



Public consultation  
Summary of submissions

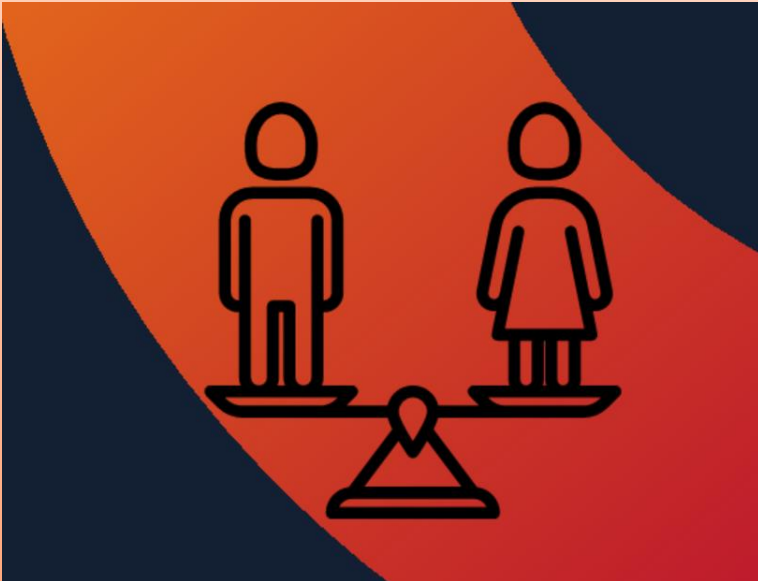
# WORK, PAY AND GENDER EQUALITY

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## **Broad consensus**

- a lack of flexibility in how work is organised makes it hard for women and men to balance the demands of work and life
- this has negative outcomes for women's access to well paid jobs and for men who want to spend more time with their families

## GENDER STEREOTYPING OF JOBS EXISTS



Division between ‘women’s jobs’ and ‘men’s jobs’ which can lead to:

- Gender discrimination; and
- Limits work opportunities for women and men

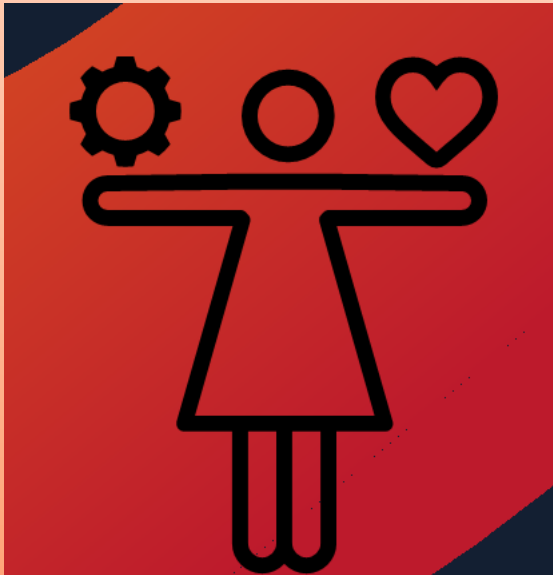
## MORE WOMEN IN LOW PAID WORK



Work sectors dominated by women are paid less than sectors dominated by men

- Women overrepresented in part time and low paid work.

## CARE RESPONSIBILITIES IMPACT ON WORK



- Narrows women's choices about and access to work and career progression
- Contributes to the gender pay and pension gap

## **MORE WORK LIFE BALANCE NEEDED**



- Employment hours and demands of work can deny women and men work life balance.

## **GENDER DISCRIMINATION IMPACTS SOME GROUPS MORE**



- Gender discrimination and bias in hiring and promotion practices maintains gender inequalities at work
- Made worse for women and men who experience other forms of disadvantage.

## SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND VIOLENCE IMPACT WORK

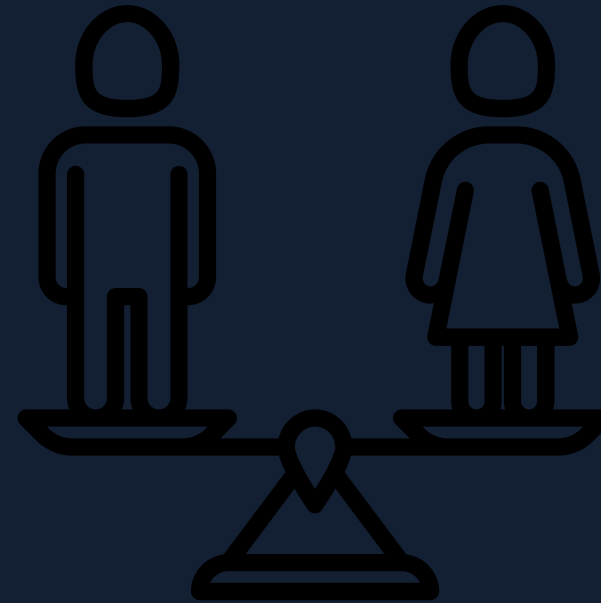


- Women experience sexual harassment and violence at work that can hinder their career advancement.



