

Knowledge translation: Communicating scientific opinions and their anticipated impact on policy-making

Emilie Karafillakis

The Vaccine Confidence Project™

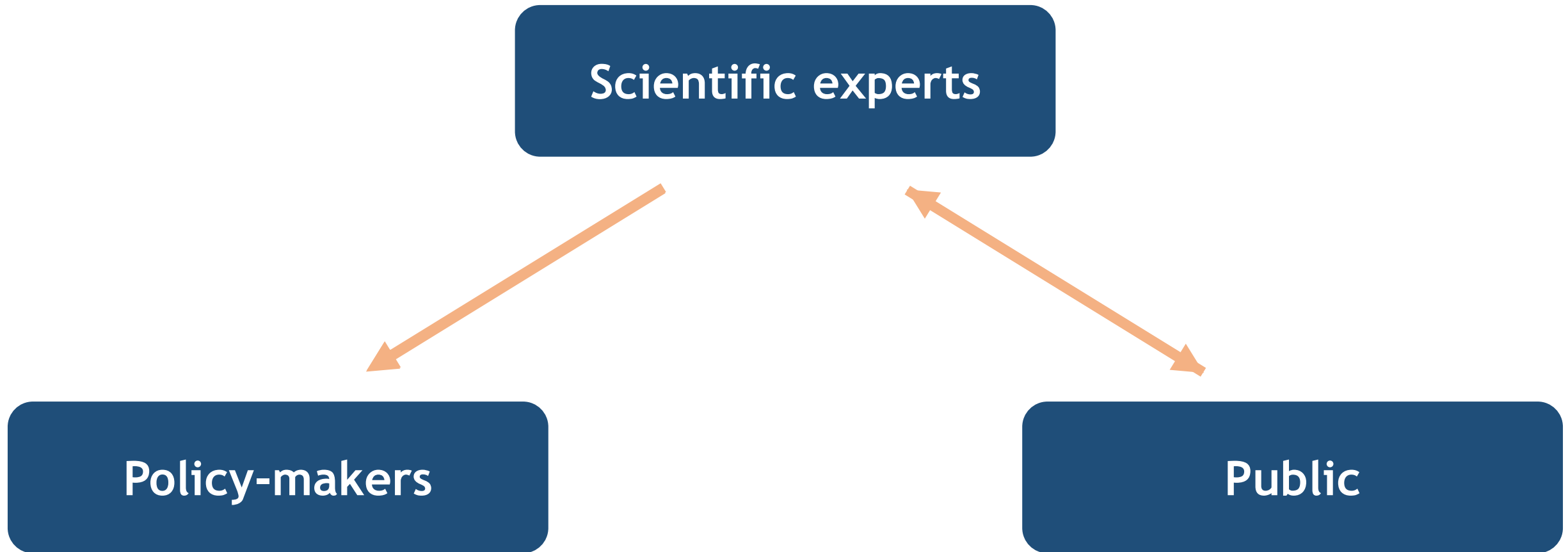
London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine



EVIDENCE-BASED EXPERTISE FOR BETTER POLICY-MAKING
8 November 2019



Knowledge translation... a very simplistic model





Risk culture: living in a world with ever increasing and complex technologies

We live in a world where risks have become...

- More universal & unavoidable
 - More difficult to assess
 - More difficult to control



Requires either a high technical/scientific knowledge or a leap of faith in experts with such scientific knowledge or others...



Risk culture: people encouraged to exert autonomy over their own lives, use available knowledge (e.g. internet) to stay aware of risks, assess risks/benefits

Healthism: Authorities promote risk culture in health (self-empowerment)

But risk culture... comes with its own risks (e.g. vaccination)



The influence of parents' concerns about HPV vaccination on government decisions in Japan

DECREASE IN HPV
VACCINE COVERAGE
FROM 73% TO <5 %

October 2009: Vaccine introduced

March 2010: Parents raise cases of chronic fatigue, pain, and paralysis they believe are linked to the vaccine

March 2013: Presumed side effects in the media

April 2013: Compensation claim approved

13 June 2013: WHO declares the vaccine safe

14 June 2013: Japan stops official recommendations of the vaccine



Public mistrust in government

May 2014: 15 girls in same school develop symptoms after HPV vaccination: **dizziness, nausea, spasms**

