



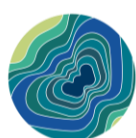
Women's  
Collective  
Ireland

**Submission by  
Women's Collective Ireland  
to the  
National Strategy for  
Women & Girls**

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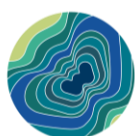
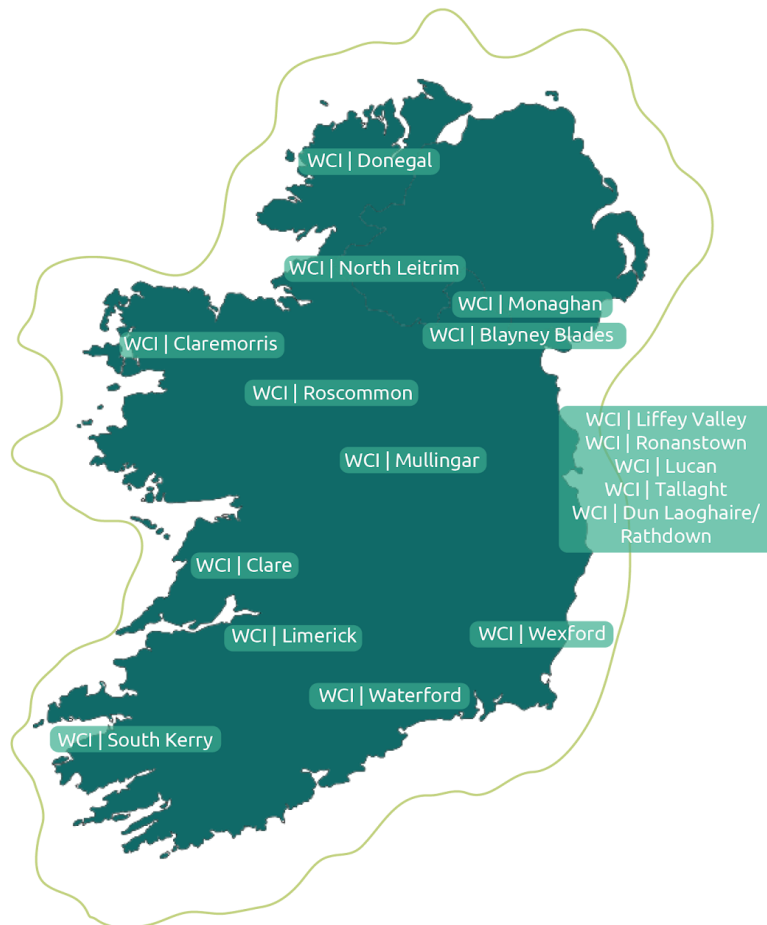
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For reference any words written in **light green** can be found in the Glossary of Terms section.



## About Women's Collective Ireland

Women's Collective Ireland (WCI) is a national women's community development organisation and receives core funding from the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth. There are 17 Women's Collective Ireland Projects located across Ireland. The goal of Women's Collective Ireland is to advance marginalised women's equality through women's community development. Women's Collective Ireland represents and works directly with **grassroots** women to build women's skills, knowledge, confidence and self-esteem through feminist community education. We work using **community development** and **feminist** principles. Women's Collective Ireland is a pro-choice and inclusive organisation, we work with members of the LGBTQ+ community including **non-binary** people and **trans** women. Our work is focused on the creation of an inclusive and equitable society for all.



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Míchumais, Lánpháirtíochta agus Óige  
Department of Children, Equality,  
Disability, Integration and Youth

## WCI Mission Statement and Guiding Values

*Our mission is to support grassroots women through collective and practical actions to achieve their full human rights and true equality.*

### WELCOMING

We actively reach out to, include and develop relationships with the diverse women in our communities.

### FOR WOMEN

We are feminist in our thinking and in our actions.

### WITH WOMEN

We seek to be supportive of and are energised by the women we meet and work with.

### COLLECTIVE

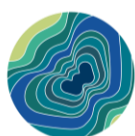
We create spaces for women to get together safely, be themselves, learn, share experiences, have their say and get involved.

### ROOTED

Our words and deeds are grounded in the lives and experiences of the grassroots women we meet and work with.

### ABOUT CHANGING THE WORLD

We actively listen and hear women's voices supporting transformation. We speak out about the barriers to women's equality and participation, and campaign for positive change.



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# Summary of Recommendations relating specifically to WCI

## Objective One: Advance Socio-Economic Equality for Women and Girls

- Continue to support core funding for WCI community education and training programmes, courses and initiatives to support and increase women's access and participation in advancing their economic equality
- Fund WCI targeted programme rollout for women distanced from the labour market, including WCI Grassroots Women's New Directions Programme 'Encompassing Pathways towards empowerment, education and employment and participation.
- Ensure women's organisations and their workers are adequately staffed and funded to allow them to outreach and work with marginalised women in the community that statutory agencies do not reach

## Objective Two: Advance the Physical and Mental Health and Wellbeing of Women and Girls

- Support core funding for WCI to continue creating and developing safe spaces for women to come together to combat isolation and social exclusion and make connections.
- Support core funding enabling WCI to develop and deliver a suite of mental health and wellbeing workshops and programmes that specifically target the women we work with at a local level

## Objective Three: Ensure the Visibility in Society of Women and Girls, and their Equal and Active Citizenship

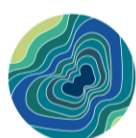
- Support core funding of WCI to continue and increase our outreach and pre-development work with women experiencing disadvantage and promote and support their participation in all aspects of society

## Objective Four: Advance Women in Leadership at All Levels

- Continue to support core funding for WCI Women in Leadership Programme

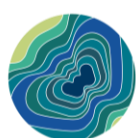
## Objective Five: Combat Violence Against Women

- Support core funding of WCI to run awareness campaigns and events to mark the annual 16 Days of Action Global Movement
- Support WCI to continue to contribute to developing a model of community development response to domestic abuse enabling WCI to promote and participate in public awareness campaigns, provide training for staff to identify domestic violence and continue to provide appropriate responses by signposting supports and services available to women



## Objective Six: Embed Gender Equality in Decision-making

- Continue to support the core funding WCI, as a key body which puts forward women's concerns and perspectives and ensure that women's interests are mainstreamed in the work of Government.



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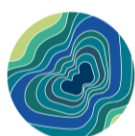


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Disability, Integration and Youth

## Purpose of the Submission

Women's Collective Ireland welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the public consultation on the National Strategy for Women and Girls. Women's Collective Ireland represents and works directly with local everyday women across the country. In particular, we work with women experiencing **disadvantage** and **oppression** and those from **marginalised** communities. We see first-hand what is going on for women in Ireland, we see how women are impacted by legislation and policy changes, we know what keeps women up at night and, crucially, we will make insightful and achievable recommendations that we know will positively impact the lives of women and girls. This submission will highlight the important role Women's Collective Ireland can and does play in the advancement of equality *and equity* for women and girls in Ireland. It will also clearly outline the biggest issues facing the women we work with right now.

We acknowledge that while there are disadvantages for all women, the **intersection** of these disadvantages affects specific groups of women differently which means that there are also inequalities between women. While women's equality can often be approached as a 'one size fits all', Women's Collective Ireland strives for **equity** for women, and we call upon the Government to work meaningfully and strive for equity among women and girls with this new strategy.



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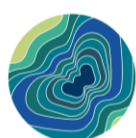


## Submission Methodology

This submission has been developed using a number of methods; reflecting the 20+ years of engagement Women’s Collective Ireland have had with grassroots women in each of our 17 Projects; gathering and acknowledging information from relevant research organisations and stakeholders; and through consultations with women. One recent method of consultation we used was a survey, titled *“National Strategy for Women and Girls”*, which we launched through our WCI Women’s Projects on 11<sup>th</sup> September with a closing date of 26<sup>th</sup> September. Over this short timeframe, 337 responses were received sharing the opinions, feedback, expertise and experiences of women all over Ireland. Their input has guided WCI’s submission for the creation of a new National Strategy for Women and Girls (NSWG).

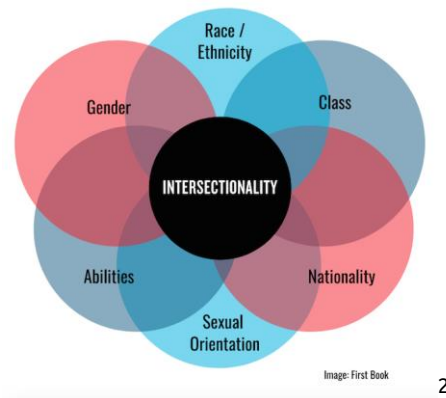
It should be noted that while some statistics will be included, this submission will not focus on the usual barrage of statistics demonstrating how poorly women are treated or represented, where women are placed, and how Ireland is performing in certain areas when it comes to gender equality. Many of these statistics and studies have already been well documented, some of which were included in previous strategies and will be included in submissions by other organisations. Behind all of these numbers, rankings and statistics there are real live women. Therefore, this submission will be filled with the voices of the women we work with, women from

<sup>1</sup> <https://reciteme.com/news/equality-v-equity/>





all backgrounds, communities and walks of life. *Their words, their lives, their struggles and their thoughts on what should be included in the next strategy will be reflected throughout this submission.* Direct quotes from women we work with will be positioned in coloured font throughout this submission. This ensures that women most affected by issues of disadvantage and marginalisation have a voice in creating the solutions to their own problems.

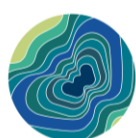


## The Role of WCI in the Implementation of the Strategy

Women’s Collective Ireland (WCI) works directly with women on the ground in each of our 17 Projects, this makes us uniquely positioned in terms of supporting the Government in the implementation of many aspects of this new strategy. WCI are the only women’s organisation in the country who work on the ground with grassroots women. Additionally, WCI also sits on numerous committees and working groups at a national level such as Aontas, Community Work Ireland, National Women’s Council, the Irish Observatory on Violence against Women, the Women’s Community Sector Working Group, Crann Childcare Support Agency, the Community Platform, the Irish Network against Racism (INAR), the Alliance for Gender Quotas and the Ukraine Civil Society Forum.

WCI will work with all relevant government departments / public sector bodies / staff officials etc. where possible in the implementation and monitoring of this new strategy. With our positioning as a national organisation working locally with

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.namidanecounty.org/blog/2022/3/30/pgsrbl96qsbq05c2ma62img929smff>



women, we can become a well-placed advisory body in working with both everyday women and government / officials. Moreover, WCI can play a pivotal part in this strategy by having ownership over key actions. We can then ensure the actions we have responsibility for are implemented in a meaningful and tangible way. Each of our 17 Projects are autonomous, meaning, they carry out activities based on the needs of the women in each locality.

