

PUBLIC CONSULTATION - CITIZENS' ASSEMBLY ON GENDER EQUALITY 2020

QUESTIONNAIRE

CA30201	Name: Peter O'Hara
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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.

Barrier 1. Society and its culture says that there are basic differences between the features of male and female humans (other than the 2 different sets of sexual organs and the secondary sexual characteristics – body size, muscle-fat ratio, voice, hair, pelvis). The features that the culture incorrectly ascribes to male and female humans are mostly mental. There is a small physical aspect, of exaggerating the 2:3 ratio of average muscle mass and physical strength so that it becomes a categorical unsuitability of the female sex for some physical work. This and the mental ascriptions resemble a dilute or weak version of the beliefs about women up to the end of the 19th century that society used at that time to not let women do certain jobs (some professional and some dirty or unpleasant jobs). Belief in these differences still lead some people to not try some things because they believe that they are not very able; and it leads to other people not considering that set of people for some jobs. Few people speak publicly (even informally) against the stereotypes, and very few persons agree even partly with a person who speaks against the stereotypes.

Barrier 2. Schools socialise children in the same culture as in Barrier 1, perhaps more strongly. Teachers have less freedom to be like an individual parent (who may speak against the stereotypes), and the other children pass the culture to each particular child. A school not for all sexes or genders together reinforces the stereotypes further.

Challenge 1. Getting culture to change.

Challenge 2. Getting a Government to ignore the mistaken ideas of some officials in the Department of Education that the department does not have the final say on schools, while the Minister does in fact have the final say (at least, on the National Schools); and getting the Government to fight fully against school officials who think that they, especially religious school operators, can oppose the State while the State pays.

- 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.)

Step 1. *State*. We should amend the Constitution, that is, replace Article 41.1.1 to 41.3.1 inclusive, with new words (1) to reduce the support of marriage to a more modest statement, (2) to define a family by the child (not by the parent(s) whether married or not) and promise a child's right to remain a member of all the families to which he/ she has belonged, and (3) to state the right of all persons to a life of both work (paid or not) and caring for children and other persons – and to remove the present statements in Article 41.1.1 to 41.3.1. Of these new words, the new words in (2) and (3) are part of this Step; and, of the present words, all of 41.2.1 and 41.2.2 must be removed.

Step 2. *State*. Have widespread public talk, on TV, radio, and other media, being messages from the Government, that the bulk of what people commonly think are automatically different between humans of different genders are not so but are due to our culture. Public notices of this sort have changed the culture about drinking alcohol and driving a vehicle, from this being your right and Gardaí who stop you on the road being spoilsports (in the 1960s), to young adults deliberately not taking alcohol if driving (in the 2000s).

Step 3. *State, Education System*. Train all teachers in non-sexism. There are fewer teachers than parents, so this is a smaller job. The training will be complicated, because the words and acts that promote the sexist ideas are much more numerous than you might at first think, and include many small words and acts.

The State is responsible to ensure children get a minimum of education (Constitution, Article 42.3.2), so the State must get schools to change (and the State has power from the Constitution to make schools change). Parents have a larger effect on children, but their change depends on Step 2.

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.

The law (Employment Equality Act) is fairly firm to oppose this discrimination, though maybe not perfect.

Barrier 1. The Constitution, Article 41.1.1 to 41.3.1, tells us that people of one gender should do caring in the home and should not be obliged to engage in labour, and sets no

such limits on the other large gender – which surely means that people of this other gender should do less caring and more labour.

Barrier 2. The law cannot stop employers, both formal and informal, from thinking about gender and family status at the times that they are assessing candidates for a job. Society and its culture says that there are basic differences between the features of male and female humans (other than the 2 different sets of sexual organs and the secondary sexual characteristics – body size, muscle-fat ratio, voice, hair, pelvis). The features that the culture incorrectly ascribes to male and female humans are mostly mental. There is a small physical aspect, of exaggerating the 2:3 ratio of average muscle mass and physical strength so that it becomes a categorical unsuitability of the female sex for some physical work. This and the mental ascriptions resemble a dilute or weak version of the beliefs about women up to the end of the 19th century that society used at that time to not let women do certain jobs (some professional and some dirty or unpleasant jobs). Belief in these differences still lead some people to not try some things because they believe that they are not very able; and it leads to other people not considering that set of people for some jobs. Few people speak publicly (even informally) against the stereotypes, and very few persons agree even partly with a person who speaks against the stereotypes. If these differences were true, they would support the differential employment described in Theme 2. Any one person who says that the differences in employment are unreasonable commonly receives an answer either to support the stereotype or to deny any real discrimination (including blaming those who do not get higher jobs for not trying for higher jobs).

