

Achieving Gender Equality At Work

Care Policy and Practice

9 November 2022, Croke Park, Dublin 1



Coimisiún na hÉireann um Chearta
an Duine agus Comhionannas
Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission

Conference Welcome



Sinéad Gibney

**Chief Commissioner,
Irish Human Rights and
Equality Commission**

“ You’re all very welcome today! The aim of this conference is to contribute to achieving gender equality at work. It will focus in particular on the relationship between care responsibilities, policy, and practice in achieving gender equality in the workplace. In this context, the conference will highlight the challenges to accessing employment; maintaining a work-life balance; and progressing and leading in the workplace on an equal basis. It will also offer an intersectional perspective, setting out the challenges faced by different groups of women, including women at risk of poverty; women from migrant or ethnic minorities and disabled women, among others. The conference will discuss the role of care policy in achieving workplace gender equality from a structural, legislative and policy perspective, and will also put the spotlight on best workplace practices.

Objectives

- To set out the centrality of care policy and practice in achieving gender equality at work;
- To hear the first-hand experience of right-holders and the challenges they experience in accessing decent work and in progressing and leading in the workplace;
- To examine the legislative, policy and practice issues that impact on gender equality and the recognition and social and economic valuing of care from an international, European and national perspective;
- To inform the work of the Commission over the coming strategic period to achieve greater gender equality at work and contribute to advancing a national action plan for care.

In our Strategy Statement 2022-2024, we are committed to achieving greater economic equality, and more equal access to decent work. We also want to see increased recognition and valuing of care as a form of work, including family and community caring, in a way which means that family carers do not experience financial loss due to their family care work. In short, we are seeking the recognition of care, socially and economically, as a central value in Irish society.

We are so grateful to have such a wonderful range of contributors, and an audience of employers, trade unions, civil society activists and policy makers to assess where we are now in terms of policy and practice, to learn from each other, and to consider what more can be done to achieve gender equality at work and greater social and economic recognition of care.

This conference is an initiative of the Commission's Worker and Employer Advisory Committee, composed of Ibec and ICTU representatives. We are grateful for their advice and support in shaping and promoting it, as well as their ongoing engagement with IHREC as key stakeholders.



Sinéad Gibney

**Chief Commissioner,
Irish Human Rights and
Equality Commission**

Conference Timetable

Achieving Gender Equality At Work Care Policy and Practice



Opening Session

08:45 Registration

09:15 Welcome and Opening Remarks

Sinéad Gibney, Chief Commissioner,
Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission

09:25 Voice of Rights-holders

Mairéad Forde, Public Relations Officer,
National Platform for Self Advocates

Imelda Morano, Activist, Migrant Rights Centre,
Ireland

Margaret Turley, Advocate, Inclusion Ireland

Breda Murray, Graduate, One Family's New Futures
Employability Programme

09:45 Gender Equality at Work and Care

Chidi King, Chief of the Gender, Equality, Diversity
and Inclusion Branch, International Labour
Organisation

10:00 **Recognising and Valuing Care in Law**

Moderator: Professor Kathleen Lynch, Commission Member, Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission

Professor Jonathan Herring, Professor of Law, Oxford University

Ivana Bacik TD, Chairperson, Oireachtas Joint Committee on Gender Equality

Suzy Byrne, Regional Manager, National Advocacy Service for people with Disabilities

Orla O'Connor, Director, National Women's Council of Ireland

11:00 **Break**

Panels

11:30 **Towards a National Action Plan on Care**

Moderator: Sinéad Gibney, Chief Commissioner, Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission

Dr Hans Dubois, Senior Research Manager, European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions

Dr Ursula Barry, Emeritus Associate Professor, University College Dublin

Clare Duffy, Policy and Public Affairs Manager, Family Carers Ireland

Karen Kieran, Chief Executive Officer, One Family

Mariaam Bhatti, Co-founder and Board Member, Great Care Co-op

12:45 **National Care Policy and Practice**

Roderic O'Gorman TD, Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration, and Youth

13:00 **Lunch**

Parallel Panel Discussions

14:00 **Panel 1: Sharing Care Equally**

Moderator: Dr Michelle D. Cullen, Managing Director, and Head of Inclusion & Diversity, Accenture in Ireland

Professor Helen Russell, Research Professor, Economic and Social Research Institute

Dr Johanna Närvi, Senior Researcher, Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare

Colm Kelly Ryan, Head of Programmes and Advocacy, Men's Development Network

Panel 2: Gender Pay Gap & Segregation

Moderator: Jim Clarken, Commission Member, Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission

John Hurley, Senior Research Manager, European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions

Dr Kara McGann, Head of Social Policy, Ibec

David Joyce, Equality Officer, ICTU

Heather Lowry, Head of Talent, Diversity and Organisational Development, An Post

Panel 3: Intersectionality & Care

Moderator: **Deirdre O'Connor**, Deputy General Secretary, Irish National Teachers' Organisation

Bridget Kelly, Community Development Worker, National Traveller Women's Forum

Tinu Achioya, Programme Manager, Cultúr Migrants Centre, Ireland

Nem Kearns and **Amy Hassett**, Advocates, Disabled Women Ireland

Valerie Maher, Programmes and Information Manager, One Family

Panel 4: Early Childhood Education & Care

Moderator: **Tanya Ward**, Chief Executive Officer, Children's Rights Alliance

Professor Mathias Urban, Desmond Chair of Early Childhood Education, Dublin City University

Orla O'Connor, Director, National Women's Council of Ireland

Darragh Whelan, Director, Childhood Services Ireland, Ibec

Darragh O'Connor, Head of Strategic Organising, SIPTU

Imelda Morano, Activist and **Mairéad McDevitt**, Community Work Lead, Migrant Rights Centre Ireland