A

Gender stereotyping of jobs exists



## **Gender norms and stereotypes reinforce assumptions about the type of work and the overall value of work that women and men do**

For this submission, women and men are naturally inclined towards specific jobs:

“Different career choices for men and women .. might.. be the result of different natural preferences.” CA 30111

For another, women and men can be encouraged or discouraged from considering different jobs:

“The more any type of employment is considered women's work, the more women are steered towards that work and the less likely it is that men will consider it.” CA 30258

This leads to separating work by gender with women's jobs less valued:

“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.” CA 30222

“Women dominate occupations in education, healthcare and caring sectors. These jobs are often undervalued.” CA 30192

## Problem A - Solutions

Education was also a context to address such stereotypes

“Educate young children in a more neutral setting teaching the same subject the same way without gender bias” CA 30249

Role models and incentives could also help:

“Incentives should be put in place to encourage people to try different subjects and jobs .....more women need to be encouraged to take up apprenticeships” CA 30259

Where gender discrimination and bias played a role, gender blind worker evaluations and training were suggested

“Removing all markers of gender from job applications and promotion applications would mean that decisions were taken based on the CV rather than on the gender of the person.” CA 30098

“Unconscious bias training should be adopted by all organizations (schools, employers) - especially by people in positions of power.” CA 30018

B

More women in low paid work



## **Women are overrepresented in part-time and low paid work**

“Women seeking to work on a part-time or flexible basis are often restricted to low-level and low-paid positions that do not make the most of their skills.” CA 30189

“Women are more exposed and vulnerable to short term employment and precarious contracts of employment.” CA 30238

How we value jobs that women do as was also highlighted:

“Alongside direct discrimination, women suffer an income penalty due to the value we place on different types of jobs.” CA 30170

## **Problem B - Solutions**

“Set wage floors in a range of low-paid sectors including those such as contract cleaning and hospitality which are dominated by women” CA 30183

“Aim to increase minimum wages to the living wage”  
CA30200

“There needs to be strategic interventions to re-balance all employment sectors to ensure that women do not dominate in the lower streams of employment” CA 30238



C Gender pay and pensions gap exist



## **Gender pay gap exists between women and men's pay and pensions**

“Women are paid on average less money for similar jobs to men. There's a widespread belief among men this is not an issue” CA 30107

“It derives from outright discrimination and a complex web of factors that influence and constrain the options open to women, with parenthood being the moment that the gap widens when mothers take a wage penalty.” CA 30181

“Women are over-represented in the low paid sector, they may not have access to private pension schemes.” CA 30200

## **Problem C - Solutions**

“Improve working conditions in the low-paid sectors that are traditionally female- dominated; and second, to make those sectors more gender balanced.” CA 30178

“Mandatory publication of gender pay gap data must be enacted as a state policy” CA 30124

D

Care responsibilities impact  
on work



## **Women's caring roles negatively impact work opportunities and pay**

“Women are more likely to have more absences and career breaks from the workplace impacting on earnings, pension entitlements and promotional prospects.” CA 30152

“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!” CA 30092

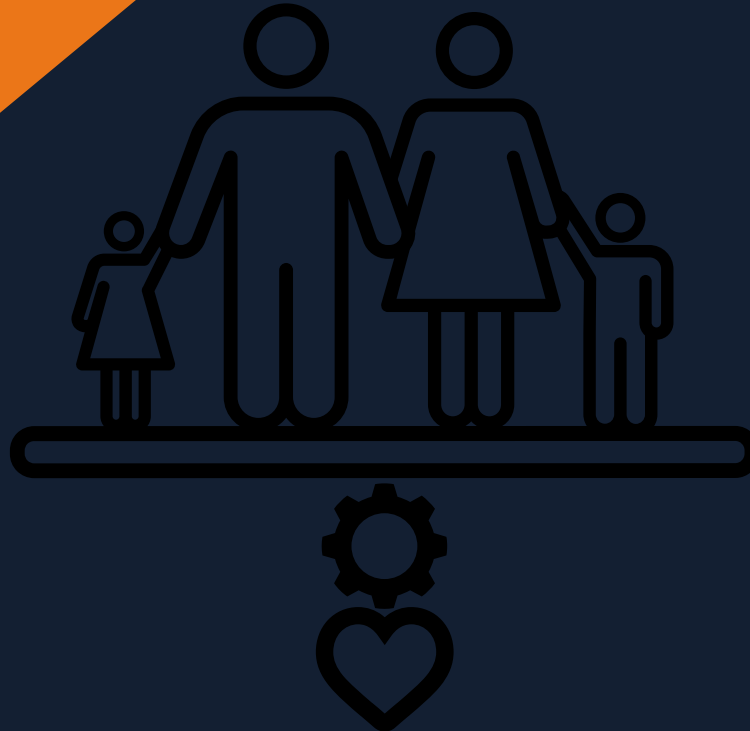
## **Problem D - Solutions**

“Breakdown the stereotypical roles of man, the breadwinner and woman, the homemaker. This can only happen if and when the state creates childcare facilities which enable both parents to work on an equal basis.” CA 30171

“That years spent in caring work be treated equally in the state pension and auto enrolment pensions.”  
CA 30266

E

More work life balance needed



## **Work culture makes work life balance difficult for women and men**

“In some cases, lack of flexibility at work can lead women to leave the workforce altogether.”

