

PUBLIC CONSULTATION - CITIZENS' ASSEMBLY ON GENDER EQUALITY 2020

QUESTIONNAIRE

CA30007

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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.

Ideas that boys and girls form about themselves as they grow are heavily informed by their own bodies as much as the world around them. Boys are far less empathetic and interested in people for example which lends itself to them wanting to be out doing something rather than being in the home caring for the place or the people in it while the inverse is generally true for girls. There are of course exceptions and there have been all throughout history but the standards of a mother as homemaker and father as being out working grew from these basic impulses. Its not that they fall prey to stereotypes its simply that children are more honest with themselves about what they want than the average adult. The only thing restricting men and women from doing things education and career wise is what they are interested in.

- 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.)

There are no steps that need to be taken. To "combat" this there will inevitably be the need to infringe on the rights of people to coerce or force them into changing to suit the nebulous idea of equality. In a truly equal society there would be no requirement for everyone to reach an equal outcome. When everyone is equal in the ability to make life choices there will inevitably be an unequal outcome and that is perfectly fine.

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.

Women tend to favour a better work life balance and as a result tend to opt for lower paying jobs with better hours or greater flexibility in terms of work schedule. They also rarely work overtime when compared to men. In fact the vast majority of the supposed gender pay gap is explained by choice. Men work on average 3.5 hours more per week. When two people with similar education levels and tenure in a company are up for promotion the company will usually opt for the harder worker and if all things are equal aside from hours worked they will clearly choose the harder worker. Now this is not a universal law. There are plenty of women that work harder and longer than the average man at their job and those women can and do succeed. The only thing holding most people back in these areas is themselves.

- 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.)

There is no fair way to "combat" an issue that is almost entirely down to personal choice.

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 theme in law, policy and practice.

Childcare costs will not change for the better unless there is a price fixing initiative in place which will either require a premium be paid by the state or there will simply be less childcare options as they will no longer be profitable. In terms of women being affected more by being a stay at home parent or carer well that is unavoidable for most. If you leave work to have a child it unfortunately comes with a forced absence of several weeks to several months where you essentially stall any possible work advancement. In cases where you have a partner that is still able to work then naturally they would have the burden of covering the costs of the household which ultimately would put them off using any parental leave that might otherwise be available to them. The options for most tend to be one stays off for a prolonged period or they both stall their work to take some paid and some unpaid leave which will almost always require one of them to still take a prolonged period off work. That's just the reality of the situation. A tiny human or a person with special needs or an elderly dependent will require more care and the one on the smaller income is the best choice to sacrifice their job in order to maximise the options for the family and due to personal choices associated with work this usually works out to be the woman.

- 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.)

Beyond price fixing childcare there is no real solution and as stated price fixing is no real solution.

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.

Economics and politics are two fields that require long hours of thankless work and in the case of politics it's more long hours of work that will make you an enemy of at least half the people in the country at any given time. They are stressful fields that typically only appeal to a small number of hyper competitive people. The vast majority of men would not want such roles and they are genetically predisposed to those kinds of

careers with being more competitive and more likely to be risk takers etc. It stands to reason that most women would be less likely to choose to enter those fields. We are talking about areas where you need to be bloodthirsty and often cruel as well as two faced. As stated most people especially women are not suited to such things.

- 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.)

You cannot force people to do a thing they ultimately are not willing to do and the requirements for these things are outside of what the vast majority of people are willing to do.

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 5
- Home & family life 4
- Education 1
- Politics and public life 6
- Media 77
- Caring for others 3
- Other – please elaborate 2

Other is placed as a nebulous idea.

- Please outline the reasons for your answer below:

The vast majority of areas are down to personal choice. Women are equally represented in media so that is not even worth discussing. The only thing that really has any issue with gender equality is education but it tends to be the boys getting shafted there. Almost no male role models as male teachers tend to find it much harder to find employment. Girls are favoured over boys in many decisions in schools. The entire school setting is designed to favour girls as well. Boys work better in a

more practical setting while our current theory based schooling system favours girls far more.

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