteering						

PLEASE TURN TO THE FINAL PAGE

Over the duration of the panel we'll explore some of the issues and subjects below. This is not a test question! Your responses to these questions help us design good experiences for future panels.

On a scale from 1 to 6, where 1 is “Not at all” and 6 is “Extremely”, how knowledgeable or familiar do you feel regarding these issues?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Not at all	Slightly	Somewhat	Moderately	Very	Extremely

Using critical thinking to evaluate information						
The impact of drug harm and drug deaths in Scotland						
The laws and policies around drug harm reduction in Scotland						
How the Scottish Parliament monitors the impact and implementation of new laws and policies						
The range of solutions available to reduce drug deaths and drug harm.						

Thank you for completing this survey.

### *8.2.2. Post-Panel Survey*

#### **Assessment of People's Panel on reducing drug harms and drug deaths**

#### **Cross Committee on Tackling Drug Deaths and Drug Harm**

#### **Scottish Parliament**

#### **Post-panel survey**

Thank you for participating in the independent evaluation of the Peoples' Panel. Your time and insights help us improve future panels.

This final survey is to help find out what the group thinks about the experience of participating in the People's Panel. The questions are designed to understand your experience of taking part in the panel.

The survey is anonymous and is not a test, so please answer questions honestly so we can get an accurate picture of the views of the group.

Anonymity

To help us analyse your responses, we need to be able to link your answers to the other questionnaire you completed at the start of the process. To keep your responses anonymous and connected to your previous responses, we asked you to form an anonymous identity (ID) code to put on both the questionnaires that you fill in.

Your identity code was formed by following these instructions:

1. In the space below, list the first three letters of the town nearest to where you were born (e.g. Inverness becomes INV).

2. Follow this with the date and month of the memorable date you chose for the first survey (e.g. if your mum's birthday is the 1st February you would write 0102).

In this example the ID Code becomes INV0102.

Please re-write your ID code below. You may have taken a note of it previously. If you are struggling to remember speak to a member of staff to support you.

ID CODE

What has been your favourite part of the People's Panel process?

What do you think we could do differently the next time to improve the People's Panel process?

Representativeness

On a scale from 1 to 6, where 1 is "Not at all" and 6 is "Extremely", how would you respond to the following statements:

	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Not at all	Slightly	Somewhat	Moderately	Very	Extremely
"I felt the participants in the People's Panel were broadly representative of the wider population of Scotland."						
"I felt that the participants had a broad range of perspectives on the issue under discussion (reducing drug related harms)."						
"As a consequence of my participation in the People's Panel, I have come to understand different viewpoints relating to drug harm reduction."						

### Knowledge and Information

Now that you have taken part in the People's Panel, on a scale from 1 to 6, where 1 is "Not at all" and 6 is "Extremely", how knowledgeable or familiar do you feel regarding these issues?

	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Not at all	Slightly	Somewhat	Moderately	Very	Extremely

Using critical thinking to evaluate information						
The impact of drug harm and drug deaths in Scotland						
The laws and policies around drug harm reduction in Scotland						
How the Scottish Parliament monitors the impact and implementation of new laws and policies						
The range of solutions available to reduce drug deaths and drug harm.						

On a scale from 1 to 6, where 1 is “Not at all” and 6 is “Extremely”, how would you respond to the following statements:

	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Not at all	Slightly	Somewhat	Moderately	Very	Extremely
I learned a lot about the Scottish Government's approach to tackling drugs deaths in Scotland in the People's Panel						
The experts offered balanced and diverse views on how to reduce drug harms						

	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Not at all	Slightly	Somewhat	Moderately	Very	Extremely
Overall, I had sufficient information about drug harm reduction in a meaningful discussion with the other participants.						

Now that you have taken part, why do you believe that policymakers need to (or do not need to) engage with citizens to decide how to prevent drug harms?

#### Facilitation and decision-making

On a scale from 1 to 6, where 1 is “Not at all” and 6 is “Extremely”, how would you respond to the following statements:

	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Not at all	Slightly	Somewhat	Moderately	Very	Extremely
During the People’s Panel process, I had ample opportunity to express my views						
No one dominated the discussion and everyone had an opportunity to speak						

We were offered sufficient time to discuss the issue under discussion (reducing drug related harms).						
The facilitators (Parliament staff) made sure everyone could participate in the People's Panel process						
I feel like the final recommendations reflect all of the participants' ideas						
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Not at all	Slightly	Somewhat	Moderately	Very	Extremely
Even though there was a vote at the end, I do feel that our group discussions are reflected in the final recommendations						
I feel that I was pressured into agreeing with recommendations I do not fully endorse.						
My own ideas about reducing drug related harms are sufficiently reflected in the final recommendations.						



On a scale from 1 to 6, where 1 is “Not at all” and 6 is “Extremely”, how would you respond to the following statements:

	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Not at all	Slightly	Somewhat	Moderately	Very	Extremely
It was clear from the start what was going to happen with the recommendations of the People's Panel						
I am convinced that politicians will take into account the People's Panels recommendations.						
I am convinced that the recommendations of the People's Panel will help hold the Scottish Government to account and help improve future policy						
The Scottish Parliament should run more processes like this People's Panel						
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Not at all	Slightly	Somewhat	Moderately	Very	Extremely
I am likely to get involved in the work of the Scottish Parliament in the future						

I feel like participating in the People's Panel has improved the way I feel about the Scottish Parliament and the work it does to hold the Scottish Government to account						
In general, I trust Members of the Scottish Parliament (MSPs) to act in the best interests of people						
Overall, I think participating in People's Panel was a positive experience.						

How would you suggest measuring the impact and effectiveness of the People's Panel in holding the Scottish Government to account? What would success look like for you?

Thank you for completing this survey

## 9. Appendix 4. Interview guidelines

### 9.1. People's Panel on Climate Change

**Assessment of Peoples' Panel on Climate Policy (2024)**

**Citizen Participation and Public Petitions Committee**

**Scottish Parliament**

**Participants:** Citizens participating in the People's Panel

**Sampling method:** Critical case sampling

**Inclusion criteria:** Attending the panel

**Recruitment method:** Through the event organisers

Estimate duration: 30-60 minutes

Observation medium: Online

**Recording method:** Recording/ Automated transcription

**Method:** Semi-structured interview

**Main objective:** To understand how participants experienced critical aspects of the panel design.

Specific objectives

1. To explore participants framing of the mini public remit
2. To identify perceptions of political impact of the panel
3. To explore interactions between the group
4. To identify key learnings and takeaways

BEFORE STARTING, ASK FOR PERMISSION TO RECORD

Theme 1: Framing of remit

- The purpose of this People's Panel was to hold Scottish Government to account in their public engagement work. After attending the panel, what is public engagement for you?
  - Potential follow-ups: what did you learn about public engagement? Why is it necessary? How did your understanding change?
- After all deliberations, how successful do you think government is in engaging the public in climate change?

- Potential follow-ups: What is your understanding of the Scottish Climate Change act? was it better or worse than you expected? Do you feel comfortable evaluating their success?

#### Theme 2: Political impact

- What is your understanding about how the results of this panel will be used by the Scottish Parliament?
- Potential follow-ups: Was there a significant moment or talk in the panels that helped you understand how the results will be used?
- How confident are you that the Panel will have a meaningful impact?
- Potential follow-ups: Are you equally confident in Parliament and Government?

#### Theme 3: Interactions

- Why do you think your personal perspective was relevant to the panel?
- Potential follow-ups: Did you find it easy or hard to participate? Did the staff make you feel comfortable? Did group dynamics make you feel confident participating and stating your opinions?

#### Theme 4: Learnings

- What would you say is your key takeaway from this panel?
- Potential follow-ups: Is there something specific that you learnt that is meaningful for you?