→Transmission of videos via **social media**

→More than **600 girls** in the country in a few weeks

→No biological link identified with the vaccine

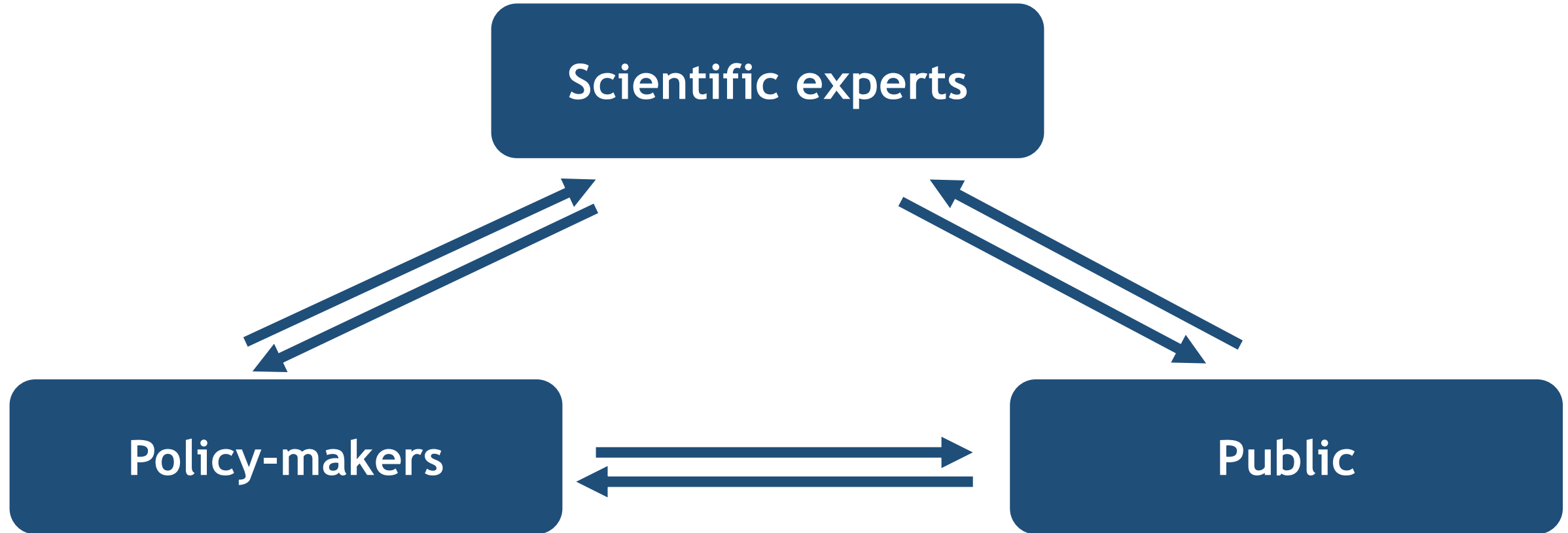
The government classifies the reactions as “mass psychogenic illnesses”

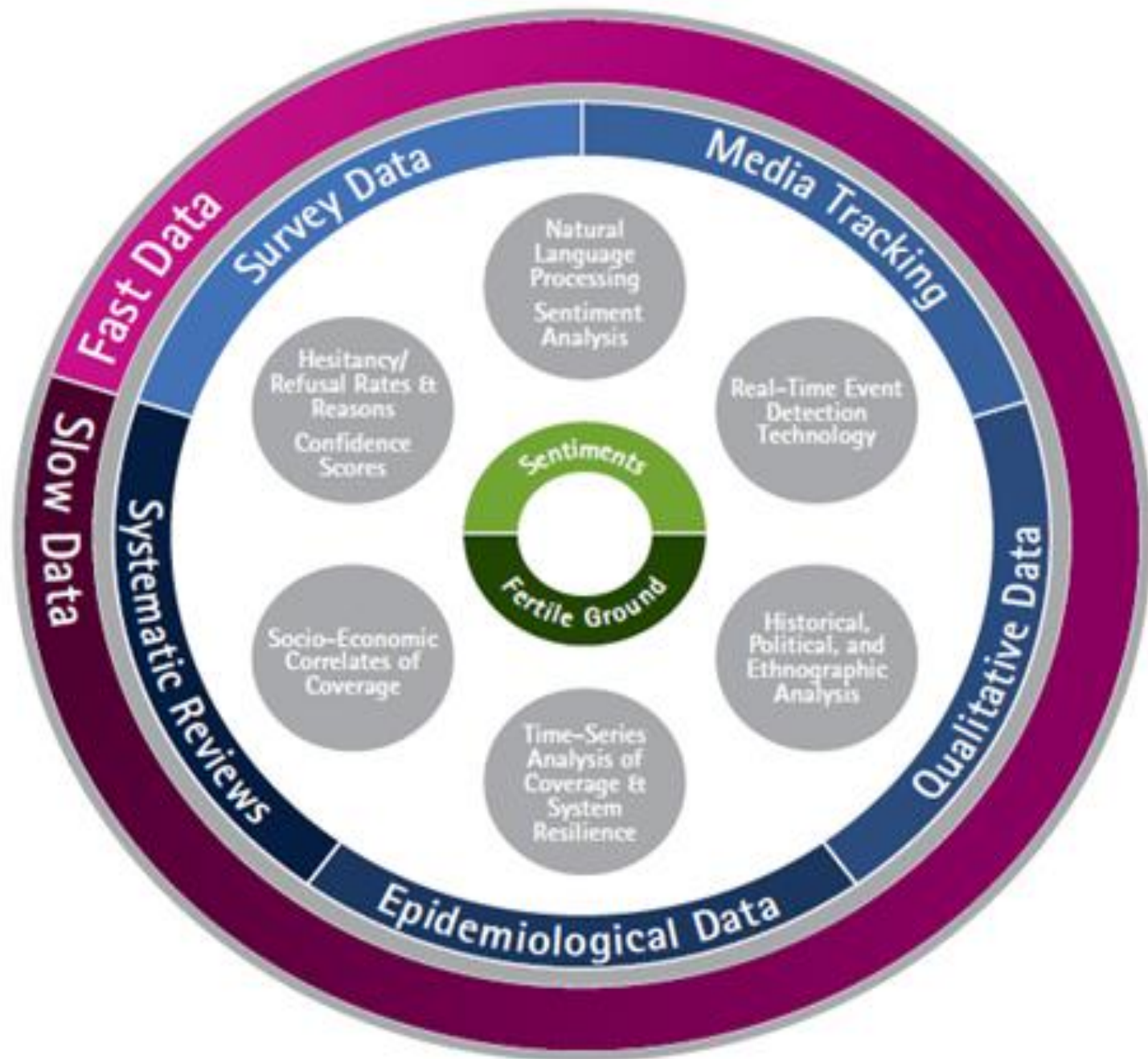
➤ Public outcry: *“The government doesn’t take us seriously, despises our girls”*