Panel 5: Disabled People, Older People & Care

Moderator: **Dr Ailbhe Smyth**, Board Member, Age Action

Professor Virpi Timonen, Professor of Social Policy and Health Services, University of Helsinki

Fiona Weldon, Strategies for Change Project Worker, Independent Living Movement Ireland

Catherine Cox, Head of Communications and Policy, Family Carers Ireland

Margaret Gibben, Head of DEI, Irish Life Group (Video Contribution)

Panel 6: Domestic Abuse and Workplace Sexual Harassment

Moderator: **Michael O'Neill**, Head of Legal, Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission

Noeline Blackwell, Chief Executive Officer, Dublin Rape Crisis Centre

Michelle Ní Longáin, President, The Law Society

Sarah Benson, Chief Executive Officer, Women's Aid

Ursula Murphy, Chief Transformation Officer, Allianz

Mandy La Combre, Senior Industrial Relations Officer, Financial Services Union

15:40 Break

Closing Session

Closing Plenary

Moderator: **Sinéad Gibney**, Chief Commissioner,
Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission

Ethel Buckley, Deputy General Secretary, SIPTU
and Executive Council Member, ICTU

Dr Kara McGann, Head of Social Policy, Ibec

Tony Geoghegan, Commission Member,
Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission

16:15 Close

Speaker Biographies





Sinéad Gibney

Chief Commissioner, Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission

Chief Commissioner Sinéad Gibney leads the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission. Prior to this she built and led Google Ireland's corporate social responsibility function, Social Action. Sinéad has also provided training, consultancy and media production to a range of organisations in the civil society and public sectors in a self-employed capacity previously. Sinéad has an undergraduate degree in History from the University of Ulster and postgraduate qualifications in the topics of Information Technology & Education (MSc), Cyber psychology, Equality Studies (MSc) and Human Rights Law from Trinity College Dublin, IADT Dun Laoghaire, UCD and the Law Society respectively. Sinéad is a former chair of the board of One Family and has served on a number of other boards; Digital Charity Lab, Victims' Rights Alliance, Responsible Research & Innovation industry advisory group.



advocacy group leader in St. Joseph's Foundation Charleville. Mairead is a Public Relations Officer with the Platform. She frequently speaks at conferences and training events. Mairead is particularly interested in the issues around transport and employment that affect the lives of people living in rural Ireland.

Imelda Morano

Activist Migrant Rights Centre Ireland

Imelda Morano has been involved in MRCI campaigns and action groups for over five years. She recently completed the Bobby Gilmore Fellowship with MRCI, a programme which seeks to develop and enhance the leadership of active members within MRCI. Mel, as she's known, has been a leader both in the Justice for the Undocumented campaign and the My Fair Home network. Mel played a crucial role in the recent regularisation scheme – supporting people to apply, doing outreach and information sessions, creating content for social media for undocumented communities, and so much more. She is deeply passionate about social justice and workers' rights. She works as a live-in childminder in Co. Carlow.



Mairéad Forde

Public Relations Officer, National Platform for Self Advocates

Mairéad Forde is a steering committee member of the National Platform of Self Advocates. She is a Munster regional representative and is an



Margaret Turley

Advocate Inclusion Ireland

My name is Margaret Turley. I am from Kilkenny but living in Dublin. I play basketball with Special Olympics, and I also love going to the gym and being active. I am involved in a lot of projects with Inclusion Ireland, from the 19 Stories Project and Shorter School Days to the Media and Rights project. I am working at EY (Ernst and Young) and I love working there - I help with filing and lots of other important things. I think it's important to have women working in the workplace because they can have a good standard of life, they can feel a part of society, and have independence also.



Breda Murray

Graduate

One Family's New Futures Employability Programme

My name is Breda. I am a single mam of four amazing unique children aging from 8 to 22 . I am a former board member of One Family and a past graduate of its New Futures Employability Programme. I work as an ASU officer in Dublin Airport for the DAA. I have spoken out in a number of forums on my experience of being a single parent and my efforts to move back into the workplace.



Chidi King

Chief of the Gender, Equality and Diversity and Inclusion Branch International Labour Organisation

Chidi King is Chief of the Gender, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Branch, part of the Conditions of Work and Equality Department of the International Labour Organization, where she oversees work to promote gender equality, equity, respect for diversity and inclusion, as well as the ILO's programme on HIV and AIDS and the world of work. The Branch strives for the elimination of discrimination, including based on gender, race, ethnicity, indigenous status, disability and HIV status, utilising an integrated and intersectional approach. Before joining the ILO Ms King was Director of the Equality Department at the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), where she led work with trade unions on equality and equity issues with a particular focus on pay equity, the care economy, gender-based violence and harassment at work, women's leadership, young workers, and rights of migrant workers. Ms King has also worked as Equality and Rights Officer for the Public Services International, a Global Union Federation, and as Employment Rights Officer for the Trade Union Congress of the UK. A lawyer by background, she has spent over 20 years providing legal and policy advice on issues of equality and non-discrimination with various private, public and voluntary sector organizations.

Professor Kathleen Lynch

Commission Member

Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission



Kathleen Lynch is Professor of Equality Studies (Emerita) at UCD and a Full Professor (Adjunct) in the School of Education. She has worked throughout her life to promote equality and social justice through teaching, activism and research. Kathleen has published widely on gender equality and its relationship with care. Her co-authored book on this subject, *Affective Equality: Love, Care and Injustice* was an Irish Times Book of the Year in 2009. It also won the National Social Sciences prize when published in Korean in 2017. Her most recent book, *Care and Capitalism*, was published this year by Polity Press Cambridge. She was awarded the UCD Medal for Pioneering Change in 2018, and the Irish Research Council, President of Ireland Prize for her scholarly work promoting Equality and Social Justice in 2019. She is currently serving as a Commissioner of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (2020-2025). Kathleen is Vice-Chairperson of its Worker and Employer Advisory Committee.