#### Theme 5: Miscellaneous (if there's more time)

- How did you integrate the information received and expert presentations you listened to into your reflections, contributions and discussions?
- What are your thoughts on the recommendations? Did they reflect the group's deliberations?
- What do you think the purpose of the first weekend was?
- Was this process worth your time?

**9.2.**

**9.3.**

## **9.4. People's Panel on Drug Harm**

**Assessment of Peoples' Panel on Drug Harms (2024)**

**Criminal Justice Committee, the Health, Social Care and Sport Committee and the Social Justice and Social Security Committee.**

**Scottish Parliament**

**Participants: Citizens participating in the People's Panel**

**Sampling method: Critical case sampling**

**Inclusion criteria: Attending the panel**

**Recruitment method:** Through the event organisers, volunteers

**Estimate** duration: 30-60 minutes

**Observation** medium: Online

Recording method: Recording/ Automated transcription

**Method:** Semi-structured interview

Main **objective:** To understand how participants experienced critical aspects of the panel design.

### **Specific objectives**

**To** explore participants framing of the mini public remit

**To identify perceptions** of political impact of the panel

To explore interactions between the group

To identify key learnings and takeaways

**BEFORE STARTING, ASK FOR PERMISSION TO RECORD**

Theme 1: Framing of remit

**The purpose** of this People's Panel was to produce recommendations on how to do things differently regarding drug related harms. After attending the panel, what are drug related harms for you?

**Potential follow-ups:** what did you learn about drug harms? What are their main drivers?

After all deliberations, how successful do you think government is in helping reduce drug harms?

1. Potential follow-ups: What is your understanding of the government's policies around drugs more broadly? Was it better or worse than you expected? Did you feel comfortable answering the question on what needs to be done differently to reduce drug related harms?
- 2.
3. Theme 2: Political impact
4. What is your understanding about how the results of this panel will be used by the Scottish Parliament?
3. Potential follow-ups: Was there a significant moment or talk in the panels that helped you understand how the results will be used?
4. How confident are you that the Panel will have a meaningful impact?

Potential follow-ups: Are you equally confident in Parliament and Government?

### Theme 3: Interactions

Why do you think your personal perspective was relevant to the panel?

- Potential follow-ups:
- Did you find it easy or hard to participate?
- Did the staff make you feel comfortable?
- Did group dynamics make you feel confident participating and stating your opinions?
  - 
  - Theme 4: Evidence and Learnings
  - How did you integrate the information received and expert presentations you listened to into your reflections, contributions and discussions?
- What would you say is your key takeaway from this panel?
- Potential follow-ups: Is there something specific that you learnt that is meaningful for you?
  - Theme 5: Miscellaneous (if there's more time)
  - What are your thoughts on the recommendations? Did they reflect the group's deliberations?
  - Was this process worth your time?

Appendix 5. Observation protocol'. Additionally, during our observations, we also engaged participants directly through informal interviewing, which is an unstructured form of qualitative interview that is typically used to complement observation research.

In the case of in-depth interviews, we employed a semi-structured approach in which we prepared ex-ante relevant dimensions of conversation but kept the interview open to how the participants approached the topic. The main objective of these interviews was to understand how participants experienced critical aspects of the panel design. The specific objectives were:

- To explore participants framing of the mini-public remit
- To identify perceptions of political impact of the panel
- To explore interactions between the group
- To identify key lessons and takeaways

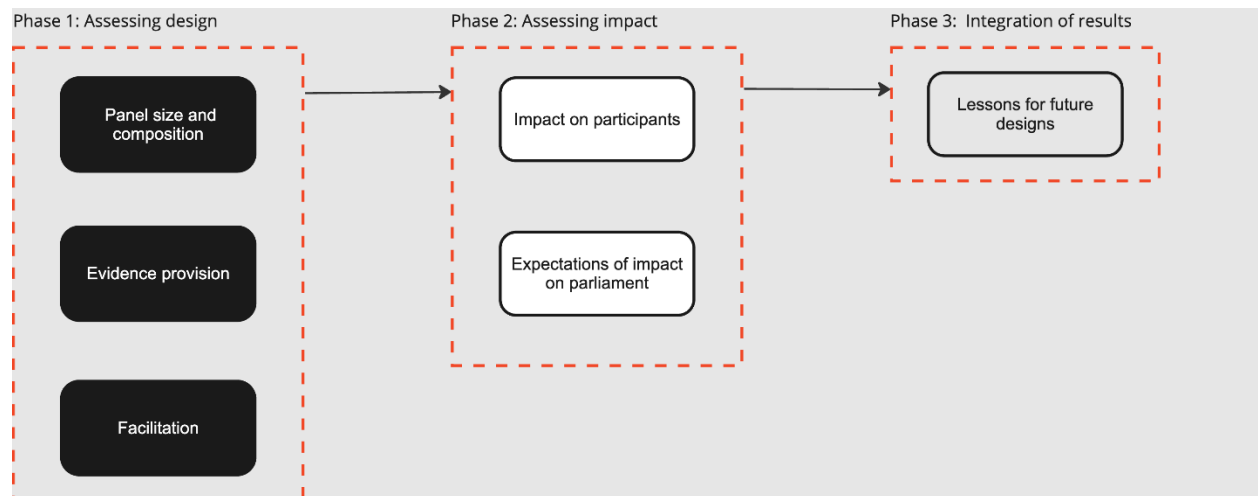
The interview protocol for participants can be found in Appendix 3. Interview Guidelines. Finally, the results of the literature were summarised in the Literature Review section of this report. The documentation analysis consisted in referencing the internal documents provided by PACT on the procedures of People's Panels and its impacts. The documentation provided to citizens was also analysed, as well as all available documentation on how the panels will influence the work of Parliament.

We divided our analysis into three main phases: assessment of design, assessment of impact and integration of results into recommendations. The evaluation of the People's Panel design (phase one) centred around assessing external inclusion in terms of who was involved in the mini-public (panel size and composition), and internal inclusion in terms of how facilitation was conducted to manage pre-existing power imbalances and give everyone an equal opportunity. Additionally, this assessment paid attention to how expert opinion was included in a way that helps produce informed and considered public opinion.

The second phase of the evaluation centred around impacts. Impacts included participant impact in terms of spill-over effects, ranging from expected effects over attitudes and knowledge, as well as emerging and unexpected ones formulated by citizens themselves. Impacts also include traceable impacts over the scrutiny process of the Committee and other implications for the political functioning of Parliament. However, since the process is still ongoing at the time of writing the report, we focused on expectations and pathways to impact.

