

**TOWARDS
TRUE GENDER EQUALITY IN
IRELAND**

**IMPLEMENTING
THE
UN BEIJING PLATFORM FOR ACTION 1995**

**Periodic Report for Beijing +20
to
United Nations Economic Commission for Europe**

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**Gender Equality Division
Department of Justice and Equality**



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INTRODUCTION

1. The period of almost 20 years since the adoption of the Beijing Platform for Action has been a period of considerable change, both economic and social, in Ireland. Ireland experienced unprecedented economic growth in the late years of the last millennium and the early years of the new millennium, but this was followed by an economic recession in the latter years of the decade, which impacted on Ireland's economic sovereignty and on the economic well being of almost all its citizens.
2. Ireland regained its economic independence at the end of 2013 and the economy is beginning to show signs of recovery. However, significant levels of unemployment and increased poverty have placed considerable pressure on public expenditure, as has population growth. Since exiting the EU IMF economic programme, the Government has made a strong commitment to maintain the reform momentum necessary to achieve its goals to support job creation and enhance living standards. The *Medium-Term Economic Strategy 2014-2020* provides a whole of Government framework to drive the development of appropriate sectoral and horizontal principles, including the goals of ensuring a job-rich recovery, setting Ireland on the path to sustainable prosperity including by providing opportunity for the Irish people, high quality public services, and encouraging innovation in business and across society.
3. The period since 1995 has also seen the implementation of a strong body of legislation to support the achievement of de jure gender equality. It is widely recognised that the achievement of de facto gender equality is more difficult. This report will outline some of the many positive indicators of the path towards de facto gender equality in Ireland. However every success still has ongoing challenges, while every challenge has been addressed already but without achieving optimal outcomes to date. As a result, this report includes a mix of good news and challenges in respect of every aspect of the Beijing Platform for Action and gender equality in Ireland
4. In its structure, the Report follows the guidelines set out by UN Women. In preparing the report, the Department of Justice and Equality has consulted with the wide range of Government Departments and Agencies who are members of the Monitoring Committee for our National Women's Strategy and with the executive of the National Women's Council of Ireland, the umbrella organisation for over 180 women's groups in Ireland, who are also members of the Monitoring Committee. This latter consultation related largely to the selection of the key achievements and challenges included in Section 1. The Department of Justice and Equality plans to hold a civil society consultation over the coming months as part of a wider national review of progress made since the Beijing Platform was agreed in 1995. The Department of Justice and Equality would like to acknowledge the contributions made by Departments, Agencies and the National Women's Council of Ireland in the preparation of this Report.

SECTION 1

ACHIEVEMENTS AND CHALLENGES SINCE BEIJING 1995

5. The key achievements in the effort to promote de jure and de facto gender equality in Ireland include the strengthening of the legal framework and institutional mechanisms for gender equality; publication and implementation of the National Women's Strategy 2007 – 2016 and a number of associated policy documents; increases in the economic engagement of women and in their educational attainment; and improvements to services to assure the reproductive and sexual wellbeing of women.
6. The challenges which persist despite significant activity since 1995 include violence against women; women's under-representation in key decision-making roles, particularly but not only in politics; ongoing gender segregation in education, as regards the uptake of specific subjects, and in the labour market, which may be impacting on the advancement of women into decision-making roles and on closing the gender pay gap; and women's over-representation as providers of the caring role within the family.

A.1 ACHIEVEMENT – DEVELOPMENT OF STRENGTHENED INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS TO ACHIEVE GENDER EQUALITY

Legislative Foundation

7. The principle of equality is enshrined in Article 40.1 of the Irish Constitution¹ which states that “*all citizens shall as human persons be held equal before the law*”.
8. Early legislation adopted in relation to gender equality was the Anti-Discrimination (Pay) Act of 1974, a measure introduced following Ireland's accession to the European Economic Community (EEC and subsequently EU) in 1973. The right to equal pay obliged employers to pay the same wages to all employees for the same work or for work of equal value, regardless of the sex of the employee. In 1977 the Employment Equality Act was enacted, outlawing discrimination in the workplace based on sex or marital status.
9. These pieces of legislation were repealed and strengthened by the Employment Equality Acts of 1998 to 2011 and the Equal Status Acts of 2000 to 2012. These Acts prohibit discrimination in employment and in the provision of goods, services and facilities on nine distinct grounds including gender.² Discrimination is described in these Acts as the treatment of a person in a less favourable way than another person is, has been or would be treated on any of the stated grounds. Indirect discrimination, harassment and sexual harassment are also prohibited.

Institutional mechanisms

10. The Gender Equality Division of the Department of Justice and Equality provides advice on gender equality issues to the Government through its Minister and Minister of State. The Division oversees implementation of the National Women's Strategy (see below); formulates and reports on progress on the Strategy and other gender equality focused policy proposals; delivers a programme of positive actions; monitors

¹ Bunreacht na hÉireann: 1937

² Equality legislation prohibits discrimination on nine grounds - gender, civil status, family status, religious belief, age, membership of the Traveller community, disability, sexual orientation and race.

the gender perspective in a range of policy proposals submitted to Government by other Departments; and represents Ireland in international policy fora addressing gender equality.

- 11.. The equality legislation also strengthened the national machinery to address equality, in particular the establishment in 1999 of the Equality Authority and the Equality Tribunal. The Equality Authority has a broad mandate to combat discrimination and promote equality of opportunity in the areas covered by equality legislation.
12. In 2012, the Authority dealt with over 8,000 calls from the public in relation to the five pieces of legislation, the implementation of which it monitors. This includes a significant number of queries in relation to gender equality issues, although it is not possible to be specific on the exact numbers as a variety of queries may be raised in a single call.
13. Under Government proposals announced in 2011, a new Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission is to be established on the merger of the Equality Authority and Human Rights Commission. The new Commission will have enhanced powers and a wider scope, which will positively impact its capacity to address discrimination and promote equal treatment on all grounds, including that of gender. For example, a new positive duty will be introduced obliging public bodies to have regard, in the performance of their functions, of the need to eliminate discrimination and promote equality of opportunity and treatment.
14. The Equality Tribunal is a quasi-judicial body and its task is to investigate, adjudicate and mediate on claims of unlawful discrimination under the terms of the Employment Equality Acts 1998 to 2011, the Equal Status Acts 2000 to 2012, and the Pensions Act 1990. The Tribunal issues written decisions which are published and has built up a highly regarded body of case law. The Government also announced proposals in 2011 to reform the State's infrastructure for seeking redress in cases of discrimination and asserting employment rights. New legislation will provide for the services of the Equality Tribunal, the National Employment Rights Authority, the Labour Relations Commission and the first instance functions of the Employment Appeals Tribunal to come together under the remit of a new single body of first instance to be called the Workplace Relations Commission. Improvement in customer service is among the key drivers of this reform, with the streamlining of business processes within the Commission to better meet the requirements of its clients and stakeholders.
15. The Government also makes core (operational) funding available annually to the National Women's Council of Ireland (NWC), which is the independent umbrella organisation for over 180 civil society organisations dealing with gender equality and related aspects of women's lives. The economic downturn led to a reduction in financial support for all bodies working in the voluntary sector, including the equality bodies. The NWC has re-focused its priorities to reflect current resources and challenges and continue to deliver exceptional work to foster gender equality.
16. The current Programme for Government 2011-2016 contains a number of commitments to foster the achievement of gender equality, including increasing women's participation in public life, in politics and on State Boards and strengthening equality principles (broadly defined) in the work of all public bodies.

A2 ACHIEVEMENT - PREPARATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL WOMEN'S STRATEGY 2007 - 2016

17. In accordance with its Beijing commitments, the Irish Government undertook a major public consultation on women's perceptions of their needs and these were incorporated into an Action Plan for Women, published in September 2002. Civil society continued to press for the development of a National Women's Strategy (NWS) and the Department of Justice and Equality was tasked by Government to co-ordinate its preparation by engaging with all relevant Government Departments and Agencies and consulting widely with civil society.
18. The National Women's Strategy 2007 - 2016 was published in May 2007 and has as its vision "*An Ireland where all women enjoy equality with men and can achieve their full potential, while enjoying a safe and fulfilling life*". The Strategy aims to be comprehensive and contains twenty key objectives and over 200 actions, clustered under the three key themes as outlined in the following table:

EQUALISING SOCIO-ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY FOR WOMEN	ENSURING THE WELLBEING OF WOMEN	ENGAGING AS EQUAL AND ACTIVE CITIZENS
Women in Employment and Enterprise	Work/Life Balance	Women in Decision-Making
Attracting more Women into the Labour Market	Women's Health	Women in Politics
The Gender Pay Gap and Variations in Income	Sexual and Reproductive Health	Women on State and Private Sector Boards
The Advancement of Women in Employment	Advancing Good Mental Health	Women and the Arts
Women as Entrepreneurs	Health Promotion	Women and the Media
Women and Education	Women, Sport and Physical Activity	Gender and Ireland's Overseas Development Aid Programme
Expanding Quality and Affordable Childcare	Health and Safety for Women in Employment	Multi-lateral Partnership to Support Women
Supporting Women with Caring Responsibilities	Bullying and Sexual Harassment	Gender Violence in Conflict, Post-Conflict and Development
Women and the Risk of Poverty	Violence against Women	
Lone Parents, other Low Income Families and Poverty	Women and Trafficking	
Older Women and Pensions		

19. Implementation of the Strategy is overseen by a cross-Departmental, cross-Agency Monitoring Committee chaired by the Minister of State with responsibility for gender equality. Civil society is also represented on the Monitoring Committee. Progress Reports on the implementation of the Strategy are prepared annually and are submitted to Government for information prior to publication.
20. The Department of Justice and Equality has recently undertaken a mid-term evaluation of the NWS for the Monitoring Committee, taking account of progress to date on the many objectives and changes to the operating environment. The Evaluation has also been submitted to Government which has endorsed its recommendations and has tasked Government Ministers to take account of the recommendations in their continuing work on the implementation of the Strategy.
21. In a further piece of work linked to the Strategy, the Monitoring Committee has overseen the work of a Sub-Committee which specifically addressed the additional

steps to be taken to advance women into leadership roles. This work will be discussed further in the section relating to the ongoing challenges to gender equality in Ireland.

22. The Progress Reports on the implementation of the NWS show positive outcomes on almost all the actions. Among the key outcomes are the establishment of separate executive offices to co-ordinate the responses to violence against women and to human trafficking. Both of these offices have prepared issue specific strategies and oversee their implementation. The outcomes are monitored and published annually.
- 23.. Other key achievements linked to the NWS include the universal availability of breast and cervical cancer screening services; a narrowing of the gender pay gap; increased supports for female entrepreneurs; the professionalization of the childcare sector; and a significant focus on gender issues within Ireland's development aid programme. Many of these impacts will be referenced later in this report.

A.3 ACHIEVEMENT - INCREASING WOMEN'S ECONOMIC ENGAGEMENT

24. One of the most important changes for women in Ireland in the period since the Beijing Platform was adopted is the increased presence of women on the labour market. Their role on the labour market has also advanced considerably thanks to the standards of education being achieved by women and this will be reviewed in greater detail later in this section.
25. Labour market participation fosters women's economic independence and well-being and enables them to build up pension entitlements, in order to reduce the risk of poverty in older years. There is a growing body of research showing that women's engagement in the labour market can stimulate economic growth and as a result this is also a key policy within European Union economic and gender equality policies respectively. Furthermore the ageing population and prolonged life expectancy are creating a demographic challenge across Europe, including in Ireland.
26. It is widely considered that the availability of the well-educated female cohort of the Irish population facilitated the expansion of the labour market in the period from 1998 to 2008, and contributed positively to Ireland's economy at that time. This period saw a significant expansion in employment across a wide range of economic sectors, including both the public and private sectors.
27. Ireland's population has increased considerably in recent years, due to net immigration and a high birth rate. The population of "women of working age" in Ireland increased by almost 32 per cent in the fifteen years between 1996 and 2011. The current time series of labour market statistical data covers the period since 1998. These data show that the number of women at work increased by 48.3 per cent over the past 15 years. As a result, women now make up 44.7 per cent of the work force, compared to 39.5 per cent in 1998. These data are summarised in the table overleaf.

EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF IRISH WOMEN SINCE 1998

	Q1/1998	Q4/2003	Q4/2008	Q4/2013	Increase since 1998
					%
Number of women in employment	587,700	766,400	924,900	871,600	48.31
Number working part time	179,200	239,400	305,100	310,000	72.99
Per cent working part time	30.5%	31.2%	33.0%	35.6%	
Number of women unemployed	53,900	29,800	53,700	79,600	47.68
Unemployment rate %	8.4%	3.7%	6%	10%	
Participation rate %	44.2%	49.3%	54.0%	52.8%	

Source: Quarterly National Household Survey CSO database.

28. Reference has already been made to the economic downturn which began in 2007/2008. This has led to increased unemployment, which impacted initially on men more than on women with the collapse of the construction and related sectors. For women, unemployment which had fallen by 30 per cent before the downturn, climbed back from 54,000 in 1998 to peak at 88,500 before falling back slightly to 79,600 at the end of 2013. Female employment appears not to be recovering to the same extent as male employment, and both continue as a challenge, particularly where there are skills mismatches. Furthermore, figures released by the CSO for 2013/Q4 show that employment increased by over 61,000 over the previous year. However, only 10,700 were women, representing an increase of just 1.2 per cent in the female employment rate, compared with an increase of 5.1 per cent for men over the same period.

Gender segregation in the labour market

29. The table above (in paragraph 27), when analysed further, shows that the number of women in the labour market has increased by some 310,000 women (almost 50 per cent) since 1998. While this growth is significant in fostering the economic independence of women, the analysis which follows will show that some 200,000 of these women are working in sectors which are significantly feminised – with women occupying between 81 per cent and 56 per cent of all positions in these particular intermediate occupations, as will be seen in the next table.
30. The next table (which is overleaf) looks at the occupations identified by respondents in the national census in 1996 and 2011. These data include people who are both employed and unemployed on the census date. The table shows the numbers of men and of women in the top six “intermediate” occupational groups in each year. The order presented in the table relates to the top six occupational groups identified for women in 2011. The top six occupations for each sex are highlighted in yellow.

Top occupations for women and men in 1996 and 2011

Census Year	1996			2011			Per cent increase over 15 yrs	
	Women	Men	Women as % of Total	Women	Men	Women as % of Total	Women	Men
Personal Service and Childcare workers	76,832	49,760	60.7%	164,366	75,699	68.5%	114%	52%
Clerical and Office Workers	113,949	27,555	80.5%	136,995	30,349	81.9%	20%	10%
Sales Occupations	73,080	83,179	46.8%	131,197	103,984	55.8%	80%	25%
Health and related workers	53,191	14,855	78.2%	85,837	22,824	79.0%	61%	54%
Teachers	40,255	21,454	65.2%	72,787	25,167	74.3%	81%	17%
Managers and Executives	20,640	44,217	31.8%	62,467	85,849	42.1%	203%	94%
Building and construction workers	2,993	106,805	2.7%	3,650	136,192	2.6%	22%	28%
Communications warehouse and transport	6,997	82,231	7.8%	12,408	106,263	10.5%	77%	29%
Farming Fishery and Forestry	12,998	127,627	9.2%	10,856	83,871	11.5%	-16%	-34%
Other high value occupations								
Computer software occupations	7,172	12,426	36.6%	12,160	38,122	24.2%	70%	207%
Scientific and technical occupations	7,019	28,300	19.9%	16,865	53,353	24.0%	140%	89%
Other professional workers	11,061	16,463	40.2%	21,074	26,192	44.6%	91%	59%

Source : Central Statistics Office : Census 1996 and 2011

31. This table shows a number of noteworthy facts. Firstly, the top five “intermediate occupations”³ in women are employed actually account for the employment of over 591,000 women, or more than half of all women in the labour market in 2011. Women represent between 82 per cent and 56 per cent of all those working in these five sectors. These sectors all show unprecedented growth in the period since the 1996 census. Employment in personal services and childcare has more than doubled while employment in sales and education increased by over 60 per cent (in both instances for men and for women) with female employment, in these sectors, increasing more significantly than male employment.
32. It is also noteworthy that the number of women working as “managers and executives” has trebled over the past 20 years, while the number of men in these positions has only doubled. A similar upward trend is found for the category “other professional workers”. This is a positive indicator as women’s roles as decision-makers remain a challenge, in all areas of responsibility.
33. To give a wider picture of the working world in contemporary Ireland, three further “high economic value” occupations have been included in this table, two because of their links with economic growth – the ICT sector and the sciences which are central to Ireland’s export-driven economy⁴. It is interesting to note a comparatively small increase in the number of women in the computer software sector at 70 per cent (compared with a 207 per cent increase in the number of men in the sector), although there was an increase of 140 per cent in the number of women in scientific and technical occupations, probably many in the pharmaceutical sector.
34. Despite this overall long-term growth in employment for women, a further examination of the last table (columns 3 and 6) will show that, despite the high levels of educational achievement in Ireland, gender segregation appears to be stronger than ever. Five of the top six intermediate occupation groups for women are in sectors which tend to be feminised globally. It may be that these occupations are those which offer the best options for part time work which is still required by many women to enable them to

³ ISCED Definitions

⁴ These data do not reflect the full levels of employment in these sectors.

provide the caring role within the family. The failure to attract more female students to the technological courses continues as a challenge in a country where technology is at the centre of economic growth. The issue of gender segregation in schools will be explored further later in this report and is being addressed by a range of initiatives in the Department of Education and Skills.

