



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

Sent by post and email:

[minister@equality.gov.ie](mailto:minister@equality.gov.ie)

Minister Roderic O’Gorman T.D.  
Department for Children, Disability, Equality, Integration and Youth  
50-58, Baggot Street Lower,  
D02 XW14.

06 July 2022

Dear Minister O’Gorman,

Thanks for the opportunity to chat in Geneva this week and for your leadership of the State delegation for Ireland’s review under the International Covenant on Civil and Political rights, and your personal commitment to human rights and equality.


I write to you in relation to Budget 2023, and specifically on the budgetary allocation under Vote 25 for the operation of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission as Ireland’s National Human Rights Institution and National Equality Body. The Commission is also the Independent National Rapporteur on the Trafficking of Human Beings.

Progressive development of our statutory mandate, and the allocation by the Oireachtas of additional functions to the Commission, means that we’ve reached a position of requiring significant additional funding to ensure the proper functioning of the organisation and to maintain the Commission as a globally recognised A-Status National Human Rights Institution (NHRI) under the UN’s Paris Principles. These global principles require that: *“to function effectively, an NHRI must be provided with an appropriate level of funding in order to guarantee its ability to freely determine its priorities and activities. In particular, adequate funding should, to a reasonable degree, ensure the gradual and progressive realisation of improvement in the NHRI’s operations and the fulfilment of its mandate.”*

This year we commenced a new strategic cycle from 2022-2024. However, the Commission faces real constraints in properly and adequately delivering on our statutory mandate through this strategy. There are many aspects of our mandate that we are currently unable to adequately meet, given limitations on our current resources, including:

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- Greater legal / enforcement measures to combat discrimination and address human rights violations— including legal inquiries;
- Promotion and support for the implementation of the statutory Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty;
- Developing capacity among civil society organisations to advocate for rights through the further development of our grants scheme;
- Public awareness and promotion on specific human rights and equality issues of concern;
- Research and evidence development to support national policy-making on human rights and equality; and
- There are further aspects of our mandate that the Commission has yet to develop in any significant regard, such as education, due to resource constraints.

**In order to progressively meet its core mandate as the National Human Rights Institution and the National Equality Body, IHREC will need a 15 per cent (€1.13 m) increase in its core budget for 2023 and an equivalent increase in 2024.**

In addition, the Commission is being allocated new functions which require additional and ongoing adequate resourcing, as they come into operation. These include:

- Formal Article 33 independent monitor of Ireland's implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), currently being legislated for in the Assisted Decision Making-Making (Capacity) (Amendment) Bill 2021
- Formal coordinating mechanism for Ireland's proposed National Preventative Mechanism under the UN Optional Protocol on the Convention Against Torture (OPCAT), currently being legislated for in the Inspection of Places of Detention Bill

IHREC has also recently been allocated a new role under Article 2 of the Northern Ireland Protocol in regard to rights and equality issues arising, which have an all-island dimension and has been allocated a new role and new legal enforcement powers under the Gender Pay Gap Information Act 2021.

**To meet the combined requirements of these new functions IHREC will require a further budget addition of €250k in 2023 and a similar amount in 2024.**



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Two years into my term as Chief Commissioner, I'm proud to say that IHREC has grown in size and impact, and has contributed significantly to the human rights and equality standing of the State. I look forward to your continued support as Minister for the work of the Commission and I'm available at your convenience to discuss these matters.

Yours sincerely,

Sinéad Gibney  
Chief Commissioner