



Knowledge Exchange Seminar Series (KESS)

...is a forum that encourages debate on a wide range of research findings, with the overall aim of promoting evidence-based policy and law-making within Northern Ireland



Independence of the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector in Northern Ireland

**CHANGING NARRATIVES,
CHANGING RELATIONSHIPS:**

A New Environment for VCSE Action?

**Dr Markus Ketola, Ulster University
Dr Ciaran Hughes, Ulster University**

THE ARGUMENT

PARTNERSHIP



DECOUPLING



SERVICES?

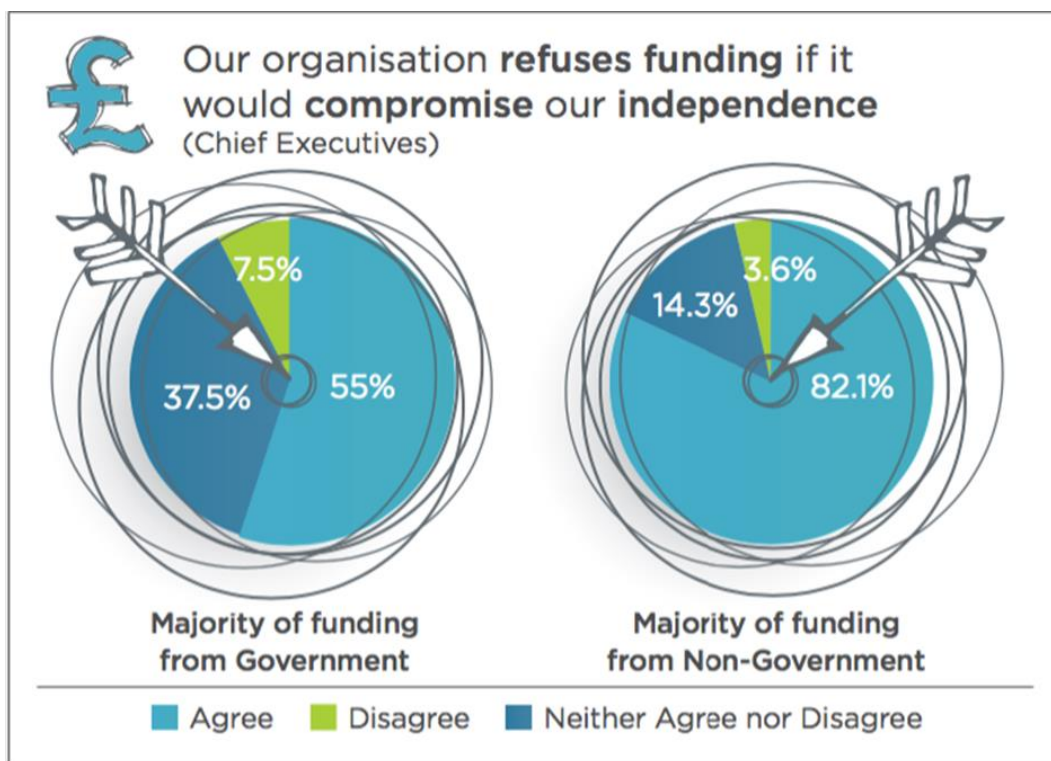
REDISCOVERY?

INDEPENDENCE?



INDEPENDENCE OF **PURPOSE**

this refers to the ability of organisations to stay true to their mission and values.



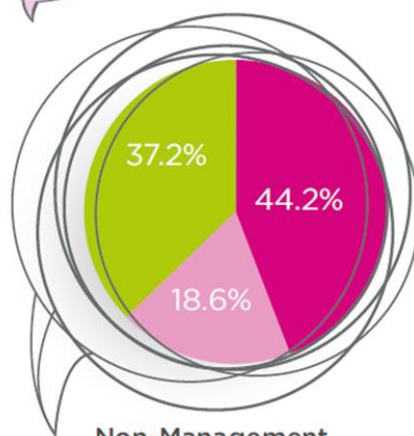


INDEPENDENCE OF **VOICE**

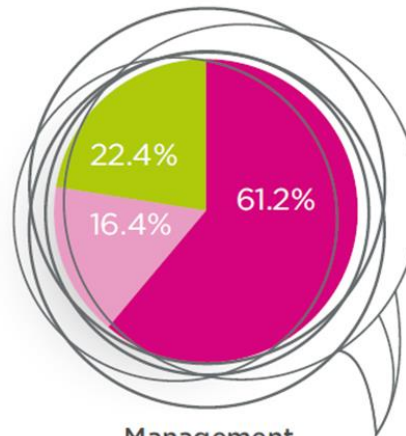
this concerns the extent to which organisations are able to exercise a critical voice, protest, campaign and negotiate without fear of negative consequences or retribution.



Our organisation has been **critical** of **decision-makers** in the past



Non-Management

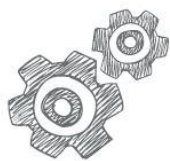


Management

■ Agree ■ Disagree ■ Neither Agree nor Disagree

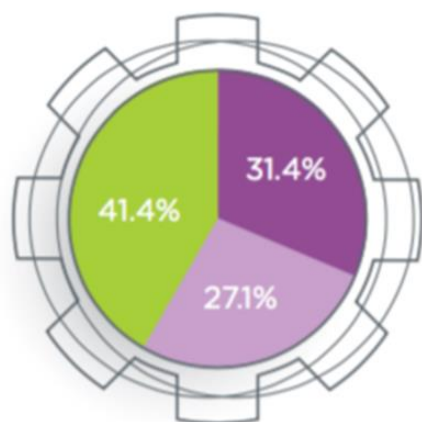
Independence is Relational





INDEPENDENCE OF **ACTION**

this concerns the ability of organisations to design and deliver effective activities and services, take risks and innovate and respond to beneficiaries' needs creatively.

