

## **The Public Submission Process for the Citizen’s Assembly on Gender Equality: Gender Based Violence**

This document provides an overview of submissions that emphasised sexual violence, domestic violence, sexual abuse, coercive control, rape and sexual assault as contributory factors to and manifestations of gender inequality. These issues featured in a number of individual public submissions and were a significant focus of many organisational submissions to the public consultation process. What follows is a range of excerpts from the public submission process that indicate the most frequently mentioned aspects of violence against women and men and its connection to gender inequality.

### **1. Gender Based Violence**

**For some organisations the term Gender based Violence (GBV) refers to :**

“Gender Based Violence takes many forms, including domestic violence, sexual violence, stalking and harassment, Female Genital Mutilation, trafficking, prostitution, so called ‘honour’ crimes, forced marriage, violence in conflict and Femicide.” CA 30169 and CA 30246

**Sexual violence was defined in submissions as:**

“Sexual violence is a form of gender-based violence which targets individuals or groups on the basis of their gender. Sexual violence includes rape, sexual assault, childhood sexual violence, sexual exploitation and online sex crime. It encompasses threats and attempts to penetrate and assault also.” CA 30173

**Violence against Women was also a term understood to include:**

“Violence Against Women (VAW) is a complex, widespread issue, constituting the most serious violation of women’s human rights in Ireland today. Violence against women takes many forms including domestic violence, sexual violence, stalking and harassment, coercion, female genital mutilation (FGM), trafficking, prostitution, sexual violence as a weapon of war, institutional violence and femicide.” CA 30179

**Coercive control was detailed as a specific form of sexual violence:**

“Coercive control is a persistent and deliberate pattern of behaviour by an abuser over a prolonged period of time designed to achieve obedience and create fear. It may include coercion, threats, stalking, intimidation, isolation, degradation and control. It may also include physical and/or sexual violence. Coercive control is all about making a woman’s world smaller – trapping her, restricting her independence and freedom. A controlling partner may shut out her friends and family, control her movements, micro-manage what she eats or wears, restrict her access to money – all the time chipping away at her confidence and destroying her self-respect. “ CA30180

### **2. Women and Men and Gender Based Violence:**

**Submissions from organisations working directly with women experiencing sexual violence, rape, domestic violence and sexual harassment and assault stressed that while women and men can be victims of gender based violence women were more likely to be affected:**

“ While sexual violence impacts all genders, it primarily affects women and it has a disproportionate impact on women. In 2018, as in previous years, about 80% of those who contacted the National 24-Hour Helpline run by our centre were women. About 90% of those who availed of our therapeutic services were women. Thus, while sexual violence is no respecter of gender and while the power imbalance in relationships can impact on all genders, the impact of sexual violence on women as a gender is disproportionate to their representation in the population.” CA 30173 and CA 30179 and CA 30265

“It can happen to anyone but is predominantly perpetrated against children of both sexes and women. In addition to being a child and a woman, other characteristics such as having a disability or being LGBT can increase the likelihood of being targeted for sexual violence.” CA 30265

**Importantly men are also victims of sexual violence with some submissions arguing that the prevalence of this maybe be underestimated** CA 30074 and CA 30060.

### **3. Gender Based Violence and Gender Inequality:**

**Submissions on this topic offered their analysis of the relationship between Gender Based Violence and gender inequality:**

“Violence against women is both a cause and a consequence of women’s inequality and an obstacle to gender equality. It has physical, mental and social implications for survivors, as well as for their families and communities. In some cases, it can even lead to death. GBV (gender based violence) can hinder one’s ability to earn a living, access education and participate in social and political life.” CA 30246

“ We see first-hand the life-long consequences of the trauma and harm caused by sexual violence of all kinds. These serious consequences negatively impact health, families, relationships, social well-being, education and work.” CA30173

“ Violence against women is a serious violation of the human rights of Irish women today. Ending violence is critical to women’s success and full, equal participation in all aspects of society” CA 30194