35. Workplace segregation is also a challenge in that it apparently impacts on the advancement of women into decision-making roles in the workplace and as such is also considered to be a contributory factor to the gender pay gap and thus affects women's life long earnings and pension entitlements.

A4 – ACHIEVEMENT – ACTIVELY ADDRESSING SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

36. It is widely known that abortion is only available in Ireland in the most limited circumstances, where the life of the mother is at risk. This position follows a number of Constitutional Referenda. National opinion on the availability/non-availability of abortion on demand continues to be very divided, as shown by the extensive debate which took place when the national legislation was amended in 2013, in order to bring it into line with the implementation of the X case and the judgement of the European Court of Human Rights in A, B and C versus Ireland. The legislation is in line with the Constitutional position on termination, i.e. that it is permissible in the event that the life of the mother is at risk, which had been adopted by Referendum previously.
37. A Green Paper (policy consultation paper) on the subject of abortion was published in September 1999 and was referred to the All-Party Oireachtas Committee on the Constitution for its consideration and recommendations. Public consultations on the preparation of both the Green Paper and the work of the Oireachtas Committee a very significant number of responses including a mix detailed submissions and signatures to petitions.
38. The Committee agreed that a major problem facing Ireland was the large number of crisis pregnancies which result in recourse to abortion facilities available in Great Britain and that there was an urgent need to take measures to reduce the number of crisis pregnancies. It also considered that women in crisis pregnancy must be offered real and positive alternatives to abortion, while there was an urgent need to take measures to reduce the rate of abortion.
39. The Committee agreed on a strategy to reduce the number of crisis pregnancies and thereby reduce the rate of overseas abortion and recommended that the strategic plan should be implemented through three major divisions with delivery programmes as follows:

Preventative measures	Options in crisis pregnancies	Post-abortion services
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Education programme ● Contraceptive programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Social understanding programme ● Counselling/information programme ● Single mother programme ● Adoption programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Post-abortion counselling programme ● Medical check-up programme

40. This led to the establishment in 2001, on a statutory footing, of the Crisis Pregnancy Agency which was to deliver this programme of actions. Responsibility for the delivery of the programme was subsequently transferred to the Health Service Executive as the Crisis Pregnancy Service.
41. The programme of work of the Crisis Pregnancy Agency/Service included the development of a number of ground breaking advertising campaigns targeting different age groups to promote the use of contraceptives to prevent crisis pregnancies and the transmission of sexually transmitted infections. These campaigns tend to use all available media, including television; campaigns in the universities; at major music events; in bars and in other places where young people gather. The Agency was also instrumental in encouraging pharmacists to make contraception available nationally and has subsequently worked with pharmacists and general practitioners to make emergency contraception available very widely.
42. The “Positive Options” campaign aims to make women experiencing a crisis pregnancy aware of the full range of options available to them. The Programme supports the availability of free crisis pregnancy and post-abortion counselling and medical services. The Programme funds a range of service delivery models across a number of settings and locations. It currently funds 15 service providers to provide counselling services in over 50 locations nationwide. Eight of the services also provide access to free post-termination medical check-ups.
43. The Agency/Service has also undertaken an extensive programme of research. It has developed a training programme for pregnancy counsellors and offers a range of training supports to the medical professions (including pharmacists and general practitioners). It has worked to influence the sexual health education component of the Relationships and Sex Education curriculum which all post-primary schools are required to deliver and has also collaborated on the development of educational retention programmes for teen mothers.
44. The two tables below and overleaf offer an indication of the impact of the work of the Crisis Pregnancy Agency/Service. The first table shows that the number of women travelling to England and Wales for an abortion has decreased by almost a third since 1998. Turning first to the numbers of abortions, while this outcome looks positive, account must be taken of the possibility that a number of women may travel to other European locations for the termination of a pregnancy and these data can therefore only be only be regarded as indicative.

Number of Abortions in GB NHS to Women with Irish addresses

	1998	2012	Percentage decrease
Number of abortions	5,892	3,982	32%
As % of all births in Ireland	11%	6%	

Source: 1998: Green Paper on Abortion; 2012: England/Wales
Department of Health Abortion Statistics 2012

45. The number of Irish-based women receiving an abortion in England and Wales has fallen by 32 per cent over the past 14 years. The rise in the number of births has led to

the percentage of such abortions as a percentage of live births falling from 11 per cent to 6 per cent. A further measure of the success of the Crisis Pregnancy Agency/Service strategy is the reduction in the number of teen pregnancies. These are shown in the next table.

Births to young mothers 1998 and 2012

	1998	2012	Percentage decrease
Births of women under 20 years	3264	1639	50%
As % of all births	6%	2%	
Births to under 20s outside marriage	3132	1483	53%
As % of all births outside marriage/ civil partnership	20%	6%	
			Percentage increase
Total number of live births	57854	72225	25%

Source: CSO Vital Statistics

46. The table shows that the number of teen births has halved over the past 14 years and that these pregnancies now represent just 2 per cent of all births. This is all the more significant, given the increase in the number of births in Ireland. As teen pregnancy can lead to an early end to formal education and contribute to women’s risk of poverty, this reduction in early pregnancy has increased the life chances of a significant number of young women, particularly as young women now tend to become sexually active at an earlier age. To further ensure the prospects of teen mothers, the Agency/Service also engaged actively with the Department of Education and Skills to ensure that post-primary schools accommodate young mothers to enable them to complete their education.

A.5/B.1 ACHIEVEMENT AND CHALLENGE - WOMEN ARE VERY WELL EDUCATED BUT GENDERED SUBJECT CHOICES PERSIST

47. Overall educational standards in Ireland have increased considerably over the past two decades with increasing numbers of men and women participating in third and higher levels of education. This is clearly illustrated in the next table (overleaf) which shows that the percentage of the Irish population with degree qualifications and higher has increased very significantly. Overall, the number of men with degrees or higher has increased by over 200,000 to 326,735, while the number of women with degrees has increased by over 300,000. The 2011 data also reflects the significant number of highly educated overseas workers who have come to work in the State in the high added value sectors such as ICT. Nevertheless, all of the available statistics support the conclusion that the participation of women in the highest levels of the Irish education system has increased significantly. (However it is noteworthy that gender imbalance remains a concern in relation to the relatively low numbers of women in high level academic positions within third level institutions and the relatively low numbers of women principals at primary and secondary level.)

Number of graduates by age group and sex 1996 and 2011

Year	1996				2011			
	Male	Female	Women as % of Total Grads	Women grads as % of all women in age group (a)	Male	Female	Women as % of Total Grads	Women grads as % of all women in age group (a)
Age group								
15-24 Yrs	10,405	13,636	57%	4%	13,610	22,626	62%	25%
25-44 yrs	68,020	67,081	50%	13%	193,252	264,823	58%	41%
45-64 yrs	36,092	23,381	39%	7%	92,813	100,749	52%	20%
65 and over	10,408	8,119	44%	3%	27,060	25,059	48%	9%
All adults	124,925	112,217	47%	8%	326,735	413,257	56%	27%

Source: CSO Census data 1996 and 2011

Note (a) Statistics reflect graduates and higher as % of those in age group who have completed education

48. As a result, some 27 per cent of all women in Ireland have a third level or higher qualification. This is particularly marked for the age group 25 to 44 years where 41 per cent of women now have these qualifications, compared with just 13 per cent, fifteen years earlier. In the younger age, group most are likely to be currently in education.
49. The second noteworthy statistic from this table is that women now comprise 56 per cent of all graduates in the Irish population compared with 47 per cent in the 1996 census. However there are still some challenges in relation to women's educational choices which can impact on their employment choices and possibly also on their advancement into the most senior decision-making roles in employment, particularly in industry. The next table looks at the field of study of all graduates and post-graduates in 2012, which total 53,224 of which 54 per cent overall were women.

GRADUATES AND POST GRADUATES BY FIELD OF STUDY AND SEX 2012

Field of Study (ISCED) ¹	Graduates			Post grad diplomas and Masters			PhD		
	Men	Women	Women as % of Total	Men	Women	Women as % of Total	Men	Women	Women as % of Total
General Programmes	1	-	0%	8	17	68%	0	0	
Education	376	1,451	79%	770	1,941	72%	28	39	58%
Humanities and Arts	1,939	2,992	61%	702	1,007	59%	94	107	53%
Social Science, Business and Law	4,709	5,800	55%	2,667	2,719	50%	76	138	64%
Science, Mathematics and Computing	2,662	1,849	41%	997	517	34%	292	227	44%
Engineering, Manufacturing and Construction	4,990	683	12%	498	219	31%	160	42	21%
Agriculture and Veterinary	406	257	39%	41	34	45%	22	10	31%
Health and Welfare	1,068	4,608	81%	470	1,903	80%	88	152	63%
Services	907	825	48%	140	124	47%	9	6	40%
Combined	531	848	61%	6	10	63%	16	26	62%
Totals	17,589	19,313	52%	6,299	8,491	57%	785	747	49%

Source : Derived from Higher Education Authority Annual Statistics

50. While caution must always be exercised in drawing conclusions from such tables, gender segregation very clearly still exists in Irish third level education. About 80 per cent of primary graduates in both "education" and "health and welfare" were women, while women accounted for only 41 per cent of graduates in "science, mathematics and computing". It is also noteworthy that women are even more prominent at 57 per cent of those completing Post Graduate Diplomas and Masters Degrees. However, when the two feminised areas of "education" and "health and welfare" are excluded women account for 49 per cent of Post Graduate Diplomas and Masters.

51. Women are also prominent among those receiving doctorates in 2012 and here the gender gaps are narrowed. However, again there are two separate considerations. Firstly, men become comparatively more prominent among the doctoral graduates in the “education” and “health and welfare” while the percentage of female graduates among those receiving doctorates in “science, mathematics and computing” is 44 per cent (although the female primary graduates account for only 41 per cent of graduates in this field). The presence of women doctoral graduates in “engineering, manufacturing and construction” while just 21 per cent, is actually 9 per cent above their presence in the graduate level.

B.2 CHALLENGE – TOO FEW WOMEN IN DECISION-MAKING ROLES

52. Despite their high level of educational attainment, women in Ireland remain under-represented in many decision-making roles, most notably in politics. This deficit was noted by the Government elected in 2011 which included in its Programme for Government a commitment to increase women’s participation in decision-making roles and in politics. The European Commission collates data on the presence of women in a number of key decision-making roles and the table below compares Irish data with the average across the EU. Ireland underperforms at present across all measures.

Women's Representation in Certain Key Decision-making Roles

Role	Ireland	EU 28	Role	Ireland	EU 28
	%	%		%	%
Parliament (Lower House)	16	27	Supreme Court **	11	35
Senior Ministers	13	28	Director/Public Prosecution	100	6
National Administrations*			Company Boards		
Level 1 (Secretary General)	13	30	Presidents	0	5
Level 2 (Dep/Assist Sec)	22	39	Members	11	18

Source: European Commission Data base on Women in Decision-making roles - data November 2013

Notes:

*National data for women in national administrations are broader and show better female representation

** National data for Supreme Court Judges in Ireland suggest that 30 % are women (April 2014)

53. However national statistics, using broader definitions, indicate that the number of women in senior decision-making positions in Irish national administrations may now be closer to the EU averages. Furthermore three of the Irish Supreme Court Judges are women at time of writing, bring women’s representation in the Supreme Court to 30 per cent. It is also noteworthy that, in the legal profession and at time of writing, the Chief Justice, Attorney General and Director of Public Prosecutions and Head of the Forensic Science Service are all women, as is the acting Commissioner of An Garda Síochána (the police).

54. A number of steps have been taken to address women’s under-representation in decision-making in Ireland. While the data gathered by the European Commission do not include State Boards, women now represent 36 per cent of all appointments on these Boards, although they are less well represented on the economically focused

State Boards and more prominent on the education, health and social services focused State Boards. The Government monitors appointments to State Boards annually.

55. Increasing women's representation in politics has been a key target of Government. Ground breaking new legislation passed in 2012 will require political parties to ensure that at least 30 per cent of their candidates at the next general election are women. This candidate quota will rise to 40 per cent seven years later. The legislation includes financial penalties and failure to reach these targets for the number of female candidates offered to the electorate will lead to a reduction in State funded support to the political parties.
56. The Minister of State for Disability, Equality, Mental Health and Older People hosted a major conference in early 2012 to raise awareness of the issue. This was attended by the Taoiseach and Tánaiste (Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister) and by the political and administrative leaders of the political parties and a significant number of women who heard a range of presentations from national and international speakers, including the French Member of the CEDAW Committee. The Conference received significant publicity.
57. Civil society has also been active in fostering the advancement of women into political life. The National Women's Council of Ireland has a long record of advocating for increased female participation in politics and in all areas of decision-making and played a key role in the introduction of gender equality quotas. "The 50/50 Group" is a one issue NGO on women and political life which is now active nationally. "Women for Election" is a social entrepreneurship project which provides training for aspiring and actual female candidates. The forthcoming local and European elections in May 2014 are the first opportunity to measure progress on the advancement of women as candidates. These elections are not covered by the candidate quotas requirement because there are no financial incentives which might be linked as penalties to the selection of candidates for either local or European electoral processes.
58. The Minister of State for Disability, Equality, Mental Health and Older People has recently chaired a working group in the context of the National Women's Strategy which has thoroughly researched the issues which must be addressed to encourage more Irish women to take leadership roles across a wide range of sectors. As a result, the Minister submitted a report to Government advocating a range of activities to foster the advancement of women, including in management, on boards and in politics and the diplomatic service. A grant of funding from the European Commission under the Progress Initiative⁵ is facilitating the implementation of the key recommendations with a specific focus on women in management roles in both the public and private sectors and on boards. The latter work will include the establishment of a database or talent bank of board ready women, a number of conferences targeting both the public and private sectors and the fostering of a mentoring and dedicated training approach for women in the public service.

B.3 VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN - A PERSISTENT CHALLENGE

59. Violence against women, in particular domestic violence, emerged as a major policy issue in the consultation process on the Department of Health's Policy Document on

⁵ This fund supports initiatives on, inter alia, equality, social inclusion and employment.

Women's Health in the 1990s. Numerous public and voluntary agencies were addressing (and in many cases continue to address) separate aspects of the services needed to support victims e.g. refuges provide emergency accommodation; the health boards fund refuges and provide services to children at risk; the Gardaí had a pro-arrest policy in cases of domestic violence; the criminal and civil justice system applied sanctions to offenders; and housing and welfare authorities provided for accommodation to those who had to leave home.

