

Research and Innovation Overview 2024

Department of Education

The Department of Education at Maynooth University, housed within the Faculty of Social Sciences, is a dynamic academic community with 18.9 full-time academic staff and 586 postgraduate students. The department offers a range of postgraduate programs, including Postgraduate Diplomas, Master's, and Doctoral degrees, with a strong focus on doctoral education. In 2022-23, the department had 65 doctoral students, demonstrating its commitment to advancing educational research.

Head of Department: Dr Maija Salokangas



Research Themes and Focus Areas

The department's research covers a wide range of educational topics, with key focus areas including:

- **Initial Teacher Education:** Faculty members contribute to the development of teacher education, exploring philosophical and practical approaches to teacher education.
- **Public Education and Pedagogy:** The Centre for Public Education and Pedagogy (CPEP) focuses on public engagement and education for societal change, addressing issues such as climate change and social justice.
- **Education, culture and social justice:** Research in this area focuses on the formation of the identities of education practitioners and learners within the social context of education and education policy.



Significant Research Outputs

In 2022-23, the Department of Education produced significant scholarly outputs, including:

Publications

- Three major research monographs were published: *Educator and the Ordinary* by Dr Elizabeth O'Brien (Palgrave Macmillan), *The Touch of the Present* by Professor Sharon Todd (SUNY Press), and *Education for Everyday Life* by Professor Carl Anders Säfström (Springer).
- Faculty members published 21 peer-reviewed journal articles, including four articles by Dr Zerrin Doganca Kucuk in various education journals, highlighting the department's research strength in multilingual education.

Awards

- The department secured €369,000 in research funding through nine new research grants. Notable projects include Dr Bernie Grummell's Erasmus+ funded project "TUTOR: Teacher Academy", which received €220,000, and a Government of Ireland Postgraduate Scholarship awarded to Tara Ćirić for her research on the education of young people in Ireland.



Collaborations and Partnerships

The department is involved in several high-impact international collaborations:

- **Marie Curie Innovative Training Network (SOLID):** This project supports doctoral research across Europe and exemplifies the department's strong international engagement.
- **Swedish Research Agency Project:** The department's involvement in this project on embodiment in the classroom continues until 2025, showcasing the department's influence on European education research.



Research Impact and Societal Contributions

The department's research has significant societal impact, particularly in the area of trauma-informed education. Dr Catriona O'Toole's work has influenced national and international policies, leading to the development of a new Micro-credential program in Trauma-Informed Practice at Maynooth University. This program was highly successful, with overwhelming demand in its first year.



Future Directions

The department will continue its focus on Public Education and Pedagogy, and Education, culture and social justice with focus on, democracy, diversity, equality and participation. Number of ongoing research projects explore Professional studies in education with specific focus on Teacher Education, Guidance Counsellor Education, Educational Leadership and Professional development. A growing research strand for the department is Transformative pedagogies and spaces with a focus on innovative pedagogical practices and ecologies that promote sociocultural sensitive encounters.

The Department of Education at Maynooth University remains a leader in educational research, combining rigorous academic inquiry with a strong commitment to public engagement and societal impact. The department's achievements in 2022-23 reflect its dedication to advancing knowledge, informing policy, and fostering educational practices that contribute to a more just and equitable society.