Professor Jonathan Herring

Professor of Law Oxford University

Jonathan Herring is the DW Wolf-Clarendon Fellow in Law at Exeter College and Professor of Law at the Faculty of Law, University of Oxford. He has written extensively on issues around medical law and ethics, family law, care law, and criminal law. His many books include *Law and the Relational Self* (Cambridge University Press); *The Right to be Prevented from Committing Suicide* (Hart); *Law Through the Life Course* (Bristol University Press); *Caring and the Law* (Hart Publishing); *Older People and the Law* (Oxford University Press); and *Domestic Abuse and Human Rights* (Intersentia). A full list of publications can be found at <https://www.law.ox.ac.uk/people/jonathan-herring>



Ivana Bacik TD

Chairperson

Oireachtas Joint Committee on Gender Equality

Ivana Bacik is the Leader of the Labour Party and TD for Dublin Bay South. She was first elected as a Senator on the Dublin University panel in 2007, and was re-elected at each subsequent Seanad election before being elected to the Dáil in July 2021. A lifelong feminist, Ivana has a long track record of campaigning on feminist and human rights issues. In 2018 she was Chairperson of the Oireachtas Vótáil100 Programme,

the series of events run to celebrate the centenary of women's suffrage in Ireland. She is now the Chairperson of the Special Oireachtas Committee on Gender Equality, which is charged with considering the recommendations in the Report of the Citizens' Assembly on Gender Equality. For many years, Ivana was the Reid Professor of Criminal Law, Criminology and Penology at Trinity College Dublin, and has published extensively on criminal law, criminology, human rights, constitutional law and related matters.



Suzy Byrne

**Regional Manager
National Advocacy Service for
People with Disabilities**



Suzy Byrne is a disabled woman who has been involved in community work and campaigning on disability and equality issues for over 30 years. She works as a regional manager for the National Advocacy Service for People with Disabilities which provides professional independent representative advocacy for disabled individuals who may need support in decision making. Suzy is also a Director of Iarnród Éireann as one of the first disabled people to be specifically recruited to a state public transport board and is a member of the Audit and Risk Committee and also the company's Diversity and Inclusion Steering Group. She also chairs the board of Irish Council of Civil Liberties.

Orla O'Connor

**Director
National Women's Council of Ireland**

Orla O'Connor is Director of National Women's Council of Ireland (NWCI), the leading national women's membership organisation in Ireland, with over 190-member groups. She was Co-Director of Together For Yes, the national Civil Society Campaign to remove the 8th Amendment in the referendum. For her role in Together for Yes, Orla was recognised as one of the 100 Most Influential People by TIME magazine in 2019. She holds an MA in European Social Policy, and after starting out in local community-based projects, has worked in senior management in non-governmental organisations for over 25 years. She represents NWCI in a wide range of national and international fora. Orla is a feminist, and an expert in the policies needed to progress women's equality in Ireland. She is an accomplished public speaker, with a strong analysis of public policy. She has led numerous high level, successful campaigns on a wide range of issues on women's rights, including social welfare reform, pension reform and for the introduction of quality and affordable childcare. Orla is passionate about ensuring access to women's reproductive rights; about ensuring more women are in leadership positions; about ending violence against women; and increasing women's economic equality.



Dr Hans Dubois

**Senior Research Manager
European Foundation for the Improvement
of Living and Working Conditions**

Hans Dubois is a senior research manager in the Social Policies unit at the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Eurofound). Eurofound is an Agency of the European Union. Hans' areas of research include long-term care, healthcare, housing, over-indebtedness, social benefits, retirement, public transport and quality of life in the local area. Recent reports of interest to the topic of the conference include those on the long-term care workforce, access to care services (childcare, healthcare, long-term care) and older people and covid. Prior to joining Eurofound, he was Assistant Professor at Kozminski University (Warsaw). He completed a PhD in Business Administration and Management at Bocconi University (Milan), after working as a research officer at the European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies (Madrid).



Dr Ursula Barry

**Emeritus Associate Professor
University College Dublin**

Ursula Barry is Emeritus Associate Professor at School of Social Policy, Social Work and Social Justice, University College Dublin, specialising in gender, equality and public policy. Ursula represents Ireland on the EU Expert Network on Gender Equality (SAAGE.eu) and has been Irish representative on EU Networks on Equality Data, Social Protection, Women and Poverty and Gender Mainstreaming. Ursula was a member of the Expert Advisory Group to the Citizens' Assembly on Gender Equality and has written and presented on the care economy to the Citizens Assembly, the European Parliament, the National Women's Council and the European Institute of Women's Health and the Geary Institute, UCD. Recent publications include: Gender Equality, the Care Economy and the EU Covid-19 Recovery Fund in *Economia e Lavoro, Anno LV1, (2022)* 1. Gender Equality: the economic value of care from the perspective of applicable EU Funds (2021) *IPOL_STU(2021) 694784_EN*; Feminisation of Poverty - Lone parents, migrant women and older women in Crowley, N. and Sansonetti, S. (2019) *New Visions for Gender Equality*. European Commission.