“If gender inequality is a cause and effect of sexual violence, it is to be expected that increased gender equality will reduce sexual violence, but gender equality will be difficult to achieve without addressing sexual violence. We cannot fully understand the persistence and pervasiveness of inequalities unless we understand how domestic and sexual violence shapes and dictates our public and private spaces, individual choices and opportunities.” CA 30265

**Many organisations working in the area of violence against women and men underlined how power and control lay at the heart of such crimes. This was reflected in these analyses:**

“ Men who are raped can feel that it was a signal to them that they were judged ‘too effeminate’ and therefore ‘punishable’ by rape as a lesson for betraying masculinity. Rape in intimate partnerships is often perpetrated as a disciplining tool when the girl or woman breaks rules laid down by her partner to control her movements and freedom.” CA 30265

**This had specific implications for how women and girls, men and boys learned about public space:**

“From a young age, girls’ and boys’ freedom is gendered, most often because girls are seen as more vulnerable to assault by others. The distance from the home and the age at which boys are allowed to

move independently, (for example take the bus to town, go on unsupervised overnight stays away from home etc.) is more expansive and earlier than girls' in general." CA 30265

**Gender based violence for this submission is often a barrier to women progressing in leadership roles or participating in public life.**

"Similar to the impacts that domestic abuse and coercive control have on women's ability to actively participate in the workforce, it also has major implications for women's access to leadership and decision making. When we think of the qualities needed to progress in leadership – confidence, self-belief, optimism and positivity - they are often the very traits that are eroded by domestic abuse and coercive control." CA 30180

**The pandemic of Covid19 was understood in this submission as increasing violence against women:**

"Home is not always the safest place during the Covid-19 Crisis and there are worrying reports from China and Italy that indicate an increase in domestic violence incidents during the crisis. We must remember that workplaces and schools often offer sanctuary for victims of domestic violence. Job losses, remote working, self-isolation and other measures are already impacting on victims. The reality that the abuser may also be at home more can be very scary. " CA30275

### **3. Awareness about and recognition of Gender Based Violence**

**For many submissions violence against women has not been given the focus it should:**

"Gender violence is a massive problem which is very neglected in almost all countries. It is used to oppress and intimidate women and girls. Women are raped, sexually assaulted and harassed by family members, bosses, colleagues and to a lesser extent by strangers in the street. The problem is so endemic, it is almost not seen because violence against women is so "normal" that we almost don't see it any more." CA 30171

"The increasing levels of violence against women and children, the inadequate protection there is for domestic violence especially intimate partner violence has now reached a critical level. A high number of sexual crimes are never reported to the authorities. We ask the Citizens Assembly to urgently identify violence against women as a national crisis." CA 30196

"In December 2019, Garda Commissioner Drew Harris highlighted that more women die as a result of domestic homicide than those who die as a result of organised crime, yet there is a shocking distinction between resources and public attention to violence associated with organised crime and that associated with domestic violence. " CA 30179

### **4. The impact of Gender Based Violence:**

**Submissions detailed the range of impacts that gender based violence has. These included loss of income, and education and training opportunities:**

"In terms of the impact on education, training and employment, research shows that women who are in abusive relationships tend to experience high rates of job loss and turnover and many times are forced to quit or are fired." CA30252

“Women may be prevented from working, or their wages or social welfare payments may be taken by the perpetrator, leaving her with no independent income. Women who experience violence may have disrupted work histories, with high rates of absenteeism frequent changes in jobs and more employment in casual work. This leads to income inadequacy, perpetuating economic inequality, creating dependency and further undermining her capacity to be independent and safe, particularly if she has children.” CA 30179

“Active participation in work or education for women experiencing domestic abuse and coercive control is impeded by their partners controlling behaviour, by stress, and other trauma-inducing impacts from violence.” CA 30180

**For another submission the impacts of domestic violence in particular were far reaching:**

“Focusing more specifically on domestic violence: this form of gender based violence has both short and long term impacts on women, including on their physical health (e.g., injuries, infertility ,chronic pain, long term disability, Femicide) and mental health (e.g., low self-confidence, depression, anxiety, PTSD, suicide).” CA 30169