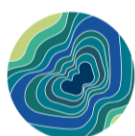
## Monitoring the Strategy

In order to have a strategy that is truly effective, clear, deliverable, tangible actions must be created. Having broad and far-reaching positive outcomes for women and girls is welcomed, however, it is imperative that the actions set out are focused, the methods of delivery are clear and the work is done in a meaningful way.

For example, simply attempting to increase women's visibility in certain areas or encouraging women to apply for various positions is not enough. Actions must also be created to ensure that women stepping into these roles and positions, whatever they may be, are protected and safe, that women are being correctly utilised and welcomed and that they are not just a number.

A robust monitoring framework must be put in place to oversee the progress being made, remedy any failures to advance or identify gaps that are found as the strategy moves forward. A collaborative approach to monitoring, measuring and evaluation should be in operation with regular input being sought from relevant experts, NGOs and women's organisations. Given our experience and expertise, Women's Collective Ireland should be central in any monitoring framework that unfolds. **[WCI Recommendation]**

Each department, agency, or organisation responsible for specific actions must take full accountability for their implementation and be answerable if they fail to meet their targets.

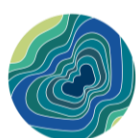


Where possible, aligning the actions in this strategy to other relevant national strategies would be a powerful tool allowing a wider group of responsible bodies to work together towards the same goals, thus, strengthening the outcomes being achieved and preventing a duplication of work. For example, the Migrant Integration Strategy, the Comprehensive Employment Strategy for People with Disabilities, the National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy, the National LGBTI Inclusion Strategy, the National Disability Inclusion Strategy, the Women’s Health Action Plan, the Taskforce on Safe Participation in Political Life, the Women’s Health Action Plan and the Third National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual & Gender-Based Violence.

To demonstrate that this strategy is more than a tick-box exercise and that the Government want to protect and retain women in the new roles they step into, our first recommendation is the creation of an independent statutory body (or extending the remit of Cuan) to allow for any woman in employment or any woman on a voluntary board / committee in Ireland to make a direct report of discriminated based on gender, or if they are the victims of sexism/misogyny, bullying, harassment, sexual harassment and abuse. This should also extend to include women experiencing racism, ableism, classism, homophobia, biphobia and transphobia. Similar to the Workplace Relations Commission, this entity could log all of these reports, potentially investigate/follow up if serious enough and outline the numbers/nature of the reports being made on an annual basis, thus getting a comprehensive picture of what women are facing in workplaces all over Ireland. Women cannot simply be put in all these positions without having strong protocols and safety mechanisms in place. [\[WCI Recommendation\]](#)

## Human Rights-Based Approach

As stated, the mission of WCI is to support grassroots women through collective and practical actions to achieve their full human rights and true equality. It is imperative that the new National Strategy for Women and Girls takes on a human rights-based



approach. Ireland is obligated to protect the human rights of women and girls through numerous legal and other International and EU treaties, directives and covenants, including but not limited to: Commission on the Status of Women, Beijing Platform for Action, UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), European Convention on Human Rights, Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, The International Conference on Population, The Istanbul Convention and Development and The UN Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). [\[WCI Recommendation\]](#)

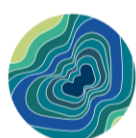
The SDG Gender Index, published recently by Equal Measures 2030, a coalition of NGOs, found that no country has, so far, achieved the promise of gender equality envisioned by the UN's 2030 sustainable development goals. **If past trends continue, the world won't achieve gender equality until 2121.** For Ireland to achieve a score of 100 in 2030, we need to improve by 1.67 points per year from 2022.<sup>3</sup>

As we watch the political landscape in countries surrounding us shift towards a more conservative and far right leaning view, it is more important than ever that the new National Strategy for Women and Girls keeps women's bodily autonomy, reproductive freedom and access to all forms of family planning a key focus as there is a real and present danger of all gains being rolled back. This is the first strategy since the Repeal of the Eighth Amendment in 2018, where an overwhelming majority of the public in Ireland democratically voted in favour of abortion access for women and those who need it.

At the International Conference on Population and Development in 1994 in Cairo, *"the international community reached consensus on three quantitative goals to be achieved by 2015: the reduction of infant, child and maternal mortality; the provision of universal access to education, particularly for girls; and the provision of universal*

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<sup>3</sup> [https://equalmeasures2030.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/Country\\_Profile\\_Ireland.pdf](https://equalmeasures2030.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/Country_Profile_Ireland.pdf)



*access to a full range of reproductive health services, including family planning*".<sup>4</sup> Ireland endorsed this agenda in 1994.<sup>5</sup>

In 1979, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly. The Convention devotes major attention to a most vital concern of women, namely their reproductive rights. The preamble sets the tone by stating that *"the role of women in procreation should not be a basis for discrimination"*.<sup>6</sup>

*The right to health under article 12 of the CEDAW Convention includes the right to bodily autonomy and encompasses women's and girls' sexual and reproductive freedom. In addition, article 16 (e) protects women's rights to decide freely and responsibly on the number and spacing of their children and to have access to the information, education and means to enable them to exercise these rights.*<sup>7</sup>

Ireland signed and ratified CEDAW in 1985.<sup>8</sup>

Moreover, adopting a human rights-based approach also extends to people from LGBTQI+ communities. In 2019, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights released the publication, Born free and Equal, setting out how international human rights law applies to issues relevant to LGBTQI+ populations, including trans people. It asserts:

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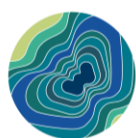
<sup>4</sup> [https://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/event-pdf/PoA\\_en.pdf](https://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/event-pdf/PoA_en.pdf) page iii

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.ireland.ie/en/un/newyork/news-and-speeches/speeches-archive/30th-anniversary-of-the-international-conference-on-population-and-development/>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-elimination-all-forms-discrimination-against-women>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.ohchr.org/en/statements/2022/07/access-safe-and-legal-abortion-urgent-call-united-states-adhere-womens-rights>

<sup>8</sup> [https://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=TREATY&mtdsg\\_no=IV-8&chapter=4](https://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=TREATY&mtdsg_no=IV-8&chapter=4)



*States are obliged to respect, protect and fulfil the human rights of all persons within their jurisdiction, including LGBTI persons. These obligations extend to refraining from interference in the enjoyment of rights; preventing abuses by State agencies and officials, private corporations and individuals; monitoring, investigating and combating such abuses when they occur; and providing remedy to victims.<sup>9</sup>*

## Gender Proofing, Budgeting and Mainstreaming

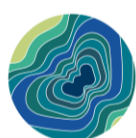
*“It is very clear that despite the push for equality between men and women, jobs and community services only consider women as an after thought. And often it appears that women have taken the initiative to adapt things to suit them and their needs rather than have those considered in development.”*

**Gender mainstreaming** is when a gender equality perspective is applied in each phase of a policy-making cycle. It involves the integration of a gender perspective into the preparation, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies, regulatory measures and spending programmes, with a view to promoting equality between women and men and combating discrimination. The systematic mainstreaming of a gender perspective across all government departments and public bodies is crucial in our work towards gender equality and gender equity.

An intersectional approach to gender mainstreaming is vital, when making policies, programmes, practices, laws and decisions, to take women with intersecting identities into account - including women living with disabilities, women from

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<sup>9</sup> [Born Free and Equal WEB.pdf \(ohchr.org\)](#) Page 9



different socio-economic backgrounds, LGBTIQ+, black, Traveller, minority and migrant women.

Men manage wealth and women manage **poverty**, is something WCI has been saying for years. In Ireland, 43.9% of women were at risk of poverty in 2017 before income from pensions and social transfers was taken into account.<sup>10</sup> Think about women in Direct Provision, who cannot work and might have one or more children to care for and have to manage on tiny weekly payments of €38.80 for each adult and €29.80 for each child.<sup>11</sup>

Disabled women, who cannot work due to their disabilities and can have higher outgoings as a result of managing or living with their disability such as needing to take cabs more often as public transport is not adequate or available to them. And the difficulties experienced by Traveller women in education directly affect their employment prospects and maintain their low levels of participation in the labour force.<sup>12</sup> Additionally, the majority of single-parent households are headed by women.

With this in mind, WCI is not only calling for gender to be taken into consideration when policies, laws and budgets are being discussed and created. We are also calling for **poverty proofing** to be implemented at all stages and levels. Poverty proofing is the process by which government departments, local authorities and state agencies assess policies and programmes at design and review stages in relation to the likely impact that they will have or have had on poverty and on inequalities which are likely to lead to poverty, with a view to poverty reduction.<sup>13</sup> Poverty proofing procedures<sup>14</sup> and **gender impact assessments**<sup>15</sup> are vital tools in this work and will

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<sup>10</sup><https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/ep/p-wamii/womenandmeninireland2019/povertypeaceandjustice/>

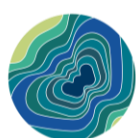
<sup>11</sup><https://www.citizensinformation.ie/en/moving-country/asylum-seekers-and-refugees/services-for-asylum-seekers-in-ireland/direct-provision/>

<sup>12</sup> [https://www.ihrec.ie/app/uploads/download/pdf/poverty\\_and\\_inequality.pdf](https://www.ihrec.ie/app/uploads/download/pdf/poverty_and_inequality.pdf) page 46

<sup>13</sup> [https://www.ihrec.ie/app/uploads/download/pdf/poverty\\_and\\_inequality.pdf](https://www.ihrec.ie/app/uploads/download/pdf/poverty_and_inequality.pdf) page 4

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.socialinclusion.ie/documents/PovertyProofingGuidelines1999.pdf>

<sup>15</sup> [http://www.mariecrawley.com/section1\\_why\\_gender\\_proof.pdf](http://www.mariecrawley.com/section1_why_gender_proof.pdf)

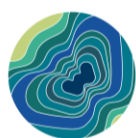


assist the Government in their commitment towards gender equity. [\[WCI Recommendation\]](#)

## Government Survey Feedback

The survey being carried out on behalf of the Government on the National Strategy for Women and Girls is welcomed. However, feedback from grassroots women we work with have highlighted some concerns that need to be raised. It was felt that the numerous questions asking for priorities to be ranked were needless and offered no real insight into women's experiences. It is not enough to rank and score women's issues. All areas are important, and all should be worked on. Attempting to research what areas are most critical for women is important, but this should be carried out in a different manner. This survey was not accessible to everyday women. It came across as if there was a certain level of knowledge expected with the ranking questions, and those with no knowledge were just left to guess.