Barrier 3. The situation of Theme 2 is there in most of Ireland (and other places) for most of the lives of people, so to some degree they accept what happens, even if they can see that it is wrong.

Barrier 4. The society's culture (of Theme 3) causes prospective employers to think about a female applicant being absent from work some time of a day or week, or some months continuously, because of family status; and causes them not to think of this about a male applicant. For the same reasons, the candidates also may have confidence or lack confidence that they will get the job, and confidence affects how likely they will get the job.

Barrier 5. A fairly standard working week is about 40 hours (may be a little under 40 hours). There are also jobs that officially last 40 hours per week, but the employer expects all or most workers to do 50 or 60 hours (sometimes with no extra pay). In these jobs, workers who work the longer hours set the standard that has the most effect on a new worker also choosing the long hours.

Barrier 6. In some workplaces, at least for some jobs (mostly higher managerial), employers (due to the culture) adjust the requirements for the job towards the male stereotype; and for some other jobs, towards the female stereotype.

Challenge 1. Getting society's culture to change.

Challenge 2. Getting culture within employing organisations to change. The changes will likely make it easier to employ staff, as there will be fewer versions of jobs in the matter of the working week, but some employers will think the changes will make things more difficult.

Challenge 3. Getting voters and government to accept that childcare be a State service just as Health and Education, to which it actually closely relates.

- 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.)

Step 1. *State*. We should amend the Constitution, that is, replace Article 41.1.1 to 41.3.1 inclusive, with new words (1) to reduce the support of marriage to a more modest statement, (2) to define a family by the child (not by the parent(s) whether married or not) and promise a child's right to remain a member of all the families to which he/ she has belonged, and (3) to state the right of all persons to a life of both work (paid or not) and caring for children and other persons – and to remove the present statements in Article 41.1.1 to 41.3.1. Of these new words, the new words in (2) and (3) are part of this Step; and, of the present words, all of 41.2.1 and 41.2.2 must be removed.

The Dáil and Senate should then make a new law to direct all employers to treat employees and prospective employees as if employees are sure to exercise the right to look after their own children and/or other children and adults. This law should mention the relevant natural feature of humans as in Step 2.

Step 2. *State*. Widespread public talk, TV, radio, other media, being messages from the Government, that is it natural for every human to care for children, and for other people, as well as to do work of other sorts (whether paid or not), and that the present division of caring mostly by females and other work mostly by males subtracts from the rights of all people; and that the bulk of what people commonly think are automatically different between male and female humans are not so but are due to our culture.

Step 3. *State, other employers*. The time for work in a standard job (“full-time”) should become 30 hours per week. This will mean that a candidate, of any gender, will know that that is what this employer intends, that a candidate (most of the time) does not have to ask for special (short) hours so as to mind children or other people, and that the employer must give a post of 30 hours per week, and so has a low interest in which gender of person to employ.

In addition, employers should allow that employees of any gender can have time off work for caring for children or other persons when the latter need extra care. Employers should give this time to persons of any gender, and encourage employees of any gender to ask for this, and prohibit employees deriding any employee who seeks or receives such time off.

Two parents of one set of children could commonly be able to have one of them minding the children for all the time not at school. When they cannot get their 2 jobs to not overlap in time, and where there is only one parent, childcare as in Step 4 will enable the parent to have a job.

Step 4. *State*. The State should itself organise and pay for places of childcare. These should exist in all districts, in the same way as schools are there over all the country. This will increase consistency of standards. As education is from cradle to grave, the State childcare centres will involve the State's duty to give a minimum of education (Constitution, Article 42.3.2).

If Steps 1 to 3 happen, some parents (both working) will use a small number of hours of this childcare, and some couples may need none; single parents will need fewer hours than they do now; and the cost of this (in this plan, through your tax) may not be as large as the cost of childcare as envisaged now.

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.