## **5. Gender Stereotypes and Gender Based Violence**

**Many submissions highlighted the sources of gender based violence as rooted in gender stereotypes:**

“ Social norms that maintain rigid gender roles are also perpetuating violence against women “CA 30200

“ Harmful gender stereotypes and roles imposed on us from birth and ingrained in us throughout our lives mean that we are not always equal in relationships and/or in sexual relations. We must address why a power imbalance between people can result in acts of sexual violence. Personal safety and respect, both inside and outside the home, is essential to ensure a person’s full and effective participation in all areas of life. The importance of all sexual activity being consensual and equal cannot be underestimated for a person.” CA30173

“ Societal norms value women less than men and endorse women's subordination to men. This supports domestic violence and creates stigma against women wanting to leave an abusive partner. Unequal access to resources, such as money and paid work, prevents women from leaving. Unequal political representation and lack of political priority for ‘women's issues’ is reflected in the lack of adequate and consistent funding for services and prevention work.” CA 30169

“It can be useful to think of sexual violence as a tool used to police the boundaries and conformity to gender roles. Sexual Harassment and violence is often targeted at those who ‘break the rules’.” CA 30265

“Gender norms and stereotypes bleeding into the public’s views of sexual and domestic violence – such as women ‘ask’ to be raped by their actions and clothing choice and men cannot get raped – these beliefs are deeply problematic. While the majority of Irish people do believe that violence against women is unacceptable, worryingly, between 7 and 11 per cent believe that walking home alone, wearing certain clothing and going home with someone made intercourse without consent acceptable. These rates are unacceptable, especially when we consider that the latter group of people may be

sitting on juries, investigating a rape or in contact with someone who has been raped or sexually assaulted.” CA 30191

“ The highly gendered nature of coercive control and domestic abuse both creates and maintains gender norms and stereotypes.” CA 30180

**Gender stereotypes were also suggested to shape society and state responses to violence against women and men:**

“Systems that have been designed around the male norm often do not respond well to women’s experiences.” CA 30169

“Additionally, research tells us that traditional patriarchal attitudes and behaviours towards sex and gender roles often result in poor social response to male violence against women.” CA 30180

**Measures suggested to counter such stereotypes and raise awareness of gender based violence included:**

“Place emphasis on promoting positive gender stereotypes across public policies, and across all media.” CA 30189

“Public awareness should be increased through media campaigns, school and college education programmes and community outreach.” CA 30194

**For many submissions education on gender norms and was key to tackling violence against women and men:**

“Social problems like pornography, prostitution and rape culture, which depend on objectification of and violence towards women, would have to be tackled head on by the state and in education.” CA 30239

“That prevention and accountability is fully prioritised across all publicly funded education settings. And that all prevention is informed by the realities of gender inequality, sexism, misogyny and all other forms of hate.” CA 30265

**Education and training for service providers was also recommended:**

“Education and training in the particular vulnerability of women and girls to sexual violence needs to be a priority for decision makers and influencers, whether they are in Government, the judiciary, the civil service, the Garda, the DPP’s office, the media, education or elsewhere.” CA 30265

**For others sex education could play a significant role:**

“The state should ensure mandatory sex education and healthy relationships education in schools.” CA 30142

“ Self-defence classes need to become part of the school sports curriculum, in particular for girls. Sex education for all pupils from a certain age is vital and if teachers are not happy to do this, then trained experts should be brought in for special workshops on the subject.” CA30171

“The National Council for Curriculum Assessment (NCCA) has recently published recommendations recognising the need to update the now 21 year old programme around sexuality education and consent. Children and young people have a right to information and education on basic matters that affect their physical, mental and emotional development and well-being.” CA 30173

“Legislate for an Objective Sex Education that addresses all forms of VAW (intimate partner abuse, sexual assault/rape, coercive control, prostitution and pornography).” CA 30179

“ The National Education Curriculum, at both primary and post primary level, should develop and deliver a comprehensive, continuous, age appropriate relationships and sex education programme, that is fully informed by a gender (in)equality lens.” CA 30169