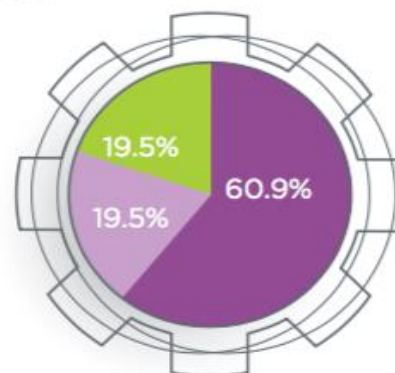


The **funding system** allows our organisation to be **flexible and innovative**.

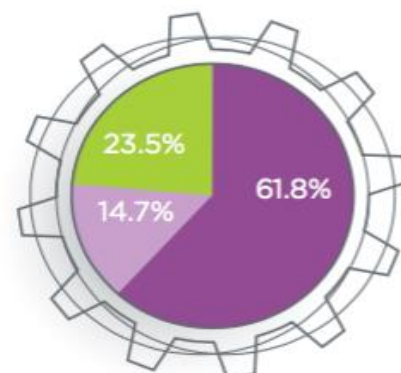
■ Agree
■ Disagree
■ Neither Agree nor Disagree



Competition makes it **difficult** to **build trusting relationships** with other organisations



Whole Sample

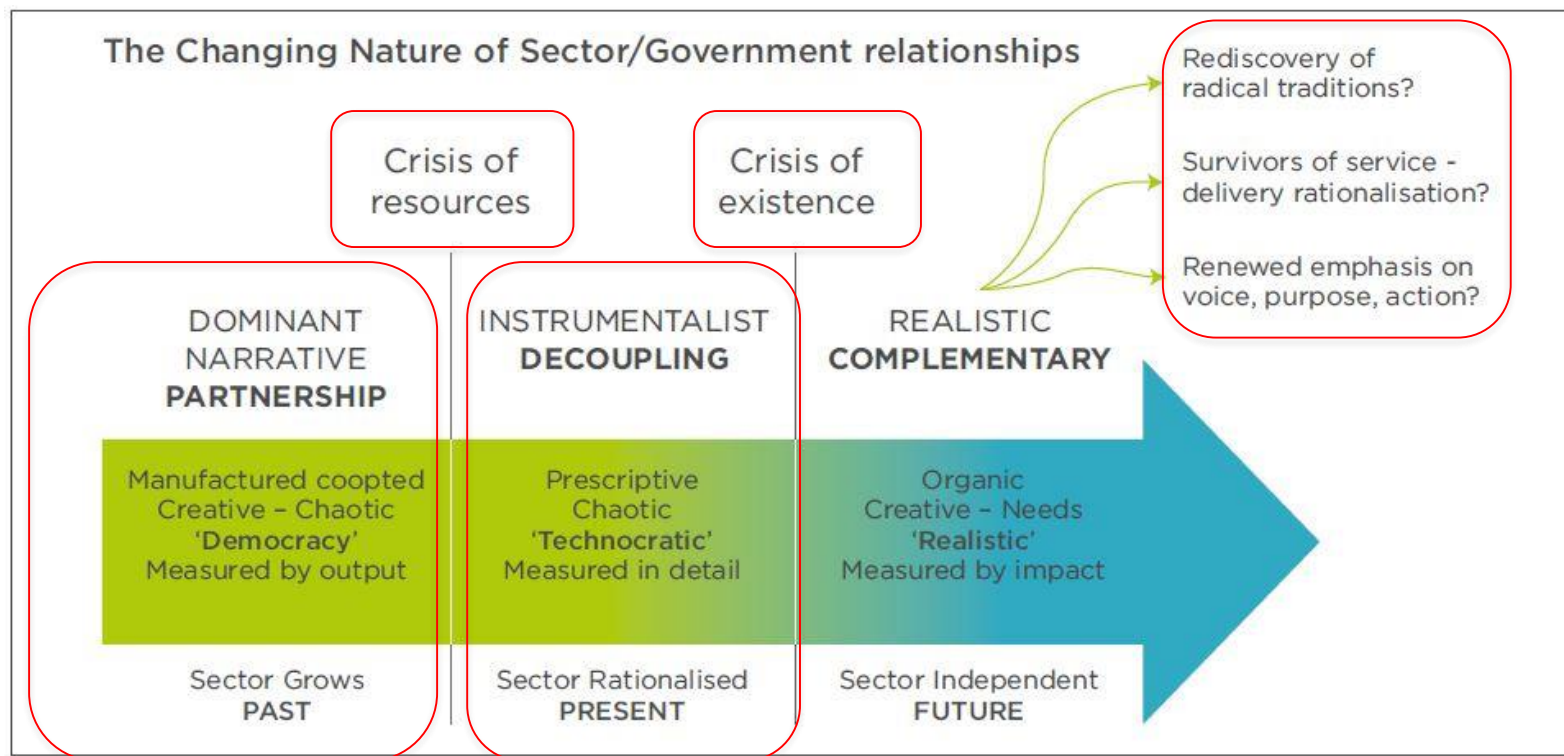


Chief Executive

■ Agree ■ Disagree ■ Neither Agree nor Disagree

The Changing Nature of Sector/Government relationships





Possible barriers to effective reform

**ACTUALLY
EXISTING
SECTOR**

Too much emphasis on
'bottom up' reform

Subcontracting

Mission drift and
organisational survival

Party political
interference

Party political
colonisation

Policy language and
political rhetoric lag
behind

**INDEPENDENT,
EFFECTIVE,
EFFICIENT
SECTOR**

PROCESS OF REFORM





Northern Ireland
Assembly



The Open
University



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