Barrier 1. The Constitution, Article 41.1.1 to 41.3.1, tells us that people of one gender should do caring and not so much labour, and that implies the reverse for the other large gender. Article 41 makes no mention of independent income for people in any gender.

Barrier 2. Society and its culture says that there are basic differences between the features of male and female humans (other than the 2 different sets of sexual organs and the secondary sexual characteristics – body size, muscle-fat ratio, voice, hair, pelvis). The features that the culture incorrectly ascribes to male and female humans are mostly mental. There is a small physical aspect, of exaggerating the 2:3 ratio of average muscle mass and physical strength so that it becomes a categorical unsuitability of the female sex for some physical work. This and the mental ascriptions resemble a dilute or weak version of the beliefs about women up to the end of the 19th century that society used at that time to not let women do certain jobs (some professional and some dirty or unpleasant jobs). Belief in these differences still lead some people to not try some things because they believe that they are not very able; and it leads to other people not considering that set of people for some jobs. Few people speak publicly (even informally) against the stereotypes, and very few persons agree even partly with a person who speaks against the stereotypes. If these differences were true, this would tell male humans that it is not right for them to do caring, including for their own children. This would also support the shorter hours of non-caring work by female humans, more hours caring, and stop them asking any male human to do any of the caring work. (Here I mean, asking a male human, whom that female human knows, whose suitability for this caring work would be obvious if it were not for the Constitutional and cultural “lower suitability” of male humans). The female humans not so often asking the male humans to help, causes the male humans to agree with the Constitution’s and the culture’s view that they are not suited to caring.

Barrier 3. A fairly standard working week is about 40 hours (may be a little under 40 hours). There are also jobs that officially last 40 hours per week, but the employer expects all or most workers to do 50 or 60 hours (sometimes with no extra pay). In these jobs, workers who work the longer hours set the standard that has the most effect on a new worker also choosing the long hours. The long hours of work in a fairly standard job is too long to leave time for caring.

Challenge 1. Getting society’s culture to change.

Challenge 2. Getting culture within employing organisations to change. The changes will likely make it easier to employ staff, as there will be fewer versions of jobs in the matter of the working week, but some employers will think the changes will make things more

difficult.

Challenge 3. Getting voters and government to accept that childcare be a State service just as Health and Education, to which it actually closely relates.

- 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.)

Step 1. *State.* We should amend the Constitution, that is, replace Article 41.1.1 to 41.3.1 inclusive, with new words (1) to reduce the support of marriage to a more modest statement, (2) to define a family by the child (not by the parent(s) whether married or not) and promise a child's right to remain a member of all the families to which he/ she has belonged, and (3) to state the right of all persons to a life of both work (paid or not) and caring for children and other persons – and to remove the present statements in Article 41.1.1 to 41.3.1. Of these new words, the new words in (2) and (3) are part of this Step; and, of the present words, all of 41.2.1 and 41.2.2 must be removed. For Theme 3, the new part (3), to state the right of all persons to a life of both work (paid or not) and caring for children and other persons, is the important part.

Step 2. *State.* Have widespread public talk, on TV, radio, other media, being messages from the Government, that it is natural for every human to care for children, and for other people, as well as to do work of other sorts (whether paid or not), and that the present division of caring and other work partly by gender subtracts from the rights of all people; and that the bulk of what people commonly think are automatically different between male and female humans are not so but are due to our culture.

Step 3. *State, other employers.* The time for work in a standard job (“full-time”) should become 30 hours per week. This will mean that a candidate, of any gender, will know that that is what this employer intends, that a candidate (most of the time) does not have to ask for special (short) hours so as to mind children or other people, and that the employer must give a post of 30 hours per week, and so has a low interest in which gender of person to employ.

In addition, employers should allow that employees of any gender can have time off work for caring for children or other persons when the latter need extra care. Employers should give this time to persons of any gender, and encourage employees of any gender to ask for this, and prohibit employees deriding any employee who seeks or receives such time off.

Two parents of one set of children could commonly be able to have one of them minding the children for all the time not at school. When they cannot get their 2 jobs to not overlap in time, and where there is only one parent, childcare as in Step 4 will enable the parent to have a job.

Step 4. *State.* The State should itself organise and pay for places of childcare. These should exist in all districts, in the same way as schools are there over all the country. This will increase consistency of standards. As education is from cradle to grave, the State childcare centres will involve the State's duty to give a minimum of education (Constitution, Article 42.3.2).