## **6. Services and Supports for women and men experiencing violence:**

### **Services for women and men experiencing violence were deemed insufficient especially by international standards:**

“ Under the Istanbul Convention, Ireland is obliged to provide for a sufficient amount of bed spaces in protective refuges for victims of domestic violence. The recommended amount is 1 bed to every 10,000 people in Ireland. With a population of 4.73 million, Ireland’s 131 refuge beds fall far short of the recommended 473 beds required. The situation is even more difficult in rural areas where services need to cover wider catchment areas. “CA 30247

“During the last recession, funding to domestic violence services was significantly cut. However, demand for services and the need for responses to more complex cases continued to increase. The infrastructure has never fully recovered and has never been properly resourced to recover from eight years of austerity. “ CA 30191

### **For this submission male victims of violence were not receiving adequate support:**

“There is not a single centre for male victims in the whole of the greater Dublin area, where more than one million people live. The nearest one is in Navan. Yet this centre in Navan, currently the home of Anyman, is only able to offer a very limited 9 to 5 service from Monday to Friday, with no service on weekends.” CA30074

### **Efforts to work with male perpetrators were also viewed as inadequate:**

“Even when men are referred to programmes, these are massively under resourced (via the Department of justice) with skeleton staff trying to work effectively with a vast range of men, from the most dangerous members of the public to men who have poor communication and self-management skills. Many of these men have also experienced adverse childhood experiences and these intersect with male privilege, to make a lethal cocktail for the women and children who are in intimate relationships with them.” CA 30103

### **Organisations appealed for additional funds to support organisations and services, including preventative programmes:**

“Legislate for ring-fenced funding to combat violence against women” CA 30265 and CA 30179

“The Domestic Sexual and Gender Based Violence sector be fully resourced to prevent and respond to all forms of sexual, intimate partner and domestic violence adequately.” CA 30180, CA 30169

#### **7. Gender Based Violence and Marginalised Women and Men:**

**For many submissions marginalised women from different communities and in different circumstances faced heightened risks of violence:**

**Migrant or ethnic minority women were identified as facing specific risks:**

“Migrant women are disproportionately represented in figures of women presenting to frontline domestic and sexual violence services. These women face additional barriers to accessing support including language barriers, cultural norms and stigma, knowledge of services, immigration status dependency, lack of staff training, and Habitual Residence Condition.” CA 30247

**Immigration status and lack of economic independence were viewed as complicating migrant women’s access to refuge services:**

“Access to shelters for undocumented women is often on a cases by case basis, due in part to capacity issues, but also the requirement to hold a Stamp 4 to access services – due to funding. It is increasingly difficult for migrant women without an immigration status to access shelters and supports.” CA 30260

“So many domestic workers, au pairs, women working in the caring industry and those exploited in the sex trade are migrant women. These workers have no voice and cannot complain, fearing for their visa status or being forced into homelessness. Trafficking for domestic servitude and trafficking for forced marriage are often combined with sexual violence. Migrant women who do not have an autonomous immigration status (status in their own right) are especially vulnerable in situation of domestic abuse.” CA 30254

**For this submission living in Direct Provision increases vulnerability to domestic violence and sexual harassment:**

“On top of the existing vulnerabilities to domestic violence that migrant women face, women in Direct Provision have extra risk factors and barriers to support. Families living in close quarters, lack of personal independence, lack of effective access to employment and social opportunities strain mental health and heighten tensions within families and put women, children and men at risk.” CA 30247

**For another submission women trafficked for sexual exploitation experienced violence yet their needs were poorly met by the Direct Provision system:**

“The State continues to accommodate trafficked victims in centres designated for asylum. Early sexualised vulnerable women are often propositioned inside and outside the centre, and they are preyed upon by buyers of sex in the vicinity of the centres and near the bus stops in town, with busses bringing them to the hostels.” CA 30255

**Recommendations from a number of organisations stressed the need to design policies with the specific circumstances of migrant women and girls in mind:**

“A policy specific to victims of domestic violence and gender-based violence that grants expedited independent status allowing access to services including social welfare, refuges/ housing.” CA 30260