In the final phase of the analysis, we draw on all our methods and findings to produce appropriate recommendations for future Panels and to help contextualise the outcomes of the current one. For this, we followed the same sub-sections of the evaluation questions. The figure below shows the difference between Phases 1, 2 and 3:

**Figure 10.** Analysis phases of the Evaluation.





## 10. Appendix 2. Tables

### 10.1. Design and Facilitation

**Table 9.** Participants responses to questions on various aspects of the deliberations (PPCC).

Variable	Mean	St. Deviation	Corresponding label*
Ample opportunity to express my views	5.52	0.68	Extremely
No one dominated the discussion	4.86	1.24	Very
Sufficient time to discuss the issue	4.48	1.29	Moderately
Parliament staff made sure everyone could participate	5.67	0.58	Extremely
The final recommendations reflect all the participants' ideas	5.25	0.72	Very
Beyond the vote, our group discussions are reflected in the final recommendations	5.05	0.92	Very
I was pressured into agreeing with recommendations (negative)**	1.33	0.80	Not at all
My own ideas about public participation in climate change are sufficiently reflected	5.05	0.86	Very

\*Qualitative label that reflects the approximated average value

\*\*Negative variable with values not inverted

**Table 10.** Participants responses to questions on various aspects of the deliberations PPDH.

Variable	Mean	St. Deviation	Corresponding label*
Ample opportunity to express my views	5,4	0.82	Very
No one dominated the discussion	4,75	0,96	Very
Sufficient time to discuss the issue	5,0	0,72	Very

<b>Parliament staff made sure everyone could participate</b>	5,75	0,44	Extremely
<b>The final recommendations reflect all the participants' ideas</b>	5,15	0,87	Very
<b>Beyond the vote, our group discussions are reflected in the final recommendations</b>	5,2	1,2	Very
<b>I was pressured into agreeing with recommendations (negative)**</b>	1,5	0,2	Not at all
<b>My own ideas about public participation in climate change are sufficiently reflected</b>	5,05	0,94	Very

\*Qualitative label that reflects the approximated average value

\*\*Negative variable with values not inverted

## 10.2. Motivations and Expectations of Participants

**Table 11.** *Personal objectives according to participants (PPCC).*

Personal objectives	Types of objectives
I would like to use this experience to overcome my anxiety and participate in politics in a form outwith voting.	Self-improvement Political participation
Hopefully see a progressive policy	Impact
Would like to know how it's going to affect people in Scotland.	Learning
Learn more about policy around climate change in Scotland and about the Parliament's participation processes	Learning
I hope to see the parliament, I hope to hear different people's opinions, I feel it is beneficial to work closely in the parliament with any opportunity given. I'm a student so felt it was a good opportunity so try something new	New experience Engagement with others' views Political participation

Learning about the Scottish government's plans and engagement with the public about net zero policy.	Learning
Better understanding	Learning
I want to feel like I have made a contribution to something very important to the country and the world. I have two very young daughters so keen to feel like I have accepted an opportunity to input into something they would want me to do. I'm looking forward to experiencing extended collaboration with people I would not normally do so. I also feel like I will learn a lot which is always welcome.	Impact Engagement with others' views Learning
Be interesting to hear other people's views	Engagement with others' views
To be more knowledgeable on Climate Change and to have made a positive contribution to policies	Learning Impact
It means that i have a better chance of knowing what needs to be done for generations to come	Learning
Becoming more knowledgeable on the topic to make positive change	Learning Impact
To understand the objectives of Scottish government.. To learn how the policies have been implemented and the impact of it so far	Learning
Feeling that I'm involved in the process of development, sharing my opinion, representing people like me and sharing our views. Enjoyment and fun getting to know new people.	Political participation Engagement with others' views
I hope to gain experience and knowledge in Scottish administration and the nation's effort to curve the negative effects of climate change.	Learning
Develop a greater understanding of the mechanics of the Parliament and the process of government.	Learning

Have a better understanding of people's panel process. Listen to other ideas as to how we can stop/ slow down climate change	Learning Engagement with others' views
That the government plans on climate change look at: 1. how their choices effect part time people/staff 2. The effects of their choices on people with disabilities 3. How they can be effective without crippling people's savings, income, ability to earn a living 4. wages/ income	Learning
An education to gain a deeper understanding of climate change and how I can make a positive change	Learning
Probably none at my age	None
None particularly to be honest	None
To be better informed on issues around climate change. To feel more empowered to make change happen	Learning Empowerment
To make a change small or big on what our future will be	Impact

**Table 12.** *Favourite part of the Panel (PPCC).*

What has been your favourite part of the People's Panel process?	Categorisation
<b>Being able to meet people from all walks of life and parts of the country.</b>	Engagement with others
<b>The process of working together to create and mend questions to ask the government</b>	Collaboration
<b>Engaging in meaningful conversations with both fellow panelists and professionals</b>	Engagement with others
<b>Getting to meet people who work within parliament and other people with similar views. It made me highlight the importance of</b>	Engagement with others

<b>climate and social justice as an area I am really interested in and was able to connect with someone from Poverty Alliance as they work in my area. Overall, I really loved the experience and being able to participate!</b>	Participation
<b>Collaborative decision making</b>	Collaboration
<b>I enjoyed taking part in the sessions. They were well organised and offered opportunities to learn about and reflect on climate change. I felt proud to take part in this panel. It is a novel way of gathering views and opinions which I am very much in favour of.</b>	Participation Deliberative democracy
<b>Collaboration with others, meeting people from all over Scotland and learning about Climate Change Action in their area</b>	Collaboration Engagement with others Learning
<b>The PP has been really well organised by the PACT team which has made the whole process enjoyable, participative and respectful.</b>	Process design
<b>Helping everyone in the group and doing things which is going to help in the future.</b>	Engagement with others Impact
<b>The fact that it's such a generative process and more than the sum of its parts. People can have lots of different ideas but working together there's a kind of alchemy that creates new and better ideas out of the group. Also trust, trusting other people to carry parts of the work and that it will be fine.</b>	Collaboration Deliberative democracy
<b>Taking part and having a relevant voice</b>	Participation
<b>I felt honoured to be a part of a panel. I enjoyed learning about the Parliament and using a democratic process to decision making</b>	Learning Deliberative democracy
<b>It has been a great experience to see out Parliament and the opportunity to be involved in something so interesting</b>	Experience Participation
<b>Face to face discussions and recognising so many committed and interesting opinions</b>	Engagement with others
<b>Discussion</b>	Engagement with others

<b>Getting to know other panel members and having in depth discussions. The atmosphere was very positive</b>	Engagement with others
<b>The synergy and collaboration</b>	Collaboration
<b>Meeting new people while learning about climate change and urgency of acting now</b>	Engagement with others Learning
<b>Meeting other groups</b>	Engagement with others
<b>I enjoyed the whole process, the group work, the social and face to face aspects</b>	Collaboration Engagement with others
<b>Being part of helping the Parliament and the Government and meeting fantastic people to work together</b>	Impact Engagement with others Collaboration

**Table 13.** “Pre-post” comparison between personal objectives and favourite part of the Panel (PPCC).

Personal objective (category)	Favourite Part (category)
Self-improvement	Engagement with others
Political participation	Participation
Learning	Collaboration Deliberative Democracy
New experience	Experience
Engagement with others' views	Participation
Political Participation	Learning
Learning	Deliberative democracy
Learning	Collaboration
Impact	Engagement with others
Engagement with others' views	Impact
Learning	

Engagement with others' views	Collaboration
	Engagement with others
Learning	Collaboration
Impact	Engagement with others
	Learning
Learning	Engagement with others
	Learning
Learning	Engagement with others
Impact	
Learning	Engagement with others
Political participation	Participation
Engagement with others' views	Deliberative democracy
Learning	Collaboration
Learning	Process design
Learning & Engagement with others' views	Impact
	Engagement with others
	Collaboration
Learning	Engagement with others
Learning	Collaboration
None	Engagement with others
None	Engagement with others
Impact	Participation

Table 14. Expected outcomes of participation (PPDH).