Furthermore, there is a danger that the survey could have been infiltrated by actors who do not really care about women's issues, social inclusion or gender equality. Those with the sole agenda of **social exclusion**, discrimination and hate should not be allowed to influence such an important document. Any responses that fall under an antithesis of a human rights-based approach should not be given any weight or credibility. Our fear is not unfounded as the recent survey circulated by WCI to seek grassroots women's input to this submission, was shared and infiltrated by people with such views. We do not wish to give oxygen to their views here but the racism, transphobia and misogyny that was communicated was palpable.





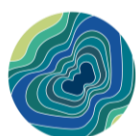
## The Biggest Issues Facing Women Right Now

*“Everything. Lack of access, safety, opportunities, childcare, Decent healthcare, gaslighting by doctors, child support, work life balance. F\*\*\*\*\*g everything! Every woman I know, middle aged, working or not, kids or not, married or not, is f\*\*\*\*\*g exhausted. From having to do everything, all the time, and hold the weight of society on our shoulders. Every woman I know is bearing the burden of childcare AND elderly care. Trapped in abusive relationships, because there's no where to go, trapped in a shitty job because the risk of poverty is too great. As a working single mum, going through menopause, while minding elderly parents, I'm just f\*\*\*\*\*g exhausted and depressed. Women's equality is a myth.”*

As referred to in our submission methodology, WCI developed and distributed a survey to gather the input of women throughout the country to inform our submission. WCI survey report is attached to this submission. The quotes in coloured font placed throughout this document are direct quotes taken from women we work with and women who answered our survey. We asked women a series of open-ended questions along with questions that simply required a yes/no/not sure response. We asked women what the biggest issues were for them right now and some clear themes emerged.

- 80% felt women and men were not equal in Ireland today
- 83% felt men could do more to improve the lives of women and girls
- 92% felt the Government could do more to improve the lives of women and girls
- When asked ‘Are there any individuals or groups that are a concern for you right now?’ 72% of women who responded that there were, with the majority of those stating far right groups were a concern, due to their promotion of hate, divisiveness and rolling back of equality and rights of women and LGBTQ+ and minority groups.

Without a shadow of a doubt the number one issue for the women who engaged with us was women’s safety and men’s violence against women.

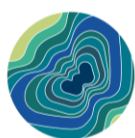




**Women’s Safety and Men’s Violence Against Women**

“The rise of incel groups with extreme misogynistic attitudes that they share with young, impressionable boys online. Groups which are only highlighted when finally exposed, like in the Pelicot case in France. This is happening all over the world under our noses - men sharing intimate images of their partners online with other men, Drugging women into submission, but society is turning a blind eye, because they don't want to believe that the men they live with or interact with in the community are capable of this level of depravity. Those of us who experience it know better.”

Women and girls do not feel safe in society today because we are not safe. We are not safe in the home, not safe on the street, not safe in school or employment and not safe online. Unfortunately, most people seem to view violence against women



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and girls in the abstract, that it is something that happens to women, over there, by no one in particular. The language we use to describe it is passive. The reality is that women and girls face violence from men and boys and as a society we need to name this, recognise it when we see it and face it head on. Women and girls are not abusing, assaulting, raping and murdering ourselves. Men are the perpetrators of these crimes. When it comes to perpetrators of violence against women and girls be it online or in the real world, conversations rarely focus on the perpetrator. Research from 2018 on Cyber violence and hate speech online against women commissioned by the European Parliament's Policy Department for Citizens' Rights and Constitutional Affairs at the request of the FEMM Committee, states that *"as the spotlights have traditionally been on the victims, for cultural and systemic reasons associated with power, very few studies have analysed, in depth, the profile of perpetrators and their geographic distribution. In the meantime, new forms of masculinity are emerging which are challenging women's rights and widespread feminism."*<sup>16</sup>

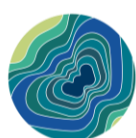
Andrew Tate was a name that was mentioned by numerous women in our survey. Tate and various other internet 'personalities' *"who fan the flames of misogyny"*.

Much more focus, research and campaigns need to be put on the perpetrators of violent crimes against women and girls as well as the harm that men like Tate are doing to young boys taking influence from him. Moreover, many of the anti-feminist and anti-women subcultures of the internet are inextricably linked with the far right and its continuous rise. Misogynistic and hate fueled narratives need to be countered. Social media companies play a very large role in the spread of online hate.

*"Andrew Tate and misogyny in general."*

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<sup>16</sup> [Cyber violence and hate speech online against women \(europa.eu\)](#) page 34 - 35



*“Extreme racism is creeping in and gaining traction. Extreme sexist men online eg Andrew Tate influencing young men. Porn sites advocating violence during sex making young men think it is acceptable or normal even.”*

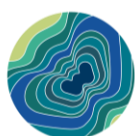
*“Mandatory education on domestic, sexual and gender-based abuse for all professionals in frontline services and court services to understand the nuances, biases and where we can fill the gaps. Challenging and changing strong gender role depictions in the school curriculums, starting at pre-school level, to teach children that they can be whatever they want to be, not just what society dictates. Impose tougher measures to ensure social media corporations are not complicit in spreading misogynistic/racist/homophobic views and anyone who incites/participates in hate-crimes are exposed and punished. Inviting participation from advocate groups/services that strongly support education and supporting women.*

*Domestic abuse accounts for so many other societal problems, so if we can address this at primary level, it will reduce the need for crisis intervention, as attitudes begin to change.”*

The other strong themes and biggest issues for women right now include:

- ***The burden of care put on women***
- ***Poverty - women not having livable wages, women becoming economically trapped in relationships and the gender and pension gap***
- ***The need for better healthcare***
- ***Women’s representation***

These issues and recommendations for each will be covered in later sections of this document.



## What's Missing?

WCI believes that although the six objectives set out in the previous strategy are far reaching, some areas are missing. We will outline these areas below.

### *Far Right*

As mentioned, when asked 'Are there any individuals or groups that are a concern for you right now?' 72% of women who responded that there were, with the majority of those stating far right groups were a concern.

*“These groups want a regression of women's rights and have a hateful propaganda against many vulnerable groups in Ireland.*

*A big concern is how unconcerned authorities seem to be about this.”*

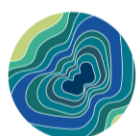
*“There is too much hatred towards minority groups and it's all coming from the right wing. I have seen friends getting sucked in. And it feels the RW are successful in their brainwashing with some people and our government have no counter attack to educate people on what the facts are.”*

**Far right** groups oppose gender equality policies and defend nationalist ideologies based on strictly traditional gender roles.<sup>17</sup> Additionally, the far right do not just use gender to push their agenda, they use race, using both gender and racism to work together to escalate extremist's crisis tropes and justify radical violence.<sup>18</sup> The threat of the far right and how they operate puts women, particularly migrant women and women from minority groups, at risk when engaging in politics or activism. According to the Hope and Courage Collective, the objective of far right activity is to shift the centre ground to the right and the right to the far right while disrupting the left and all progressive social movements and campaigns.<sup>19</sup> They go on to say they believe that the far right is motivated by deeply conservative and

<sup>17</sup> [120430686.pdf \(cuni.cz\)](#) page 18

<sup>18</sup> [120430686.pdf \(cuni.cz\)](#) page 18

<sup>19</sup> <https://hopeandcourage.ie/the-far-right-in-ireland/>



reactionary ideas about race, religion, hierarchy, nationalism, gender roles, and science.<sup>20</sup>

## *“We can easily slide back to a time when women had no autonomy”*

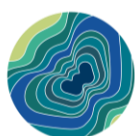
The far right are a threat to women, particularly migrant and ethnic minority women and the LGBTQI+ community. The Government must do more on a local and national level to dispel the misinformation and disinformation being spouted by the far right. All relevant departments and agencies should continue to fund and work closely with community groups and organisations such as Women’s Collective Ireland and other community organisations, who are on the ground trying to combat far right rhetoric, promote social inclusion and support the integration of people of all backgrounds into our communities. [\[WCI Recommendation\]](#)

The link between the far right, ‘incels’ and extreme hate towards women in online forums should not go unnoticed or unchallenged by the Government either.

*“Firstly for their given desire to destroy solidarity,  
rule by fear and exclusion  
and to control women and children for the benefit of a few men.  
Second for their impact on impoverished and under resourced  
communities who feel the lies of the far right  
are an easier explanation for their despair,  
than the truth (that the state has abandoned them).”*

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<sup>20</sup> <https://hopeandcourage.ie/the-far-right-in-ireland/>



## Men

There is no denying, we live in a **patriarchal** world. Historically, the laws, systems and structures of the world have been set up for men, by men. It is why continued gender proofing, budgeting and mainstreaming is so important. Men hold the majority of positions of power and it is mostly men at decision-making levels. Unfortunately for women and minority groups, if you do not have a seat at the table, you can end up on the menu. It was not so long ago in this country that unwed mothers were detained and when a woman did marry she had to give up her job.

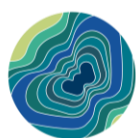
With this in mind, it is hardly surprising that the majority of women we surveyed felt men could and should play a much larger role in supporting the advancement of gender equality. The previous strategy only mentioned the role of men and boys once in its actions. Action 3.4 Support initiatives to encourage men and boys to be champions of gender equality.<sup>21</sup> This is simply not enough. Men and boys, with focused support, education and encouragement from Government, relevant departments, agencies and organisations should be doing far more to improve the lives of women and girls.

*“Many men are unaware (or in denial) of the patriarchal society we live in. Recently a male employee of the FAI told me that women were taking their jobs! And when challenged on it he honestly could not get his head around my issue with his reference to “our jobs” ie males in football. Shocking.”*

*“Men are complicit by not calling out misogynistic behaviour among peers. Many share similar attitudes, or don't want to get involved. It suits a lot of men to keep the status quo, as patriarchal laws and views benefits them more than women.”*

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<sup>21</sup> <https://assets.gov.ie/6427/88cc57e206a34e94aeff2310f2b100d5.pdf> page 53



Many women mentioned needing men to step up more in the home. There was once a time when men worked outside the home and women exclusively inside, however, now many women (not always by choice) also work outside the home. This has resulted in women working externally as well as doing all domestic labour and care, where many men just work outside the home and aren't doing an equal or fair amount of labour inside the home.