CA 30187

“A culture of long working hours, can become unfeasible for some women in the context of family commitments, either in respect of young children or caring responsibilities for elderly persons, or for other personal reasons.” CA 30177



## Problem E - Solutions

**Changes in how work is organised was viewed by a range of submissions as key to addressing gender inequality:**

“Male dominated professions need to become more family friendly. Female dominated professions need to have their worth recognised more.” CA 30066

“The State should incentivise employers to implement flexible or part-time work including perhaps job-sharing.” CA30152

“The introduction of a four-day work week and flexibility around starting and finishing times.” CA 30191

“Changes in organisational culture are needed to normalise part-time work among men, to reduce long hours work culture and to reduce the penalties attached to part-time work .”

CA 30189

## **Problem E - Solutions**

**For others, giving workers rights to bargain with employers would help:**

“Collective bargaining rights can help women to raise issues like gender pay gap, maternity benefit and employee-led flexible working and for women to collectively negotiate solutions with their employers.” CA 30066

F

# Sexual harassment and violence impact work



## **Gender based violence and sexual harassment impacts work**

“Women who experience violence may have disrupted work histories, with high rates of absenteeism frequent changes in jobs and more employment in casual work.” CA 30179

“Sexual harassment in the work place negatively impacts women’s abilities to participate fully in the workplace.”  
CA 30180

## **Problem F - Solutions**

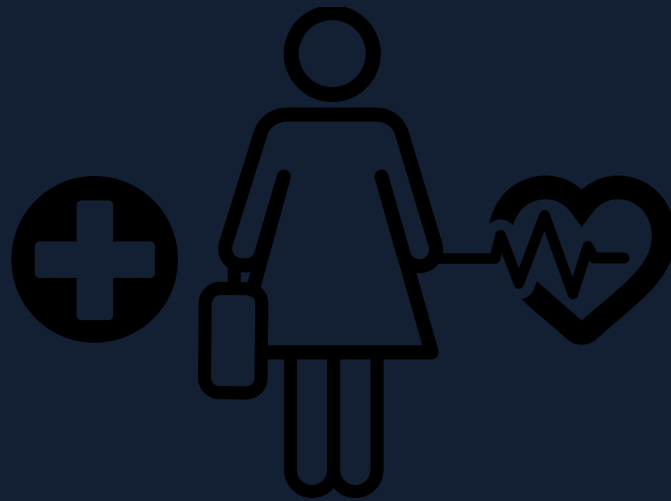
[Employers should commit] “to more urgent action and to communicating a zero tolerance for sexually harassing behaviours in the workplace.” CA 30275

“The introduction of [paid] Domestic Violence Leave along the lines of that recently introduced in New Zealand.” CA 30183



# G

Women's health issues impact  
on their work



## Women's health issues impact on their work

“The menopause affects women when they are often juggling demanding jobs, school-age children and elderly parents.”

CA 30275

“Not only are menstruating women still stigmatised, there is a tendency to treat the pain and discomfort that women face in the workplace as a minor matter.” CA 30266

“For women who have taken their full paid leave, they have no entitlement to breastfeeding in the workplace.” CA 30266

## **Problem G - Solutions**

“The government to publish a green paper on women’s health and welfare in the workplace covering the health and welfare issues impacting on women, potential legislative protections and employer requirements.” CA 30266

“In the short term there should be a statutory recognition of menopausal symptoms as a medical condition, requiring that employers treat it as such.” CA 30275



# H

Gender discrimination impacts  
some groups more



## **Women with disabilities, migrants, lone parents and Travellers face additional challenges in work**

“One Parent Families, especially where no co-parenting exists, not being able to participate as fully as 2-parent families in work while overburdened with care.”

CA 30152

“Hiding one’s identity can be the only option to secure employment for Traveller and Roma women.” CA 30264

“Women with disabilities are less likely to be employed.” CA 30195

## **Problem H - Solutions**

“Develop a Traveller and Roma Training, Employment and Enterprise Strategy with clear actions targeting Traveller and Roma women, an adequate budget and a concrete implementation plan.” CA 30264

“Address discrimination in employment by expanding and strengthening employment equality legislation.” CA 30278

**The wider societal benefits of full female participation in the work force were highlighted:**

“Far reaching changes are required if women in Ireland are to be permitted to realise their full potential in the world of work. However, if these changes are made, the resultant benefits will accrue not only to women and their families but to the Irish economy and to Irish society as a whole.” CA 30181