

PUBLIC CONSULTATION - CITIZENS' ASSEMBLY ON GENDER EQUALITY 2020

QUESTIONNAIRE

CA30210

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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.

Maternity leave being still mother focused. Single gender secondary schools with 'gendered' and limited subject choices. Family laws unequal treatment of parents based on gender. That we even need quotas for Women in regards to participation in national elections. The inadequate trans gender healthcare. Lack of education around gender identity along side proper sex education across the whole school system, across all students. Cost of childcare meaning one parent having to make a 'choice' between work outside or inside the home, and that 'choice' often falling on women as societal care givers.

- 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.)

Education overhaul to address the educational structures that are an impediment. Stronger state supports for provision of childcare outside the home. Healthcare system reform to not only address trans healthcare but also the wider issues within. Political Parties to be more robustly admonished for not including women (as well as minorities, differently abled, and generally more society reflective voices) Family Law to continue to work towards more equal assessment of parents and not just default to mother is best carer for children.

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.

Flexibility is often the key issue because mothers are more expected to be the primary carer for children and take time off when child is say, I'll. Punish employers through WRC frameworks when they refuse to allow father's to take time off to perform care roles. Better and more affordable provision of child care, not just infant to entering school age, but from entering school age up to 14 yrs, to allow for children to be cared for while the parents work full days outside the home. Including provisions where possible for the care of ill children in some cases where required. While quotas are a blunt instrument for making workplaces more balanced, they may be required in the short term, for either gender dependant on job type to create more equal employment in the sectors that are currently heavily gendered

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Legislative frameworks for clear instructions around building more equal workplaces. State sponsored childcare

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.

Provision of childcare is expensive and as per last section flexibility in low paid work disproportionately means care roles are still occupied primarily by women. Early

education that erodes gendered care stereotypes and shows boys it's ok to care for those around not just by going out to work in manly jobs. Encourage employers in male dominated industries to maybe have on site child care and not adversely punish men who need time off to care for children or other relatives.

- 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.)

Educational reform. State childcare for burden lifting. Better elder and disability care to help lift those care burdens through health service. Better employer guidelines (and punishments) so that people who have care duties do not suffer in career unnecessarily

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 always comes back to childcare. Some female candidates who should have stood in 2011 did not state childcare an issue, as well as work life balance. Why doesn't the Daily have creche facilities? Discourse around male vs female politician's used very gendered and often for the women, reductive language which demeans women being seen as able to hold high elected office. Strong vs Shrill, Bold vs Obstreperous, and so on. This stems from not only the journalistic area but also from the wider public due to poor education on how to not gender the characteristics of leaders. It's unintentional discrimination through words for the wider public (journalists often know what they're doing). It is incredibly difficult to be seen as a strong worthy leader if constantly portrayed as an angry, shrill, woman who only wants to give out, like a character (apologies, I cannot spell that word correctly) of an old mother.

- 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.)

Better childcare provision to allow parents who want to engage in public life to be more able to. Education around gendered stereotyping being reductive Press ombuds office to maybe examine the use of language around gender of politician's and produce guidelines to help combat gendered stereotyping which creates public mistrust of women in high office (even after we've had 2 female Presidents)

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 3
- Home & family life 1
- Education 5
- Politics and public life 4
- Media 6
- Caring for others 2
- Other – please elaborate 7

Healthcare. Trans healthcare, but also cis female presentation of major ailment symptoms such as heart attack are not always the same as for men. This needs public highlighting. So, women minimise their own needs to prioritise others because if they don't fulfill their care duties there is no one else there to do them. We need to make sure everyone gets adequate healthcare when they need it first, not when they've left it so long it's become a major issue. Early intervention is better

➤ Please outline the reasons for your answer below:

They all flow out like ripples from the home care issues, and if we don't see ourselves reflected in our public representatives or high profile career positions we are less likely to strive to reach those heights ourselves, choosing to box ourselves into our 'right' lane. Education and Media appear to have more diverse voices these days, they can still be better but they've made strides

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

I feel like this whole time I've been forced to speak in the gender binary and that's a failing of my experiences and languages education but perhaps as well about the framing of the questions. We want everyone to feel included in society and this absolutely includes those outside the cis binary. Trans people, non binary people, voices from minorities and differently abled sections of society have these equality issues with extra barriers on top because of wider societal unacceptance of them through bigotry, racism, ableism and generally not including them in societal conversations from the start. We look at the binary first and then after we look to include everyone else. I hope this forum includes people from the spectrum of Irish life so we can build solutions to all the equality issues from the word go.