60. A national survey in 1995 on domestic violence indicated that the incidence of violence against women was widespread, and prevailed in all social classes and regions. As a response, in 1996, the Government set up the Task Force on Violence Against Women chaired by the then Minister of State at the Department of Equality and Law Reform.
61. The main focus of the resultant 1997 Task Force Report was on domestic violence. The Task Force Report put forward comprehensive proposals for the development of co-ordinated and coherent services for women who have experienced, or have been threatened with, violence. In addition, proposals were also put forward for the development of intervention programmes for perpetrators of violence; and preventative strategies to identify and address the root causes of the problem.
62. The Government established the National Steering Committee on Violence against Women (NSCVAW) in 1998 in accordance with the recommendation of the Task Force. As a national committee, the membership was, and continues to be, comprised of bodies which broadly function at national level and includes representatives from the key Government Departments, An Garda Síochána (Irish Police Force), the Health Service, the Courts Service, the Probation Service and the voluntary sector services working in the field. Representatives from organisations working with the Traveller and migrant communities and with women working in prostitution are also represented separately as they have particular issues which must be considered. A representative of the Perpetrator Intervention Programmes has recently been added to the group.
63. By 2007, it was widely felt that a new approach was needed to address violence against women and domestic violence and this was incorporated as a key objective in to the National Women's Strategy 2007 – 2016. This led to the creation of a stand alone Executive Office within the Crime Division of the Department of Justice and Equality, known as Cosc⁶, which was tasked on its establishment, inter alia, to
 - Work with Government departments, Agencies, and NGOs in the sector to ensure the delivery of a well co-ordinated service to support victims of domestic, sexual and gender-based violence.
 - Develop and deliver awareness raising strategies to ensure that victims are aware of the availability of services in their locality, and that society is made aware of the extent and impact of behaviours and crimes of domestic, sexual and gender-based violence.
 - Develop strategies, standards for service delivery and training programmes to address the issue of domestic, sexual and gender-based violence in line with best international practice.
 - Put in place strategically based positive actions which work with perpetrators of domestic violence.

⁶ An Irish word meaning “stop” or “prevent”

- Provide leadership and support to the National Steering Committee on Violence against Women (NSCVAW) and to its sub-committees.
- Continue to implement the recommendations of the 1997 Task Force Report on Violence against Women.

National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence 2010-2014

64. The model chosen for this strategy, developed by Cosc, focuses on primary and secondary intervention while placing an emphasis on co-ordinated impact assessment and the generation of evidence on which policy and service planning is firmly based. It is based on four high level goals and a number of key objectives:

GOAL	KEY OBJECTIVES	GOAL	KEY OBJECTIVES
1 To promote a culture of prevention and recognition through increased understanding of domestic, sexual and gender-based violence	To increase understanding, recognition and practical information on domestic, sexual and gender-based violence throughout society in Ireland 2 To increase understanding and recognition of domestic, sexual and gender-based violence in State-sector organisations 3 To raise awareness among young people of domestic, sexual and gender-based abuse	2 To deliver an effective and consistent service to those affected	4 To increase confidence in service provision for those affected by domestic violence and sexual violence 5 To promote high standards in service provision 6 To strengthen intra- and inter- organisational co-ordination to improve service effectiveness and consistency 7 To improve protection and support for victims 8 To address offending behaviour by perpetrators of domestic and sexual violence
3 To ensure greater effectiveness of policy and service planning	9 To improve the effectiveness of policy planning through improved data capture and data co-ordination 10 To ensure that policy development and service provision planning are evidence-based and take account of the experience of victims 11 To ensure greater co-ordination between relevant organisations 12 To provide a solid foundation for future actions on domestic and sexual violence	4 To ensure efficient and effective implementation of the strategy.	13 To ensure that all actions within this strategy are monitored and progressed in a timely and comprehensive manner 14 To ensure that due account is taken from the lessons learned of the implementation from this strategy

65. A mid-term review of Cosc's National Strategy, conducted in 2012, indicated broad support for the high-level goals of the strategy and a strong level of commitment amongst all parties to addressing more effectively the issue of domestic, sexual and gender-based violence. The strategy has helped highlight the issue and has brought together various participants to work towards common goals. Progress is being made in relation to most of the activities set out in the strategy, albeit somewhat slower in many cases than originally envisaged. The review resulted in a prioritisation of actions and

the amendment of some indicators. A final review of the Strategy will take place in mid 2014 which will inform the development of a follow-on strategy. As with the first strategy, this will be developed in consultation with and input from both the State and the voluntary sector.

New legal framework

66. The Civil Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2011 [Act No.23 of 2011], enacted on 2 August 2011, amended the Domestic Violence Act 1996, broadening the eligibility criteria, thus entitling additional categories of persons to apply for safety and protection orders.
67. In terms of the Civil Law, further work is underway on the preparation of a new Domestic Violence Bill, which is expected to be published in 2015. This is expected to consolidate current legislation and introduce new reforms. This work will also assist Ireland in proceeding towards the ratification of the Istanbul Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence. It is the general practice in Ireland, where possible, to sign and ratify conventions at the same time and therefore all legal obstacles to the implementation of a Convention must be addressed in advance of the signing and ratification.

Services to address Violence against Women

68. In Ireland, An Garda Síochána has a specialised police unit, which provides advice and assistance to police officers around the country in relation to domestic and sexual violence. This unit also tackles child abuse and pornography. In addition, each Garda Division has an officer assigned to monitor the implementation of the Garda policy on domestic violence. The An Garda Síochána “Domestic Violence Intervention Policy” highlights the intervention that An Garda Síochána members should adhere to when responding to domestic violence callouts.
69. Furthermore, the “Garda policy on the investigation of Sexual Crimes, Crimes against Children and Child Welfare”, updated in March 2010, provides a summary of the policies governing the investigation of crimes of a sexual nature and suspected child abuse and is designed to provide practical guidance to members of An Garda Síochána by creating awareness of the investigative and welfare responsibilities associated with such crimes. It also sets out the main legal (including human rights) provisions necessary when conducting sexual crime investigations.
70. The Prosecution Policy Unit, formed within the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (ODPP) in 2008, has identified domestic, sexual and gender based violence as priority areas of prosecution policy. The development of policy guidelines providing detailed advice to Prosecutors on how to implement legislation on violence against women is on-going. The ODPP has appointed a solicitor within the District Court Section (where the majority of domestic violence cases are dealt with) to have special responsibility for all matters relating to domestic violence.
71. Cosc works to co-ordinate, at a national policy level, the wide range of support services available nationally and regionally to address domestic and sexual violence, such as help-lines, counselling, accompaniment and advocacy, services providing crisis/emergency accommodation and refuge facilities (including specific support for children), programmes working with perpetrators, awareness raising, etc. The delivery of those services occurs through a substantial number of government and non-

governmental organisations. Practically all of the non-governmental organisations concerned receive core funding from the State. Regional Advisory Committees have also played a role in co-ordinating services at more local levels, collaborating also with the National Committee. These committees are in the process of being re-organised in light of the transfer of responsibility for the support of community based services from the HSE to the newly created Child and Family Agency (Tusla).

72. In the context of significant constraints on public expenditure the State funds for provision of domestic and sexual violence services have been affected by the cuts during the last few years. The Child and Family Agency budget is currently funding 60 services including 20 Crisis Refuges, 16 Rape Crisis Centres and 24 Support Services. There are also six Sexual Assault Treatment Units, based within hospital settings around the country. Medical staff at all of these units are trained and committed to the provision of holistic clinical, forensic, psychological and contraceptive care, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week as required.
73. Additionally, the HSE through its primary care and hospital services provide for the health and well-being of victims of gender-based violence. While Tusla, the Child and Family Agency, established in January 2014, will now have primary responsibility for the support and development of health and welfare services to assist victims of domestic and sexual violence, they are to liaise closely with the HSE at national and regional level to promote and coordinate services and training for Health Care Professionals in the area of violence against women and to coordinate the work of the Regional Advisory Committees and liaise with the NGO support services in their region.

B.4 CHALLENGE – CONTINUED OVER RELIANCE ON WOMEN AS PRIMARY CARE GIVERS

74. In common with most countries, women in Ireland continue to play the more prominent role as carers within the family. This was substantiated by research funded by the Department of Justice and Equality in 2005⁷ which found that on average women spent 5 hours 7 minutes per day on weekdays on caring and household activities, compared with 1 hour 42 minutes spent by men. At weekends women continue to spend the same amount of time on caring and household activities while men's time on these activities increased to 2 hours and 24 minutes.
75. Significant State investment has been made in the paid childcare sector since 2000, with significant financial support from the European Structural Funds in the period 2000 to 2006. This facilitated the creation of over 50,000 extra places for children in crèches and community childcare centres during this period. Subsequent developments included the provision of one year of free pre-school education on a half day basis during the school term. The provision of quality childcare with appropriate child/adult ratios has always been a key goal in this regard. As a result the cost of delivering high quality childcare and the cost of accessing it is quite high for parents and, coupled with long commuting times, the cost of childcare in Ireland is still high when compared with many other EU and OECD countries. In some circumstances, State supported childcare is available but many parents, especially mothers, still cite the cost of childcare as a

⁷ ESRI: Time Use in Ireland 2005

contributory factor to their remaining outside of, or attached part time, to the labour market.

76. Child Benefit is a universal non-taxable payment paid in respect of all qualified children, up to the age of 16 years, which assists parents with the costs associated with raising children. The payment continues to be paid in respect of children up to their 18th birthday who are in full-time education, or who have a physical or mental disability. Child Benefit provides assistance to all households with children in recognition of the higher costs incurred in child-raising and child care in a way which allows choice to parents in how this is undertaken. It is normally paid directly to mothers although it may be paid to fathers in certain circumstances. Child Benefit is currently paid to around 616,000 families in respect of some 1.17 million children. As a universal payment, Child Benefit should be seen as one part of an overall system of child income support payments, which also includes the more selective and targeted payments such as the Family Income Supplement and qualified child increases (to primary social welfare payments). Between 1997 and 2009, there were significant increases in Child Benefit payments and overall expenditure grew from just €506 million to approximately €2.5 billion per year. In the context of greatly diminished resources and as a result of the need to reduce the structural level of government spending, expenditure on Child Benefit has fallen through reductions in payment rates. In 2014 expenditure on Child Benefit is estimated to be €1.9 billion in 2014, which represents almost 10% of total Department of Social Protection expenditure. Child Benefit has now been standardised at a rate of €130 per child per month, which is amongst the highest rates in the European Union, demonstrating the importance of this payment in policy terms as a vital universal support for families and their children.
77. The State provides for a statutory maternity leave of up to 26 weeks, attracting a financial support of €230 per week to employed and self-employed women while many women working in the public sector and many private sector employments receive their full salaries during this period at their employer's discretion. Total expenditure by the State on Maternity Benefit was €303 million in 2012 and €465,000 on Adoptive Benefit compared with just €35 million on maternity benefit and €0.08m on Adoptive Benefit in 1995, a seven fold increase in real terms. Unpaid parental leave is also available, as is flexitime in the many parts of the public sector, although it is seldom available to the more senior grades. However experience to date shows that these family supports are most often availed of by women, who interrupt their careers to discharge the family caring functions. Furthermore, women in low-paid employment are less likely to avail of unpaid leave.
78. The State also provides financial support under its social protection schemes to people undertaking caring duties - caring for an elderly/other dependent adult or child under 16 with a severe disability. In certain circumstances, this payment is available to those who also work for a limited amount of hours outside the home. A Respite Care Grant is also payable. Overall in 2012, payments made specifically to support people in a caring role amounted to €772 million (includes Carer's Allowance/Benefit, Domiciliary Care Allowance and Respite Care Grant).
79. Taken together, the total expenditure by the State to support carers (child benefit, maternity benefit, carer's benefit/assistance, Respite Care Grant and Domiciliary Care Allowance) totalled €3,124 million in 2012, representing 15 per cent of the total expenditure of the Department of Social Protection that year.

80. Accordingly, there are still a number of key challenges to be addressed to support women's economic engagement, despite the achievement noted earlier. This includes the better sharing of family responsibilities and the greater availability of affordable quality childcare and appropriate working arrangements to support women's engagement in the labour market. In this latter regard, there are further specific issues, such as the availability of childcare to support women working atypical hours including in the health services, in shift work and in politics, and to assist lone parents in undertaking the dual roles of parent and labour market participant, without the support of a partner.

SECTION 2

DEVELOPMENTS ON THE BEIJING AREAS OF CONCERN SINCE IRELAND'S LAST UPDATE IN 2009

WOMEN AND POVERTY

83. The period since 2009 has represented an economic challenge for Ireland. Internal and external economic pressures led to a significant economic downturn and the implementation of an economic transformation overseen by the European Commission and the International Monetary Fund. Ireland has now regained its economic sovereignty but the economic adjustment is still ongoing.
84. This economic transformation brought a significant reduction in the resourcing and levels of public social services. The increase in unemployment placed an additional pressure on the State's social protection programme but every effort has been made to minimalise cuts to social protection payments, compared to other reductions in state salaries and supports in order to reduce the impact of the downturn on the most disadvantaged. In 2013, the Department of Social Protection spent over €20 billion in providing income support to 1.5 million recipients and supporting a further 750,000 beneficiaries. This expenditure increased from €17.8 billion in 2008, covering 1.8 million recipients and beneficiaries and from €10.5 billion in 2003, which helped to support some 1.5 million persons.
85. The Government has sought to maintain the rates of the main weekly payments, reflecting concerted State intervention and investment in the social protection system. The CSO Survey of Income and Living Conditions (SILC) shows that a significant impact of the crisis is registered in rising basic deprivation rates, increasing from 14% in 2008 to 22.6% in 2010 and 26.9% in 2012. The risk of being deprived has spread to groups that are not income poor, reflecting the social impact of the crisis for the Irish population as a whole.
86. Following a review in 2012⁸, the Government agreed a revised and enhanced national social target for poverty reduction, which is to reduce consistent poverty (overlap of at-risk-of-poverty and basic deprivation) to 4% by 2016 (interim target) and to 2% or less by 2020, from the 2010 baseline rate of 6.3%. This is supported by a wide range of actions across diverse policy areas in the *National Action Plan for Social Inclusion 2007-2016*. More recent measures which address the social impact of the crisis are set out in the annual updates of the National Reform Programme⁹.
87. The most recent data available from the EU/CSO SILC survey relate to 2012 and are compared with 2009 data in the table overleaf.

⁸ Ireland's Former Headline Target: To reduce the number experiencing consistent poverty to between 2-4% by 2012, with the aim of eliminating consistent poverty by 2016, which will lift at least 186,000 people out of the risk of poverty and exclusion.

⁹ The National Social Report 2014 also reflects measures that will help to address the social impact of the crisis, specifically in the achievement of the objectives of the Social Open Method of Coordination (OMC).

INCIDENCE OF POVERTY AND DEPRIVATION BY GENDER 2009 AND 2012

	At risk of poverty		Experiencing deprivation		In consistent poverty	
	2009	2012	2009	2012	2009	2012
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Men	14.1	16.3	16.8	26.4	5.5	7.8
Women	14.1	16.7	17.7	27.4	5.4	7.6
Total	14.1	16.5	17.1	26.9	5.5	7.7
Households with one adult and children under 18	35.5	29.1	44.1	49.5	16.6	17.4

Source : CSO: SILC Report 2012

88. The top part of the table shows the deterioration in the levels of poverty which were linked at least in part to the loss of employment due to the economic downturn. While the situation is aggravated for both genders, it is more marked for men, in this time period, reflecting the gender imbalance in the financial services and construction sectors which were significantly impacted. More recent data show a further decline for women as female employment only began to decrease very significantly in the early years of the new decade, brought about in part by a recruitment embargo within the public sector and a decline in domestic consumption which impacted on both the public sector and on the services sector, including the retail trade, which tends to be feminised in Ireland.
89. The table above also looks at the high incidence of poverty among households led by a single parent. These are most often led by a single mother. The Department of Social Protection (D/SP) is currently undertaking a comprehensive reform of the One-Parent Family Payment (OFP) to tackle long term welfare dependency and the high rates of lone parents who are in consistent poverty by incentivising a return to paid employment. The reforms see a reduction in the age threshold of the youngest child at which a lone parent is still eligible for the OFP, which is being reduced to seven years by the end of 2015.
90. When the youngest child reaches seven years, recipients of OFP will be required to apply for an alternative social welfare payment as well as being required to engage with the D/SP's activation services. These are designed to improve individuals' prospects of securing employment by identifying any skill gaps and offering them access to education, training or employment programmes to improve their employability. To assist lone parents to make the transition from OFP to Jobseekers Allowance (JA), two initiatives were implemented in 2013. The first is the JA transitional arrangement. This arrangement is for previous recipients of OFP who are entitled to JA, whose youngest child is under 14 years and who continue to parent alone. It exempts these customers from having to be available for and seeking full-time employment and allows them to work part-time (including mornings only) and still receive a JA payment. This arrangement provides targeted support to previous OFP recipients with young children taking their specific caring responsibilities into account. The second initiative is the pilot and roll-out of a new subsidised afterschool childcare scheme jointly run by D/SP and the Department of Children and Youth Affairs. This Scheme is available nationwide offering 800 subsidised afterschool childcare places for

certain customers of the Department, including lone parents, who take up employment or engage in an employment support programme.