What specific personal outcomes or benefits do you hope to achieve by participating in the People's Panel? - outcomes or benefits	Types of objectives
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<b>A change in drug policy where i see where things have gone wrong</b>	(Policy) impact Learning
<b>Experience</b>	Experience
<b>I'm interested to hear the points of view of other people from different backgrounds and their lived experiences.</b>	Engagement with other points of view Learning
<b>It would be nice to see that I was part of people who made policy that made a difference</b>	(Policy) impact
<b>I hope to have some influence and bring my own experience to the group.</b>	Influence
<b>Hopefully to help others</b>	Impact
<b>To learn more about actions taken regarding drugs - a subject I'm unfamiliar with, and hopefully improve some lives in the process!</b>	Learning Impact
<b>Experience</b>	New experience
<b>Not sure</b>	-
<b>Further knowledge of what is going on in drug deaths</b>	Learning
<b>Gain more knowledge, experience and meet new people</b>	Learning Experience Social interaction
<b>I hope to become better at discussing topics such as this, improving my communication skills, learning about others views and getting experience.</b>	Self-improvement Learning Engagement with other points of view Experience
<b>To make an impact on society no matter how little.</b>	Impact
<b>Expanding knowledge in this important subject and contributing to the discussion</b>	Learning Contribution



<b>Better informed.</b>	Learning
<b>I would like to have a better understanding of how the scottish parliament handle certain topics.</b>	Learning
<b>Becoming more informed and open to different viewpoints.</b>	Learning Self-improvement Engagement with other points of view
<b>More understanding of current issues and hear others opinions and suggestions</b>	Learning Engagement with other points of view
<b>That I've made a meaningful contribution</b>	Contribution
<b>Have a better understanding of drug abuse</b>	Learning
<b>To learn more.</b>	Learning
<b>Meeting new people and feeling part of the political process.</b>	Social interaction Political participation

Table 15. Favourite part (PPDH)

<b>What has been your favourite part of the People's Panel process?</b>	<b>Types of valued take-aways</b>
<b>Being allowed to see the Scottish Parliament building ads an insight into work in progress. For example being allowed the opportunity to participate in the People's panel.</b>	Learning Political participation
<b>Decision-making process</b>	Deliberation
<b>The format of the discussions and how they were facilitated was great, and allowed us as the panel to get to know each other quickly but very naturally. Staying so close to the venue in such a nice hotel and not having to worry about arranging travel or accom or food was such a treat, honestly. The facilitators and all the staff and speakers were wonderful and so lovely too.</b>	Deliberation Organisation Team Evidence providers
<b>Meeting a diverse group of people, having my opinions challenged and reaching a consensus on so many issues.</b>	Engagement with others Deliberation

<b>All of it</b>	-
<b>The whole teams Energy and care.</b>	Team Organisation
<b>Meeting other participants</b>	Social interaction
<b>Sharing ideas and opinions on the subject matter and receiving information from excellent sources</b>	Deliberation Learning
<b>Hearing other people's views and opinions and being able to actually take part in helping and contributing to possible new laws and stuff introduced to combat the drug harm and deaths issue.</b>	Engagement with other points of view Political participation Impact
<b>My favourite part was hearing and learning all the new evidence.</b>	Learning
<b>Learning</b>	Learning
<b>I really enjoyed the witnesses during the access to treatment section</b>	Evidence providers
<b>Hearing the wide and varied information from respective speakers during the two weekends. Some very interesting and informative information</b>	Learning
<b>Hearing from the broad range of witnesses. Impressive to hear about how much work is being done in these areas and also their willingness to bring this to the panel</b>	Learning Evidence providers
<b>The amount of interesting information from various people on our topic</b>	Learning Evidence providers
<b>Listening to the different evidence and people from different organisations</b>	Learning Evidence providers

Table 16. "Pre-post" comparison between personal objectives and favourite part of the PPDH

<b>Types of objectives</b>	<b>Types of valued take-aways</b>
<b>(Policy) impact</b>	Learning Political participation
<b>Experience</b>	Deliberation

<b>Engagement with other points of view</b> <b>Learning</b>	Deliberation Organisation Team Evidence providers
<b>(Policy) impact</b>	N/A
<b>Influence</b>	Engagement with others Deliberation
<b>Impact</b>	-
<b>Learning</b> <b>Impact</b>	NA
<b>New experience</b>	Team Organisation
-	Social interaction
<b>Learning</b>	NA
<b>Learning</b> <b>Experience</b> <b>Social interaction</b>	Deliberation Learning
<b>Self-improvement</b> <b>Learning</b> <b>Engagement with other points of view</b> <b>Experience</b>	Engagement with other points of view Political participation Impact
<b>Impact</b>	Learning
<b>Learning</b> <b>Contribution</b>	NA
<b>Learning</b>	Learning
<b>Learning</b>	Evidence providers
<b>Learning</b> <b>Self-improvement</b> <b>Engagement with other points of view</b>	NA
<b>Learning</b> <b>Engagement with other points of view</b>	NA

NA	Learning
Contribution	Learning Evidence providers
Learning	Learning Evidence providers
Learning	NA
Social Political participation	Learning Evidence providers

### 10.3. Impact on Participants

**Table 17.** Pre-post comparisons on learning perceptions (PPCC).

Learning objective	Pre Mean (SD)	Post Mean (SD)	T value	P-value	df
Critical Thinking	4.10 (0.94)	4.95 (0.92)	-2.886	0.009	19
Socio-economic impacts of Climate Change	3.38 (1.12)	4.8 (0.83)	-4.956	<0.001	18
Objectives of the Climate Change laws	2.57(1.33)	4.7 (1.13)	-6.091	<0.001	18
Scottish Parliament work	1.9 (1.14)	4.3(0.86)	-7.099	<0.001	18
Role of public engagement	2.29 (1.23)	5.10(1.07)	-7.474	<0.001	18

Note: The survey question was: “Now that you have taken part in the People’s Panel, on a scale from 1 to 6, where 1 is “Not at all” and 6 is “Extremely”, how knowledgeable or familiar do you feel regarding these issues? “. Likert scale: 1 = Not at all, 2 = Slightly, 3 = Somewhat, 4 = Moderately, 5 = Very, 6 = Extremely.

**Table 18.** Pre-post comparisons on learning perceptions (PPDDH)

Learning objective	Pre Mean (SD)	Post Mean (SD)	T value	P-value	df
Critical Thinking	4.53 (0.92)	5.2 (0.68)	-3.57	0.003	14
Impacts of drug harms and deaths	4.07 (1.16)	5.47 (0.64)	-4.01	0.001	14

Laws and policies to reduce drug harms	3.67 (1.29)	4.73 (1.03)	-3.23	0.006	14
Scottish Parliament monitoring solutions available to reduce drug deaths and drug harm	3 (1.51)	4.4 (1.12)	-4.37	<0.001	14

Note: The survey question was: “On a scale from 1 to 6, where 1 is “Not at all” and 6 is “Extremely”, how knowledgeable or familiar do you feel regarding these issues? “. Likert scale: 1 = Not at all, 2 = Slightly, 3 = Somewhat, 4 = Moderately, 5 = Very, 6 = Extremely.

**Table 19.** Similar arguments before and after the panel.

Before Panel	After Panel	Interpretation
To accurately reflect public opinion	To reflect the views of the Scottish population	Consistent emphasis on representativity of policy
For people to buy into things they need to feel they share the goals and aims. Ownership. It's our world we should have a say in the direction we move.	We are all part of the process and we should be involved. Taking ownership encourages greater participation.	Consistent emphasis on citizen ownership
It is important to engage with citizens because it is people that make a country, and every one of us is responsible to drive change. In order for this to happen, policymakers have a duty to communicate clearly and effectively with the public	Because everyone needs to make changes to reach net zero, and it is vital that the government engages in conversations with the public to inform and inspire people. Knowledge is power	Consistent emphasis on encouraging individual change