When asked to elaborate on their answers on if women feel men could do more to improve the lives of women and girls, men doing their fair share in the home was an obvious theme. Campaigns highlighting the need for men to show up more in the home would be useful. [\[WCI Recommendation\]](#)

*“give them support in their homes”*

*“Share the work in the home”*

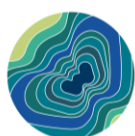
*“Equal roles in the home”*

*“Political decision making to improve supports to enable women to feel valued both in the home and work is crucial.”*

*“Take more responsibility in the home and with the children”*

*“Am not sure that the men in government give enough thought to the problems of women who have to be home makers and acquire childcare which is very expensive.”*

*“Step up & be counted for. Many men in my experience talk the talk of equality but don't live it in their own homes..... this perpetrated gender stereotypes leading to the same expectations of women as were in the 70's & before along with the expectation that they work full time jobs too.”*





Employment protected and paid leave for both parents is required. Increasing paternal leave and encouraging the shared taking of parental leave would go a long way to shifting the burden of care for children being squarely on women. **[WCI Recommendation]** Other countries are doing the following:

*Japan offers a maximum of one full year of paid parental leave exclusively for fathers. This leave is entirely separate from any leave granted to mothers. Pay is tiered with the first half (or 180 days) paid at 67% of the employee's regular salary. The remainder is paid at 50%. Pay is provided by the Japanese government.*

*Sweden offers both parents access to 480 days of shared leave with partial pay. In the family-friendly Swedish culture, parents are encouraged to split leave days between them. Parental leave is paid in flexible tiers starting at 80% of the employee's regular salary.*

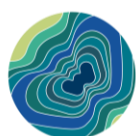
*Norway is another Nordic country with generous paternity leave laws that balance parenting duties to allow for equal workforce participation. In Norway, fathers are entitled to either 15 weeks at 100% pay or 19 weeks at 80% pay through social security.<sup>22</sup>*

Men's violence against women and women's safety was the strongest and most common theme throughout our survey. Everyday men can play a crucial role in decreasing and preventing the widespread misogyny, abuse, harassment and violence women are subjected to. WCI is aware that 'Not All Men' are abusive, however, equally, we argue that 'Not All Men' are doing enough to combat the fear, threat of and actual violence women deal with on a daily basis at the hands of some men.

*“open conversation among men about issues like rape culture and ‘locker room talk’. education on social awareness of the problems women face largely at the*

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<sup>22</sup> <https://www.safeguardglobal.com/resources/paternity-leave-by-country/>

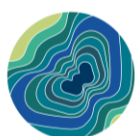
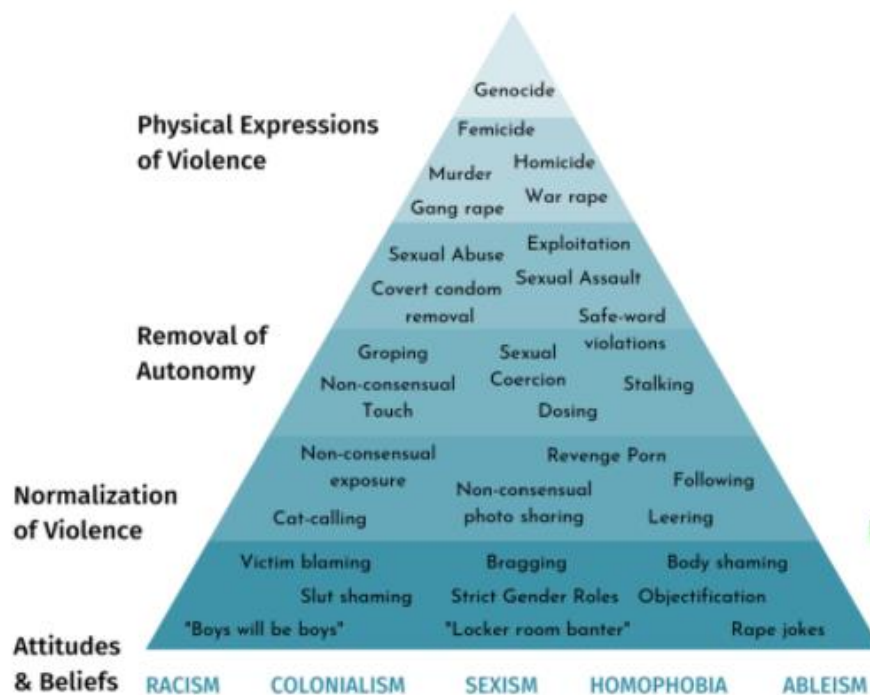


*hands of men should be mandatory in primary, secondary and third level education.”*

Simply calling out negative and inappropriate behaviour when they see it or hear it, would be a powerful tool in men collectively working towards a society where women and girls are valued and safe. Government should support ongoing initiatives and create new ones in this area. **[WCI Recommendation]**

*“Without men stepping up and stepping in to stop their fellow man's misogyny nothing will change as those with misogynistic views are very unlikely to take womens opinions on board”*

*“Stop the spread of accepted violence and control of women. Educate themselves and take accountability... Then hold dangerous men accountable.”*



Women's  
Collective  
Ireland



An Roinn Leanaí, Comhionannais,  
Míchumais, Lánpháirtíochta agus Óige  
Department of Children, Equality,  
Disability, Integration and Youth

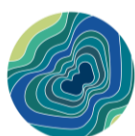
*“Men do not call out misogynistic attitudes in their friends and stay silent where they see situations of coercive control and domestic violence.”*

*“The violent ones - stop the violence. The non-violent ones - understand the threats and fears that women face, not just at an extreme level but also the low-level misogyny and sexual inappropriateness that women have to deal with on an ongoing basis.”*

### ***Housing Crisis***

The housing crisis was another theme in feedback from everyday women. Younger generations are being locked out of the housing market due to skyrocketing house prices caused by high demand and low supply. The Government must address the housing crisis and increasing housing supply nationally as an absolute priority. The housing crisis is also resulting in countless women and children being stuck in unhealthy situations and violent and abusive homes due to homeless and refuge accommodation being full and there being literally nowhere for women to go. If

<sup>23</sup> <https://www.ualberta.ca/en/current-students/sexual-assault-centre/resources/create-change.html>



there are some accommodation options out there the rents are too high for women to afford.

*“This government is putting women at risk of further violence or death by limiting the amount of housing available for women who have risked their lives going to a women’s refuge and then to be told after a few months that they must move on and find non-existent accommodation, this sometimes causes women to go back to their violent husband which puts women and children at risk. In my work I have come across women who cannot leave a violent man because of this issue of ending up on the streets with their children. Lack of suitable housing is a huge issue for women and causes untold hardship.”*

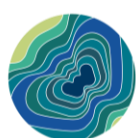
*“The lack of housing also means that some women are living in homes with ex partners that they are not in a relationship with anymore but cant afford to move out. This is unacceptable. The lack of refuge spaces for women experiencing domestic violence is unacceptable as it is preventing women from moving out of dangerous situation. Also, the lack of housing is resulting in women facing homelessness if they leave violent situations.”*

*“Women are disproportionately affected by issues like housing and healthcare access especially if compounded for those in abusive relationships.”*

*“Lack of access to affordable housing ”*

Ombudsman for Children, Dr Niall Muldoon, recently said that allegations of domestic violence should be treated similarly to allegations of sexual abuse in order to prevent women and children from becoming homeless. He said, *“Legally, we should be in a situation where it shouldn’t be the mother and children who leave [in domestic abuse cases], it should be the alleged offender.”*<sup>24</sup> WCI agrees with this suggestion. Additionally, the streamlining of Council procedures and paperwork for

<sup>24</sup> <https://www.irishlegal.com/articles/ombudsman-calls-for-alleged-domestic-abusers-to-be-removed-from-homes>



women accessing housing lists if they are in violent or abusive relationships. **[WCI Recommendation]**

### **Cost of Living and Childcare Costs**

The increased cost of living was mentioned by numerous women, many also made reference to the cost of childcare. The rising cost of living coupled with the cost of childcare is incredibly worrisome for women, single mothers, in particular. This is especially true for single mothers where they are having difficulty around maintenance orders and constantly having to fight for monetary support for themselves and their children.

*“casual sexual violence against women and a lack of consequences for persons when they go through the justice system. financial hardships on women especially single mothers when partners leave them or are experiencing addiction issues.*

*This puts women into a very vulnerable position and I know women who have turned to sex work in order to pay rent as they have to wait long periods of time for financial assistance from public services. This isn't good enough and we should be supporting women in these times. I also think that men should have to pay child support, there are too many women tired out from constantly having to go to court and appointments that they often let it go and are again financially vulnerable. The state should be the ones doing the leg work and wages should be garnished.”*

*“Health, cost of living, safety”*

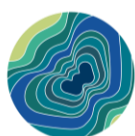
*“Cost of living”*

*“The rising cost of living”*

*“Cost of Childcare*

*“Cost of living - putting food on the table, of supporting a family, of heat”*

*“Financial and social support for women in the home. Work must always pay.”*



Women's  
Collective  
Ireland



An Roinn Leanaí, Comhionannais,  
Míchumais, Lánpháirtíochta agus Óige  
Department of Children, Equality,  
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*“The lack of paid paternity leave. This means the mother is 'out of the running' for longer. Also the cost of childcare. This often means the mother will stop working instead of the father, because it will be cheaper than the cost of childcare”*

*“Women take on more caring responsibilities in the home such as childcare and caring for elderly parents. The cost of childcare is unaffordable for many restricting women who want to work.”*

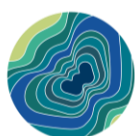
*“Women still undertake the majority of investment in Child Rearing, from conception onwards.”*

Women are more likely to be in precarious or part-time employment. Women taking on part-time work is often driven by their caregiving responsibilities. Part-time roles typically offer lower hourly wages, fewer benefits, and limited career advancement opportunities, further contributing to the gender pay gap. The OECD reports that part-time work is a significant factor in the gender wage gap. This further entrenches economic disparities and limits women’s career progression.<sup>25</sup>

Moreover, a significant portion of the gender pay gap can be attributed to the motherhood penalty, where women experience career setbacks and reduced earnings due to childbearing responsibilities. Conversely, men often benefit from a fatherhood bonus, where having children can enhance their perceived stability and commitment to their careers. Studies show that women’s earnings decrease by around 4% for every child they have, while men’s earnings increase by 6% after becoming fathers. This disparity contributes to the gender pay gap and

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<sup>25</sup> <https://www.oecd.org/en/data/indicators/gender-wage-gap.html>



disproportionately affects women who balance professional and caregiving responsibilities.<sup>26</sup>

Furthermore, the gender pay gap, being forced to take on part-time work and the motherhood penalty, results in women being paid far less throughout their entire working life, which ends up in women's pension or retirement accounts being significantly smaller than men's, so women are more likely to be poor in old age.<sup>27</sup>

WCI advocates for the implementation of all recommendations made by the Citizens Assembly on Gender Equality, under the areas of Care, Social Protection and Pay and Workplace Conditions. WCI also calls for significant investment in childcare resulting in a universal, public model that delivers truly affordable and sustainable childcare for anyone who needs it. **[WCI Recommendation]**