91. The Irish social protection system includes a number of payments to women who might otherwise be at risk of poverty. Conditions usually apply. Details of some of the key payments and the number of beneficiaries in 2012 are given in the table below, with comparative data for 2007 (as contained in Ireland's last report to UNECE). Social transfers play a pivotal role in alleviating poverty, cushioning people from the worst effects of rising unemployment and falling incomes. They are essential in supporting well-being and reducing inequalities through the redistribution of income, therefore helping to promote social solidarity. A recent report for the Department of Social Protection by the ESRI shows that in 2011, 87 per cent of households received social transfers. In terms of the proportion of total household income coming from social transfers, women were slightly more reliant on social transfers (28 per cent vs. 26 per cent for men in 2011).

FEMALE BENEFICIARIES OF SELECTED SOCIAL WELFARE SCHEMES

	2007		2012			
	No of Women receiving Benefit/Assistance	Basic weekly payment	No of Women receiving Benefit/Assistance	Basic weekly payment		
State Pension (contributory)	78,431	€209.30	108,840	€230.30		
State Pension (Non-contributory)	61,914	€200.00	65,896	€219.00		
One parent Family Allowance	83,311	€185.80	85,200	€188.00		
Widow's Pension	97,482	€191.30	100,503	€193.50		
Maternity Benefit	20,948	varies	22,850	varies		
	Number of families receiving child benefit	Number of children in respect of whom benefit is paid	Monthly payment per child	Number of families receiving child benefit	Number of children in respect of whom benefit is paid	Monthly payment per child
Child benefit	576,612	1,110,715	1st + 2nd	608,733	1,162,070	1st + 2nd
			€160 each			€140 each
			3rd and +			3rd €148
			€195 each			4th and +
						€160

Source: Department of Social Protection Statistical Reports

92. The retention of the National Minimum Wage at €8.48 per hour is likely to have assisted the economic well-being of women. Central Statistics Office data show that 12 per cent of women earned less than €10 per hour compared with just 8 per cent of men¹⁰. Implementation of the Minimum Wage legislation is monitored by the National Employment Rights Agency which found that 85 per cent of companies inspected were compliant with the legislation. The Agency is empowered to recover unpaid wages for those working in non-compliant employments.

¹⁰ CSO: National Employment Survey: published 2011

93. A report on *Financial Exclusion in Ireland*¹¹, analysing data from SILC 2008, found that households headed by a female were much more likely than male households (13% vs. 8%) to experience credit exclusion (i.e. do not have any form of credit). Lack of access to affordable credit means that women, often those on a low income, turn to moneylenders and to other sub-prime providers, who charge high interest rates. A survey of 500 money-lending customers carried out for the Central Bank of Ireland¹² in 2013 found that 62% of customers were female. Female headed households are also more likely to be unable to save regularly (53% vs. 50%). Lack of savings can result in women falling into poverty when circumstances change (e.g. loss of job, illness, and of particular importance to women, divorce and separation).

EDUCATION AND TRAINING OF WOMEN

94. As mentioned previously, women have consistently outperformed men in education in Ireland for some time. This has already been discussed at length in the 20 year review above. While there are still some residual levels of illiteracy, there is evidence that women are more likely than men to avail of the widely available adult literacy and numeracy programmes. Women are also active participants in life-long training and education.
95. However, as was also mentioned previously, there are still a number of issues to be addressed including the under-representation of girls and young women in science and technology. This emerges in the school and recent data show no significant levels of improvement on the uptake by girls of these subjects, despite the wide availability of the full range of subjects. The next table shows that numbers taking selected subjects at higher levels in the School Leaving Certificate examination (equivalent to the International Baccalauréat).

NUMBERS TAKING SELECTED SUBJECTS AT HIGHER LEVEL – LEAVING CERTIFICATE EXAMS
2007, 2009, 2010 and 2011

Subject (higher level)	Boys					Girls				
	2007	2009	2010	2011	Absolute Change	2007	2009	2010	2011	Absolute Change
Biology	5,441	6,858	7,293	8,410	2,969	12,080	13,244	13,676	14,267	2,187
Chemistry	2,407	2,614	2,686	2,743	336	3,322	3,423	3,610	3,529	207
Mathematics	4,472	4,681	4,554	4,479	7	3,916	3,739	3,836	3,758	(-158)
Physics	3,657	3,398	3,497	3,462	(-195)	1,566	1,296	1,380	1,320	(-246)
Design/ Communi- cation Graphics*	2,610	3,714	3,781	3,552	942	268	396	452	442	174
Construction Studies	5,922	6,703	6,742	6,519	597	404	510	492	368	(-36)
Engineering	3,227	3,422	3,709	3,812	585	134	181	151	148	14

Source: CSO Women and Men in Ireland 2007, 2009, 2010 and 2011.

* In 2009 the Subject 'Technical Drawing' was renamed as 'Design and Communication Graphics'.

¹¹ Russell, H., Maître, B. and Donnelly, N., 2011. *Financial Exclusion and Over-indebtedness in Irish Households*. Dublin: Economic and Social Research Institute.

¹² Central Bank of Ireland. 2013. *Report on the Licensed Moneylending Industry*. Dublin: Central Bank of Ireland.

96. A new Junior Cycle qualification (for the age group 12 to 16 years), the Junior Cycle Student Award, will be introduced for students entering first year in September 2014 and completing the three year cycle in 2017. In implementing the new Framework for Junior Cycle, all students will be expected to value the role and contribution of science and technology to society, and their personal, social and global importance. Revised Senior Cycle post-primary science specifications have been submitted to the Department of Education and Skills by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) for approval. These new specifications provide a strong focus on practical, investigative approaches and practical assessment which, it is anticipated, will engage increased numbers of students in the sciences.
97. The Department of Education and Skills has been proactive in addressing gender equality in the educational system for many years (Objective B.4) and gender awareness guidelines have been developed for the school management boards, administrative managers and teachers across the education system. Whole school evaluations carried out periodically by the school inspectorate review and comment upon school gender equality policies. The Department has also delivered a programme to encourage women to advance into school principal positions. There is an ongoing dialogue on the comparatively low representation of women in the upper levels of the academic world, in both professorial and higher positions.

WOMEN AND HEALTH

98. Ireland has long enjoyed a good health service with a significant proportion of the population entitled to free primary and secondary care. At present 40.4 per cent of the population have a medical card which entitles them to free general practitioner care and to prescribed medicines at a very low cost per item. While these data are not gender disaggregated, the coverage rate has increased by 10 percentage points or over 500,000 persons since 2008. The remainder of the population are entitled to reimbursement of the costs of medical prescriptions that exceed a pre-determined threshold each month (on a monthly basis) and can avail of secondary health care in a public ward. There are some nominal costs for hospital out-patient services.
99. The most recent Irish life expectancy rates are based on the period 2005 to 2007 and show a life expectancy of 76.8 years for a man and 81.6 years for a woman at age 0. Eurostat has published more up to date estimates, based on 2011 data and estimate life expectancy of 78.3 for a man and 82.8 years for a woman at age 0.
100. The table overleaf looks at the ten principal causes of death for women in Ireland in 2012, with comparable statistics for male deaths from the same causes.

TOP TEN CAUSES OF DEATH FOR WOMEN 2012 WITH DATA FOR MEN

Cause of Death (WHO 65 COD Code)	Men		Women	
	Number	As % of Total	Number	As % of Total
Ischaemic Heart Disease	2,691	18.2	1,955	13.9
Cerebrovascular disease	761	5.1	1,167	8.3
Other heart disease	595	4.0	756	5.4
Chronic Lower Respiratory Disease	790	5.3	753	5.4
Other diseases of circulatory system	609	4.1	733	5.2
Neoplasms - Larynx trachea/bronchus/lung	1,131	7.7	720	5.1
Diseases of nervous system and senses	605	4.1	703	5.0
Neoplasms - breast (Women) prostate (men)	518	3.5	675	4.8
Pneumonia	459	3.1	656	4.7
Mental and behavioural disorders	344	2.3	601	4.3
All other causes	6,275	42.5	5,351	38.0
All deaths	14,778	100.0	14,070	100.0

Source: Derived from CSO Vital Statistics

101. The table shows that the most common cause of death for both men and women is ischaemic heart disease, while the second cause for women is cerebrovascular disease. Deaths from ischaemic heart disease are more frequent for men than for women, while the opposite applies in relation to cerebrovascular disease. In this regard the Department of Health has launched a new cardiovascular health care policy which establishes a framework for the prevention, detection and treatment of cardiovascular care, placing an emphasis on the role of primary health care in reducing the incidence of these diseases. However rich diets, obesity, smoking and the use of recreational alcohol are impacting badly on the incidence of related diseases. Heart disease has been identified as an area in which gender awareness can contribute to better outcomes as the symptoms displayed by men and by women are quite different.
102. A range of other specific and non specific diseases of the circulatory system also appear for both sexes, but particularly for women. Deaths from neoplasms rank more highly for men, with cancer of the larynx, lungs etc ranking particularly highly for both genders and breast cancer still a major cause of death for women.
103. Since the last report on Beijing, new nationwide screening programmes to address both breast cancer and cervical cancer have been implemented. Over 120,000 women are now screened every year for breast cancer and all women in the target age group are called for a mammogram every two years. The acceptance rate is now above the minimum target of 70 per cent set for the service, although a significant number still choose not to engage with the service.
104. The next table overleaf looks at admissions to psychiatric hospitals in 2006 and 2012 and shows some significant gender differences in diagnosis.

ALL ADMISSIONS TO PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITALS BY GENDER AND DIAGNOSIS 2006 AND 2012

Diagnosis	2006			2012			% Increase (decrease)	
	Male	Female	Women as % of Total	Male	Female	Women as % of Total	Male	Female
Organic Mental Disorders	245	225	47.9%	241	216	47.3%	-1.6	-4.0
Alcoholic Disorders	1,763	1,004	36.3%	843	518	38.1%	-52.2	-48.4
Other Drug Disorders	508	155	23.4%	618	213	25.6%	21.7	37.4
Schizophrenia, Schizotypal and Delusional Disorders	2,499	1,476	37.1%	2,176	1,545	41.5%	-12.9	4.7
Depressive Disorders	2,415	3,503	59.2%	2,438	2,947	54.7%	1.0	-15.9
Mania	1,201	1,528	56.0%	924	1,173	55.9%	-23.1	-23.2
Neuroses	512	644	55.7%	745	812	52.2%	45.5	26.1
Eating Disorders	17	161	90.4%	13	186	93.5%	-23.5	15.5
Personality and Behavioural Disorders	264	457	63.4%	323	748	69.8%	22.3	63.7
Intellectual Disability	76	106	58.2%	44	20	31.3%	-42.1	-81.1
Developmental Disorders	12	8	40.0%	15	2	11.8%	25.0	-75.0
Behavioural and Emotional Disorders of Childhood and Adolescence	14	9	39.1%	12	3	20.0%	-14.3	-66.7
Other and Unspecified	732	754	50.7%	722	676	48.4%	-1.4	-10.3
TOTAL	10,258	10,030	49.4%	9,114	9,059	49.8%	-11.2	-9.7

Health Research Board: Activities of Irish Psychiatric Services

105. "Depressive Disorders" is the principal cause of admission for both men and for women, with almost 56 per cent of these admissions being women. Men on the other hand account for about 58 per cent of admissions for "schizophrenia, schizotypal and delusional disorders" and for "alcoholic disorders." That said, there has been an increase in the comparative percentage of women being admitted for both "alcoholic disorders" and for "other drug disorders", although admissions for alcoholic disorders have decreased by more than half for men and marginally less than half for women.
106. Admissions of women for "other drug disorders" increased by over 37 per cent since 2006 (compared with an increase of 21.6 per cent for men) although women still only account for 26 per cent of all admission for this diagnosis. Admissions of women for eating disorders has also increased significantly (+15.5 per cent for women) over the past six years and these accounted for 186 female admissions in 2010 (compared with 161 female admissions six years earlier).

Mainstreaming gender in the Health Services

107. The Health Service Executive (HSE) which delivers the health services in Ireland has been engaged with the National Women's Council of Ireland on the preparation of a gender mainstreaming framework to address gender inequalities in health and published its recommendations in 2012. The Report makes the business case for integrating gender into health care policy, planning and delivery pointing out that it enables the HSE to
- Improve access to health care services for everyone, through a change in culture and by providing services that respond to differences between women, men and transgender persons in health status, in relation to their expressed needs and in the utilisation of services;
 - Plan and deliver services that are evidence-based and informed, by allocating and targeting resources in the most effective way and to areas of greatest need, and thereby achieve better value for money;
 - Meet its strategic objectives and targets to reduce inequalities in health, making a difference to the lives of women, men and transgender persons; and

- Promote gender mainstreaming as a tool for driving social inclusion and equality in health and to empowering women, men and transgender persons in the promotion of health and well-being.

108. The key steps in the framework are contained in the following grid:

**STEPS IN THE GENDER MAINSTREAMING FRAMEWORK
FOR THE HEALTH SERVICES**

1. Senior management commitment and leadership	5. Gender proofing: assessing gender relevance and carrying out gender impact assessments
2. Awareness raising about gender differences in health	6. Develop priorities for service planning and delivery that address gender differences
3. Collate and analyse gender and sex disaggregated data	7. Gender mainstreaming in specific services – for example primary care, mental health cancer care, cardiovascular care, etc.
4. Consult with service users health care unions and staff	8. Monitoring, review and reporting

Source: Equal but Different : a Framework for integrating gender equality in Health Service Executive policy, planning and service delivery : 2012

109. Since its publication in November 2012, the HSE and the NWCi have:

- Established an interagency Gender Mainstreaming Advisory Committee in order to progress national gender mainstreaming actions. Its membership is comprised of the Department of Justice and Equality, Department of Health, Health Service Executive, The Equality Authority, Pavee Point, The Institute of Public Health in Ireland, the Irish Cancer Society, Men’s Development Network, Transgender Equality Network Ireland and Cairde;
- Translated ‘Equal but Different’ into a short User Friendly Guide for health care staff and managers;
- Begun the rolling out of Gender Mainstreaming practice projects at service level;
- Developed a Gender Mainstreaming Training programme, aimed at increasing the competence, knowledge attitudes and skills of healthcare staff and managers to incorporate a gender mainstreaming lens within the planning and implementation of services;
- Developed a Gender Mainstreaming Toolkit to provide practical support to health care staff & managers in identifying specific actions aimed at addressing gender through the service planning and implementation process.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

110. In 2002, a study on the prevalence of sexual abuse and violence in Ireland, prepared with support from the Departments of Health and Children and Justice and Equality concluded that one in five women reported experiencing contact sexual assault as adults with a further 5 per cent reporting non-contact sexual experiences. A quarter of the cases (6 per cent of all women) involved penetrative sex.

111. A statutory code of practice on sexual harassment and harassment at work was put in place in 2002 (and revised in 2012) to give practical guidance to employers and

employees on how to prevent such harassment at work and to put procedures in place to deal with it.

112. The European Union’s Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) conducted an EU-wide sample survey of women aged 18 to 74 years in 2013 and published the results in 2014. The survey asked women about their experiences of physical, sexual and psychological violence, including incidents of intimate partner violence (‘domestic violence’), and also asked about stalking, sexual harassment, and the role played by new technologies in women’s experiences of abuse. In addition, it asked about their experiences of violence in childhood. The table below shows the key statistics from this report in respect of Ireland and the composite European Union. The initial analysis of the FRA data highlighted notable differences in the Irish experience compared to the EU averages.

INCIDENCE OF PHYSICAL AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Violence perpetrated by	Women who have experiences physical and/or sexual violence by current of previous partner or by any other person			
	Since the age of 15		In the past year	
	IE	EU 28	IE	EU 28
	%	%	%	%
Current partner	4	8	2	3
Previous partner	19	26	3	3
Any partner (current or previous)	15	22	3	4
Non partner	19	22	5	5
Any person (partner or non-partner)	26	33	8	8

113. The FRA data also reveal the following findings in relation to Ireland and show the EU-28 comparators.

Physical, Sexual and Psychological Violence

According to the study fewer Irish women surveyed experienced sexual violence by a partner or a non-partner since the age of 15 (8% of Irish women surveyed compared to an EU average of 11% of women surveyed).