**Table 20.** Enriched arguments after the panel.

Before	After	Interpretation
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So that the public can have confidence in the policy.	It brings in different levels of thinking	New emphasis on improving policy and not just accepting it
Because different people have different key areas of change they have identified as the most important, so having a citizens panel is the best way to discover what the real problems are and how best to tackle them.	Because there is no one in Government seriously advocating for those impacted by climate change and their voices remain unheard and unconsidered and the options being put out are unrealistic and/or unaffordable. The Scottish communities in low income towns do not have a lot of faith in the government to actually help them rather than hinder them which is their overall experience. They need to work on rebuilding the trust with these communities by engaging with them and learning what they can do really make an impact or improvement to their quality of life due to the adverse effects of climate change	New emphasis on community work and unequal distribution of impacts
If there is to be a positive change to making Climate Change Policies work then engaging citizens is key.	Because the Policy makers can lose sight of what's important to the people of Scotland and may not have an awareness of what is appropriate action for the public.	New emphasis on improving policy and not just accepting it
Vital to bringing your community, end electorate along with you in the implementation of policy.	I feel the deliberative collaboration approach is extremely important in helping MSP's have a better understanding of public awareness, public knowledge and the direction of travel for future policy.	New emphasis on improving policy and not just accepting it
Their decisions have profound impact on our livelihoods. Policy makers need to influence the masses, present the cause and draw more people to the call of saving our planet	The mode or medium of communication will vary: Scottish Government no longer have any excuse to delay and now more than ever need to engage with the public - not just mass communication but being able to reach the everyday man on the street	New emphasis on accountability and not just communication

**Table 21.** *Decreased weight of “rights-based” conceptions.*

Before	After	Interpretation
	By doing so you get a wider	
The ordinary people should have a say. view		Less emphasis on political rights
Primarily because it is citizens that will have to live with policy makers decisions	Take straightforward action	Less emphasis on political rights

**Table 22.** *Arguments that touch on lived experience.*

Before	After	Interpretation
<b>Without engaging with citizens, policymakers can only work in an abstract, without a real knowledge of what’s actually going on at ground level and how that is directly affecting people and their communities.</b>	Those in society experiencing these issues first hand and in their communities hold the most valuable knowledge and insight, and it is only with their involvement that any significant change or improvement can be achieved.	Increased emphasis on the importance of lived experience as valuable knowledge.
<b>Because the public have a wealth of experience and different viewpoint. They are here to represent us, not always to lead.</b>	Policymakers are often sheltered from the realities of lived experience, as are many of the panel members. Engagement with the panel would help inform policyholders of the issues and impacts surrounding drug use and drug harm and make it more “real” for them. It certainly has for some of the panel members.	Decreased emphasis on political function of citizen engagement (representation) and increased emphasis on the value of lived experience as knowledge for better policy.
<b>Citizens are the people living amongst it.</b>	Because it is our country and therefore our problem, we should be consulted on our	From lived experience to political right.

	views on how we ,(the public) thinks this should be tackled	
<b>The citizens are the ones that deal with issue at the forefront every day. It impacts all aspects of life. Speaking with the citizens could help see from a point of view that could be missed otherwise. Scottish citizens should be able to have their say on how to improve their communities.</b>	I feel if policymakers spoke to the people that the drug harms and deaths in Scotland effect directly then this would help them see other perspectives this would allow policies to be shaped to be beneficial to the targeted demographic.	Lived experience remains as the central argument. After the panel, the reference to political rights (have a say) disappears.

Table 23. Arguments linking citizen engagement with better policy.

Before	After	Interpretation
<b>I believe they need listen to the people views and opinions in order to come up with great drug harm reducing policy</b>	To listen to different opinions on what could be done differently	Decreased emphasis on better policymaking due to citizen engagement, increased focus on the opinion gathering (listening to citizens).
<b>To obtain a perspective on what society thinks</b>	Engaging with citizens enhances policy makers ability to make reasonable decisions	Increased emphasis on better policymaking thanks to citizen engagement.
<b>Policy makers need a wealth of experience in order to make the correct decision for the best outcomes for society</b>	Of course government needs to interact with the public in order to assess the feelings and opinions of the population when such an important issue is resulting in unnecessary/ avoidable death.	Decreased emphasis on better policymaking due to citizen engagement, increased focus on the opinion gathering (listening to citizens).



Table 24. Arguments referring to government action.

Before	After	Interpretation
<b>For the good and better the public.</b>	Do what we have put forward.	Direct call to action after the panel.
<b>De-criminalise</b>	Listen to public more and be brave.	Call to bravery.
<b>Where else can people's voices be heard.</b>	Have courage to cross party policies for the long term.	Call to bravery with a focus on cross-party cooperation.
<b>Because that gives a voice to people and makes the political decisions based on what works</b>	To ensure that a variety of voices are heard and that decisions are not only made at the top	Continued presence of argument around voice (political right) with added nuance regarding the need for more democratic decision-making.
<b>To date government led policies have not unfortunately helped make enough of a difference in this area. Good evidence of this type of engagement and the results in other areas/countries proving more effective. Good way to tap into a range of views and experiences it might be difficult for government to access otherwise.</b>	Because the evidence and ideas have often already been provided yet there appears to be a lack of political will to perhaps to do some of the more difficult work. Hopefully the People's Panel's recommendations gives policy makers more evidence and reassurance that the Scottish people would back these changes. They just need to implement them.	More refined understanding on the evidence available to government and direct call to action.

## 10.4. Impact Expectations on the Scottish Parliament

Table 25. Definitions of Panel success by participants (PPCC).

Category	What would success look like for you?

Recommendations being actioned	To see the recommendations being actioned. For awareness of actions of climate change to be clearly disseminated to everyone in Scotland for everyone to have the chance to be involved in action for Climate Change.
	For action to be taken to achieve the recommendations we suggested.
	The recommendations actioned
	Down the line, I will see big changes that the group suggested being implemented. As well as the government encouraging more participation from the voter base in things such as people's parliament rather than just participating in elections
	Success would be in being fully aware of actions taken in implementing resolutions
	The recommendations resulting in tangible change.
Good communication	The short-term goals are fundamental to the long-term success of this endeavour. I would like the Scottish Government to initiate a national roll out into communities based on the deliberations and recommendations made by the people's panel
	Good communication on further action being done
	Meet again in 2 years to see if any of the recommendations were carried forward
	I would like the committee to send regular updates as and when they are implementing or even discussing one of our recommendations to ensure accountability and to feel as if things have been done

	Having a final report from the government stating which recommendations they are going to implement and in what timeframe
	MPs -> personal views _> party view -> know specifically how they vote _> if they don't like anything, tell us why with specifics

Substantive listening	I'd hope the Committee listen carefully to the recommendations of the PP and not look for reasons to bat them back to us!
	People on the panel all feeling like their views were reflected, the committee taking on board our recommendations and then Scottish Government taking decisive action or carrying out more research based on what we have said. I've already been part of a working group pro bono for a year where the Scottish Government in the end ignored most of our recommendations, so I confess to being a bit cynical.
	To meet MSPs at the Scottish Parliament and hear what they have to say and what they thought about our recommendations.
	To use and listen to the Scottish people

views into policy decisions, reflecting genuine public input.

**Table 26.** *Definitions of Panel success by participants.*

Category	What would success look like for you?
Recommendations being actioned	The ultimate measurement would be a substantial reduction in drug deaths/harms which have resulted due to implementation of policy influenced by the People’s Panel.

	Seeing the recommendations put into practice, as some of them are a radical departure from current practice
	How many of the recommendations are actually acted upon meaningfully.
	For me, if the Scottish Government takes our recommendations into consideration and makes them into policies, I feel this will be a success.
	Implementing the recommendations made

Good communication	Seeing and hearing responses and any actions against each individual recommendation in a regular and timely manner
	Hearing that our people's panel submissions impact the final decision made by the Scottish Government.
	Following the recommendations and their implementation; getting follow-ups and reports on the topics we discussed.
	Review in one year's time.

Substantive listening	Hopefully it will take the views of the Scottish Public into account and act accordingly
	Decisions reflecting outcome.