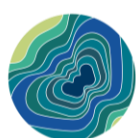
WCI further calls for appropriate data collection systems to be put in place to identify the numbers of women living in poverty or those at risk of poverty. These statistics then need to be further broken down according to social groupings e.g. households headed by women, Traveller women, women with disabilities etc. **[WCI Recommendation]**

*“Men in positions of power have created a society which doesn't value the importance of women's access to the labour market. Childcare workers are paid badly despite the owners of creches making huge profits in some cases and the parents being charged extortionate rates. The lack of a publicly funded childcare services has caused this. In addition, the lack of publicly funded home help for the elderly is resulting in women (generally) filling in this gap to care for their elderly parents without adequate state support. Also, women are generally the ones caring for kids with disabilities without the appropriate level of state support.”*

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<sup>26</sup> <https://www.inc.com/betsy-mikel/this-same-life-event-costs-women-4-of-their-salary-while-mens-earnings-increase-6.html>

<sup>27</sup> Linda Scott (2020) The Cost of Sexism, How the economy was built for men and why we must reshape it, Faber & Faber Ltd, London UK. page 18



## Climate Crisis

While the Climate Crisis was not a strong theme in our survey, it would be remiss of WCI not to include the need for work to be done in this area. The Climate Crisis is one of the biggest issues facing us on a local, national and global scale. Studies have found that women are more likely than men to be affected by climate change, with UN figures indicating that 80% of people displaced by climate change are women.<sup>28</sup> Women are predominantly in the primary caring role and more likely to live in poverty, meaning women are more vulnerable when disasters hit and it is more difficult for them to recover given their incomes and social status.<sup>29</sup> As well as addressing women living in poverty, women need to be better educated about climate change and its impact and, crucially, how they can play a part in stopping it. Moreover, the 2024 SDG Gender Index found that one of Ireland's worst performing indicators since 2015 was around the environment. With indicator 13.2: '*Proportion of women (15+ years) who report they are satisfied with efforts to preserve the environment*' declining by more than -0.2 points per year.<sup>30</sup> Women-led groups do not receive sufficient climate funding. Women-led organisations, which are often small, have difficulty accessing funding from climate finance providers, which mostly invest in large-scale projects.<sup>31</sup> Government funding for women and youth led organisations leading out on projects and education around climate justice and climate change. **[WCI Recommendation]**

*Women are excluded from decision-making spaces and climate change negotiations. Despite the unequivocal value of women's participation in climate movements and their history as environmental defenders, men still fill 67% of climate-related decision-making roles and women's representation in national and global climate negotiating bodies remains below 30%. Women's leadership and full participation in the climate*

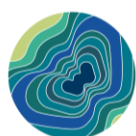
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<sup>28</sup> <https://www.bbc.com/news/science-environment-43294221>

<sup>29</sup> <https://www.bbc.com/news/science-environment-43294221>

<sup>30</sup> [https://equalmeasures2030.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/Country\\_Profile\\_Ireland.pdf](https://equalmeasures2030.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/Country_Profile_Ireland.pdf)

<sup>31</sup> <https://unfoundation.org/blog/post/five-facts-about-gender-equality-and-climate-change/>

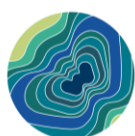




*movement are essential if we want to design solutions and responses to the climate emergency that address women's differentiated needs and protect their rights.*<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> <https://unfoundation.org/blog/post/five-facts-about-gender-equality-and-climate-change/>



## Objective One

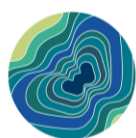
### Advance Socio-Economic Equality for Women and Girls

**If women are to achieve meaningful civil and political rights, poverty among women must be abolished.**

According to Linda Scott, an internationally renowned expert on women's economic development, *Men, as a group, often choose to spend money on their own indulgences, rather than sharing it with their families. By contrast, women, as a group, spend first on families, especially children and communities (2020: 14).* She goes on to say that *research has demonstrated repeatedly that, even in the poorest communities, economically empowering women increases spending on education, nutrition and healthcare, strengthening countries in the process (2020: 15).*

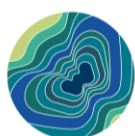
Furthermore, the link between the feminization of jobs and lower pay should also be mentioned here. Kat Banyard speaks about the fact that women dominated roles and professions are paid and valued less than men's, *even when the jobs demand the same level of skill, training, physical and mental effort and decision-making.* She continues by stating that *jobs such as caring roles and the skills they require are seen as 'natural' for women and thus not deserving of much financial remuneration.* Banyard goes on to say that *an individual's pay can be reduced by up to 9 per cent just by being employed in a female-dominated industry (2010: 91-92).*

WCI utilises women's community education as a vital tool in tackling educational disadvantage for women as it provides a model of education, from first steps to third level, which encompasses the needs of women. It starts with the lived experience of the participants and validates their experiences and knowledge. Embedded in WCI work are the prioritisation of the needs and experiences of marginalised women living in Ireland. 17 WCI Women's Projects provide a focal point for local women and are supporting women to access high quality education, training and employment opportunities.



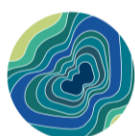
## WCI Recommendations:

- Continue to support core funding for WCI courses and education to support and increase women to advance. This allows WCI projects to provide supports through community education programmes for “hard-to-reach” groups of women, including those who left school without qualifications and who need second-chance educational opportunities. Women’s Community Education offers women an opportunity to gain new skills, enhance existing skills and build confidence through a participatory, women centred approach to learning.
- Fund WCI targeted programme rollout for women distanced from the labour market, including WCI Grassroots Women’s New Directions Programme’ ‘Encompassing Pathways towards empowerment, education and employment and participation.
- Ensure women’s organisations and their women workers are adequately staffed and funded to allow them to work with marginalised women in the community that other organisations do not reach.
- Appropriate data collection systems need to be put in place to identify the numbers of women living in poverty or those at risk of poverty. Statistics need to be further broken down according to social groupings e.g. households headed by women, Traveller women, women living with disabilities etc.
- Childcare which is accessible and affordable needs to be made available particularly for women who work atypical hours. The number of community crèche facilities needs to be increased to meet the needs of women on low income. Significant investment in the childcare sector is needed, resulting in a universal, public model that delivers truly affordable and sustainable childcare for anyone who needs it.
- WCI advocates for the implementation of all recommendations made by the Citizens Assembly on Gender equality, under the areas of Care, Social Protection and Pay and Workplace Conditions.
- Promotion and support for employers to offer more flexible working

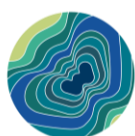


conditions for parents and carers, particularly single mothers in all kinds of employment - access to employment that includes job sharing, flexible working hours and working up time off in lieu etc.

- Employment protected and paid leave for both parents. Increasing paternal leave and encouraging the shared taking of parental leave would go a long way to shifting the burden of care for children being squarely on women.
- Continue with work on tackling the gender pay gap including having sanctions in place for identified inequalities linked solely to gender. Employer reporting on the gender pay gap should include information on race/marital status/ability/membership of the LGBTQ+ community.
- Regulations need to be strengthened to support working women with precarious employment contracts which leads to in work poverty.
- The government needs to recognise and adequately resource the home as a centre of care and recognise the role of family carers as care partners. Payments and supports to carers need to be adequate to keep them out of poverty.
- Respite grants and respite beds need to be reinstated as does Home Care Packages for carers.
- Recognise the unpaid care work of women through providing social insurance credits for stay-at-home mothers. Provide a universal pension system which gives women and men equal access to a comprehensive pension guarantee, ensuring that women are not financially disadvantaged as a result of undertaking care work.
- The hours in Community Employment schemes suit women with caring responsibilities. Reinstatement of the materials and training grants to allow women to upskill while on schemes. Increase payments to those on CE schemes. Many women cannot afford to take up places on schemes due to loss of benefits and cost of working outside the home. CE scheme placements should also be targeted and matched to the needs of the women.



- Critical areas that require further measures are the low pay and working conditions of workers in the childcare, healthcare, community, retail and hospitality sectors (feminisation of work). These are areas where employees are predominantly women. Contribute to the reduction of the gender pay gap by increasing pay in these sectors.
- Poverty proofing at all decision making levels. Incorporate poverty proofing into all policy, legislative and budget changes.



## Objective Two

### Advance the Physical and Mental Health and Wellbeing of Women and Girls

Women face violence not only as caregivers but also as care receivers. The systematic mistreatment of women during childbirth and other reproductive services is a widespread problem that deserves more recognition at the EU level.<sup>33</sup>

*“Woman not been taken seriously with many things such as doctors appointments being dismissed of serious issues, not enough knowledge on women’s health.”*

*“women’s mental and physical health are still not taken as seriously by doctors/professionals as mens are”*

*“The knowledge & medical support for women’s issues in this country is very poor. I know it has started to be addressed but there is a very long way to go.”*

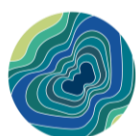
*“Go to a doctor get gaslight but if a man goes he gets proper treatment ”*

Many women in our survey mentioned negative experiences when trying to access healthcare, including gaslighting by medical professionals, lack of support and listening, lack of specialised knowledge on health issues relating to menstruation, menopause and reproductive care and not being taken seriously.

Gynaecological and obstetric violence refers to a type of violence rooted in the intersection of gender-based violence (targeting women just because of their gender) and institutional violence (rooted in the structural power imbalances within an institution), taking place in a healthcare setting.<sup>34</sup> Factors such as race/ethnicity,

<sup>33</sup> [https://www.epc.eu/content/PDF/2023/ViolenceAgainstWomen\\_DP\\_v4.pdf](https://www.epc.eu/content/PDF/2023/ViolenceAgainstWomen_DP_v4.pdf) page 5

<sup>34</sup> [ViolenceAgainstWomen\\_DP\\_v4.pdf \(epc.eu\)](https://www.epc.eu/content/PDF/2023/ViolenceAgainstWomen_DP_v4.pdf) page 5



gender, age, socio-economic status, medical conditions, and religious beliefs are all crucial in determining the scale of violence. Previous research shows that ethnic minorities and migrant women are at a higher risk in Europe. For example, research carried out in Belgium found that, one out of three women of colour have experienced obstetric violence compared to the average of one in five. Moreover, LGBTIQ+ women are vulnerable to mistreatment as they face discriminatory behaviour based on their gender identity, sexual orientation, or sex characteristics.<sup>35</sup>

According to research carried out by Fórsa 96% of women want the protection of a workplace menstrual health policy, but only 1% say their employer has one in place.<sup>36</sup> All workplaces should be encouraged and supported to have menstrual health policies and measures in place for staff dealing with period pain, menopause and conditions such as endometriosis.