Fewer Irish women surveyed experienced a number of constituents of domestic abuse by a partner compared to the EU average and are among the lowest in Europe

- Psychological violence (31% in Ireland compared to 43% at EU level).
- Controlling behaviour (23% in Ireland compared to 35% at EU level).
- Economic violence (10% in Ireland compared to 12% at EU level).
- Abusive behaviour (24% in Ireland compared to 32% at EU level).

More Irish women contacted the police as a result of violence average perpetrated by

- a partner (21% compared in Ireland to 14% at EU level), or
- a non-partner (16% in Ireland compared to 13% at EU level).

Violence in Childhood

Fewer girls in Ireland experienced physical or sexual violence before the age of 15 compared with the EU average (26% compared with 33%).

Physical violence against girls before the age of 15 in Ireland was perpetrated by

- Fewer fathers, step or foster fathers (23% of cases of physical violence compared with 58% at EU level)
- More male teachers, doctors or priests (13% of cases compared with 6% at EU level) and
- More female acquaintances, friends or neighbours (17% of cases compared with 4% at EU level).

Opinions, Attitudes and Awareness

More women in Ireland perceived the frequency of violence against women to be "very common" when compared to the EU average (33% compare with 27%).

Fewer women reported being aware of laws and political initiatives to prevent domestic violence against women (42% compared with 49%).

114. The National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence 2010 – 2014 contains a specific action the aim of which is to improve data on domestic and sexual violence. A Data Committee has been established to progress this work and it comprises representatives of the Garda Síochána the Courts Service, the Health Service Executive, the Central Statistics Office and the Probation Service. The Committee will, inter alia, review the implementation of the statistical indicators on violence against women developed by the UN Statistical Commission.
115. This work is already highlighting the importance of data across a wide range of activities relating to violence against women. A paper on progress and future direction is currently under development. It is intended that improvements in this area will lead to greater effectiveness of policy and service planning, in addition to informing the monitoring and reviews of the implementation of the strategy.
116. The next table shows the numbers of orders made under the Domestic Violence Acts in the period 2009 to 2012. It must be emphasised that these data are not gender disaggregated. Such disaggregation might be considered in the future.

COURT APPLICATIONS UNDER DOMESTIC VIOLENCE LEGISLATION

	2012	2011	2010	2009
Barring order applications	2,789	2,763	2,726	2,855
Barring orders made	1,165	1,043	1,064	1,106
Protection order applications	4,192	3,403	2,926	3,134
Protection orders made*	3,849	3,085	2,672	2,867
Safety order applications	5,026	3,755	3,561	3,322
Safety orders made	2,255	1,513	1,457	1,339
Interim barring order applications	648	731	530	545
Interim barring orders made*	520	569	431	451

117. The number of orders made under the Domestic Violence Acts has increased since 2009 from 9,856 applications to 12,655 in 2012. According to the latest data available, in 2012, spouses remained the primary applicants for relief representing 51% of applicants for barring orders, 55% of applicants for interim barring orders, 41% of applicants for safety orders and 42% of applicants for protection orders.
118. Following the establishment of Cosc in 2007, an extensive period of research and consultation led to the preparation of the National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence 2010 – 2014. The Strategy’s main aim is developing a strong framework for sustainable intervention to prevent and effectively respond to domestic, sexual and gender-based violence. Detail of the content of the Strategy is given in Section B of this Report. Its implementation is overseen by a high level cross-Departmental Monitoring Committee.
119. Seven progress reports on the implementation of the strategy have been published on the Cosc website, of which the latest is dated June 2013. During 2012, Cosc undertook a mid-term review of the strategy and as a result of the review the targets attached to the activities in the strategy have been recalibrated.
120. Cosc is currently working to ensure cross-government implementation of the strategy through action based on primary and secondary interventions. Primary intervention relates to the prevention of domestic, sexual and gender-based violence through generating greater understanding, increasing recognition and raising awareness. Secondary intervention deals with responding to the violence concerned by ensuring better provision of services to and protection for victims, improving co-ordination and dealing with the offending behaviour of perpetrators. A significant research project has also been completed to inform the Strategy and subsequent policy decisions. In 2011 a report of a study undertaken by Cosc on “ *Domestic and Sexual Violence Services in Ireland: Service Provision and Co-ordination* ” was published, with the aim of securing an up-to-date understanding of how Ireland has been responding to domestic and sexual violence, informing the development and implementation phases of the National Strategy.
121. Cosc also reports on a very significant body of other work delivered by the Departments and Agencies with responsibility for addressing these issues. It is also advised by some committees, such as the Perpetrator Programmes Committee, who advise Cosc on the development and implementation of policy and practice in relation to domestic violence perpetrator intervention programmes in accordance with the actions contained in the national strategy. The work of the Monitoring Committee in 2013 focused on improving referral protocols in the programmes for referrals and on further improving accountability and planning through improved data gathering and reporting.
122. The “Garda policy on the investigation of Sexual Crimes, Crimes against Children and Child Welfare”, updated in March 2010, provides a summary of the policies governing the investigation of crimes of a sexual nature and suspected child abuse and is designed to provide practical guidance to members of An Garda Síochána in creating awareness of the investigative and welfare responsibilities associated with such crimes. It sets out the main legal (including human rights) provisions necessary when conducting sexual crime investigations.

123. According to the Garda Recorded Crime Statistics 2008-2012 published by CSO, there has been considerable change in the volume of offences recorded in a number of groups in the period between 2008 and 2012. In particular Sexual offences increased by 51%.
124. The rise in the number of recorded sexual offences occurred particularly in the period 2011 to 2012, and was mainly due to an on-going review of all cases involving alleged sexual offences reported to An Garda Síochána. Some of these offences would have occurred at some distance in the past but were re-presented on the date of reclassification. This review was undertaken in conjunction with the Garda Síochána policy on the investigation of sexual crime, which was introduced in April 2010. The majority of these offences were sexual assault (not aggravated), followed by rape and by the defilement of a boy or girl less than 17 years old.
125. Cosc developed in 2012, and revised in 2013, a Communication Paper on approaches to promoting and developing an understanding of domestic, sexual and gender- based violence for the general public and two specific groups - the Traveller and migrant communities. The paper is intended as guidance to organizations and professionals and outlines suggestions and advice on messages and methods for raising awareness; confronting offending behaviors and increasing the understanding and recognition of domestic, sexual and gender-based violence.

Human Trafficking

126. The Anti-Human Trafficking Unit (AHTU) established in the Department of Justice and Equality in February 2008 continues to work to ensure that the Irish response to trafficking in human beings is coordinated, comprehensive and holistic. A key element of this strategy is the implementation of the *National Action Plan to Prevent and Combat Trafficking in Human Beings in Ireland 2009 - 2012* published in June 2009. The Plan was developed under four main headings:
- Prevention and Awareness Raising
 - Prosecution of traffickers
 - Protection of victims and
 - Child trafficking
127. A cross-Departmental structure, led by the Department of Justice and Equality is overseeing the implementation of the Strategy and the preparation of a second National Action Plan, engaging also with the NGOs and International Organisations regularly. In total, over 70 different Governmental, Non-Governmental and International Organisations are involved with the AHTU in anti-trafficking initiatives. This structure includes a number of Working Groups which deal with the following issues:
- Development of a National Referral Mechanism
 - Awareness Raising and Training
 - Child trafficking
 - Labour Exploitation Issues
 - Sexual Exploitation issues
128. Ireland ratified the *Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings* and it came into effect for Ireland on 1 November 2010. Ireland also ratified the *UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons*,

Especially Women and Children (known as the Palermo Protocol) which came into effect for Ireland on 17 July 2010. The Criminal Law (Human Trafficking) Act 2008 gives effect to these instruments. An amendment to the 2008 Act was enacted on 9 July 2013 (the Criminal Law (Human Trafficking) (Amendment) Act 2013) – the purpose of which is to facilitate compliance with the criminal law measures in Directive 2011/36/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims, replacing the earlier framework. Among other things, this amending Act broadens the scope of the definition of “exploitation” to include forced begging and other criminal activities. For the purpose of clarity, it defines the term “forced labour” in line with the definition set out in ILO Convention No 29 on Forced or Compulsory Labour.

129. Annual Reports published by the AHTU include data collected to establish a better informed view of trafficking in Ireland. The most recent Report, which refers to 2012, shows that 48 alleged victims were reported to An Garda Síochána in 2012. A total of 28 were referred or encountered by three NGOs and one International Organisation active in the sector. Of the 48 alleged victims reported to An Garda Síochána, a total of 31 were female of which 26 were trafficked for the purposes of sexual exploitation. In 2011, 53 cases of alleged trafficking in human beings, involving 57 alleged victims, were reported to An Garda Síochána. A total of 27 alleged victims of trafficking were encountered by or had been referred to NGOs active in this area. In 2010, 69 investigations into human trafficking involving 78 alleged victims were initiated by An Garda Síochána. 36 alleged victims of trafficking were encountered by or referred to NGOs in 2010. In 2009, 68 incidents of human trafficking involving a total of 66 cases of potential and suspected trafficking in human beings came to the attention of the Garda Síochána. These persons were encountered by the Garda National Immigration Bureau directly or were referred by organisations such as state service providers and or NGOs.
130. In addition to the AHTU, there are three other dedicated units in State Agencies dealing with this issue, the Human Trafficking Investigation and Co-ordination Unit in the Garda National Immigration Bureau (GNIB), the Anti-Human Trafficking Team in the Health Service Executive (HSE) and a specialised Human Trafficking legal team in the Legal Aid Board (LAB). These units have been set up as a response to Ireland’s international obligations to provide services to victims of the trafficking of human beings. Dedicated personnel are also assigned to deal with the prosecution of cases in the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) and with welfare issues in the Unit in the Department of Social Protection tasked to work with persons from the new ethnic communities in Ireland and with asylum seekers.
131. In 2012, the Garda Síochána in its Annual Policing Plan identified trafficking in human beings as one of the priorities with increased priority given to prevention and detection of human trafficking. It was also identified as a policing priority in 2011 and previously in 2010. The Commissioner of the Garda Síochána established a *Human Trafficking Investigation and Co-ordination Unit* within the Garda National Immigration Bureau (GNIB) in 2009. The remit of the Unit is to provide a lead role on policy issues in the field of human trafficking. The Unit acts as a centre of excellence for the organisation and oversees all investigations where there is an element of human trafficking and provides advice, guidance and operational support for investigations.

132. More specifically, the Director of Public Prosecutions has nominated particular prosecutors to deal with cases of human trafficking and issued them with guidelines. Their purpose is to guide prosecutors in examining which factors are to be considered in assessing whether to commence or continue with a prosecution including a consideration as to whether the public interest is served by a prosecution of a victim of human trafficking who has been compelled to commit offences (e.g. immigration or sexual offences) as a result of being trafficked.
133. A number of awareness raising and training initiatives have taken place since the establishment of the Anti Human Trafficking Unit (AHTU) in 2008. This includes a mix of national campaigns and campaigns where there was collaboration with other EU Member States. A wide range of media outlets and events are used creatively to maximize the impact of these campaigns.
134. The International Organisation for Migration (IOM) secured a contract in 2009 to develop, design and deliver a *'Train the Trainers'* programme on behalf of the AHTU. This was subsequently rolled out to personnel in Government agencies likely to encounter victims of trafficking. The idea of the programme was that participants on the course will train others in their organisations on the issues associated with human trafficking. Three *'Train the Trainer'* courses were completed with 40 participants from 13 different organisations. Basic awareness raising/training was delivered by IOM with input from NGOs, An Garda Síochána, and the AHTU to personnel in State organisations likely to encounter victims of human trafficking in the course of their work. An Garda Síochána has developed a continuous professional development training course¹³ which has been delivered to more than 700 operational Garda personnel. Awareness raising training has been delivered to over 3,000 members of An Garda Síochána, including inter alia, Immigration Officers, Ethnic Liaison Officers and senior Investigating Officers.

WOMEN AND ARMED CONFLICT

135. Ireland's National Action Plan for Implementation of UNSCR 1325 (2011–2014) was launched in November 2011 by the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade. The National Action Plan (NAP) coordinates Ireland's inputs to international efforts to implement UNSCR 1325 and other UN obligations on Women, Peace and Security (WPS).
136. It was drafted drawing on interdepartmental and civil society consultation and an international cross learning initiative. It sets out how Ireland will promote and implement the objectives of UNSCR 1325 in its programme support activities, diplomatic advocacy and policy-making across the interrelated areas of peace, security and development. It has national application in that it includes provisions relating to migrant and asylum-seeking women and girls in Ireland. It also recognises the relevance of UNSCR 1325 and other UN obligations on women, peace and security to the conflict on the island of Ireland.

¹³ Entitled "Tackling Trafficking of Human Beings: Prevention, Protection and Prosecution"

137. The NAP focuses on five Pillars, each with a number of objectives, and establishes clear actions and target timeframes. The five Pillars, grounded in those laid out in the UN Secretary General's reports on Women, Peace and Security, are:

Pillar 1: Prevention of Conflict, including Gender-Based Violence (GBV); and Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA).

Pillar 2: Participation and Representation of Women in Decision Making.

Pillar 3: Protection from Gender-Based Violence (GBV); Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA); and Other Violations of Women's Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law.

Pillar 4: Relief, Recovery and Rehabilitation.

Pillar 5: Promotion of UNSCR 1325 in International, Regional and National Arenas

139. An independent Mid-Term Progress Report was published in 2013, providing an overview of the progress to date on the implementation of Ireland's National Action Plan (NAP).

140. One of the NAP's major strengths is considered to be in gender-based violence. GBV actions and indicators are well populated in the NAP and, although progress on impact is difficult to show, the extent of work being done under the GBV Pillars (Pillar 1, Pillar 3) is clear, particularly in increasing financial support for GBV work and improving the military approach to gender in conflict.

141. All personnel deployed overseas in peacekeeping and humanitarian interventions receive gender equality training, and core aspects of UNSCR 1325 are embedded in learning outcomes for pre-deployment training and in mission-specific training. Codes of conduct, protection policies and reporting and sanctioning mechanisms are in place for overseas personnel to ensure the security and protection of women and girls and other vulnerable groups. A zero tolerance standard on sexual exploitation and abuse pertains in field missions with GBV and SEA recognised as serious breaches of conduct attracting severe sanctions. All Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) have been reviewed and amended by the Gender Field Advisor and her team to ensure mainstreaming. In addition, reports utilised by Irish troops have been reviewed and amended to include more gender specific / sex- disaggregated data.

142. The independent Mid-Term Progress Report acknowledges that while these steps help to embed standards of practice, behaviour and accountability for those in peacekeeping and humanitarian roles, a number of challenges remain in Pillar 1 and Pillar 3. There is little evidence of the impact that training is having on operations on the ground in terms of strengthening efforts to prevent GBV and SEA. More needs to be done to monitor and evaluate the quality of the training to ensure it is effective and relevant. Steps should be taken to consult with women in local communities to assess how they regard their treatment by peacekeeping personnel.

143. Pre & post deployment questionnaires have been developed by the Defence Forces in consultation with Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and members of the NAP

Monitoring and Evaluation Group. These questionnaires are currently being piloted by the Gender Field Advisor (GFA) in the current UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) deployment. The UNIFIL GFA has also been tasked with examining the possibility of consulting with local women and women's groups in an effort to obtain feedback from the local community to see if their needs are being met by the peacekeepers. Once this unit returns home, an in-depth After Action Review (AAR) will help guide the process for future deployments.

WOMEN AND THE ECONOMY

144. Women have enjoyed de jure equality on the labour market since the 1970s and a quasi-judicial system is in place to enable women to challenge any breaches of those rights. Nevertheless, in tandem with most countries, women are under represented in decision-making roles in the economy and also experience a gender pay gap which may impact on their life long earnings and pension entitlements. This can arise because women experience gender stereotyped attitudes in the workplace, including the undervaluing of a women's contribution by an employer, as reflected in many equality cases. Women often find it necessary to interrupt their careers or to work part-time to accommodate childbearing/rearing and may have chosen to or have been encouraged to choose work in feminised sectors where remuneration and opportunities for advancement are more limited.
145. An overview of the labour force in Ireland between Q4 2008 and the end of Q4 2013 that can be seen in the table below.