**Immigration status was a key element of recommendations:**

“Grant urgent autonomous status to migrant women that provides access to the relevant State services for domestic violence, and that allows them to work and support themselves and their children, on par with other Irish or resident women who flee this violence. “ CA 30255

**Female Genital Mutilation** was also underscored as a form of gender based violence affecting women and girls: CA 30246 CA 30247 CA 30194 CA 30267

**Traveller and Roma women were identified as vulnerable to violence and poorly served at times by existing services:**

“Language and literacy barriers, fear of negative treatment and discrimination in services, and inability to secure employment and safe and adequate accommodation/housing all act as barriers. This leaves Traveller and Roma women with very little concrete options but to stay in abusive relationships or leave and end up homeless. “CA 30264

**Suggestions made to address the barriers that Traveller and Roma women experience included:**

“Fully resource the Traveller and Roma sector to undertake awareness raising and preventative work on domestic, sexual and gender-based violence to reduce barriers to information.” CA 30264

**LGBTI+ students were also identified as vulnerable to sexual harassment and sexual violence**

“ (In our survey) 43% of LGBTI+ students were sexually harassed (e.g. unwanted touching or sexual remarks). Society and culture shape norms for what is considered an appropriate expression of one’s gender. Those who express themselves in a manner considered to be atypical may experience criticism, harassment and sometimes violence.” CA 30254

**One suggestion from LGBTI+ groups included:**

“Create a more supportive and inclusive environment for LGBTI+ young people in formal education setting” CA 30188

**The risks of violence for older women and men were also an area of concern:**

“ Unpublished research into the Family Court shows that in one year, 72% of cases involved mothers applying for protection, and 84% concerned sons that were abusive to one or both parents. This challenge to gender equality in the right to live free from violence is a particular risk for older age groups, as women constitute a much higher proportion of the vulnerable over-75 population, with three women to every two men in this age group. “ CA 30187



**Older people were understood as vulnerable due to a series of factors:**

“For example, poor health and isolation in older people can increase resistance to reporting problems if the perpetrator also provides essential support for them to live independently. Poor health and isolation can also reduce older people’s ability to seek help if they have mobility or hearing issues and reduce their interaction and thus perception that there is anyone else to help them.” CA 30187

**For older women economic dependency in the form of dependent status in social welfare payments and the gender pension gap created additional risk factors for violence:**

“This payment method which provides an additional payment to the main claimant in order to support an ‘adult dependent’, sees 97% of IQA payments to pension recipients made to men. This embeds a dependency relationship that increases the risk of financial abuse in partnerships where we know that women are more at risk: women are seven times more likely to experience severe abuse where their partner controls decisions about money.” CA 30187

**Another submission drew attention to how women involved in community organising can experience Gender based harassment:**

“This submission emerges out of our local experiences of activism and organising in recent years, during which we have endured and observed a sharp increase in gender-based harassment, threats and hate-attacks both online and offline.” CA 30252

**One submission outlined violence, abuse and discrimination experienced by women and girls in the past in Institutional contexts**, including the circumstances of illegal and forced adoption in which mothers and children were separated from each other and the impact of this separation.” CA 30113

**A link between domestic violence and homelessness and homelessness and sexual violence featured in submissions by both individuals and organisation’s:**

“Domestic violence is a contributor to women’s homelessness, yet women who are residing in emergency domestic violence refuges are not counted in the monthly homelessness figures. A high percentage of women in homeless services have experienced some form of violence or abuse at some point in their lives.” CA 30191

“Women experiencing homelessness were also understood as at risk of violence and in need of integrated help in the form of accommodation, mental health services and community supports for women.” CA 30194

**For some submissions some women were placed at increased risk of violence by law and policy:**

“Marginalised women are not listened to about the reality of our lives. For example sex workers, who are an extremely disenfranchised group who are almost invisible in Irish society were ignored in the formulation of the laws around sex work in Ireland in 2015. This has led to increased violence, a 92% increase and a plummet in trust in the Gardaí.” CA 30244 and CA301091

**Another submission disagreed arguing that sex work was a form of sexual exploitation and in itself violence against women:**