2016: vaccine coverage drops to 15%, with impacts seen on other vaccines



Knowledge translation... finding the right balance



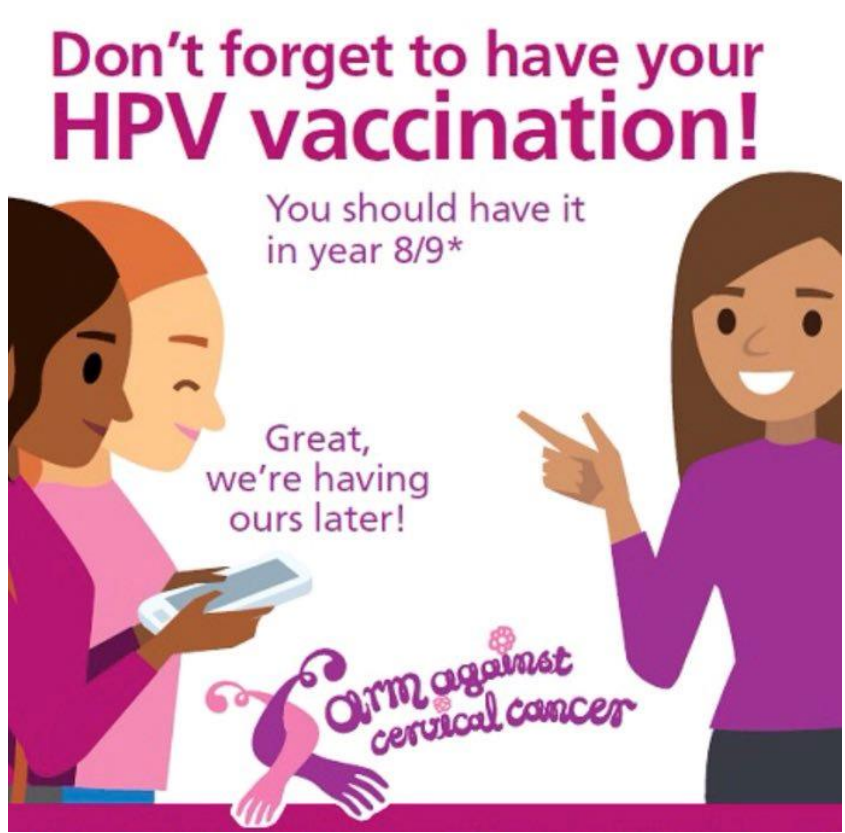


The science of listening to the public: no single metric tells the story



VACCINATION PROGRAMMES AND HEALTH SYSTEMS IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

Report of the
Expert Panel on effective ways of
investing in Health (EXPH)



How can public listening inform policy-making?

Communicating with the public

Be credible.

Do not withhold information to “avoid embarrassment” or to avoid prompting “panic”

Express empathy.

Acknowledge how people feel, build trust

Show respect.

Never be paternalistic. Listen to your population’s fears and address them. Don’t judge or dismiss concerns.

Be the first to provide information.

Don’t withhold it. Understand when it’s about more than information (trust, reassurance)

Be accurate.

Adapt your message. Select channel and method of communication (scientific facts vs. personal stories?)

Promote action.

Positive steps people can take encourages them to feel more in control and empowered.

Superbugs and anti-vaxxers make WHO's list of 10 global health threats

By [Holly Yan](#), CNN

🕒 Updated 0558 GMT (1358 HKT) January 21, 2019