Clare Duffy

**Policy and Public Affairs Manager
Family Carers Ireland**

Clare has been the Policy and Public Affairs Manager with Family Carers Ireland since 2008 and is responsible for managing the organisation's policy and public affairs functions. She is passionate about securing positive change for carers and works collaboratively with Government and policymakers in helping shape and advance carer policy. Clare led the National Carers Strategy Oversight Group on behalf of FCI and prepared annual Scorecard Reports monitoring Governments' implementation of the Strategy's 42 actions. She works with Government's Cross-Party Oireachtas Interest Group on Family Carers and represents carers on a number of national consultative committee's and oversight groups, including the Community and Voluntary Pillar of Social Partnership. Clare and her colleagues in FCI work closely with Eurocarers, the European Network of Caring Organisations and Universities, and have worked collectively for the development of an EU Care Strategy. Clare has a particular interest in welfare, health and pension policy, legislation and research and holds a Master's in International Business and Marketing from Dublin City University and a Postgraduate Diploma in Social Policy from Trinity College Dublin.



Karen Kieran

**Chief Executive Officer
One Family**

Karen Kiernan is CEO of One Family, Ireland's organisation for one-parent families. Karen chairs the National One Parent Family Alliance comprising ten national organisations who are concerned about the high levels of poverty experienced by lone parents and their children. Karen was appointed to the Board of the Courts Service of Ireland to represent court users and chairs their Family Law Development Committee. She was appointed to the National Advisory Council on the national children's and young people's strategy framework Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures and chaired their committee on Child Poverty. She sits on many other statutory and voluntary sector committees and advisory groups sharing the experience of One Family's services around parenting, childcare, family law courts and social welfare. Karen coordinates several civil society groups working around family law reform and the Constitutional recommendations of the Citizens Assembly on Gender Equality. She is particularly interested in the development of a National Child Poverty Action Plan; reform of Article 41 of the Constitution to provide equality for all families; and comprehensive Court Welfare Services as part of a reform of the family law system in Ireland. For more see: www.onefamily.ie and @1familyireland and @karenkiernan on Twitter.



Mariaam Bhatti

Co-founder and Board Member Great Care Co-op

Mariaam is a qualified community development and social policy practitioner with extensive experience of advocacy and community organising. For over a decade she has worked on various national and global campaigns and provided peer support to migrants in low paid work. This experience led to co-founding of The Great Care Co-op, Ireland's first carer-led homecare cooperative. Mariaam is also a qualified teacher, and has facilitated groups and workshops in Ireland and at a European level. She is a 2019 UN Fellow (Programme for People of African Descent) and was one of the 100 Most Influential People of African Descent Under 40 Worldwide 2020. Mariaam is also a Member of the European Commission's Expert Group on Migration and OSCE's Advisory Council member on anti-human trafficking. She holds BA (Hons) in Community and Youth Work and a Masters in Rights and Social Policy, both from Maynooth University; a Postgraduate Certificate in EU Policy Making from Vrije Universiteit Brussel, and a postgrad in Education from Marino Institute of Education. She is also a certified carer, and has worked in various care roles over 7 years, mainly in child care as well as elder care and people with disabilities.



Roderic O'Gorman TD

Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth

Roderic O'Gorman TD is the Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth. He was appointed to this role in June 2020. Roderic was elected to represent the Dublin West constituency in the 2020 general election. Prior to being elected to Dáil Éireann, he served on Fingal County Council, having been first elected in 2014 and re-elected in 2019, representing the Green Party/ Comhaontas Glas. An EU law lecturer, he has worked with the DCU Brexit Institute, focusing on how to manage the challenge facing Ireland as a result of the UK's decision to leave the European Union. He has also served on the board of management of five schools - Coolmine, Scoil Choilm, Danu Special School, Pobail Setanta and Castleknock Community College.



Dr Michelle D. Cullen

Managing Director, and Head of Inclusion & Diversity, Accenture in Ireland

Michelle Cullen is a Managing Director, and Head of Inclusion & Diversity at Accenture in Ireland. Michelle has defined and led Accenture's inclusion and diversity strategy, accelerating gender equality. She drives Accenture's ambition and actions across enablement, LGBTQ+ inclusion,

ethnicity, social mobility and gender equality. She is a strong advocate for diversity in leadership and co-founder of Accenture's Women on Walls initiative which seeks to make women leaders visible through a series of commissioned portraits to inspire future generations. Michelle serves on the Worker and Employer Advisory Committee of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission. Michelle was named Woman of the Year at the 2018 Women in IT Awards and is a Dublin City University Alumni Achievement honouree. Accenture is a global professional services company, employing over 5,500 people in Ireland. The company fosters a culture of equality, enabled by employee resource groups focused on gender equality, persons with disabilities, supporting its LGBTQ+ community, ethnic and racial diversity and mental health & wellness. In 2022, Accenture ranked No. 1 on Refinitiv's Index of the World's Most Diverse and Inclusive Companies, its third time ranking No.1 in the past five years.

Professor Helen Russell

Research Professor
Economic and Social Research Institute

Helen Russell is a Research Professor and head of the social research division at the Economic and Social Research Institute and an Adjunct Professor of Sociology at Trinity College Dublin. Helen holds



Dr Johanna Närvi

Senior Researcher
Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare

Johanna Närvi holds a PhD in Social Sciences, and works as a Senior Researcher in the Welfare State Research and Reform unit at the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare (THL), Finland. Her research focuses on work–family interface and family policy from a gender perspective, with particular emphasis on parental leave systems, workplace practices

and the well-being of parents with children. She is currently leading a research project on changing forms of work and their consequences for work-family reconciliation. Her recent research has covered (in)equalities in Finnish childcare policies, fathers taking leave at workplaces, and the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on gender equality and the wellbeing of parents. She has also served as an expert for national working groups preparing policy reforms related to leave policies, and she is a member of the International Network on Leave Policy and Research.