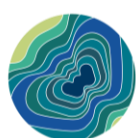
### **WCI Recommendations:**

- Support core funding for WCI to continue creating and developing safe spaces for women to come together to combat social exclusion and make connections - particularly in rural areas.
- Support core funding allowing WCI to develop and deliver a suite of mental health and wellbeing workshops and programmes that specifically target the women we work with at a local level.
- Support core funding for WCI to promote and raise awareness of women's health issues, programmes, screenings and events.
- Extend membership of the Women's Health Taskforce to Women's Collective Ireland.
- Continue to fund and support Traveller Primary Healthcare Projects and Traveller Community Development Projects.
- Make positive changes in health systems, knowledge, and practice to centre

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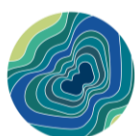
<sup>35</sup> [ViolenceAgainstWomen\\_DP\\_v4.pdf \(epc.eu\)](#) page 5

<sup>36</sup> <https://www.forsa.ie/workplace-menstrual-health-policies-benefit-employers-too/>



women, in all of their intersecting identities, and recognise them as subjects rather than objects.

- Develop decentralised gender-affirming care services within the primary care system under an informed consent model.
- Implement all recommendations set out by Marie O'Shea in her published report of the Review of the operation of the Health (Regulation of Termination of Pregnancy) Act 2018.
- Create legislation to regulate the Rogue Pregnancy Agencies currently in operation.
- Expand the free contraception scheme to women and those who need it to all ages.
- All workplaces should be encouraged and supported to have menstrual health policies and measures in place for staff dealing with period pain, menopause and conditions such as endometriosis.
- Reduce hospital waiting lists and open more A&E Departments to fix the current trolley crisis.
- National guidelines for the assessment and management of psychiatric patients presenting to Accident and Emergency Departments should be implemented immediately.
- Publicly and regularly advertise people's welfare and PRSI entitlements across various mediums (radio, television, newspapers, universities, social media).





## Objective Three

### Ensure the Visibility in Society of Women and Girls, and their Equal and Active Citizenship

**The burden of care put on women means many are not as visible in society. Women and the care work they provide should not be taken for granted in the home or community or at a societal or economic level.**

If women's unpaid work were assigned a monetary value, it would exceed up to 40 per cent of GDP in some countries based on conservative estimates.<sup>37</sup> Unpaid care work is essential to the functioning of the economy but often goes uncounted and unrecognised. Women shoulder a disproportionate share of unpaid care and domestic work. Globally, women—particularly those from low-income, migrant, and racialized groups—perform more than three-quarters of unpaid care and domestic work.<sup>38</sup> The burden of care put on women means they are not as visible in society.

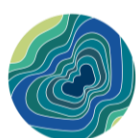
Women are the backbone of many communities and are often working as human rights activists and allies. This can make them vulnerable to targeted online and real world harassment and violence from right leaning actors and groups. More must be done to protect all women working at a grassroots level in our communities. Women should not have to put up with online or real world harassment and violence simply for speaking up about reproductive justice, racism or LGBTQ+ inclusion. In the past WCI staff members have been targeted for their human rights activism. Perpetrators of any such harassment should be held accountable by law. Fear of harassment or being targeted is a further barrier preventing women being more visible in society and being equal and active citizens.

#### WCI Recommendations:

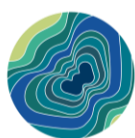
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<sup>37</sup> [https://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/economic-empowerment/facts-and-figures#\\_edn26](https://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/economic-empowerment/facts-and-figures#_edn26)

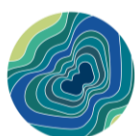
<sup>38</sup> [https://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/economic-empowerment/facts-and-figures#\\_edn26](https://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/economic-empowerment/facts-and-figures#_edn26)



- Support core funding of WCI to continue and increase our outreach and pre-development work with women experiencing disadvantage. In working with women experiencing disadvantage, there are a number of pre-developmental steps often needed to support women before they avail of learning opportunities and often the first step in this process is accessing information or joining a women's group.
- Recognise the impact of poverty and marginalisation on inclusion of women's voices by resourcing women's community development and education. Understanding that low levels of educational attainment, low income and other socio-economic factors impact significantly on the lives of women. In our experience, community education has empowered and built women's capacity to participate fully in their communities. This work is transformative and is key to social inclusion. Community education is the tool that WCI Projects use as they are often the only provider of education and training specifically designed to cater for women experiencing disadvantage in their communities. Local projects, in consultation with women, plan, develop and deliver a range of accredited and non-accredited education programmes, while taking into account women's role as primary carers.
- Support funding for organisations to make reasonable accommodations to premises to facilitate the inclusion of people with disabilities.
- Abolish the current direct provision model within the next five years.
- Recognising that women with intersecting identities such as migrant women, Traveller women and women with disabilities may need extra support and funding in order to work towards achieving equal and active citizenship. Support core funding for organisations who work with specific marginalised women's groups.
- Available grants and funding to increase and facilitate women taking up short term, non-accredited courses. Offering free community creché spaces to women furthering their education.



- Strengthen laws to protect women and victims of online and real world violence and harassment - all perpetrators need to be held to account and punished for inflicting harm on another.
- Liaise with the Garda National Protective Services Bureau on ways to work specifically with women who are reporting harassment, abuse or violence they have faced because of their work in politics, community work or activism.
- Calling on the Government to recommit to the Hate Crime Bill and ensure it is passed by the Oireachtas.
- Enact the Istanbul Convention, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child into legislation.



## Objective Four

### Advance Women in Leadership at All Levels

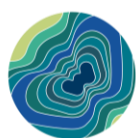
It is widely understood that there are many barriers preventing women from engaging in leadership and representative positions. The solution to women being under-represented in politics is not as simple as saying, 'more women should run'. Research from across the globe has indicated similar findings when it comes to barriers facing women who wish to enter into politics, these barriers are known as the Five C's: Childcare, Cash, Confidence, Culture and Candidate Selection Process.<sup>39</sup> Additionally, in recent times a further 'C' and barrier has been identified as Cyber Space.<sup>40</sup> Cyber can be either access to WiFi/technology/devices or the cyber abuse many political figures, especially women have to face. Each of these barriers must be targeted to facilitate the advancement of women in leadership positions at all levels.

The role of WCI should not be underestimated in the positive strides we can make towards advancing women's leadership at all levels. Women's Collective Ireland Limerick were instrumental in the establishment of the Limerick Women's Caucus in 2019, which was the first of its kind at a local level in the country. There are now more than 10 women's caucuses in existence around Ireland. WCI Projects play a critical role in raising awareness of gender equality in relation to marginalised women through engagement with local, regional and national bodies tasked with community and local development. A major strength of WCI is the way in which we can effectively connect women at a local level to strategic actions at a national level, and in turn link national priorities to local level.

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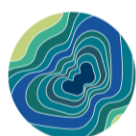
<sup>39</sup> [2009-11-05\\_women-s-participation-in-politics\\_en.pdf \(oireachtas.ie\)](#)

<sup>40</sup> <https://www.citizensassembly.ie/en/previous-assemblies/2020-2021-citizens-assembly-on-gender-equality/about-the-citizens-assembly/meetings/leadership-online-meeting1/dr-fiona-buckley-slides.pdf>

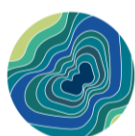


## WCI Recommendations:

- Continue to support core funding for WCI to run our Women in Leadership Course
- Recognise and support the work and core funding of WCI to develop further actions to strengthen and increase women and diversity in local politics, activism and leadership roles.
- Target funding such as Equality for Women funding to support the development of women's equality infrastructure at grassroots level.
- Target funding to women's groups to support initiatives for training women for leadership and representative roles such as Public Participation Networks.
- 40% gender quotas for Local Elections, with the eventual roll out to 50/50 at local and national level - such a strategy should incorporate nested quotas and targeted supports for ethnic minority women, Traveller women and disabled women, to help tackle the lack of diversity in elected office.
- Push through necessary legislation to allow for maternity and paternity leave for local councillors.
- Ensure effective local structures and processes are put in place for dialogue between policy makers, providers and local communities that supports participatory democracy. It is essential that local structures facilitate the inclusion and representation of marginalised women.
- Ensuring political parties run women candidates in a meaningful, serious and supportive way and do not engage in 'tokenism'. Women should not be run to hit a target or for the sake of it. Women running for election in political parties need to be given the same support as every other candidate. Parties need to be held accountable when this does not happen and be adequately supported to see that it does.
- Political parties need to have policies on sexual harassment, bullying, code of conduct etc. that are all available to the public. Funding should be allocated for each party to have a trained and informed welfare officer.



- Political party members, particularly men, should be required to do ongoing mandatory training on unconscious bias, discrimination and equality, diversity and inclusion to give them a better understanding of the current landscape and what they need to do to improve it.



## Objective Five

### Combat Violence Against Women

Without a doubt, the biggest issue facing women and girls right now is men's violence against women. This topic was by far mentioned by the majority of women who responded to our survey. As a society we must start to recognise that the majority of men who inflict harm upon women are not the scary weirdo with no friends. They are men we know, men we trust and men we love. If we look at the recent and horrifying Gisèle Pelicot case in France, where her husband of 50 years orchestrated her being raped over 200 times and enlisted over 90 men to 'help' him. Fifty of these men have been identified by police and stand accused of having raped Gisèle. The suspects range in age from 26 and 74,<sup>41</sup> and they worked as journalists, plumbers, nurses, IT consultants, truck drivers, firefighters, students, prison guards, pensioners and municipal councillors.<sup>42</sup> They are family men, community men, business men and everyday regular men. We must keep this in mind as we talk about men's violence against women.

Moreover, we have a justice system that often causes further and needless harm and trauma to those who are trying to navigate it. Fear and anxiety, stemming from constant psychological abuse also known as **coercive control**, can be just as debilitating as physical violence, underscoring the need for a more nuanced understanding of intimate partner violence that includes non-physical forms of abuse (Crossman et al., 2015<sup>43</sup>; Reyes et al., 2018<sup>44</sup>). Given these devastating effects, it is vital that both the criminal and family courts recognize and address coercive control as a weapon used against women, particularly in child custody cases. When courts fail to align on this issue, the abuse is often perpetuated in the legal process,

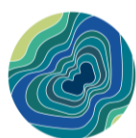
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<sup>41</sup> <https://www.thecut.com/article/who-is-gisele-pelicot-french-rape-case-explained.html>

<sup>42</sup> <https://www.cbc.ca/news/world/gisele-pelicot-men-accused-rape-1.7324328>

<sup>43</sup> Crossman, K., Hardesty, J., & Raffaelli, M. (2015). "he could scare me without laying a hand on me". *Violence Against Women*, 22(4), 454-473. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077801215604744>

<sup>44</sup> Reyes, H., Maman, S., Chen, M., Groves, A., & Moodley, D. (2018). Patterns of intimate partner violence victimization among south african women and their relation to emotional distress during pregnancy and postpartum. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 36(7-8), NP4230-NP4249. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0886260518786738>

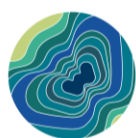


resulting in further harm to both women and children. Therefore, to protect the interests of women and children, the nuances of coercive control must be fully understood and considered during family court proceedings.