## 11. Appendix 3. Survey questionnaires

### 11.1. People's Panel on Climate Change

#### 11.1.1. Pre-panel survey

##### **Assessment of People's Panel reviewing the Climate Change Act**

##### **Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee**

##### **Scottish Parliament**

Thank you for participating in the independent evaluation of the Peoples' Panel. Your time and insights are instrumental in enhancing this initiative for continuous improvement.

This initial survey is to help find out what the group thinks of climate change and participation in Scotland. The questions are designed to understand your motivations and expectations before you take part in the panel.

The survey is anonymous and is not a test, so please answer questions honestly so we can get an accurate picture of the views of the group.

#### **Anonymity**

To help us analyse your responses, we need to be able to link your answers to the other questionnaire you complete at the end of the process. To keep your responses anonymous, we ask you to form an anonymous identity (ID) code to put on both the questionnaires that you fill in.

Please form an identity code by following these instructions:

1. In the space below, list the first three letters of the town nearest to where you were born

(e.g. Inverness becomes INV).

2. Follow this with the date and month of a memorable date of your choice

(e.g. if your mum's birthday is the 1st February you would write 0102).

In this example the ID Code becomes INV0102. Please form your own ID code and write it below. You may also want to take a note of it for the second questionnaire that you will fill in at the end!

ID CODE

Please tell us why you decided to take part in this Citizens' Panel.

What specific personal outcomes or benefits do you hope to achieve by participating in the people's panel?

Why do you believe that policymakers need to (or do not need to) engage with citizens in Climate Change decisions?

On a scale from 1 to 6, where 1 is "Not at all" and 6 is "Extremely", how would you respond to the following questions?

	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Not at all	Slightly	Somewhat	Moderately	Very	Extremely
How much do you like talking about politics?						
How comfortable do you feel when voicing your political opinion?						
How interested are you in hearing the opinions of other people?						

How willing are you to read things or listen to people who challenge your own opinions?						
How valid do you think your opinion is in any situation?						
How much do you trust Members of the Scottish Parliament (MSPs) to act in the best interests of people?						

On a scale from 1 to 6, where 1 is “Never” and 6 is “Always”, how often have you done any of these following activities?

	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Never	Almost never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
Voted in an election						
Created or signed a petition						
Contacted a local councillor, MP or MSP						
Taken part in a public consultation						
Taken part in a demonstration or march						
Shared your views with a Scottish Parliament committee						

Taken part in volunteering						
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What you know?

On a scale from 1 to 6, where 1 is “Not at all” and 6 is “Extremely”, how knowledgeable or familiar do you feel regarding these issues?

Remember, this is not a test, so answer honestly to help us continue to improve how these Panels work.

	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Not at all	Slightly	Somewhat	Moderately	Very	Extremely
Using critical thinking to evaluate information						
The socio-economic and environmental impacts of climate change in Scotland						
The objectives set out in Scotland's Climate Change laws, including greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets						
How the Scottish Parliament monitors the impact and implementation of new laws						
The role of public engagement in climate change policy						

Thank you for completing this survey.



### 11.1.2. Post-panel survey

Thank you for participating in the independent evaluation of the Peoples' Panel. Your time and insights help us improve future panels.

This final survey is to help find out what the group thinks about the experience of participating in the People's Panel. The questions are designed to understand your experience of taking part in the panel.

The survey is anonymous and is not a test, so please answer questions honestly so we can get an accurate picture of the views of the group.

#### Anonymity

To help us analyse your responses, we need to be able to link your answers to the other questionnaire you completed at the start of the process. To keep your responses anonymous and connected to your previous responses, we asked you to form an anonymous identity (ID) code to put on both the questionnaires that you fill in.

Your identity code was formed by following these instructions:

1. In the space below, list the first three letters of the town nearest to where you were born

(e.g. Inverness becomes INV).

2. Follow this with the date and month of the memorable date you chose for the first survey

(e.g. if your mum's birthday is the 1st February you would write 0102).

In this example the ID Code becomes INV0102.

Please re-write your ID code below. You may have taken a note of it previously. If you are struggling to remember speak to a member of staff to support you.

ID CODE

What has been your favourite part of the People's Panel process?

What do you think we could do differently the next time to improve the People's Panel process?

Representativeness

On a scale from 1 to 6, where 1 is “Not at all” and 6 is “Extremely”, how would you respond to the following statements:

	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Not at all	Slightly	Somewhat	Moderately	Very	Extremely
“I felt the participants in the People’s Panel were broadly representative of the wider population of Scotland.”						
“I felt that the participants had a broad range of perspectives on the issue under discussion (public engagement in climate change).”						
“As a consequence of my participation in the People’s Panel, I have come to understand						

different viewpoints relating to public engagement in climate change.”						
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## Knowledge and Information

Now that you have taken part in the People's Panel, on a scale from 1 to 6, where 1 is “Not at all” and 6 is “Extremely”, how knowledgeable or familiar do you feel regarding these issues?

	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Not at all	Slightly	Somewhat	Moderately	Very	Extremely
Using critical thinking to evaluate information						
The socio-economic and environmental impacts of climate change in Scotland						
The objectives set out in Scotland's Climate Change laws, including greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets						
How the Scottish Parliament monitors the impact and implementation of new laws						

The role of public engagement in climate change policy						
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On a scale from 1 to 6, where 1 is “Not at all” and 6 is “Extremely”, how would you respond to the following statements:

	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Not at all	Slightly	Somewhat	Moderately	Very	Extremely
I learned a lot about public engagement in climate change from my participation in the People’s Panel						
The experts offered balanced and diverse views on public engagement in climate change						
Overall, I had sufficient information about public engagement in climate change to engage in a meaningful discussion with the other participants.						

Now that you have taken part, why do you believe that policymakers need to (or do not need to) engage with citizens in Climate Change decisions?

## Facilitation and decision-making

On a scale from 1 to 6, where 1 is “Not at all” and 6 is “Extremely”, how would you respond to the following statements:

	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Not at all	Slightly	Somewhat	Moderately	Very	Extremely
During the People’s Panel process, I had ample opportunity to express my views						
No one dominated the discussion and everyone had an opportunity to speak						
We were offered sufficient time to discuss the issue under discussion (public engagement in climate change)						
The facilitators (Parliament staff) made sure everyone could participate in the People’s Panel process						
I feel like the final recommendations reflect all of the participants’ ideas						
Even though there was a vote at the end, I do feel that our group discussions are reflected in the final recommendations						

I feel that I was pressured into agreeing with recommendations I do not fully endorse.						
My own ideas about public participation in climate change are sufficiently reflected in the final recommendations.						

### Impact

On a scale from 1 to 6, where 1 is “Not at all” and 6 is “Extremely”, how would you respond to the following statements:

	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Not at all	Slightly	Somewhat	Moderately	Very	Extremely
It was clear from the start what was going to happen with the recommendations of the People’s Panel						
I am convinced that politicians will take into account the People’s Panels recommendations.						
I am convinced that the recommendations of the People’s Panel will help hold the Scottish Government to account and help improve future policy						

The Scottish Parliament should run more processes like this People's Panel						
I am likely to get involved in the work of the Scottish Parliament in the future						
I feel like participating in the People's Panel has improved the way I feel about the Scottish Parliament and the work it does to hold the Scottish Government to account						
In general, I trust Members of the Scottish Parliament (MSPs) to act in the best interests of people						
Overall, I think participating in People's Panel was a positive experience.						

How would you suggest measuring the impact and effectiveness of the People's Panel in holding the Scottish Government into account? What would success look like for you?