Colm Kelly Ryan

Head of Programmes and Advocacy Men's Development Network

Colm Kelly Ryan is Head of Programmes and Advocacy. He is responsible for the management, operations and rollout of training and development programmes. He is also responsible for redesigning the Development Programme, establishment of advocacy campaigns (White Ribbon, Beyond Exploitation, Irish Ratification of ILO Convention No.190) and overseeing implementation of the organisation's strategic plan and communications strategy. An International Human Rights Lawyer, he holds an LL.M in International Human Rights Law from Lund University, Sweden. He has served as a consultant for one of Sweden's largest human



rights research institutes and was involved in the implementation of capacity building programmes in Turkey. He has also worked with development and food insecurity in Colorado, USA. Colm's research and advocacy interests include gender equality, sustainable development, economic, social, and cultural rights, sanctions, intersectionality, migration law and human rights cities.

Jim Clarken

Commission Member, Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission

Jim Clarken is the CEO of Oxfam Ireland and an Executive Director of the board of Oxfam International. He is a Commissioner at the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission where he sits on the Worker and Employer Advisory Committee. He represents Ireland on the board of the European Union Fundamental Rights Agency and was recently elected as chair. Jim is a leading commentator on global issues relating to human rights, inequality, sustainable development, the rights of refugees and migrants, and the role of business in protecting and promoting human rights. He is an adviser to the Irish Government on its role at the UN Security Council. A passionate advocate for the rights of women, Jim has driven a gender-focus through Oxfam's work, with emphasis on women's economic

empowerment and participation in political and business leadership. He has led the Irish Consortium on Gender Based Violence and was appointed by the Ceann Comhairle to the Forum on Family Friendly and Inclusive Parliament to recommend a transformation in how the Oireachtas operates to ensure it is better gender balanced and diverse. Jim is an Adjunct Professor at the School of Business and Law at University College Cork.



Jim O'Gorman

Adjunct Professor

**Irish Consortium on Gender Based Violence
and the Forum on Family Friendly and Inclusive Parliament**

Jim O'Gorman is an Adjunct Professor at the School of Business and Law at University College Cork. He has led the Irish Consortium on Gender Based Violence and was appointed by the Ceann Comhairle to the Forum on Family Friendly and Inclusive Parliament to recommend a transformation in how the Oireachtas operates to ensure it is better gender balanced and diverse. Jim is an Adjunct Professor at the School of Business and Law at University College Cork.



Dr Kara McGann

Head of Social Policy

Ibec

Dr Kara McGann is Head of Social Policy at Ibec, Ireland's largest business representative body. She supports employers with strategic advice on labour market, equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) and wellbeing policy and practice. She engages with National and European stakeholders to lobby on the broad area of social policy, from gender pay gap reporting and human rights, to labour market activation, and represents business in various fora. She is Chair of the Joint Equality Council at ESB; a Board Member of the Governing Authority of DCU, a member of the External Group of Experts of the European Consortium of Innovative Universities (ECIU) and a member of the Labour Market Advisory Council. Prior to joining Ibec in 2008, Kara held roles in industry as a Career Development Manager, Organisational Psychologist and lectured at undergraduate, postgraduate and executive level.



David Joyce

Equality Officer

ICTU

David Joyce's areas of work include the promotion of equality at a number of levels: within trade unions and in Irish workplaces as well

as at the national policy level. This involves the development of policy on equality related issues and the production of guidelines for trade unions on various equality issues as well as representing Congress on a number of external departmental and agency equality related committees.

He also participates in various ETUC equality initiatives including the negotiating group on the development of a joint framework of action for gender equality, and the revision of the Parental Leave Directive. David represents the ICTU at the ILO and was part of the Workers Group that negotiated ILO Convention 190 on violence and harassment in the world of work.



Heather Lowry

**Head of Talent, Diversity and Organisational Development
An Post**

Heather Lowry is currently the Head of Talent, Diversity and Organisation Development in An Post. She started her career in financial services before finding her true passion and moving into the Learning and Development space 17 years ago. Heather held a number of global Head of Learning and Development positions in PFPC International, PNC Global Investment Servicing and BNY Mellon before branching out further into Global Organisation and Management Development. She held the position

of Head of Talent and Learning in the Central Bank of Ireland before moving to An Post in 2021. She has a strong passion for driving systemic culture change through leadership and management development and diversity and inclusion. Heather has a keen interest in neuroscience and behavioural change. She has a Bachelor of Business and Legal Studies, MSc in Investment & Treasury and most recently completed a second MSc in Business and Leadership Practice. Heather is a qualified coach practitioner and is proficient in a number of diagnostic tools.



Deirdre O'Connor

**Deputy General Secretary
Irish National Teachers' Organisation**

Deirdre O'Connor is the Deputy General Secretary/ General Treasurer of the Irish National Teachers' Organisation. She is a primary teacher and has worked as a trade union official for 20 years. She has extensive experience of negotiating on behalf of and representing union members in many forums. She was the INTO's Equality Officer from 2010 and 2014, and is a long serving member of the ICTU Disability Committee. Deirdre has been a member of the ICTU Executive Council since 2017 and was a member of the National Disability Authority between 2014 to 2022. She represents ICTU on the IHREC Worker Employer Advisory Committee.

She holds an MSc in Education Management (UUJ, 2002) and a Diploma in Employment Law (Law Society, 2011).



Bridget Kelly

Community Development Worker National Traveller Women's Forum

Bridget Kelly is a Community Development Worker at the National Traveller Women's Forum. She is a Traveller Woman and Traveller activist and works from a Human Rights based approach. She has worked on a range of issues impacting on the community including accommodation, education, health and employment at a local, regional and national level. She represents the NTFW in a number of national Traveller policy committees within various government departments in the area of equality and human rights and is committed to the achievement of full gender equality for Traveller women.