Women's Collective Ireland's work is positioned under in the Prevention Pillar of The Framework for Action in The ZERO TOLERANCE Third National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual & Gender-Based Violence 2022-2026. The Prevention Pillar focuses on supporting evidence-based actions designed to prevent DSGBV. Women's Collective Ireland's broad reach with grassroots women in communities across Ireland plays a vital role in the prevention pillar offering to provide a powerful means of intervention and prevention to DSGBV.

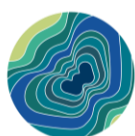
### **WCI Recommendations:**

- Support core funding of WCI to continue to contribute to developing a model of community development response to domestic abuse that requires:
  - Resourcing WCI to deliver public awareness campaigns which will seek to raise awareness of DSGBV as well as challenging existing myths, misconceptions and established beliefs.
  - Promoting the active engagement and participation of communities in initiatives designed to tackle DSGBV.
  - Funding WCI training of frontline workers to identify domestic violence and refer victims/ survivors to appropriate services.
  - Resource WCI to continue to signpost supports and promote services available to women.
  - Ensuring a shared approach to research and evaluation in relation to DSGBV issues across all relevant Departments and agencies.
- Support WCI to run awareness campaigns and events to mark the annual 16 Days of Action Global Movement. Additionally, WCI acts as a safe space for women in unhealthy relationships or violent situations to visit and can act as a 'buffer organisation'. Meaning women can attend their local WCI project to attend a class or event but can also be put in touch with a local domestic violence service or rape crisis centre. This is especially important for women under surveillance by current or ex-partners.





- Stop referring to it as ‘Violence Against Women’ using passive language, as if it is being committed by an abstract entity. Call it Men’s Violence Against Women as it is men who are perpetrating the violence against us.
- Hold the media to account for passive, sensationalist or victim blaming headlines or reporting on cases of men’s violence against women.
- Research and focus needs to be on perpetrators of violence against women and girls with the lens of prevention in mind. We know that perpetrators are predominantly men, and very often, men that we know. We need to start profiling these men - look at who they are, where they are from, what their background is, how old they are and crucially, why they are engaging in the abuse and or harassment of women and girls.
- More campaigns focusing on men as bystanders and what more men, who don’t engage in violence against women and girls, can do to call out sexism and misogyny. Men need to have more of an active role in combating men’s violence against women.
- Campaigns and initiatives targeted at young boys to combat the ‘incel’ and anti-women narratives being shared by social media influencers and internet ‘personalities’.
- Allegations of domestic violence should be treated similarly to allegations of sexual abuse in order to prevent women and children from leaving the family home.
- The streamlining of Council procedures and paperwork for women accessing housing lists if they are in violent or abusive relationships.
- Victims of a sexual offence and the releasing of their counselling records should be abolished. There is no evidentiary value to this abhorrent practice. This practice does nothing more than retraumatize victims and allow alleged perpetrators to weaponize the notes. This practice should be considered state violence.
- Listen to those who have navigated the court / justice system (e.g. women



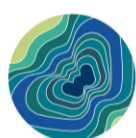
leaving abusive relationships, women who have been victims of rape and assault, women seeking a divorce or maintenance order) and implement recommendations to reform. Judges should receive Trauma Informed Care training.

- The Government must do more to call out countries who are not meeting human rights obligations and directives and countries who engage in worrying actions towards women, such as what is currently happening in Afghanistan. *Recent Taliban laws that prohibit women from speaking or showing their faces outside their homes. Women's voices are also deemed to be potential instruments of vice and so will not be allowed to be heard in public under the new restrictions. Women must also not be heard singing or reading aloud, even from inside their houses.*<sup>45</sup> The Irish Government must do more on an International stage to support women in other countries who face violence, discrimination and misogyny.
- Support adequate funding and supports to rape crisis and domestic violence services and resource local area networks against violence against women.
- Increased supports and awareness on technology facilitated abuse.
- Support local authorities and organisations to hold community safety audits in high density harassment areas in line with United Nations best practice recommendation.<sup>46</sup>
- Commit to the implementation of all recommendations under the Istanbul Convention to help reduce the numbers of women living with Domestic Violence.
- Do not facilitate the use of pseudo-science parental alienation in Irish Courts. Extensive research has been carried out worldwide on the harm caused to predominantly women and children by allowing parental alienation to be

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<sup>45</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/article/2024/aug/26/taliban-bar-on-afghan-women-speaking-in-public-un-afghanistan>

<sup>46</sup> [https://www.unodc.org/documents/Urban-security/Safety\\_Governance\\_Assessment\\_Guidance\\_final.pdf](https://www.unodc.org/documents/Urban-security/Safety_Governance_Assessment_Guidance_final.pdf)

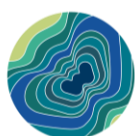


used. Prof Mike Wang, chair of the ACP-UK, Association of Clinical Psychologists UK, board of directors. In an interview with the Observer, said: “The organisation is aware of unregulated experts making findings of so-called parental alienation and doing tremendous harm. I’ve seen children taken away by the force of the state on the basis of PA. “But what the public needs to know is that there is an international consensus that the evidence-base on parental alienation is not sufficiently robust to be making decisions about child-contact arrangements.<sup>47</sup>

- Perpetrators of violence and harassment should be held accountable in court. A man’s career or future prospects should not be given more weight than the violent acts and trauma inflicted on any victim. The recent case of Natasha O’Brien and Cathal Crotty is a textbook case of what should not have happened and should never happen again.
- Further campaigns on changing laws around sexual, domestic and gender-based violence. Many women do not realise that coercive control or sharing/threatening to share intimate images without consent is a crime.

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<sup>47</sup> [Questions over use of ‘psychological experts’ in parental alienation cases | Family law | The Guardian](#)



## Objective Six

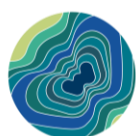
### Embed Gender Equality in Decision-making

#### WCI Recommendations:

- Continue to support the core funding WCI as a key body which puts forward women's concerns and perspectives and ensure that women's interests are mainstreamed in the work of Government.
- Ensure the intersectional gender and poverty proofing, mainstreaming and budgeting. See also: *The Equality and Human Rights Budget Advisory Group is a non-statutory advisory group, convened by the Scottish Government.*<sup>48</sup>
- An understanding that men are 50% of the population and therefore not automatically entitled to hold 76% of representative roles, as is currently the case.
- The implementation of statutory gender quotas of 40% for local elections to start.
- Commitment from Government to the introduction of mechanisms to ensure the adequate representation of minority groups including but not limited to: Traveller women, women from migrant backgrounds, disabled women and women from the LGBTQIA+ community.
- Increased funding for political parties, councils, and NGOs, tied to outcomes, to support women's inclusion, as for quotas to be effective, proper resourcing for engagement, capacity building, and training will be needed.

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<sup>48</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-government-response-equality-human-rights-budget-advisory-groups-recommendations/pages/3/>



## Acknowledging the work of Women's Collective Ireland

As part of our survey we ask, "Are there any people in your community / individual politicians / political parties / local organisations / national organisations that you feel do meaningful work towards advancing women's equality?" Unsurprisingly, WCI was mentioned and acknowledged by many of the women for the work we do at a local and national level.

*"Women's Collective of Ireland, Donegal do amazing work creating spaces for women to meet and work together as well educational workshops on women's issues."*

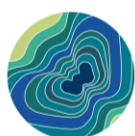
*"Cahersiveen women's collective have encouraged links between a scattered group of women"*

*"Women's collective Ireland help women to get together."*

*"Women's collective provide such a varied programme to support women from all walks of life. Women can learn new skills, meet likeminded woman, exchange ideas and gain new friends."*

*"The women's centre and women's collective do tremendous work to help women and support them. Whether in times of need to assist in integrating within the community, learning new skills, opportunities to take part in activities and providing necessary health and wellbeing requirements. Eg well woman's centre, access to emergency contraception, advice on menopause or other women's issues. Cervical screening and breast examination and counselling services and a listening ear."*

Women's Collective Ireland carries out an abundance of work on all areas of women's equality, education and empowerment. However, WCI is under-resourced and under-staffed. With only 17 Project's in operation many counties have no active



Women's  
Collective  
Ireland



An Roinn Leanaí, Comhionannais,  
Míchumais, Lánpháirtíochta agus Óige  
Department of Children, Equality,  
Disability, Integration and Youth

projects in their area. Increased funding for WCI to improve wages, increase staff hours and numbers, with a view to expanding WCI to other locations is vital given the role we play in supporting women and advancing gender equality. Extra unrestricted Government funding, outside of administration and overheads, would allow each project to do targeted work with women specific to their area, that doesn't involve researching and applying for funding. **[WCI Recommendation]**

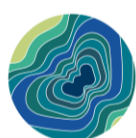
*“Women’s Collective Ireland are supporting grassroots working class women to have a voice and access community education and leadership opportunities. This is bringing about change in women’s lives”*

*“Women’s collective limerick, are educating women as to how women's equality can be advanced and that it needs advancing”*

*“Women's collective Lucan have opened my eyes, given me knowledge, understanding, a voice, confidence to be me. They see women and empower us.”*

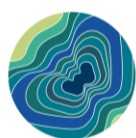
*“Women's Collective Wexford is an amazing group that reaches out to women in the community through courses. It opens door to women who may otherwise through lack of funds or other reasons be socially isolated.”*

It should be noted that many other groups in this question were highlighted, including local activist groups and Women’s Sheds. Continued funding to advance and grow the Women’s Shed movement in Ireland is also incredibly important, especially in rural areas. **[WCI Recommendation]**



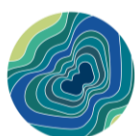
## Recommendations Outside Six Main Objectives

- Continue to support the core funding of Women's Collective Ireland to ensure our work with women experiencing disadvantage and marginalisation can continue under the six main objectives.
- Ensure Women's Collective Ireland has a key role in the implementation and monitoring of the new National Strategy.
- Protect women in employment and voluntary roles - The creation of an independent statutory body (or extending the remit of Cuan) to allow for any woman in employment or on any woman on a voluntary board / committee in Ireland to make a direct report of discriminated based on gender, or if they are the victims of sexism/misogyny, bullying, harassment, sexual harassment and abuse. This should also extend to include women experiencing racism, ableism, classism, homophobia, biphobia and transphobia. This entity could log all of these reports, potentially investigate/follow up if serious enough and outline the numbers/nature of the reports being made on an annual basis, thus getting a comprehensive picture of what women are facing in workplaces all over Ireland.
- It is imperative that the new National Strategy for Women and Girls take on a human rights-based approach (CEDAW, Beijing Platform for Action, SDG etc.).
- Continue to work towards the implementation of recommendations made by the Citizens Assembly on Gender Equality.
- Take measures to build gender and poverty proofing, budgeting and mainstreaming into the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all policies, regulatory measures and spending programmes within the Civil and Public Service. An intersectional approach to gender is vital, when making policies, programmes, practices, laws and decisions, to take women with intersecting identities into account.
- Fund and support community organisations who work to promote solidarity building, community integration and educating the public on the



misinformation and disinformation coming from far-right actors and organisations. All relevant departments and agencies should continue to work closely with community groups and organisation who are on the ground trying to combat far right rhetoric, promote social inclusion and support the integration of people of all backgrounds into our communities.