Thank you for completing this survey

## 11.2. People's Panel on Drug Harm

### 11.2.1. Pre-Panel Survey

Assessment of People's Panel on reducing drug harms and drug deaths

Cross Committee on Tackling Drug Deaths and Drug Harm

Scottish Parliament

Pre-panel survey

Thank you for participating in the independent evaluation of the Peoples' Panel. Your time and insights help us improve future panels.

This initial survey is to help find out what the group thinks of drug policy and harm reduction in Scotland. The questions are designed to understand your motivations and expectations before you take part in the panel.

The survey is anonymous and is not a test, so please answer questions honestly so we can get an accurate picture of the views of the group.

Anonymity

To help us analyse your responses, we need to be able to link your answers to the other questionnaire you complete at the end of the process. To keep your responses anonymous, we ask you to form an anonymous identity (ID) code to put on both the questionnaires that you fill in.

Please form an identity code by following these instructions:

1. In the space below, list the first three letters of the town nearest to where you were born

(e.g. Inverness becomes INV).

2. Follow this with the date and month of a memorable date of your choice

(e.g. if your mum's birthday is the 1st February you would write 0102).

In this example the ID Code becomes INV0102. Please form your own ID code and write it below. You may also want to take a note of it for the second questionnaire that you will fill in at the end!

ID CODE



Please tell us why you decided to take part in this People's Panel.

What specific personal outcomes or benefits do you hope to achieve by participating in the People's Panel?

Why do you believe that policymakers need to (or do not need to) engage with citizens to decide how to reduce drug harms?

On a scale from 1 to 6, where 1 is “Not at all” and 6 is “Extremely”, how would you respond to the following questions?

	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Not at all	Slightly	Somewhat	Moderately	Very	Extremely
How much do you like talking about politics?						
How comfortable do you feel when voicing your political opinion?						
How interested are you in hearing the opinions of other people?						

How willing are you to read things or listen to people who challenge your own opinions?						
How valid do you think your opinion is in any situation?						
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Not at all	Slightly	Somewhat	Moderately	Very	Extremely
How much do you trust Members of the Scottish Parliament (MSPs) to act in the best interests of people?						

On a scale from 1 to 6, where 1 is “Never” and 6 is “Always”, how often have you done any of these following activities?

	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Never	Almost never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
Voted in an election						
Created or signed a petition						
Contacted a local councillor, MP or MSP						
Taken part in a public consultation						

Taken part in a demonstration or march						
Shared your views with a Scottish Parliament committee						
Taken part in volunteering						

PLEASE TURN TO THE FINAL PAGE

Over the duration of the panel we'll explore some of the issues and subjects below. This is not a test question! Your responses to these questions help us design good experiences for future panels.

On a scale from 1 to 6, where 1 is "Not at all" and 6 is "Extremely", how knowledgeable or familiar do you feel regarding these issues?

	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Not at all	Slightly	Somewhat	Moderately	Very	Extremely
Using critical thinking to evaluate information						
The impact of drug harm and drug deaths in Scotland						
The laws and policies around drug harm reduction in Scotland						
How the Scottish Parliament monitors the impact and implementation of new laws and policies						

The range of solutions available to reduce drug deaths and drug harm.						
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Thank you for completing this survey.

### *11.2.2. Post-Panel Survey*

Assessment of People's Panel on reducing drug harms and drug deaths

Cross Committee on Tackling Drug Deaths and Drug Harm

Scottish Parliament

Post-panel survey

Thank you for participating in the independent evaluation of the Peoples' Panel. Your time and insights help us improve future panels.

This final survey is to help find out what the group thinks about the experience of participating in the People's Panel. The questions are designed to understand your experience of taking part in the panel.

The survey is anonymous and is not a test, so please answer questions honestly so we can get an accurate picture of the views of the group.

Anonymity

To help us analyse your responses, we need to be able to link your answers to the other questionnaire you completed at the start of the process. To keep your responses anonymous and connected to your previous responses, we asked you to form an anonymous identity (ID) code to put on both the questionnaires that you fill in.

Your identity code was formed by following these instructions:

1. In the space below, list the first three letters of the town nearest to where you were born (e.g. Inverness becomes INV).

2. Follow this with the date and month of the memorable date you chose for the first survey (e.g. if your mum's birthday is the 1st February you would write 0102).

In this example the ID Code becomes INV0102.

Please re-write your ID code below. You may have taken a note of it previously. If you are struggling to remember speak to a member of staff to support you.

ID CODE

What has been your favourite part of the People’s Panel process?

What do you think we could do differently the next time to improve the People’s Panel process?

Representativeness

On a scale from 1 to 6, where 1 is “Not at all” and 6 is “Extremely”, how would you respond to the following statements:

	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Not at all	Slightly	Somewha t	Moderatel y	Very	Extremely
“I felt the participants in the People’s Panel were broadly representative of the wider population of Scotland.”						
“I felt that the participants had a broad range of perspectives on the issue under						

discussion (reducing drug related harms)."						
"As a consequence of my participation in the People's Panel, I have come to understand different viewpoints relating to drug harm reduction."						

#### Knowledge and Information

Now that you have taken part in the People's Panel, on a scale from 1 to 6, where 1 is "Not at all" and 6 is "Extremely", how knowledgeable or familiar do you feel regarding these issues?

	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Not at all	Slightly	Somewhat	Moderately	Very	Extremely
Using critical thinking to evaluate information						
The impact of drug harm and drug deaths in Scotland						
The laws and policies around drug harm reduction in Scotland						
How the Scottish Parliament monitors the impact and implementation of new laws and policies						

The range of solutions available to reduce drug deaths and drug harm.						
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On a scale from 1 to 6, where 1 is “Not at all” and 6 is “Extremely”, how would you respond to the following statements:

	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Not at all	Slightly	Somewhat	Moderately	Very	Extremely
I learned a lot about the Scottish Government's approach to tackling drugs deaths in Scotland in the People's Panel						
The experts offered balanced and diverse views on how to reduce drug harms						
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Not at all	Slightly	Somewhat	Moderately	Very	Extremely
Overall, I had sufficient information about drug harm reduction in a meaningful discussion with the other participants.						

Now that you have taken part, why do you believe that policymakers need to (or do not need to) engage with citizens to decide how to prevent drug harms?

#### Facilitation and decision-making

On a scale from 1 to 6, where 1 is “Not at all” and 6 is “Extremely”, how would you respond to the following statements:

	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Not at all	Slightly	Somewhat	Moderately	Very	Extremely
During the People’s Panel process, I had ample opportunity to express my views						
No one dominated the discussion and everyone had an opportunity to speak						
We were offered sufficient time to discuss the issue under discussion (reducing drug related harms).						
The facilitators (Parliament staff) made sure everyone could participate in the People’s Panel process						



I feel like the final recommendations reflect all of the participants' ideas						
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Not at all	Slightly	Somewhat	Moderately	Very	Extremely
Even though there was a vote at the end, I do feel that our group discussions are reflected in the final recommendations						
I feel that I was pressured into agreeing with recommendations I do not fully endorse.						
My own ideas about reducing drug related harms are sufficiently reflected in the final recommendations.						

### Impact

On a scale from 1 to 6, where 1 is "Not at all" and 6 is "Extremely", how would you respond to the following statements:

	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Not at all	Slightly	Somewhat	Moderately	Very	Extremely
It was clear from the start what was going to happen with the						

recommendations of the People's Panel						
I am convinced that politicians will take into account the People's Panels recommendations.						
I am convinced that the recommendations of the People's Panel will help hold the Scottish Government to account and help improve future policy						
The Scottish Parliament should run more processes like this People's Panel						
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Not at all	Slightly	Somewhat	Moderately	Very	Extremely
I am likely to get involved in the work of the Scottish Parliament in the future						
I feel like participating in the People's Panel has improved the way I feel about the Scottish Parliament and the work it does to hold the Scottish Government to account						

In general, I trust Members of the Scottish Parliament (MSPs) to act in the best interests of people						
Overall, I think participating in People's Panel was a positive experience.						

