

# Childcare

Ireland has a persistently poor track record on the provision of affordable childcare and places an overreliance on the private market to deliver this essential public good. A lack of available, affordable, and accessible childcare is a significant barrier to women's workforce participation and economic independence, particularly in rural areas, and for lone-parents who should be entitled to the same statutory parental leave as dual-parent households. Measures to address the inequalities in the availability and take-up of parental leave are needed to address persistent, structural gender inequality.



## Key Issues

- > Unequal distribution of unpaid care work between women and men.
- > No system of affordable public childcare.
- > Insufficient number of childcare places and high costs hinder women's labour force participation, access to education, and contribute to the pay and pensions gap.



## What actions are required by the State?

The CEDAW Committee and IHREC have made recommendations with actions that the State needs to take.



### CEDAW recommendations

- › Provide affordable childcare and promote shared parental leave to encourage men to participate equally in childcare responsibilities, and challenge stereotypes on traditional gender roles.



### IHREC recommendations

- › Develop a detailed and adequately resourced roadmap to transition to a public model of Early Childhood Education and Care by 2030.
- › Increase annual investment in Early Childhood Education and Care to match EU and OECD averages and progress towards UNICEF's target of 1% of Gross