If Steps 1 to 3 happen, some parents (both working) will use a small number of hours of this childcare, and some couples may need none; single parents will need fewer hours than they do now; and the cost of this (in this plan, through your tax) may not be as large as the cost of childcare as envisaged now.

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.

Barrier 1. The Constitution, Article 41.1.1 to 41.3.1, tells us that people of one gender should do caring in the home and should not be obliged to engage in labour, and sets no such limits on the other large gender – which surely means that people of this other gender should do less caring and more labour.

Barrier 2. The law cannot stop employers, both formal and informal, from thinking about gender and family status at the times that they are assessing candidates for a job. Society and its culture says that there are basic differences between the features of male and female humans (other than the 2 different sets of sexual organs and the secondary sexual characteristics – body size, muscle-fat ratio, voice, hair, pelvis). The features that the culture incorrectly ascribes to male and female humans are mostly mental. There is a small physical aspect, of exaggerating the 2:3 ratio of average muscle mass and physical strength so that it becomes a categorical unsuitability of the female sex for some physical work. This and the mental ascriptions resemble a dilute or weak version of the beliefs about women up to the end of the 19th century that society used at that time to not let women do certain jobs (some professional and some dirty or unpleasant jobs). Belief in these differences still lead some people to not try some things because they believe that they are not very able; and it leads to other people not considering that set of people for some jobs. Few people speak publicly (even informally) against the stereotypes, and very few persons agree even partly with a person who speaks against the stereotypes. If the stereotypes were true they would support the differential employment described in Theme 4. Any one person who says that the differences in employment are unreasonable commonly receives an answer either to support the stereotype or to deny any real discrimination (including blaming those who do not get higher jobs for not trying for higher jobs).

Barrier 3. The situation of Theme 4 is there in most of Ireland (and other places) for most of the lives of people, so to some degree they accept what happens, even if they can see that it is wrong.

Barrier 4. The society's culture (of Theme 3) causes prospective employers to think about a female applicant being absent from work some time of a day or week, or some months

continuously, because of family status; and causes them not to think of this about a male applicant. For the same reasons, the candidates also may have confidence or lack confidence that they will get the job, and confidence affects how likely they will get the job.

Barrier 5. A fairly standard working week is about 40 hours (may be a little under 40 hours). There are also jobs that officially last 40 hours per week, but the employer expects all or most workers to do 50 or 60 hours (sometimes with no extra pay). In these jobs, workers who work the longer hours set the standard that has the most effect on a new worker also choosing the long hours.

Barrier 6. In some workplaces, at least for some jobs (mostly higher managerial), employers (due to the culture) adjust the requirements for the job towards the male stereotype; and for some other jobs, towards the female stereotype. This applies to the “higher” or “highest” jobs in non-government work and also in at least some semi-state work.

Barrier 7. Voters manage to expect that TDs work long hours, not by specifying the hours, but by asking and asking and asking TDs to do things. The reporting media report this style of work and rarely challenge it as they might for any other job. That is, voters manage to require TDs to work hours that damage the TDs’ health, and neither ordinary people (voters, citizens) nor reporting media consider this damage.

Challenge 1. Getting both voters and TDs to see the job as having an ordinary amount of hours.

Challenge 2. Getting the media, who consider (mostly correctly) that it is their job to inform us, to accept the change of culture which Step 2 attempts. The media believe the stereotypes about gender.

- 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.)

Step 1. *State*. We should amend the Constitution, that is, replace Article 41.1.1 to 41.3.1 inclusive, with new words (1) to reduce the support of marriage to a more modest statement, (2) to define a family by the child (not by the parent(s) whether married or not) and promise a child’s right to remain a member of all the families to which he/ she has belonged, and (3) to state the right of all persons to a life of both work (paid or not) and caring for children and other persons – and to remove the present statements in Article 41.1.1 to 41.3.1. Of these new words, the new words in (2) and (3) are part of this Step; and, of the present words, all of 41.2.1 and 41.2.2 must be removed. For Theme 4, the new part (3), to state the right of all persons to a life of both work (paid or not) and caring for children and other persons, is the important part.