LABOUR MARKET ATTACHMENT OF WOMEN AND MEN 2008 AND 2013

	Q4/2008			Q4/2013			Per cent increase (decrease) over 5 years	
	Men	Women	Women as % of	Men	Women	Women as % of	Men	Women
Number in labour force	1,278.6	978.7	43.4	1,197.1	966.0	44.7	(6.37)	(1.30)
Number in employment	1,158.5	924.9	44.4	1,038.2	871.6	45.6	(10.38)	(5.76)
Number working full time	1,062.7	619.8	36.8	891.6	561.7	38.6	(16.10)	(9.37)
Number working part time	95.9	305.1	76.1	146.8	310.0	67.9	53.08	1.61
Number unemployed	120.0	53.7	30.9	158.9	94.3	37.2	32.42	75.61
Unemployment rate	9.4%	5.5%		13.3%	9.8%			
Participation rate	72.0%	54.0%		67.8%	52.8%			
Employment rate (age 15 to 64)	72.2%	59.3%		66.5%	56.4%			

Source: CSO: Quarterly National Household Survey on line data base

146. The economic downturn brought a reduction in the numbers of men and of women who were active in the labour market. The crisis in the construction sector began in 2007 and has continued to the present. This has impacted particularly on male employment but the recession began to impact on all sectors of the economy reducing employment opportunities for women as well as for men.

147. Female employment was still very close to its peak at the end of 2008, and the number of women who are unemployed has increased by 40,600 over the five years. The unemployment rate for men increased from 9.4% to 13.3% in the same period, but had been as low as 3.7% before the crisis and peaked at 18.1% in early 2012. The female unemployment rate was equally low, and the unemployment rate for women peaked at 11.6% in 2012 before reducing to the present level of 9.8%. Male unemployment also impacts on the female partners and children and this impact cannot be disregarded.
148. As the table above also shows, there is a very significant increase in the number of men working part-time, which again reduces family incomes. Despite the increase of the number of men who are working part time, only some 14 per cent of all men in employment work part-time, compared with almost 36 per cent of all women in employment. It is likely that the unequal distribution of family and home responsibilities between women and men and a lack of affordable childcare services for children under 3 years old may contribute to women choosing to work part time.
149. As was mentioned in the opening section of this Report, there has been a significant increase in the labour market attachment of women over the past 20 years. The report has also noted that the economic downturn has led to a reduction in women's economic engagement with many women experiencing unemployment. The State has provided a range of retraining opportunities and internship opportunities to assist men and women who are unemployed. A further initiative called Pathways to Work (PtW) has been established to achieve better engagements with unemployed persons and jobless households. The PtW initiative aims to make more labour market opportunities available for the unemployed and others whose principal income is a social welfare payment.
150. While a range of training and activation options are available, one which attracts a significant female participation is the Community Employment Scheme which is designed to help the long-term unemployed and other disadvantaged groups to return to the work force by offering them part-time and temporary placements and training in voluntary and community-based organisations. In January 2014 the Childcare Education and Training Support (CETS) Programme was extended to CE participants. This is a significant development for the CE programme and will provide approximately 1,800 childcare places for participants and new entrants to CE in 2014. This will support in particular parents of children under 5 not in the free pre-school year (ECCE) to take up a CE place where the cost of childcare has been a barrier – in particular lone parents and other vulnerable groups. Approximately €8m has been set aside for this support for 2014.
151. There is still a significant cohort of women of “working age” who are not attached to the labour market – neither employed nor unemployed. This includes women who have taken the decision to care for their children and women whose children are no longer dependent. Looking at married women only – the only cohort for which data are available - the most recent data show that 61 per cent of married women of working age are in employment, while a further 4.4 per cent are unemployed. Accordingly, over 34 per cent of all married women of working age are detached from the labour market. Various business cases for gender equality show evidence that economic growth can be fostered by the labour market attachment of more women. This is a key goal of the European Union's economic policy and gender equality policy. Accordingly, steps should be taken to foster the further attachment of this group to the

labour market. At present this cohort is precluded from participation in the labour market activation initiatives of the Department of Social Protection which specifically target the unemployed and those who rely on income supports through other schemes of that Department.

Gender segregation in the labour market

152. The next table suggests that there is still a significant segregation by occupational group on the Irish labour market. The engagement of women in typically female roles such as “administrative and secretarial, caring” and , “leisure and other services” is still very marked, as is the enrolment of men in traditionally masculine categories such as skilled trades, process, plant and machinery related occupations. Reference was made earlier to the under-representation of women in many of the high added value technological roles in the new and emerging sectors.
153. Furthermore, while there have been small increases in the numbers of women in each of the top three occupational categories, including in management roles, in the two professional groups, there has been a greater increase in the numbers of men engaged. Indeed there are almost 11,000 additional men in the group “Professionals” and only 100 or so additional women in this group.

MEN AND WOMEN IN EMPLOYMENT BY OCCUPATION 2008 AND 2013

	2008			2013		
	Men	Women	Women as % of total	Men	Women	Women as % of total
	000	000	%	000	000	%
Managers, directors and senior officials	93.7	45.2	32.5	101.6	49.3	32.7
Professionals	143.5	199.5	58.2	154.4	199.6	56.4
Associate Professional and technical	125.2	83.8	40.1	134.8	85.3	38.8
Administrative and Secretarial	50.8	204.2	80.1	40.9	169.8	80.6
Skilled trades	375.0	29.7	7.3	277.1	27.4	9.0
Caring, leisure and other services	19.9	128.8	86.6	23.8	123.7	83.9
Sales and customer service	51.8	115.6	69.1	54.6	105.8	66.0
Process, plant and machine operatives	139.3	19.5	12.3	122.0	21.0	14.7
Elementary	156.3	97.2	38.3	124.7	87.8	41.3
Total in employment by sex (000)	1,158.5	924.9	44.4	1,038.20	871.6	45.6

Source: Quarterly National Household Survey

The Gender Pay Gap

154. Although the gender pay gap in Ireland, at 14.4 per cent, is slightly better than the EU average, , it remains an important challenge in that it can have a very significant impact on the life long earnings of women and impacts upon their pension entitlements. With funding from the Equality Authority and the European Social Fund, Ibec¹⁴, the employers’ body, has developed a gender pay audit tool to assist employers to carry out gender pay reviews. The assessment tool and guidelines enable employers to measure existing pay rates, to identify any gaps and to take corrective action to eradicate any pay discrepancies that might be identified. The set of tools was piloted in a number of sectors including manufacturing and financial services companies and is now available to all Ibec members.

¹⁴ Formerly known as Irish Business and Employer’s Confederation

Women and entrepreneurship

155. CSO statistics suggest that Ireland is not a significantly entrepreneurial country, if the numbers who are self-employed, with or without employees, are regarded as a measure for entrepreneurship. Over the period under review, (Q4 2009 to Q4 2013), female self-employment has increased less than 1.5 point per cent, from 18.5 per cent to nearly 20 per cent of the total (to 64,500). This is far below the EU average of 33 per cent. The trend for men in the same period was not dissimilar, with an increase of slightly more than 1 point per cent in the number of male self-employed persons (to 260,000). However, the percentage of men in self employment activities is more than four times the percentage of female self-employed.
156. The National Women's Strategy (NWS) seeks to support more women as entrepreneurs by emphasising the training and development of girls and women in entrepreneurship as well as the further development of support networks for women in business and practical supports such as childcare availability.
157. The Equality for Women Measure (EWM), a programme of positive actions, has made ongoing ESF and Exchequer funding available for different projects to promote female entrepreneurship, such as the *National Women's Enterprise Day* (NWED) which is now in its sixth year, an initiative of the City and County Enterprise Boards (CEBs)¹⁵, which takes place annually with over 300 women attending the event each year and availing of mentoring, networking and a speakers programme. Another initiative, called "*Going for Growth*", is supported by a pool of very successful female entrepreneurs who offer their services on a pro bono basis. Participants have the benefit of sharing experiences and learning from peers and they also gain knowledge from the leading female entrepreneur. A number of other community based projects for the development of Female Entrepreneurship also received funding for two years under the EWM. The array of project selected for support was quite diverse, including a project working with women from the Traveller community and a project working with programme refugees in a rural setting.
158. Enterprise Ireland developed a comprehensive Female Entrepreneurship Strategy in June 2012 showing a clear commitment by Enterprise Ireland to encourage female led start up activity which includes specific female only funding initiatives, including a new Competitive Feasibility Fund of €250,000 for Female Entrepreneurs. The objective of this Fund is to assist a female-led new start-up company, or female entrepreneur, to investigate the viability of a new growth-orientated business proposition which has the potential to become a High Growth Potential Start-up [HPSU].
159. In early 2014, Enterprise Ireland's first peer-to-peer online networking platform for female-led companies was launched to facilitate greater communication and connectivity between the growing number of female entrepreneurs supported by the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation through Enterprise Ireland, particularly helping them exploit opportunities to grow their businesses in Ireland and in international markets.
160. Enterprise Ireland have acknowledged a 100% increase in female-led businesses and the launch of this networking initiative coincides with the announcement that Enterprise Ireland will invest €600,000 in 12 female-led businesses as part of the

¹⁵ Now restructured as the Local Enterprise Offices

Competitive Start Fund for Female Entrepreneurs to support women in expanding their business horizons and setting up innovative international companies that can win business abroad and create jobs at home. Enterprise Ireland has also launched a new accelerator programme to complement “Going for Growth” for female led start-ups which offers classroom-based and one-to-one mentoring, networking events and grant assistance.

161. The work of Enterprise Ireland is complemented at local level by the Local Enterprise Offices (formerly the City and County Enterprise Boards (CEBs)). CEBs have been very successful at attracting the active participation of women in their range of training programmes such as Start your Own Business courses and Management Development Programmes. Over 16,000 women received training from the CEBs during 2013 while a further 2,681 women availed of mentoring, representing 41 per cent of those who availed of mentoring services during the year.
162. The CEBs have also played an active role in encouraging entrepreneurship in schools including with a focus on the development of female entrepreneurial skills while the Professional Development Service for Teachers (PDST) continues to provide workshops on Enterprise Education. Some 16,000 students participated in 2013 in the Student Enterprise Awards organised by the County and City Enterprise Boards and an additional 200 companies participated in the Mini-Company Transition Year “Get Up and Go” competition which is part of the Transition Year¹⁶ Programme. The top three winners of each competition receive the Sean Lemass Award for Enterprise, which acknowledges excellence in Entrepreneurship. An equal number of males and females have participated and been successful in the named competitions.
163. Enterprise is part of the Junior Certificate Business Studies, Leaving Certificate Business, the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme, (LCVP) Link Modules, the vocational preparation and guidance aspects of the Leaving Certificate Applied and an option within Transition Year. Within Transition Year, 6,620 students in 2013 followed the Mini-Company programme, of which 62% were female. An additional 4,322 students followed other enterprise education programmes, of which approximately 56% were female.

WOMEN IN POWER AND DECISION-MAKING

164. As mentioned previously, women’s under-representation in positions of power and in decision-making roles continues as one of the significant deficits in the achievement of de facto gender equality. Data in the table overleaf are gathered by the European Commission and illustrate the comparatively slow rate of progress in this sector for Irish women.

¹⁶ Transition Year is a multi-experience educational year offered in many schools to students between the completion of the junior School Certificate and the start of the intense programme for the Leaving Certificate.

REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN IN SELECTED LEADERSHIP ROLES

	2007	2013
	%	%
Members of Lower House of Parliament	13	16
Senior ministers in National Governments	20	13
Leaders of businesses	21	n.a.
Members of boards of largest publicly quoted companies	8	10.7
Top administrative level - national administration		13
Second administrative level - national administration		26
National supreme court		11

Source: European Commission: DG Justice Gender Equality Directorate

165. A number of initiatives have been taken in relation to women's representation in parliament. While the numbers of female members of the lower House are very low, the Taoiseach (Prime Minister), who may nominate a number of Members to the Seanad (Upper House), included a majority of women among his chosen Senators in 2011, which has resulted in women occupying 30 per cent of the seats in the Seanad (upper house) at present.

166. The Joint Oireachtas Committee on Justice, Equality and Women's Affairs tasked a Sub-Committee to review women's representation in political life in 2009. The resultant report identified five barriers to women's active engagement in politics as follows:

Cash	Confidence
Childcare	Culture and
Candidate Selection	

167. There are certain facets of Ireland's political structure which contribute further to this difficulty. Constituencies in Ireland are organised on a multi-seat basis which means that candidates face challenges from fellow party members as well as from the opposition. There is still a strong culture of local engagement which necessitates a full time commitment, including at weekends, making it difficult to link family life and leading to a situation where the whole family is expected by the electorate to play a supportive role to the parliamentarian. In early 2014, the NWCI produced a report on 'A Women Friendly Oireachtas' which examined a number of these obstacles based on testimonial from women across a range of political parties.

168. New legislation will impact on the political parties with effect from the general election in 2016 and will require parties to put forward a minimum of 30 per cent of candidates of either sex. This percentage will increase further to 40 per cent, seven years later. There are early indications, from the local elections, which take place in 2014, that the political parties are still having difficulties in either identifying or selecting female candidates. However, a number of civil society organisations are actively encouraging women to participate more actively in political life.

169. A Sub-Committee of the National Women's Strategy Monitoring Committee has recently completed a study on the key issues which are preventing the advancement of women into positions of power, entitled "Towards Gender parity in Decision-making in Ireland". The recommendations of the monitoring Committee were adopted by

Government and the Department of Justice and Equality is now working to implement these recommendations. They are far-reaching and diverse and include recommendations to develop special training and mentoring initiatives to encourage women to seek promotion particularly but not exclusively in the public sector.

170. As the table above points out, women are very much under-represented on corporate boards. For over a decade, the Department of Justice and Equality has also monitored women's representation on State Boards and has reported annually to Government on progress. Over the past five years women's representation on State Boards had been static at 34% but the 2013 data show a small upward trend to just 36%. However, this mean figure masks a significant difference between economically focused and socially focused Departments. The representation of women on the Boards of health, education and social policy agencies tend to exceed 40 per cent target set by Government while Boards from the economic Departments are often below 20% to 25% women.
171. To assist in identifying more women as candidates for these Boards, it is intended that a database of "board ready women" will be established. It is hoped that the very many women with experience or expertise in a wide range of areas, including for example, finance, law, corporate governance, etc. will be encouraged and supported to put themselves forward for inclusion on the database, which will then be available to all Ministers who are seeking candidates to appoint to Boards within the ambit of their Department. It is envisaged that this process might be replicated in the private sector. Legislation to introduce a temporary gender equality quota for listed companies is also under consideration at EU level and that will, if adopted, have implications for the structure of the Boards of the largest publicly listed companies in Ireland. These companies are already required to address the gender issue in accordance with the provisions of the London Stock Exchange.
172. The European Commission has made funding available to all Member States to encourage the advancement of women into leadership roles and the Department of Justice and Equality has received an award of funding to enable it to implement the key recommendations of the Report "Towards Gender Parity in Decision-making in Ireland.

INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISM FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN

173. A report on the establishment of the institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women over the past 20 years is contained in the first part of this Report.
174. The Department of Justice and Equality, led by a Minister for State, continues to have responsibility for the achievement of gender equality through the provision of advice to Government, a range of specific initiatives and participation in international fora on gender equality. The Department continued to oversee the implementation of the National Women's Strategy over the past five years, which included the preparation of a detailed report to Government, which outlines the progress made to achieve each objective under the Strategy and which also publicises international developments in gender equality policy.
175. The Department provided the research and secretarial support for the Mid-Term Review of the Strategy and for the special project on women and leadership. The

Department also delivered a programme of positive actions – the Equality for Women Measure – which has been described previously. It also monitors and reports to Government on the representation of women on State Boards.