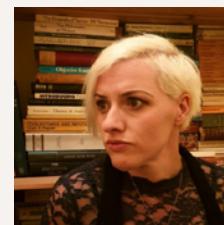
both in Ireland and abroad, having worked for NGOs and in the public and private sectors. She has a proven track record in Government funded projects, peace and reconciliation development funded projects, community development projects, and facilitating cross-cultural community dialogue within delicate and challenging contexts and international bodies. As one of the founding members of Louth African Women's Support Group and the pioneer of the group's drama outfit, she received an award from the United Nations Refugee Agency on Art and Culture in recognition of her contribution to the group and for her role in the integration of women in society through drama. Her strong belief in equality and justice has shaped her career, leading to engagement with policy makers at national and international level. She has extensive and unrivalled experience in development, strategising and lobbying.



Tinu Achioya

Programme Manager Cultúr Migrants Centre, Ireland

Atinuke (Tinu) Achioya is a Programme Manager at Cultúr Migrant Centre Ireland. She is a human rights advocate with over 20 years' of experience in the Not-for-Profit sector as a Social Entrepreneur



Nem Kearns

Advocate Disabled Women Ireland

Nem is an SRHR, LGBTQIA+ and disability justice advocate, with a particular passion for grassroots community building within these intersections. They enjoy establishing connections and collaborations across self-representative groups, and bridges between marginalised communities,

and believe these voices must be heard to create a meaningful shared vision of equality. One of the founding members of Disabled Women Ireland - Ireland's national Disabled Person's Organisation of women, non-binary and gender non-conforming people - Nem currently serves as Board Secretary and represents DWI at various events and inter-organisational working groups. In addition to their work as a disability policy advisor to a range of elected officials, Nem is also a co-founder and organising member of the cross-neurodivergency organisation Neuro Pride Ireland, serves on the Boards of TENI and the Abortion Rights Campaign and is part of the inter-organisational Disabled Gender-Based Violence Taskforce, which seeks to tackle the root causes of the high levels of gender-based violence disabled people are subjected to. As a multiply disabled queer non-binary person, Nem believes in the power of reclaiming our own narratives to challenge the silencing and stigmatising of marginalised voices and seeks to apply the maxim Nothing About Us, Without Us in all their work.



Amy Hassett

**Advocate
Disabled Women Ireland**

Amy Hassett is a disability advocate and a co-chairperson of Disabled Women Ireland (DWI), Ireland's national disabled person's organisation advocating for the rights of disabled self-identified women, girls and non-binary people. Originally from Wexford, Amy is also a neuroscience PhD student in UCD.



Valerie Maher

**Programmes and Information Manager
One Family**

Valerie Maher currently holds the role of Programmes & Information Manager with One Family and has worked with them since 2013. One Family is Ireland's national organisation for people parenting alone, sharing parenting after separation or divorce, and those experiencing a crisis pregnancy. Valerie oversees delivery of One Family's New Futures Employability Programme and also manages the national askonefamily Information and Support Helpline. She has held roles across a number of One Family services including social policy, employability supports, professional development and their children and parenting services. Valerie obtained her BA (Hons) in Psychology from Maynooth

University and also holds a Master's degree in Social Science, Human Rights and Social Policy; specialising in labour market activation policies and their impact on lone parents. Her research interests include lone parents and social inclusion, lifelong learning, welfare to work transitions, work life balance and women's labour market participation. She is a registered member of the Irish Teaching Council in the area of further education and holds a Level 6 Train the Trainer qualification. Valerie is passionate about supporting and empowering people parenting alone to realise their full potential.



Tanya Ward

Chief Executive Officer Children's Rights Alliance

Tanya Ward is Chief Executive Officer of the Children's Rights Alliance since 2012. Previously, she was the Deputy Director at the Irish Council for Civil Liberties (ICCL) where she worked for eight years. She has also worked with the Irish Centre for Migration Studies, the Irish Refugee Council, the Curriculum Development Unit and the City of Dublin VEC. A former lecturer in human rights on the MPhil in Ethnic and Racial Studies, TCD and the Masters in Equality Studies in the UCD School for Social Justice. She was also a former Vice President for the International Federation of Human Rights (2008-2011). Tanya has graduate and post-



graduate degrees from UCC and a LLM in Human Rights from Queens University Belfast as well as a Certificate in Managing Community and Voluntary Organisations from the National College of Ireland. Tanya is currently the Chair of the National Advisory Council for the National Policy Framework for Children and Young People. She is also a board member of the Law Centre for Children and Young People Board and a member of the Oversight Board for the Childcare Law Reporting Project.

Professor Mathias Urban

Desmond Chair of Early Childhood Education Dublin City University

Mathias Urban, PhD, is Desmond Chair of Early Childhood Education, and Director of the Early Childhood Research Centre (ECRC) at Dublin City University, Ireland, Professor (II) of Pedagogy at the University of Stavanger, Norway, and Affiliate Professor and Fellow at EDPolicyFORWARD: The Center for Educational Policy at George Mason University, USA. He works on questions of integrated early childhood systems, diversity and equality, social justice, and professionalism in diverse socio-cultural contexts. Mathias has over 20 years' experience in designing and leading international collaborative research projects. He was awarded the 'Marianne Bloch Distinguished Career Award' by the international Reconceptualising Early

Childhood Education network in 2018, and the DCU President's Research Impact Award 2020. He is the lead author of the 2018 (Argentina), 2019 (Japan), 2020 (Saudi Arabia), 2021 (Italy) and 2022 (Indonesia) G20/T20 early childhood development, education and care policy briefs, and a member of the European Commission expert working group on Early Childhood Education and Care.