Step 2. *State*. Have widespread public talk, on TV, radio, other media, being messages from the Government, that is it natural for every human to care for children and for other people, as well as to do work of other sorts (whether paid or not), and that the present division of caring mostly by females and other work mostly by males subtracts from the rights of all people; and that the bulk of what people commonly think are automatically different between male and female humans are not so but are due to our culture; and that excessive work damages a person’s physical and mental health, including even when the worker alone seeks such long hours of work.

Step 3. *State, other employers*. The time for work in a standard job (“full-time”) should become 30 hours per week. This will mean that a candidate, of any gender, will know that

- Caring for others _ _ _ 5 _
- Other – please elaborate _ _ _ _ _

➤ Please outline the reasons for your answer below:

These 6 areas have nearly the same importance. What I think is most important is that there is too little talk in public about the barriers: the culture of supposed essential differences between genders (actually due to culture) is the most important. That is what I mean by saying Politics and Public life is no 1. The rest are all equal.

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

I Peter O'Hara am willing to speak to the Citizens' Assembly
I write on 2 further Themes here. Please read this, as these 2 themes receive even less public discussion than your 4 themes.

Further Themes

Why I select these parts of the present Gender Equality changes that are needed Ireland's and Europe's society, and societies derived from Europe, have in the past had less equality for genders than now. In many people's minds the subjects of gender inequality are only those subjects on which persons other than themselves have spoken or written. Most people with only that set of thoughts agree that the past states of affairs did unfairly discriminate by gender. A few people think there was not any inequality that needed to be fixed, and some think that the changes towards equality have gone too far. Many of the gender inequalities that have been discussed in public are not yet changed to equality. I think that there are some people who think that the progress on those subjects so far is enough. But I suspect there are enough who realise that the publicly well-known aspects of society have not been made equal yet, that many other persons will tell the Citizens' Assembly of the need to further change these, and suggest methods to make the changes.

There are some other aspects of life in Ireland where there is now notable gender inequality, which have not had much public discussion.

I have decided to direct my submission mostly to subjects which have not had so much public discussion in Ireland.

5. Accepting people, and people's rights to be accepted as Humans
(you have no need to "accept" a person by gender)

In this part I intend mostly to write about people, irrespective of their gender – because that is the attitude which I see as right for people – that is, we humans should all be treating other humans without considering do they belong to this gender or that gender.

I understand that many people have it close to their consciousness while they are talking with a person for the first time, what gender is this person, and do I “accept” him or her or them as [*name of gender*]. Some people then “accept” a person, or not. In some cases not “accepting” is because the first person does not think the second person truly fits the gender which the first person thinks the second is presenting, or does not think the presented gender is a legitimate gender. This is unequal treatment of people of different genders.

A person does not need to have any ideas about the gender of another person with whom the first person is talking, or with whom the person is doing any other matter (commercial, caring, or enjoying) – except for when courting a life’s partner, when your orientation is one of your freedoms and rights.

To have this attitude to gender, which I describe, that is, not to consider it in ordinary interactions, is part of gender equality.

People should have the same indifferent attitude to all other variables of humans, on which people want equality and freedom from discrimination.

Barrier 1. The Constitution, Article 41.1.1 to 41.3.1, tells us that people of one gender should do caring in the home and should not be obliged to engage in labour, and sets no such limits on the other large gender – which surely means that people of various genders have different abilities and different “positions” in society.

Barrier 2. The Constitution and various laws mention gender, and some laws probably remain that have some duties, restrictions, or rights that depend on your gender. A recent law that lets you change your gender between male and female does not allow for other genders.

Barrier 3. Society and its culture says that there are basic differences between the features of male and female humans (other than the 2 different sets of sexual organs and the secondary sexual characteristics – body size, muscle-fat ratio, voice, hair, pelvis). The features that the culture incorrectly ascribes to male and female humans are mostly mental. There is a small physical aspect, of exaggerating the 2:3 ratio of average muscle mass and physical strength so that it becomes a categorical unsuitability of the female sex for some physical work. This and the mental ascriptions resemble a dilute or weak version of the beliefs about women up to the end of the 19th century. Few people speak publicly (even informally) against the stereotypes, and very few persons agree even partly with a person who speaks against the stereotypes.

Challenge 1. Getting society’s culture to change.

Challenge 2. Getting culture within employing organisations to change, as described in Theme 2, Challenge 2.

