

PUBLIC CONSULTATION - CITIZENS' ASSEMBLY ON GENDER EQUALITY 2020

QUESTIONNAIRE

CA30092

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.

Key barrier are the societal structural norms that continue to exist. Women still do majority of child care, house work and other caring roles. Men who opt to do child care etc are considered exceptional. Women who want to succeed in workplace have to act like a man to get promotion and this includes possibility of delaying or not having children. Work practices are not family friendly for either gender and homemaking, child rearing are completely de-valued.

- 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.)

Societal wide change required across all sectors education, family, community organisation, media, industry and in particular fashion industry. Need to move away from valuing women based on physical appearance and in this regard women and young girls need to be educated and offered alternative ways of valuing self.

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).

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Belief that men are breadwinners still prevails with both men and women. Assumption that women will undertake childcare and other caring responsibilities and this is natural! Funding of caring in Irish society is completely inadequate and this evidenced by low pay of caring professions Nursing, child care, social care. While men are small proportion of professions such as nursing, teaching they continue to occupy most senior positions thus increasing their pay. Men in senior positions also promote other men

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Investment in work areas traditionally associated with particular genders such as child care, cleaning, hospitality industry, food production etc to enhance opportunities. This issue also has a class aspect so is not completely determined by gender

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.

Families tend to hand over care of dependant elderly to one or two people, typically single women who are also trying to work to support themselves. Presumption that all families want to or can care. Failure to recognise impact of this or to provide financial support to support carer to for example reduce workign hours. Traditionally, value placed on childhood by Irish society and on care and rearing practices is very low . Poor recognition of the importance of early childhood experiences and how these impact later health and wellbeing with potential to enhance societal wellbeing and productivity and reduce impact of physical and mental illness. No adequate regulation of childcare.

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Examination of how childhood is viewed by Irish society with recognition of healthy approaches. Provision of parenting classes to all potential parents - embed in second level and third level education. Community education and support of new parents, adequate funding, regulation and provision of quality child care. Support parents particularly those with existing challenging situations including addiction, physical health issues e.g. cancers and mental health issues with use of for example home helps. Access to supportive counselling to support health and not just for illness.

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.

Lack of opportunity, exclusion, competing demands of family and home life.

- 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.)

Support in work and education. Current approach to promoting STEM for girls could be adopted to target other areas for example attracting more males to caring professions.

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 4
- Education 2
- Politics and public life 5
- Media 66
- Caring for others 3
- Other – please elaborate 7

Personal safety - it can be very frightening at times when subjected to unwanted attention - risk of assault, being robbed etc.

➤ Please outline the reasons for your answer below:

The area I am most aware of is my work life. I am better qualified than majority of my male colleagues yet have not been afforded the same opportunities. Even though I work in a predominantly female profession, the senior ranks are male and they have almost always put other males into senior positions despite being less qualified or experienced. This has impacted my salary and ultimately my pension

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