Darragh O'Connor

**Head of Strategic Organising & Campaigns
SIPTU**

Darragh has worked as a union organiser for over 14 years in the public, private and C&V sectors. Most recently, he led SIPTU's 'Big Start' campaign which prioritised affordable, high quality Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) for children and parents. Following years of campaigning, an historic first pay deal was reached in 2022. The pay deal was underpinned by a significant increase of state investment and lifted thousands out of poverty pay.



Darragh Whelan

**Director, Childhood Services Ireland
Ibec**

Having joined Ibec in 2017, Darragh is the Director of Ibec's trade association for the Early Years sector, Childhood Services Ireland (CSI). CSI represent childcare providers across the country and from the full spectrum of childcare service types. He is the lead negotiator for the employers on the Early Years Joint Labour Committee which sets the rates of pay and terms and conditions for the childcare sector. Prior to being appointed as Director of CSI, Darragh provided advocacy and representation to a range of sectors within Ibec. He has also represented Ibec at the International Labour Organisation within the United Nations, where international conventions are negotiated impacting the world of work, in particular and most recently, the convention to end violence and harassment in the world of work.



Mairéad McDevitt

**Community Work Lead
Migrant Rights Centre**

Mairéad oversees community work activities in MRCI. She supports the My Fair Home network, a community of migrant home carers in Ireland and also co-ordinates the Bobby Gilmore Fellowship. She joined MRCI in 2018 as a youth worker, with the Young, Paperless & Powerful campaign. She holds a Masters in Community & Youth Work from Maynooth University. She previously worked in the service industry for 20 years. She holds a BA in French&Italian, and a Diploma in Environmental Science & Social Policy, both from UCC. Mairéad is deeply committed

to, and passionate about, community and youth work, fairness and equality, anti-discriminatory narratives, social and climate justice.



Dr Ailbhe Smyth

Board Member

Age Action

Ailbhe Smyth is a long-time activist on feminist, LGBT and other social issues. She has been involved in leading many campaigns, including the marriage equality and repeal the 8th amendment referendum campaigns. She co-founded and convened the Coalition to Repeal the 8th. Ailbhe is the former founding head of Women's Studies at UCD where she lectured for many years. She is chair of Women's Aid and of Ballyfermot STAR Addiction services, and on the board of Age Action and of the Women's Global Health Network. She is Patron of the Women's Collective Ireland. In 2019 she was included in Time Magazine's list of the 100 Most Influential People, and in 2022 she was conferred with the Freedom of the City of Dublin.



Professor Virpi Timonen

**Professor of Social Policy and Health Services
University of Helsinki**

Virpi Timonen is Professor of Social and Health Services Research and Leadership at the University of Helsinki, Finland. Her research encompasses social policies in ageing societies, sociology of intergenerational relationships, and qualitative research methods. She has investigated many different aspects of long-term care, including reforms of home care policies, institutional care practices and migrant care workers. Her original investigations of intergenerational relations and grandparenting have provided new insights into how older adults contribute to the maintenance of family solidarity but also make choices that break with established roles. She has generated new theory on how successful and active ageing are socially constructed by a range of actors: her Model Ageing theory amounts to a fundamental critique of paradigms that dominate policy making for older adults.



Fiona Weldon

**Strategies for Change Project Worker
Independent Living Movement Ireland**

Fiona Weldon is the Strategies for Change Project Worker at Independent Living Movement Ireland

and has over 30 years of experience in working in the Disability Sector. All of her work is motivated by the reality of the effects of segregation, exclusion and non-disabled professionalism. Henceforward promoting the need for a Rights Based Model of Support to people that are labelled disabled.

Fiona's initial work in this sector involved setting up a local Independent Living Service offering Personal Assistance to local disabled people that wanted more choice and more control over the human supports that they needed to assist them with their daily living. Fiona has worked for the National Institute for Intellectual Disability (NIID) in Trinity College, NUI Maynooth and the National Anti-Bullying Research and Resource Centre in Dublin City University.



Catherine Cox

**Head of Communications and Policy
Family Carers Ireland**

Catherine has worked within Family Carers Ireland (formerly The Carers Association Ireland) for over 20 years. She holds degrees in Social Care and Human Resource Management and has worked with family carers for many years in an effort to highlight the challenges that they face, influence social policy for family carers and support them in lobbying for better services and recognition for their invaluable work and contribution to our society. Her interest in family care stems from her



own family situation as her mother cared for her father who suffered a number of strokes over a 20 year period. The family experienced first-hand the gaps in supports, services and information provision for family carers throughout their caring journey from early stage diagnosis of their loved ones illness right through to life after caring. She is the national spokesperson for Family Carers Ireland and engages with family carers, policy makers, political representatives and media at a local and national level in an effort to highlight the challenges that family carers face and influence positive change in their lives throughout their caring roles.

Margaret Gibben

**Head of DEI
Irish Life**

Margaret is an internationally recognised leader in Diversity, Equity & Inclusion, bringing the depth and breadth of knowledge to provide strategic leadership to the design, development and execution of D&I strategy. She is highly qualified and experienced as a Development Manager and Coach, accredited to deliver a wide range of best-in-class personality, leadership and emotional intelligence diagnostics. Her professional education includes accreditation by INSEAD's Global Business School on driving gender diversity. Currently completing a diversity & inclusion champion master class certification.

Recognised by peers and listed 12 and 17 (of the top 100) on the Global Involve 2020 & 2021 HEROes Women Role Model Lists, Margaret has a proven track record of delivering multiple projects and work-streams with exemplary stakeholder relationships at every level.