“In order to shift attitudes to commercial sexual exploitation, reduce its prevalence, and move towards a societal understanding of it as a form of violence against women, the government must continue to resource awareness-raising and education initiatives, including measures to deter demand.” CA 30202 and CA 30254

## **8. Online Digital and Social Media and Gender Based Violence and Exploitation.**

**A number of submissions highlighted sexual exploitation, sexual harassment and sexual violence in online, digital and social media contexts:**

“Women are still held to a different standard than men and receive more threats of violence against them on social media, this abuse needs to be addressed”. CA 30235

“ Online gender-based sexual violence is real and can have profoundly negative effects on a person. This more recent type of sexual violence is already proving to be quite prevalent, particularly towards young women. Online sexual violence includes: Non-consensual sharing of intimate images and videos (also known as revenge porn); Online exploitation, coercion and threats; Online sexual harassment; Sextortion; and Unwanted online sexual conduct. “CA30173

“ We still do not have an adequate laws involving harmful behaviour online. Sexually explicit material, much of it depicting women as subservient, degraded and automatically available to gratify men, is far too readily available to impressionable adolescent males and adult males. If this material does not involve child victims or persons purporting to be child victims, access to it is little regulated.” C30265

**Submissions highlighting online sexual abuse suggested:**

“ An office of Digital Safety Commissioner be established, and that legislation is enacted to criminalise online harmful communications; A commonly accepted definition of this form of violence must be acknowledged and a strategy to deal with online sexual violence must be implemented.” CA30173 and CA 30265

“This work should include the establishment of an Online Safety Commissioner and the development of legislation to criminalise online harmful communications, including image based harassment (also known as revenge porn), online stalking and harassment and digital coercion and exploitation. Online abuse and harassment has been identified as key methods being used to target women in public life and diminish the voice and agency of women in politics and civil society.” CA 30179

## **9. The Criminal Justice System and Gender Based Violence:**

**Many submissions detailed shortcomings in the criminal justice system’s approach to sexual violence, sexual harassment, rape and domestic violence:**

**The legal system was for some submissions not always a place of support for women experiencing violence as gender stereotypes and rape myths sometimes led to victim blaming:**

“ The credibility and reputation of the complainant in a sexual offences case is regularly the main

focus of the defence of an accused person. Thus, harmful stereotypes about how a person looked or dressed can influence how an investigation and trial proceeds. This in turn means that victims of sexual violence may be reluctant to access appropriate remedies in our legal and justice system.” CA 30173

“Both within the justice system and in wider society, the victim of sexual violence is often blamed for what happened to them. This leads to a real reluctance to report offenders ”CA 30173

“That a woman or girl who dresses or acts in such a way or who has allegedly (or admittedly, on other occasions) consented to sex with the accused or others, is less likely to be a credible witness.” CA 30265

**Low rates of conviction were seen as directly related to low rates of reporting of sexual offences:**

“ Women are afraid - rape convictions so low as to make rape legal “. CA 30235

“Sexual offence reporting rates are notoriously low. These cases have a very high rate of drop-off after reporting, occurring at many different stages in the criminal justice system. This impacts on our whole society, including permitting those who carry out the abuse to continue free from sanction or accountability.” CA 30173

**Suggestions to improve victim’s experiences in the criminal Justice system included:**

“That the justice system is overhauled to treat survivors better and ensure that it is capable of understanding and responding to all forms of gender-based violence, both in the criminal justice system and elsewhere, in particular that a full family welfare system is put in place in special family courts” CA 30265

“ That victims of sexual violence have adequate and timely access to the services that they need in the health and justice systems; That comprehensive, trauma-informed training is provided to all personnel involved in providing frontline services to victims of domestic, sexual and gender based violence; “CA 30173

**For this submission services needed to be designed in ways that encouraged women to seek help and support their long-term recovery:**

“Fundamental issues such as removing women from their homes, leaving them to move to locations outside of their areas, away from supports, schools etc. are no longer an appropriate response to the issue of violence and only further exacerbates the problems and trauma experienced by women and children. Some women also put off reaching out for help for fear that they will be judged or have their children taken away from them by the state.” CA 30191