- Continue to support the core funding of other organisations and community groups who work with women and girls.
- Aligning the actions in this strategy to other relevant national strategies and action plans allows a wider group of responsible bodies to work together towards the same goals, thus, strengthening the outcomes being achieved and preventing a duplication of work. For example, the Migrant Integration Strategy, the Comprehensive Employment Strategy for People with Disabilities, the National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy, the National LGBTI Inclusion Strategy, the National Disability Inclusion Strategy, the Women’s Health Action Plan, the Taskforce on Safe Participation in Political Life, the Women’s Health Action Plan and the Third National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual & Gender-Based Violence.



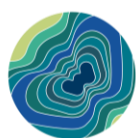


## Glossary of Terms

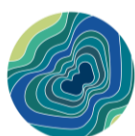
We use some commonly used terms and phrases in women's equity and community work. Not all of these words might be used for this submission.

What we mean when we use the following terms:

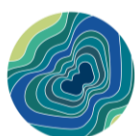
- Feminism – a range of social movements, political movements, and ideologies that aim to define, establish, and achieve the political, economic, personal, and social equality of women.
- Patriarchy – a social system in which power and privilege is held by men, through political leadership, cultural norms and customs that favour men and withhold opportunity from women.
- Gender Bias – is a preference or prejudice toward one gender over the other. Bias can be conscious or unconscious, and may manifest in many ways, both subtle and obvious.
- Gender Proofing – ensures that checks are carried out on any policy proposal to ensure that any potential gender discriminatory effects arising from that policy have been avoided and that gender equality is promoted.
- Poverty – People are living in poverty if their income and resources (material, cultural and social) are so inadequate as to preclude them from having a standard of living which is regarded as acceptable by Irish society generally. As a result of inadequate income and resources people may be excluded and marginalised from participating in activities which are considered the norm for other people in society.
- Poverty Proofing – is the process by which government departments, local authorities and State agencies assess policies and programmes at design and review stages in relation to the likely impact that they will have or have had on poverty and on inequalities which are likely to lead to poverty, with a view to poverty reduction.



- Gender Budgeting - means preparing budgets or analysing them from a gender perspective. It is a way to promote equality through the budget process against persistent gender disparities in education, employment, entrepreneurship, and public life opportunities and outcomes. Planning budgets with the promotion of gender equality in mind has the potential to help policymakers address a range of inequalities embedded in public policy and resource allocation.
- Gender mainstreaming - is when a gender equality perspective is applied in each phase of a policy-making cycle. It involves the integration of a gender perspective into the preparation, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies, regulatory measures and spending programmes, with a view to promoting equality between women and men, and combating discrimination. An intersectional approach to gender mainstreaming is vital, when making policies, programmes, practices, laws and decisions, to take women with intersecting identities into account.
- Gender Impact Assessments – is one of the tools used in gender proofing. It involves an assessment of policies and practices to see whether they will affect women and men differently, with a view to adapting these policies/practices to make sure that any discriminatory effects are neutralised.
- Sexism – prejudice, stereotyping, or discrimination against women.
- Misogyny – is the hatred of, contempt for, or prejudice against women or girls. Misogyny manifests in numerous ways, including social exclusion, discrimination, hostility, patriarchy, male privilege, belittling of women, disenfranchisement of women, violence against women, and sexual objectification.

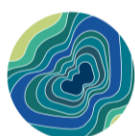


- Intersectionality – is a metaphor for understanding the ways that multiple forms of inequality or disadvantage sometimes compound themselves and create obstacles that often are not understood among conventional ways of thinking. For example, a Traveller woman with a disability, a single mother with no secondary level of education, a trans woman. The term Intersectionality was coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989.
- Equity – Equality means each individual or group of people is given the same resources or opportunities. Equity recognizes that each person has different circumstances and allocates the exact resources and opportunities needed to reach an equal outcome.
- Privilege – a right, immunity, or benefit enjoyed by a particular person or a restricted group of people beyond the advantages of most.
- Male Gaze – is the act of depicting women and the world, in the visual arts and in literature, from a masculine, heterosexual perspective that presents and represents women as sexual objects for the pleasure of the male viewer.
- Social Exclusion – exclusion from the prevailing social system and its rights and privileges, typically as a result of poverty or the fact of belonging to a minority social group.
- Social Inclusion – is the process of improving the terms on which individuals and groups take part in society—improving the ability, opportunity, and dignity of those disadvantaged on the basis of their identity.
- Oppression – a situation in which people are governed in an unfair and cruel way and prevented from having opportunities and freedom.
- Disadvantage – something that puts one in an unfavourable position or condition. The absence or deprivation of advantage or equality.
- Marginalisation – to treat individuals (or groups) as if they are not important or significant.

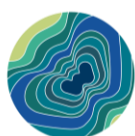


- Gender Binary – a classification system consisting of two genders, male and female. A concept or belief that there are only two genders.
- Non-binary – is a spectrum of gender identities that are not exclusively masculine or feminine – identities that are outside the gender binary.
- Trans – is often used as shorthand for transgender. Transgender is a broad term that can be used to describe people whose gender identity is different from the gender they were thought to be when they were born.
- Heteronormative – relating to a world view that promotes heterosexuality as the normal or preferred sexual orientation.
- Community development – is intended to empower community members and create stronger and more connected communities. Community development is a holistic approach grounded in principles of empowerment, human rights, inclusion, social justice, self-determination and collective action.
- Grassroots women – is a term used for women living in often working-class, marginalised, rural and urban communities, who experience exclusion for whatever reasons including economic, cultural, social and political exclusion.
- Far Right – is a term often used to describe extreme, nationalistic viewpoints, including fascism and oppressive ideologies. These ideologies and values are shared by groups active all over the world. Far-right groups range from explicitly neo-fascist groups, racist and anti-migrant groups, homophobic and transphobic groups, misogynist groups, nativist groups and fundamentalist religious groups.<sup>49</sup>
- Incel – is a term associated with an online subculture of people who define themselves as unable to find a romantic or sexual partner despite desiring one, and blame, objectify and denigrate women and girls as a result. The movement is strongly linked to misogyny.

<sup>49</sup> <https://www.cwi.ie/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/a-guide-to-understanding-and-responding-to-the-far-right-final-may-2022.pdf> page 3



- Coercive control – is a pervasive form of psychological abuse that often goes unnoticed yet has profound and lasting impacts on victims, particularly women. Unlike physical violence, coercive control involves a pattern of behaviour aimed at dominating and manipulating a partner’s thoughts, actions, and decisions. This type of abuse erodes a woman’s autonomy, undermining her sense of self-worth and independence.



# Women's Collective Ireland

**Email:** [info@womenscollective.ie](mailto:info@womenscollective.ie)

## **Social media:**

Facebook - [WomensCollectiveIreland](https://www.facebook.com/WomensCollectiveIreland)

Twitter / X - [@WCI\\_irl](https://twitter.com/WCI_irl)

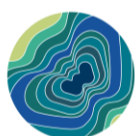
Instagram - [@wci\\_irl](https://www.instagram.com/wci_irl)

**Website:** [www.womenscollective.ie](http://www.womenscollective.ie)

*Queries relating to this submission can be sent to: [CEO@womenscollective.ie](mailto:CEO@womenscollective.ie).*

*Maire O'Grady*

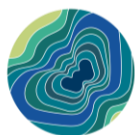
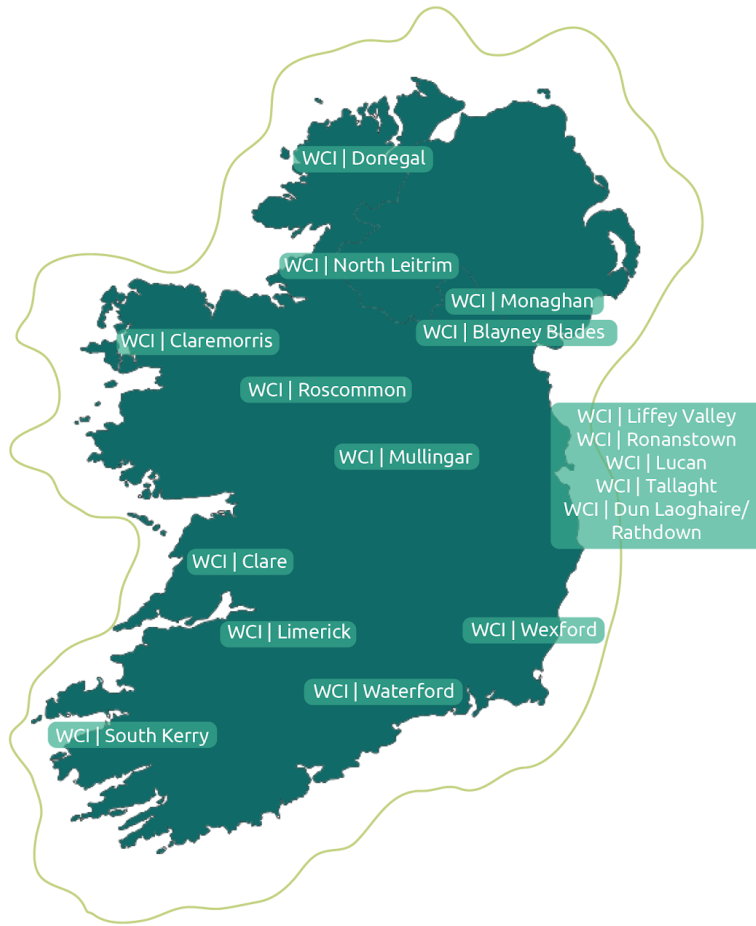
**Women's Collective Ireland Chairperson**



Women's  
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An Roinn Leanaí, Comhionannais,  
Míchumais, Lánpháirtíochta agus Óige  
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Disability, Integration and Youth



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