Making the changes

Step 1. *State*. We should amend the Constitution, that is, replace Article 41.1.1 to 41.3.1 inclusive, with new words (1) to reduce the support of marriage to a more modest statement, (2) to define a family by the child (not by the parent(s) whether married or not) and promise a child’s right to remain a member of all the families to which he/ she has belonged, and (3) to state the right of all persons to a life of both work (paid or not) and caring for children and other persons – and to remove the present statements in Article 41.1.1 to 41.3.1. Of these new words, the new words in (2) and (3) are part of this Step; and, of the present words, all of 41.2.1 and 41.2.2 must be removed. For Theme 5, the new part (3), to state the right of all persons to a life of both work (paid or not) and caring for children and other persons, is the important part.

Step 2. *State*. We should amend the Constitution so that gender is not important for any

law. I am not sure which Article should contain this.

A new law should then amend many laws so that no public or private qualification or business needs a person's gender. This will include that on being born the State will not register you as of any particular gender. Thus you will not need to apply to change it. No private or public organisation will be able to say that we do not recognise what you say is your gender. The Equal Status Act and the Employment Equality Act will still prohibit discrimination on the ground of gender (some of the 9 grounds are information recorded by law and some are not, yet the laws against discrimination can work in both types of case).

Step 3. *State*. Have widespread public talk, on TV, radio, other media, being messages from the Government, that it is natural for every human to care for children and for other people, as well as to do work of other sorts (whether paid or not), and that the present division of caring and other work partly by gender subtracts from the rights of all people; and that the bulk of what people commonly think are automatically different between humans of different genders are not so but are due to our culture; and that the gender of any other person has no effect on your own freedom, development, or rights.

6. Society neither prescribing nor proscribing, by a person's gender, any particular types of clothes, other parts of appearance, and "appropriate" interests and activities,

The present society discriminates between humans of different genders, by directing that they not wear clothes that it "allocates" to another gender; by directing that in other parts of your appearance (hair, make-up, jewellery) people conform to what society "allocates" to their gender; and that they have interests and activities also according to society's "allocation" by gender.

There is no benefit to society from this "allocation", which reduces people's freedom. Substantial portions of the persons within various genders want to act free of the restrictions that society sets on these subjects. A person may have this desire without any idea that your own gender is different from a gender that society tends to ascribe to you – this choice is not automatically linked to your view on what your gender is, and it is a separate right.

The culture about sexes or genders should stop ascribing (a) hair and other body styles, (b) particular clothes or types of clothes, (c) styles of personal behaviour and communication, and (d) activities (jobs or enjoyments) that are specially fit for some particular genders, or any other feature, to any sex or gender. Accordingly, every person, of every gender, should be free to do any of a,b,c,d, or any other thing within the law, that they choose, and other persons should not mistreat a person because of the choices they make on these as on any other matters.

Challenge 1. Getting society's culture to change.

Challenge 2. Getting people to see that some of the reasons, to oppose a person appearing or acting in ways that society "allocates" to another gender, are circular. I wonder whether the only laws that limit this freedom are the laws on public disorder; and the influence that stops people behaving as they desire on this subject is the pressure of society. As many people believe that something will go wrong in society if people wear clothes or do actions not "allocated" to those people's gender, the same many people react a bit quickly, without thinking, when they see a person dressed so, or behaving so. This reaction is stronger because most people see such behaviour quite rarely. This automatic reaction reinforces in people's minds that there is indeed something wrong with having the appearance, style, or behaviour – wrong, and liable to cause trouble or upset

society.

Making the changes

The real changes needed are in all the ordinary people, yet as in other themes it is only the State who can spread the word and change the culture.

Step 1. *State*. Have widespread public talk, on TV, radio, other media, being messages from the Government, that is it natural for every human to choose their clothes and behaviours; and that the choice of body style, clothes, communication style, and activities of any other person has no effect on your own freedom, development, or rights – even if it offends the sensibilities of another person, it is part of the first person's right to freedom of expression.

Step 2. *State*. Enforce existing law(s), that stop a person interfering in another person's legal activities, in any case of a person trying to limit another person's appearance, style, or personal activities.

If there is any supplementary information or documents that you would like to submit as part of your consultation, please send this to info@citizensassembly.ie, with 'Public Consultation Supplementary Information' in the subject line, along with your name to allow us to correctly match any documents with your submission.