Michael O'Neill

Head of Legal, Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission

Michael O'Neill is Head of Legal at the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission. He leads the Commission's team of solicitors who, as well as representing the Commission, may provide legal advice and representation to members of the public on matters of equality and human rights law. He has worked in the field of public law for over two decades. Earlier in his career he was a référendaire at the Court of Justice of the EU in Luxembourg, as well as an academic (at NUI Galway, HEC Paris and the University of Edinburgh). He is a graduate of the National University of Ireland (UCC and UCD), the University of Ulster and the College of Europe, Bruges and he was called to the Bar in 1995.



Noeline Blackwell

Chief Executive Officer Dublin Rape Crisis Centre

Noeline Blackwell is a human rights lawyer and CEO of the Dublin Rape Crisis Centre, a voluntary organisation which works to prevent the harm and heal the trauma of sexual violence. Prior to this, she was Director General of access to justice organisation FLAC, having previously been a solicitor in private practice. Noeline has been a member of several statutory and NGO boards, including most recently the Commission on the Future of Policing. She chairs the Independent Patient Safety Council and the Child Law Project and sits on the Governing Authority of University College Dublin.



Michelle Ni Longain

President The Law Society

Michelle is President of the Law Society and Senior Partner at ByrneWallace LLP. Michelle heads the firm's public sector group. She advises public and private sector clients on complex areas of employment, equality and administrative law. Michelle has been a member of the Council of the Law Society of Ireland since 2004. In 2021, she was appointed President (the fifth woman to serve in this role). She was also a member of the Council of

the Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland from 2007 to 2013. Michelle's experience of practising in three jurisdictions and her membership of the councils of two professional regulatory bodies and many of their committees has helped to inform her advice to public and regulatory sector clients. Michelle won the Lexology International Law Office Client Choice Award for employment and benefits in 2016.



Sarah Benson

Chief Executive Officer Woman's Aid

Sarah Benson is the current Chief Executive Officer of Women's Aid, Ireland. Women's Aid are a national, organisation working to prevent and address the impact of domestic violence and abuse. They do this by advocating, influencing, training, and campaigning for effective responses to reduce the scale and impacts of domestic abuse on women and children in Ireland, and by providing high quality, specialised, integrated, support services. For nine years prior to this role, Sarah was the Chief Executive Officer with Ruhama, an Irish NGO working nationally with women and people affected by prostitution including victims of sex trafficking. In addition Sarah has previous experience as Manager of the National Domestic Violence Helpline and extensive work in the community and voluntary sector both in Ireland and abroad, working particularly with marginalized ethnic minority women and youth.



Ursula Murphy

Chief Transformation Officer Allianz

Ursula Murphy has been Chief Transformation Officer with Allianz since 2018. Prior to this role Ursula has 20+ years of Executive and Non-Executive leadership experience across a number of sectors. A graduate of the Advanced Management Programme (Certificate of Business Excellence) with Columbia Business School, Ursula holds an MBS in Business Practice from University College Cork, an MSc in Strategic HR Management from Sheffield Hallam Business School and is a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (FCIPD). Ursula holds further graduate and postgraduate qualifications in Business, HRM and Organisation Development. She is married with four children.



Mandy La Combre

Senior Industrial Relations Officer Financial Services Union

Mandy La Combre has been a trade union activist for almost three decades representing workers in various employments in the public and private sector. During this time Mandy has been involved in numerous social justice campaigns and has spoken out on issues that particularly affect women workers. She currently holds the position of Senior Industrial

Relations Officer with the Financial Services Union (FSU). She works across both jurisdictions: Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. In her FSU role, as well as representing workers on industrial relations matters, Mandy is focussed on addressing gender inequality in the workplace, most notably by seeking engagement with employers on the development of workplace policies that look to push the gender equality agenda. For example, domestic violence policies, menopause policies, family friendly policies, and efforts to try to narrow the gender pay gap. These are areas Mandy is particularly focussed on, recently concluding a number of ground breaking agreements. Mandy is also a qualified Human Resource Management professional with a BA(H) HRM from the National College of Ireland (NCI), and a further Diploma in this field from the University College Cork (UCC). Mandy represents FSU on the Irish Congress of Trade Union's Women's Committee.



Ethel Buckley

Deputy General Secretary, SIPTU and Executive Council Member, ICTU

Ethel Buckley is Deputy General Secretary of SIPTU and is an Executive Council member of ICTU. Ethel is also a member of the IHREC's Worker and Employer Advisory Committee. Active from a young age in various women's rights, anti-racist and political campaigns in her native Cork, and



Tony Geoghegan

**Commission Member,
Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission**

Tony Geoghegan is a Commission Member at the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission and he is Chairperson of its Worker and Employer Advisory Committee. He has worked in the

abroad. She first became involved in SIPTU when at University College Cork (UCC). Initially serving as a Shop Steward in UCC, Cork. Ethel later took up a role as a full-time union official based in Liberty Hall. She was involved in the 2001 National Toll Bridges strike, the Independent Newspapers dispute in 2004 and the Irish Ferries dispute of 2005, she was promoted to Branch Secretary.

She joined the union's Strategic Management Team in 2011 when she was promoted to National Campaigns and Equality Organiser. In this role, Ethel led campaigns to mobilise young, migrant and LGBT workers. As Services Division Organiser since 2015 she has been central to the Justice for Clerys Workers campaign, organising the National Women's Football Squad and securing legislation to restore collective bargaining rights to certain categories of freelance workers. She has also worked on ending involuntary low working hours and zero hours contracts.

addiction arena for the past thirty years both here in Ireland and in Britain. Tony was CEO of Merchants Quay Ireland, Drugs and Homeless Services for 28 years. MQI was founded by the Franciscans in 1989 as a response to the growing issues of problem drug use and homelessness in Ireland. He has worked across a range of different treatment modalities and settings from crisis intervention, including needle exchange, to day counselling services and on to residential drug free therapeutic communities and aftercare and resettlement programmes.





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