**Other submissions asked for reform of family court processes:**

“Resources must be allocated to the reform of crucial state processes connected with the issue of VAW including the family law courts system and the development of a model of multi-agency Domestic Homicide Reviews. An integrated courts welfare system should be established with appropriate facilities and wraparound services for victims of sexual violence.” CA 30179

“Legislate for the establishment of a dedicated and integrated family court.” CA 30265

#### **10. Work and Gender Based Violence and Sexual Harassment:**

##### **Sexual harassment in the workplace was highlighted in a variety of submissions:**

“Violence and harassment in the workplace deprive people of their dignity, is incompatible with decent work, and is a threat to equal opportunities and to a safe, healthy, and productive working environment. It remains a widespread phenomenon, present in all countries and disregarding sectors, occupations and work arrangements. While both women and men experience violence and harassment at work, unequal status and power relations in society and at work often result in women being far more exposed to violence and harassment.” CA 30246

##### **Research conducted by this organisation found:**

“. Four in five workers (81%) took no action, while only one in four of the small minority who did report sexual harassment to their employer felt it was taken seriously and dealt with satisfactorily.” CA30275.

##### **Employers were seen to have a special role in protecting workers from sexual harassment and assault:**

“ We need to see employers in Ireland committing to more urgent action and to communicating a zero tolerance for harassing behaviours in the workplace. Employers who fail to meet their obligations in relation to sexual harassment should face significant sanctions.” CA30275.

##### **Workers experiencing domestic violence were also viewed as requiring special supports:**

“Co-workers may be aware of a colleague’s abuse but in the absence of a workplace policy are unsure on how best to support them. Managers need guidance on how to recognise the signs of domestic abuse and how to respond to a staff member’s disclosure. Employers have a duty of care to their staff and workplace health and safety procedures should include provisions that acknowledge domestic violence.” CA 30204 and CA 30251

##### **Many submissions referenced specific initiatives that could address work based sexual harassment:**

“To ratify the ILO Convention 190 on gender-based violence to address the intersection of violence and women’s economic inequality and harassment in the work place.” CA 30196 CA 30246, CA 30179 CA 30267 CA 30183 CA30275. CA 30169

##### **A central recommendation for a number of submissions was for paid leave for those experiencing domestic and intimate partner abuse and sexual violence:**

“Legislate for a minimum of 10 days paid leave for persons experiencing domestic and intimate partner abuse and violence.” CA 30179 CA 30204 CA 30266 CA 30183 CA30275. CA 30169

#### **11. Recommendations on Policy and Legislation to Combat Gender Based Violence:**

##### **A number of submissions identified gaps in research and data on violence against women:**

“ Currently no monitoring body exists in Ireland to account for occurrences of gender-based hate attacks, and/or the impact of these attacks on gender-equality in Ireland. “ CA 30252

“ Ensure that the National Office for the Prevention of Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence implement the “gold standard” so that data on all forms of gender-based violence against women are systematically collected and analysed and disaggregated by, inter alia, age, ethnicity and relationship with the perpetrator. There is no current proposal to begin research on the extent of sexual violence among vulnerable minority groups: like Travellers, members of the LGBTQI, disabled and migrant communities.” CA 30179

**Another submission was representative of many in requesting**

“ To develop a third National Plan on domestic, sexual and gender based violence to ensure that Ireland fully meets the requirement of the Istanbul Convention.” CA 30179

**A majority of organisational submissions called for a dedicated independent office to be made responsible for the state’s response to Sexual, Domestic and Gender Based Violence:**

“The establishment of a National Rapporteur for Sexual Domestic and gender based violence and exploitation reporting regularly to Government on progress achieved, with adequate resources and powers to develop recommendations and monitor their implementation through a third national action plan.” CA 30179 CA 30265 CA 30172 CA 30182 CA 30267 CA 30169 CA 30255 CA 30173 CA 30188 CA 30187 CA 30246

Submissions also made the request for a **separate Citizen’s Assembly to be established on Violence against Women** CA 30179, CA 30262