How would you suggest measuring the impact and effectiveness of the People's Panel in holding the Scottish Government to account? What would success look like for you?

Thank you for completing this survey

## 12. Appendix 4. Interview guidelines

### 12.1. People's Panel on Climate Change

**Assessment of Peoples' Panel on Climate Policy (2024)**

**Citizen Participation and Public Petitions Committee**

**Scottish Parliament**

**Participants:** Citizens participating in the People's Panel

**Sampling method:** Critical case sampling

**Inclusion criteria:** Attending the panel

**Recruitment method:** Through the event organisers

Estimate duration: 30-60 minutes

Observation medium: Online

**Recording method:** Recording/ Automated transcription

**Method:** Semi-structured interview

**Main objective:** To understand how participants experienced critical aspects of the panel design.

Specific objectives

2. To explore participants framing of the mini public remit
3. To identify perceptions of political impact of the panel
4. To explore interactions between the group
5. To identify key learnings and takeaways

BEFORE STARTING, ASK FOR PERMISSION TO RECORD

Theme 1: Framing of remit

- The purpose of this People's Panel was to hold Scottish Government to account in their public engagement work. After attending the panel, what is public engagement for you?
  - Potential follow-ups: what did you learn about public engagement? Why is it necessary?  
How did your understanding change?
- After all deliberations, how successful do you think government is in engaging the public in climate change?

- Potential follow-ups: What is your understanding of the Scottish Climate Change act? was it better or worse than you expected? Do you feel comfortable evaluating their success?

## Theme 2: Political impact

- What is your understanding about how the results of this panel will be used by the Scottish Parliament?
- Potential follow-ups: Was there a significant moment or talk in the panels that helped you understand how the results will be used?
- How confident are you that the Panel will have a meaningful impact?
- Potential follow-ups: Are you equally confident in Parliament and Government?

## Theme 3: Interactions

- Why do you think your personal perspective was relevant to the panel?
- Potential follow-ups: Did you find it easy or hard to participate? Did the staff make you feel comfortable? Did group dynamics make you feel confident participating and stating your opinions?

## Theme 4: Learnings

- What would you say is your key takeaway from this panel?
- Potential follow-ups: Is there something specific that you learnt that is meaningful for you?

## Theme 5: Miscellaneous (if there's more time)

- How did you integrate the information received and expert presentations you listened to into your reflections, contributions and discussions?
- What are your thoughts on the recommendations? Did they reflect the group's deliberations?
- What do you think the purpose of the first weekend was?
- Was this process worth your time?

## 12.2. People's Panel on Drug Harm

### Assessment of Peoples' Panel on Drug Harms (2024)

**Criminal Justice Committee, the Health, Social Care and Sport Committee and the Social Justice and Social Security Committee.**

**Scottish Parliament**

**Participants:** Citizens participating in the People's Panel

**Sampling method:** Critical case sampling

**Inclusion criteria:** Attending the panel

**Recruitment method:** Through the event organisers, volunteers

Estimate duration: 30-60 minutes

Observation medium: Online

**Recording method:** Recording/ Automated transcription

**Method:** Semi-structured interview

**Main objective:** To understand how participants experienced critical aspects of the panel design.

Specific objectives

2. To explore participants framing of the mini public remit
5. To identify perceptions of political impact of the panel
4. To explore interactions between the group
5. To identify key learnings and takeaways

BEFORE STARTING, ASK FOR PERMISSION TO RECORD

Theme 1: Framing of remit

- The purpose of this People's Panel was to produce recommendations on how to do things differently regarding drug related harms. After attending the panel, what are drug related harms for you?
  - Potential follow-ups: what did you learn about drug harms? What are their main drivers?
- After all deliberations, how successful do you think government is in helping reduce drug harms?

- Potential follow-ups: What is your understanding of the government's policies around drugs more broadly? Was it better or worse than you expected? Did you feel comfortable answering the question on what needs to be done differently to reduce drug related harms?

#### Theme 2: Political impact

- What is your understanding about how the results of this panel will be used by the Scottish Parliament?
  - Potential follow-ups: Was there a significant moment or talk in the panels that helped you understand how the results will be used?
- How confident are you that the Panel will have a meaningful impact?
  - Potential follow-ups: Are you equally confident in Parliament and Government?

#### Theme 3: Interactions

- Why do you think your personal perspective was relevant to the panel?

#### Potential follow-ups:

- Did you find it easy or hard to participate?
- Did the staff make you feel comfortable?
- Did group dynamics make you feel confident participating and stating your opinions?

#### Theme 4: Evidence and Learnings

- How did you integrate the information received and expert presentations you listened to into your reflections, contributions and discussions?
- What would you say is your key takeaway from this panel?
  - Potential follow-ups: Is there something specific that you learnt that is meaningful for you?

#### Theme 5: Miscellaneous (if there's more time)

- What are your thoughts on the recommendations? Did they reflect the group's deliberations?
- Was this process worth your time?

## 13. Appendix 5. Observation protocol

### Assessment of Peoples' Panels (2024)

#### Citizen Participation and Public Petitions Committee

#### Scottish Parliament

**Participants:** Citizens participating in the People's Panel

**Sampling method:** Critical case sampling

**Inclusion criteria:** Attending the panel

**Recruitment method:** Through the event organisers

Estimate duration: 120 minutes

**Observation medium:** In person or online according to the event

Recording method: Note taking

**Method:** Non-participant observation

**Main objective:** To understand how specific elements of the dialogue design impact its outcomes

Specific objectives

1. To explore participants perceptions on panel composition
2. To explore practices and dynamics of evidence provision
3. To explore significant practices and moments of facilitation
4. To explore discourse and interactional dynamics between participants

Theme 1: Perceptions on panel composition

Guiding questions: Do participants perceive that all relevant voices are present? Do participants act familiarly among themselves? Are there markers for otherness?

Notes:

Theme 2: Evidence provision



Guiding questions: How do experts position themselves in front of the citizens? How are they perceived by participants? What sort of tools or techniques do they use to explain complex content? Are they on top, on tap or equal partners? How is the material presented and used? How diverse are expert witnesses? Do they enter into conflict among each other or with participants? To what extent do presenters assert arguments against and for any given complex issue? Do they represent different kinds of expertise (e.g. stakeholder, academia, government, NGO's)?

Notes:

### Theme 3: Facilitation

Guiding questions: Following Landwehr (2014) there are at least four main tasks of facilitation.

- Constitutionalizing deliberation (how they set up deliberation): how facilitators present the process and define meanings and objectives.
- Enforcing procedural rules:
- Rationalizing communication and keeping emotions at bay {prompting reasoning and constructive emotionality}:
- Ensuring internal inclusion and pluralistic argumentation:
- Summarizing, aggregating, and decision-making:

### Theme 4: Interactions

Guiding questions: Following the updated DQI (Steiner, 2012), attention will be given to interruptions, use of time, respectful/foul language, listening, justifications of ideas, force of the better argument and stories (see Appendix).

Notes:

### References:

Landwehr C. (2014). Facilitating deliberation: The role of impartial intermediaries in deliberative mini-publics. In Grönlund K., Bächtiger A., Setälä M. (Eds.), *Deliberative mini-publics: Involving citizens in the democratic process* (pp. 77-92). Colchester, UK: European Consortium for Political Research Press.

Steiner, J. (2012). Newest version of Discourse Quality Index (DQI). In *The Foundations of Deliberative Democracy: Empirical Research and Normative Implications* (pp. 268–271). appendices, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.