176. The Department of Justice and Equality also contributes a gender perspective to a wide range of Memoranda proposing policy developments and changes which are circulated for inter-Departmental consultation prior to their discussion at Government. It also actively engages with Departments which are preparing new policy proposals to ensure that the gender equality dimension is fully addressed. It also continues to assist in monitoring the delivery European Union funded Operational Programmes which have set gender equality as a horizontal principle underpinning the Programmes.
177. The Department of Justice and Equality is also an active participant in a number of other international bodies which work to foster gender equality, including the European Commission's High Level Group on Gender Mainstreaming and its Advisory Committee on Equality between Women and Men. It also participates in the work of the Gender Equality Commission of the Council of Europe and the Management Board of the European Institute for Gender Equality. All of these bodies develop important work which influences national gender equality policy formulation in Ireland.
178. Ireland's Presidency of the Council of Ministers of the European Union in the first semester of 2013 facilitated a number of initiatives on the part of the Department of Justice and Equality to promote awareness of gender equality issues. This included a collaboration with the European Institute on Gender Equality on the preparation of a study and indicators on an area of concern identified under Beijing. The study for the Irish Presidency was on "women and the media" and will be dealt with in more detail later in this report. During the EU Presidency, Ireland also promulgated Council Conclusions which were agreed at Ministerial level on the steps which might be taken at EU level to advance women into decision-making roles in the media. Other work during the Irish Presidency included a workshop of EU Labour, Employment and Social Protection Ministers on the labour market activation of older women and a major international Conference on the Economic Engagement of Women in the context of Europe's economic policy.
179. Ireland also played an influential role at CSW during its Presidency, proposing, inter alia, language on the role which the media can play in raising awareness of violence against women in the Agreed Conclusions of the session. Ireland's delegation to CSW also hosted and actively participated in a significant number of side events.
180. Recently, the decision has been taken to merge the Irish Human Rights Commission with the Equality Authority to form an enhanced the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission. Legislation to establish the Commission in accordance with the Paris Principles is currently before the Irish Parliament. The new Commission will be the State's designated national equality body for the purpose of EU anti-discrimination law and the National Human Rights Institution. The Equality Tribunal is also in the process of being merged with the employment rights infrastructure to provide a more streamlined redress procedure.
181. Each body continued to provide services in relation to gender equality issues over the past five years. The Equality Authority was established in 1999 under the Employment

Equality Act and it also has functions in relation to the Equal Status Acts and the Pensions Act. Its functions include

- Working towards the elimination of discrimination in relation to the areas covered by these acts, on each of the nine grounds of discrimination, which include gender;
- The promotion of equality of opportunity in relation to employment and vocational training and in the provision of goods and services, accommodation and education and
- The provision of information to the public on the working of these Acts and on the Maternity Protection Acts, the Adoptive Leave Acts and the Parental Leave Acts.

182. The key strategic goals of the Equality Authority over the time period under discussion were to achieve the following:

- That the majority of people in Ireland are aware that they have rights and responsibilities under equality legislation and that they have statutory leave entitlements.
- Enhanced access to redress under Irish equality legislation and EU Equal Treatment Directives for people experiencing discrimination.
- A proactive approach by employers and service providers in key sectors to promote equality and achieve compliance with equality legislation.
- Continuous enhancement of evidence for and understanding of equality issues.
- Practical responses made to critical priority issues for groups experiencing inequality.

183. It is proposed under the draft legislation that the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission will take responsibility for all of these functions in the future. In addition, this legislation will give effect to the Government's commitment that public bodies will be required to have due regard to equality and human rights issues in their work. Speaking as he introduced the new legislation to the Parliament in April 2014, the Minister for Justice and Equality commented that "drawing together, in a single, leaner and more streamlined body, the main strands of the vital equality and human rights agendas will positively strengthen the ability of the new Commission to effectively, efficiently, and cohesively promote a culture that respects the human rights and equal status of everyone in our society."

184. The next table (overleaf) summarises some of the queries received by the Equality Authority in 2008 and in 2012 on issues relating to gender equality:

QUERIES TO THE EQUALITY AUTHORITY 2008 AND 2012

Queries received	2008	2012
Maternity Protection Acts	4,117	3,115
Parental Leave Acts	1,589	1,362
Adoptive Leave Acts	97	37
The following relate to the "Gender" ground only		
Equality Employment Acts	330	238
Equal Status Acts	104	99

Source: Annual Reports of the Equality Authority

185. There has been a reduction in the number of queries dealt with by the Authority but this may reflect the greater availability of online information to assist the public and a broader understanding among both the public and employers of the provisions of the legislation.
186. The Equality Tribunal continues to operate as a quasi-judicial body and will shortly be merged with the new Workplace Relations Service Framework. Its Annual Reports show that it issued decisions in 79 complaints on the gender ground in 2008, representing 9 per cent of its total caseload, and in 62 complaints on the gender ground in 2012, representing about 11 per cent of its caseload. However, these data do not reflect the total picture as fewer than 40 per cent of complaints referred to the Equality Tribunal result in a published decision. Many complaints may be withdrawn or settled prior to a hearing and a significant number result in a mediated agreement.
187. The National Women's Council of Ireland continues to serve as the umbrella organisation for women's groups in Ireland and it represents over 180 such groups. The economic downturn led to a reduction in State support towards its core funding but, despite this financial challenge, the Council continues to play an important role as the key civil society partner in the achievement of gender equality. It has been very successful in accessing some philanthropic funding to enable it to undertake a number of projects including in the fields of women and politics; younger women and feminism; gender mainstreaming in the health services while it is also partnering with the Department of Justice and Equality in the EU Progress funded leadership initiative, mentioned previously. The Irish Congress of Trade Unions and the employers' group Ibec and the broader community voluntary sector are also active in overseeing the implementation of the National Women's Strategy, while Ibec is also partnering in the EU Progress funded leadership initiative.

HUMAN RIGHTS OF WOMEN

188. Ireland is party to all of the main international human rights conventions and reports regularly on the implementation of these conventions as appropriate. Every effort is made to include a gender focus in these reports as necessary. In this regard, Ireland's next CEDAW Report is overdue but this will be submitted later this year.

189. In 2010, Ireland ratified the Protocol to the Palermo Convention which prevents, suppresses and punishes trafficking in persons, especially women and children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.
190. As mentioned earlier in this report, full consideration is being given at present to the signature and ratification of the Council of Europe Istanbul Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence. Certain aspects of this Convention in relation to property rights present difficulty but the Irish authorities are working to find a solution.
191. Women in Ireland enjoy the full range of human rights including sexual and reproductive health in accordance with the Beijing Platform and the ICPD. Abortion is only available in very limited circumstances, in accordance with the Irish Constitution as determined by referendum.

WOMEN AND THE MEDIA

192. Women continue to play a prominent role in all forms of the media in Ireland, including in atypical roles such as anchoring the major news programmes and in sports journalism on the national public service broadcasting channel.
193. The media tend to be aware of the need to advance the role of women. The national broadcaster RTÉ advised in 2010 that
 - During the 1980s and 1990s, RTÉ recognised that there was a need to address the advancement of women in, and on, RTÉ. This was addressed by putting in place recruitment programmes and training. In addition work was undertaken to ensure that the representation of women on screen and on microphone was based on best practice in regard to gender balance.
 - RTÉ now believes that full adherence to all equality legislation is what is required and that it is no longer necessary to have in place any specific measures in regard to either the participation of women in the media workforce or the representation of women on the media. For example about five years ago RTÉ compiled a directory of potential women contributors to programmes. RTÉ found that researchers, producers and reporters did not use this directory as they felt their contact books already had a gender balance. Incidentally women make up over half of all production staff in RTÉ.
 - RTÉ does not propose any measures specifically designed to deal with the issues of gender equality. RTÉ's recruitment over the last two decades and their career development programmes have ensured that women are not discriminated against in the workforce or in their portrayal in media under RTÉ's control.
 - These fundamental principles are reflected in RTÉ's ethos and in all corporate publications. For example, in the *Public Service Broadcasting Charter* the following statement is included in relation to the Station's Public Service Remit:

“no editorial or programming bias shall be shown in terms of gender, age, disability, race, sexual orientation, religion or membership of a minority community.”

Gender: *“in its programming and editorial content, RTÉ shall strive to resist gender stereotyping”*.

- This is also reflected in RTÉ’s corporate documentation, such as the ***Guiding Principles*** publications and in the following from RTÉ ***Programme Standards and Guidelines*** while other sections of this document, such as ‘Care in the Use of Language’ emphasise the importance of using gender-inclusive terms at all times, while the entry under ‘Respect for Diversity’ emphasises a work environment free of discrimination on any such grounds.
- Therefore gender equality is already, and has been for many years, part of RTÉ policy at all levels across the organisation, both in its internal working environment as well as in its representation of women on any RTÉ media services.

Decision-making in the Media

194. As part of the work undertaken to foster gender equality during the Irish Presidency of the EU Council of Ministers in 2013, the Department of Justice and Equality collaborated with the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) in the preparation of research to develop indicators to measure progress in addressing the area of concern “women and the media” within the Beijing Platform for Action. This forms part of a suite of work on indicators relating to Beijing developed by EU Member States in collaboration with the European Commission over the past twelve years.
195. Ireland considered that this research should concentrate on the presence of women in decision-making roles as there was already a significant body of literature on the issue of stereotypes in the media. The research found that women were still under-represented in these senior roles, despite the significant presence of young women among graduate journalists. The survey looked at the presence of gender equality policies in the media sector and found that the presence of such policies was correlated with the advancement of women within the media companies. It is important to emphasise that the research focused on a comparatively small number of media companies but tried to capture at least one public sector broadcaster in each Member State.
196. The indicators identified as the outcome of this research were as follows:
- Indicator 1: The proportion of women and men in decision-making posts in media organisations in the EU
- Indicator 2: The proportion of women and men on the boards of media organisations in the EU
- Indicator 3: Policies to promote gender equality in media organisations
197. EU Member States subsequently endorsed these indicators and these will be surveyed periodically to determine the progress being made under this area of concern under the Beijing Platform for Action.

Women and the advertising medium

198. The advertising sector in Ireland has developed a self governance code which includes the following provisions which aim to overcome gender stereotypes and the false depiction of women in advertising. This code recently underwent a review which will contribute to a revised code and incorporated consultation with the public and with civil society bodies including the NWCI. The key provisions of relevance in the current code are as follows:

Decency and Propriety

- 2.15 *A marketing communication should contain nothing that is likely to cause grave or widespread offence.*
- 2.16 *Marketing communications should respect the dignity of all persons and should avoid causing offence on grounds of gender, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race or membership of the traveller community.*
- 2.17 *Marketing communications should respect the principle of the equality of men and women. They should avoid sex stereotyping and any exploitation or demeaning of men and women. Where appropriate, marketing communications should use generic terms that include both the masculine and feminine gender; for example, the term 'business executive' covers both men and women.*
- 2.18 *To avoid causing offence, marketing communications should be responsive to the diversity in Irish society and marketing communications which portray or refer to people within the groups mentioned in 2.16 should:*
- (a) respect the principle of equality in any depiction of these groups;*
 - (b) fully respect their dignity and not subject them to ridicule or offensive humour;*
 - (c) avoid stereotyping and negative or hurtful images;*
 - (d) not exploit them for unrelated marketing purposes;*
 - (e) not ridicule or exploit religious beliefs, symbols, rites or practices.*
- 2.19 *Advertisers should take account of public sensitivities in the preparation and publication of marketing communications and avoid the exploitation of sexuality and the use of coarseness and undesirable innuendo. They should not use offensive or provocative copy or images merely to attract attention. Marketing communications that may be considered by some to be distasteful, might not necessarily conflict with 2.15 above. Nevertheless, advertisers are urged to consider public sensitivities before using potentially offensive material.*

199. One particular advertising campaign for a snack food product bought over 300 complaints to the ASAI in 2010. The findings of the complaints committee was as follows

While the Committee accepted that evidence had been provided that a section of the population found the advertisement to be amusing and inoffensive they recognised that over 300 complaints had been received from individuals and groups who found the advertisements to be unacceptable on a variety of grounds including the exploitation of sexuality and the use of provocative images to attract attention.

Having regard to the nature and unprecedented level of complaints received, the Committee decided that the advertisements had caused grave and widespread offence.

The Committee decided that the advertisements constituted a grave breach of the provisions of the Code as set out in Section 2.15, 2.16 and 2.17.

Action Required: *The advertisements (which have been withdrawn) should remain withdrawn on a permanent basis and the advertisements should not be published again in any media, including the advertisers' website.*

WOMEN AND THE ENVIRONMENT

200. As a country with a mild climate, Ireland faces fewer environmental challenges than many other UN States. However, a clean environment is central to Ireland's food exports, a sector which supports many female employment opportunities. Ireland participated in the EIGE study on the development of indicators on this Area of Concern in 2012. It was found that women were again poorly represented in decision-making in this sector in Ireland.
201. Recent research published by the EU Fundamental Rights Agency and based on a sample survey, estimated that 52% of women in Ireland sometimes avoid certain areas for fear of violence. This exceeds the EU average of 37%. This research was based on an EU-wide sample survey. Even the perception of violence can damage freedom to participate in one's local environment. A positive initiative in this regard is Dublin's commitment to working towards 'Safer City' status in cooperation with UN Women and it is possible that learning from this process might be extended nationally to ensure that women can feel safe in their local environment across the country.
202. Every effort is made to include a gender perspective in Ireland's national development policies. Gender equality also forms a key principle in our overseas development aid programme, as does a focus on environmental factors and their impact on development. Irish Aid's policy on gender equality includes three objectives:
1. To advance equal rights for men and women
 2. To eliminate gender inequalities in access to, control of and benefits from resources and services and
 3. To support women's equal participation with men in political and economic decision-making.

The second of these objectives has the greatest relevance to the issue of women and the environment, but aspects of the first and third are also influential in fostering women's roles as decision-makers including in the environmental sector.

203. In order to deliver on objective 2, Irish Aid works to strengthen women's access to improved basic services such as health care and education, and to improve women's access to, and control of resources such as land and capital. In practical terms this involves supporting governments and NGOs to improve basic services so that women can better avail of them. It also includes supporting legislative reform on issues such as women's property rights.
204. Increasing women's access to agricultural resources and services is a key part of Ireland's work to address hunger. The Hunger Task Force prioritises increasing smallholder agricultural productivity especially among female farmers. Irish Aid is active on agriculture and livelihood interventions in most of its Programme countries, including through dialogue with Ministries of Agriculture to mainstream gender in policy developments and working with partners to improve women's access to extension services, markets, land and agricultural inputs such as seeds, seedlings, irrigation water, fertilizers and pesticides, capital, agricultural equipment, etc. Irish Aid also supports the International Land Coalition's women's rights programme. This global alliance of civil society, inter governmental and civil society organisations works at different levels to promote secure and equitable address to land for women and men through capacity building, dialogue and advocacy.
205. The Irish Aid programme continues to place an increased emphasis on the importance of building resilience to plan for and cope with the increased vulnerabilities and risks which can result from climate change. This includes support to NGOs, many of which place a strong emphasis on building resilience within vulnerable households, many of which are headed by a woman.
206. Another key focus is improving access to clean water, as this is a key dimension of both improved nutrition security and gender equality.

THE GIRL CHILD

207. In June 2011, the Irish Government established the Department (Ministry) for Children and Youth Affairs, a new Government Department with responsibility for a range of issues including child welfare and protection, youth justice, the National Children's Strategy, family supports and early childhood care and education. The focus of the Department falls equally on the needs of girls and of boys. A new National Policy Framework for Children and Young People is due to be launched in mid-2014.
208. The key responsibilities of the Department are:
 - the direct provision of a range of universal and targeted services;
 - ensuring high quality arrangements are in place for focused interventions dealing with child welfare and protection, family support, adoption, school attendance and reducing youth crime; and

- the harmonisation of policy and provision across Government and with a wide range of stakeholders to improve outcomes for children, young people and families.
209. A new Child and Family Agency was established on 1st January 2014. The Agency brings a dedicated focus to child protection, family support and other key children's services for the first time in the history of the State. The Agency is as broadly based as possible and includes services that:
- may prevent problems arising for a family in the first instance;
 - identify problems and provide supports at an early stage; and
 - assist children and families in managing serious problems requiring specialised intervention beyond their own resources.
210. The Child and Family Agency has taken over responsibility for the following range of services:
- Child Welfare and Protection Services, including family support services previously delivered by the Health Service Executive's (HSE) Children and Family Services;
 - Services previously delivered by the Family Support Agency and the National Educational Welfare Board;
 - Pre-school Inspection services;
 - Domestic, sexual and gender-based violence services previously delivered by the HSE;
 - Community-based services related to the psychological welfare of children and families.

