

PUBLIC CONSULTATION - CITIZENS' ASSEMBLY ON GENDER EQUALITY 2020

QUESTIONNAIRE

CA30018

Name: Name with Secretariat

Theme 1: Gender norms and stereotypes

Gender norms and stereotypes as barriers to gender equality

Fixed ideas about what women and men should do in the home or at work are learned by girls and boys in early childhood and throughout their lives. These ideas or gender stereotypes affect their choices in school and as they enter careers and contribute to a lack of progress toward equality between women and men. This limits not only the jobs that women and men consider or are available to them, but also can exclude women and men from social roles and tasks.

- Please outline what you see as the key barriers/ obstacles and challenges to gender equality under this theme in law, policy and practice.

There is still an expectation of women to be the main carer in the home, as opposed to a 50/50 split with the husband. For example, the difference between maternity and paternity leave is archaic and a barrier to women in the workplace. Ireland should be ashamed of the statutory paternity leave - especially in comparison to Nordic countries. It also perpetuates a stereotype of the man being the main "bread winner" when that's not always the case.

- Please identify the steps to be taken to address the issues raised and who should address them (e.g. the state, private sector, education system etc.)

The state should address statutory paternity leave and adopt a policy similar to Finland's.

Theme 2: Work: Occupational segregation by gender, gender discrimination and the gender pay gap

Women and men are often concentrated into different kinds of jobs and within the same occupations, women are often in work that is less well paid and has less opportunities for career advancement. Women often work in areas where they can work part-time so as to fit in with their caring responsibilities. While many men work in low paid jobs, many professions dominated by women are also low paid, and professions that have become female-dominated have become lower paid. This worsens the gender pay gap (the average difference between the wages of women and men who are working).

- Please outline what you see as the key barriers/ obstacles and challenges to gender equality under this theme in law, policy and practice.

Please see my response to Theme 1. Further, when the majority of leadership positions are occupied by white men, they are more likely to promote and hire people that look like them and have the same interests. It's critical that companies have leadership teams that reflect the population/customers they serve/wider organization/stakeholders.

- Please identify the steps to be taken to address the issues raised and who should address them (e.g. the state, private sector, education system etc.)

Unconscious bias training should be adopted by all organizations (schools, employers) - especially by people in positions of power.

Theme 3. Care, paid and unpaid, as a social and family responsibility

Care -- the social responsibility of care and women and men's co responsibility for care, especially within the family

Women remain disproportionately responsible for unpaid care and often work in poorly paid care work. For working parents or lone parents, balancing paid work with parenting and or caring for older and dependent adults presents significant challenges. Women are most disadvantaged by these challenges, yet men also suffer from lack of opportunities to share parenting and caring roles. Despite recent legislation and policy initiatives to support early years parental care, inequalities in the distribution of unpaid care continue between women and men. The cost of childcare has been identified as a particular barrier to work for women alongside responsibilities of caring for older relatives and dependent adults.

- Please outline what you see as the key barriers/ obstacles and challenges to gender equality under this them in law, policy and practice.

The cost and availability of nearby/affordable child care seems to be a serious challenge for parents. I don't have children, so I can't speak to this.

- Please identify the steps to be taken to address the issues raised and who should address theme (e.g. the state, private sector, education system etc.)

Investment in affordable child care. Look at average wages to understand what is affordable.

Theme 4: Women's access to, and representation in, public life and decision making

Ensure women's participation and representation in decision-making and leadership in the workplace, political and public life

Women are systematically underrepresented in leadership in economic and political decision-making. Despite the introduction of a candidate gender quota (through the system of party funding) for national political office, and initiatives to support women's access to corporate decision-making roles, men continue to dominate leadership positions. There are also issues to be considered around how media represents women and men.

- Please outline what you see as the key barriers/ obstacles and challenges to gender equality under this theme in law, policy and practice.

It can be intimidating to be the only woman in the room. Especially if you feel you have to constantly defend your position and your qualifications.

- Please identify the steps to be taken to address the issues raised and who should address them (e.g. the state, private sector, education system etc.)

Educate men on the downsides of creating a "lad" culture so that they're aware how their behaviors deter women from participating and succeeding in leadership positions. Make sure they understand the benefits of a diverse leadership team with statistics.

5. Where does gender inequality impact most?

To conclude we would be interested in your response to the following question: In which area do you think gender inequality matters most?

Please rank the following in order of importance, 1 being the most important:

- Paid work 1
- Home & family life 3
- Education 2
- Politics and public life 4
- Media 5
- Caring for others 6

- Other – please elaborate

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n/a

- Please outline the reasons for your answer below:

You need paid work to survive, and education greatly impacts that. The more resources you have, the more likely you can afford the costs associated with a child (whether that be the option to not work, or the option to pay for child care).

- Please include any further comments or observations you may have here.

n/a