Other initiatives of specific interest to the girl child

211. The *Criminal Justice (Female Genital Mutilation) Act* was enacted by the Irish Parliament in April 2012. Under the Act, a person is guilty of an offence if the person does or attempts to do an act of female genital mutilation. The Act also makes it a criminal offence for someone resident in Ireland to take a girl to another country to perform FGM. The Act explicitly refers to FGM as a human rights violation and as a form of gender-based violence. It also removes the argument of consent or culture as a defence. A person who is guilty of an offence under the Act is liable –
- (a) On summary conviction to a class A fine or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 12 months or to both, and
 - (b) On conviction on indictment to a fine or imprisonment for a term not exceeding 14 years or to both.
212. In February 2012, a guide entitled '*Services for Victims of Child Trafficking*' was published by the Anti-Human Trafficking Unit in the Department of Justice and Equality. The guide is for service providers who may come into contact with victims of child trafficking. It sets out the procedures in place for supporting and protecting victims of child trafficking in accordance with the *National Action Plan to Prevent and Combat Trafficking of Human Beings in Ireland 2009-2012*. The purpose of the guide

is to provide service providers who deal with children with the following information on human trafficking:

- Signs that indicate that a child might be a victim of trafficking;
- Information on what services are available; and
- The action to be taken where there are suspicions that a child may have been trafficked.

213. The HSE is responsible for the protection and welfare of children within the Republic of Ireland under the Child Care Act 1991 and the Children First Guidelines. The HSE is responsible for the reception into care and provision of care to all separated children/unaccompanied minors. This is a national service. When any child requiring a service comes to the attention of the HSE, an assessment takes place of the needs of that child and that assessment includes an assessment of the needs of children who may be victims of human trafficking. It makes all necessary provisions for any unaccompanied child identified as an alleged victim of trafficking including accommodation, medical care, a care plan, legal aid and advice, voluntary return home, education and any other need of the child.

214. “Healthy Ireland: A Framework for Improved Health and Wellbeing 2013-2025” is a new national framework for action to improve the health and wellbeing of the Irish population, including children, over the coming generation. It reflects the international experience of a new commitment to public health with a focus on prevention. It has as its vision: a *Healthy Ireland, where everyone can enjoy physical and mental health and wellbeing to their full potential, where wellbeing is valued and supported at every level of society and is everyone’s responsibility.*

215. In October 2013, a three year, all island¹⁷ campaign by “safefood”¹⁸ in partnership with the HSE and Healthy Ireland was launched to target childhood obesity and to remind parents about the negative health impacts of excess weight in childhood and how this can impact on a child’s quality of life.

¹⁷ Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland

¹⁸ The agency responsible for promoting food safety and healthy eating in Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland

SECTION 3 DATA AND STATISTICS

Data Collection

216. Comprehensive data are gathered every five years at the national Census. The range of data collected is fully gender disaggregated and includes information on education, employment, health, disability, housing, in addition to the standard demographic data. The Central Statistics Office is also contributing indirectly to the processes established to gather the “Minimum Set of Gender Indicators” agreed by the UN Statistical Commission.

Central Statistics Office Publication: Women and Men in Ireland

217. In 2004, the Central Statistics Office published, for the first time, a new gender report which compared key differences in the social and economic lives of men and women in Ireland. The report, *Women and Men in Ireland 2004*, included a section that focused on Ireland’s performance on EU Council policy targets in areas such as employment rates and representation in decision-making. The Report has been published annually to 2012 and will in future be published every two years. It is an invaluable resource with the comparable statistical information it provides particularly important in monitoring the impacts of new policy initiatives. CSO report that it will be published electronically every two years in the future. The Report includes a suite of indicators which facilitate the measurement of developments towards de facto gender equality.
- 218 The extensive table overleaf shows some of the key indicators drawn from the 2007 and 2011 reports. A further Report will be published later this year. It is intended that these data will supplement those already presented in the various sections of this table.

Other national research

219. The Economic and Social Research Institute undertook a number of key pieces of research for the Equality Authority, which have contributed significantly to the evidence based policy debate. These include
- *The Gender Wage Gap in Ireland* (2009) which offers new evidence on the factors which contribute to the gender pay gap in Ireland, based on the Central Statistics Office’s National Employment Survey 2003.
 - *A Women’s Place: Female Participation in the Irish Labour Market* (2009) which looks at changes in women’s participation in the Irish labour market since the 1990s
 - *Pregnancy at Work – a National Survey (2011)* which looked at women’s experiences at work during and after pregnancy.
 - *Pregnancy and Employment – a Literature Review (2011)* reviewing national and international sources
 - *Pregnancy Discrimination in the Workplace: Legal Framework and Review of Legal Decisions 1999 to 2008* – an oversight of the legal framework for maternity and employment protection in Ireland
 - *Workplace Equality in the Recession? The Incidence and Impact of Equality Policies and Flexible Working* – which found a marked increase in the proportion of companies that offer flexible working arrangements and that have adopted equality policies.

SELECTED INDICATORS FROM "WOMEN AND MEN IN IRELAND" (CSO)

Indicator	2008 Report		2011 Report	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Employment rate aged 15 - 64 yrs	75.6	60.5	63.3	56.0
Labour force Participation rate 15+ yrs	72.7	54.2	68.4	53.3
Average hours worked per week (2006 and 2011)	40.5	31.8	39.4	30.6
Migration 2011 and 2011	2001		2011	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
	000	000	000	000
Emigration	12.6	13.6	38.7	37.8
Immigration	30.1	29.0	20.1	22.3
Net migration	17.5	15.4	-18.6	-15.5
Early School Leavers	2005		2010	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
	%	%	%	%
% of 18-24 age group	15.4	9.5	12.6	8.4
Lone Parents	2008 Report		2011 Report	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
	000	000	000	000
Number (000)	11.5	119.5	14.1	133.3
		Years		Years
Age of woman at birth of first child		28.9		29.4
Women and Men in decision-making	2008 Report		2011 Report	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
	%	%	%	%
State Boards	68.0	32.0	66.0	34.0
Seanad Eireann (Upper House of Parliament)	77.0	23.0	70.0	30.0
Dail Eireann (Lower House)	86.7	13.3	84.0	16.0
Government Ministers	82.0	18.0	91.0	9.0
Ministers of State	86.0	14.0	74.0	26.0
<i>Some of these data are estimated</i>				
Civil Service (selected grades by gender)	2007		2010	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
	%	%	%	%
Secretary General	76.5	23.5	82.4	17.6
Principal Officer	75.2	24.8	69.4	30.6
Assistant Principal	65.0	35.0	61.4	38.6
Higher Executive Officer	48.8	51.2	48.2	51.8
Executive Officer	33.0	67.0	33.3	66.7
Clerical Officer	22.5	77.5	22.6	77.4
TOTAL	35.3	64.7	34.8	65.2
Grants to high performance athletes	2001		2010	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Number of recipients	188	69	236	100
Arts Council Grants	2007		2010	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Number of recipients	548	454	348	332

Source: derived from Women and Men in Ireland 2012

Other Statistical Indicators/Indices

World Economic Forum

220. A number of international publications offer comparative material on progress towards gender equality. One of the most widely publicised in the Gender Equality Index published by the World Economic Forum. This index tends to rate Ireland highly but the data are skewed by the fact that Ireland had an elected female President (Head of State) for 21 years, until late 2011. Overall Ireland occupied sixth place globally on this index in 2013, up two places in 2008, but down one place on 2011 and 2012.
221. This World Economic Forum index has a number of components and the different ratings assigned to Ireland are summarised in the next table.

RATING ON WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM GENDER INDEX 2008 AND 2013

	2008		2013	
	Rank	Score	Rank	Score
Economic Participation	48	0.681	29	0.745
Educational attainment	1	1.000	34	0.999
Health and survival	81	0.973	65	0.974
Political empowerment	8	0.354	6	0.412
Overall	8	0.762	6	0.782

Source : World Economic Forum 2013

222. This table shows that a difference in ratings can be linked to a very small difference in the scores, as evidenced by the “educational attainment” data.

EU Gender Equality Index

223. In June 2013, the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) published its first Gender Equality Index, as a synthetic measure of gender equality that is both easy to communicate and to understand. Its purpose was not just to measure gender equality but also to allow its analysis over time and to give more visibility to the comparative situation of women and men in Europe. The Index addresses six domains: work, money, knowledge, time, power and health. It is intended that its scope will be further extended to include violence and intersecting inequalities. The microdata from the Fundamentals Rights Agency’s study on violence against women will be analysed by EIGE to populate the Gender Index on Violence against Women.
224. The key findings for Ireland are contained in the next table. This table reflects the key points made in the earlier parts of this Periodic Report to UNECE. Ireland appears to be slightly ahead of the EU average on almost all indicators with the exception of those relating to power. Women’s engagement in decision-making was already identified as an ongoing challenge in Ireland.

EUROPEAN GENDER EQUALITY INDEX : IRELAND AND EU 27 : 2013

	IRELAND	EU 27
	%	%
GENDER EQUALITY INDEX	55.2	54.0
WORK	71.0	69.0
Participation	73.9	76.6
Segregation and quality of work	68.1	62.2
MONEY	77.0	68.9
Financial resources	76.8	59.5
Economic situation	77.2	79.6
KNOWLEDGE	52.8	48.9
Attainment and Segregation	78.5	57.2
Lifelong Learning	35.4	41.8
TIME	53.4	38.8
Care	60.2	45.5
Social	47.5	33.0
POWER	26.5	38.0
Political	30.4	49.9
Economic situation	23.0	29.0
HEALTH	96.4	90.1
Status	95.8	86.6
Access	97.0	93.7

Source:EIGE: Gender Equality Index: Country Profiles 2013

225. The final table overleaf, looks at the individual indicators used in the formulation of this Gender Equality Index and facilitates comparison between the sexes across the constituent indicators. Again it reflects and validates the many points made during this Report.

KEY GENDER EQUALITY INDICATORS IRELAND

INDICATOR	Unit	IRELAND	
		Women	Men
WORK			
Full-time equivalent employment (15+ population)	%	40.1	54.4
Duration of working life	YRS	30.1	38.2
Employed peoples in "Education Human Health and Social Sciences (aged 15 - 64 yrs)	%	35.1	8.4
Employees with flexible working arrangements	%	40.2	52.4
Employees undergoing work related training	%	39.6	43.7
Workers who perceive health not at risk from work	%	88.1	78.7
MONEY			
Mean monthly earnings	PPS	2,790	3424
Mean equivalised net income (16+)	PPS	19,674	20583
Not at risk of poverty > 60 per cent median income	%	85.5	84.7
S20/S80 income quintile share	%	19.2	18.2
KNOWLEDGE			
Graduates of tertiary education (15 - 74 yrs)	%	34	28.3
Tertiary students in Education, Health and Welfare, Humanities and Arts	%	49.8	24.4
Participants in formal and non formal education and training	%	14.2	13.5
TIME			
Workers caring for children or grandchildren, every day for one hour or more	%	42.3	28.4
Workers doing cooking and housework every day for one hour or more	%	77.1	38
Workers doing sporting, cultural or leisure activities outside home at least every other day	%	19.6	24.5
Workers involved in voluntary or charitable activities at least once a month	%	18.8	15.5
POWER			
Share of Ministers	%	14	86
Share of Members of Parliament	%	15	85
Share of Members of Regional Assemblies	%	17	83
Share of Members of Boards in Largest Quoted companies	%	8	92
Share of members in key decision-making bodies in Central Bank	%	15	85
HEALTH			
Self perceived health good or very good	%	82.6	83.5
Life expectancy at birth (absolute value)	YRS	83.2	78.7
Healthy life years at birth (in absolute value)	YRS	67	65.9
Population without unmet needs for medical examination (over 16s)	%	96.7	97.7
Population with unmet needs for dental examination (over 16s)	%	94.7	95.6
INTERSECTING INEQUALITIES			
Employment of people born in a foreign country (15-64 yrs)	%	54.1	65.1
Employment of people aged 55-64 yrs	%	42.1	58.2
Employment rates of people living in a household with one adult and One or more dependent children	%	46.3	57.3

Source: EIGE: Gender Equality Index: Country Report 2013

SECTION FOUR

EMERGING PRIORITIES

National Priorities

226. This Report has shown that there has been considerable progress towards the achievement of de facto gender equality in Ireland since the Beijing Platform for Action was adopted in 1995. It has also shown that progress continued to address all of the areas of concern since the last progress report, despite the economic downturn, although the impact of the downturn on Irish women and men cannot be disregarded. As the economy begins to show more positive trends and employment is beginning to rise again, the prospects are better. The statistical analysis in Section 3 has shown that for many indicators Ireland lies close to the EU mean data. Section 1 showed that there are some specific deficits to be further addressed, while in the longer term, Ireland would hope to move to exceed the EU averages in the Gender Equality Index and this will be a priority over the next five years..

The Millennium Development Goals and the Post 2015 Agenda

227. Ireland has been actively engaged in the process of developing the Post 2015 agenda. A Special Event on the Millennium Development Goals, co-facilitated by Ireland and South Africa, held in September 2013, adopted an outcome document providing a strong commitment to maximising progress on the MDGs over the next two years and a clear road map to 2015. In addition, during its Presidency of the Council of Ministers of the European Union in 2013, Ireland successfully negotiated the EU Council Conclusions on Post-2015, and continues to input to the EU joint working group on Post 2015, in collaboration with the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government.
228. In the Open Working Group (OWG) in February 2014, Ireland, as a member of an OWG Troika with Norway and Denmark, called for an ambitious goal on gender equality as well as gender mainstreaming across all other goals, targets and indicators in the Post 2015 agenda. Such a goal would reaffirm international commitment to our obligations to dismantle the structural drivers behind gender inequality, including understanding the attitudes, behaviours and practices that perpetuate gender stereotypes and all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls. Investments in reducing inequality are essential to deliver equitable and inclusive growth, sustainable social cohesion, peace and stability.
229. Ireland is advocating for the new development agenda to be rooted in the principles of human rights. The realisation of women's and girls' rights and their full participation and leadership in all areas of sustainable development is fundamental to achieving gender equality and is a prerequisite for poverty eradication. Supporting the economic empowerment of poor women and men, girls', their access to primary, secondary and tertiary education, their participation and leadership in decision making, and the prevention of violence against women and girls are critical investments and will pave the way for women and girls to enjoy the full expression of their rights and to contribute to, and benefit from, discrimination-free societies.

230. Women's empowerment in the Post 2015 agenda requires proactive support for women's participation on an equal footing with men in economic and political decision-making from the household to the national and international level. The empowerment of women living in conflict-affected environments and in peace-making is particularly important as it reduces the disproportionate risks they face in fragile and dangerous situations and because it leads to more effective and equitable conflict resolution and more durable peace.
231. Finally, in order to prioritise actions, monitor progress and fight discrimination with an evidence-based approach, strengthened capacities in the collection, analysis and use of disaggregated data and gender sensitive indicators will be needed in the Post 2015 agenda. Targets and indicators, showing progress among the poorest and most marginalised women, are needed to capture progress on gender equality in issues such as access to land, energy, education, and political and economic power.

Ireland's Development Cooperation

232. Strengthening gender equality and women's empowerment is a central part of Ireland's Policy for International Development "One World, One Future" which was launched in 2013. The policy commits Ireland to:
- Improve access to productive resources and opportunities for women;
 - Prevent gender based violence as a major abuse of human rights;
 - Strengthen women's voice in decision making at all levels; and
 - Focus on girl's education beyond primary schools
233. Ireland, through its official overseas development programme, Irish Aid, is supporting partner governments to tackle gender inequalities through policies and programmes in Uganda, Mozambique, South Africa, Timor Leste, Sierra Leone and Liberia, particularly around services delivery, capacity building and the roll out of relevant legislation. This has included work with the Ministry of Agriculture in Tanzania and Ministry of Finance in Uganda on gender mainstreaming, and the Joint Gender Support Programme in Zambia to strengthen the coordination of gender mainstreaming in the public sector.
234. Ireland has been also been highly active in the promotion and protection of women's human rights, gender equality, and the empowerment of women and girls in our work at the United Nations, involving strong engagement in the context of negotiations at the UN Human Rights Council, the UN General Assembly, and the UN Commission on the Status of Women.
235. As part of its UN Human Rights Council (HRC) membership 2013 - 2015, Ireland has committed to promoting gender equality, combating all forms of discrimination and addressing gender-based violence. Ireland has made a number of national statements and interventions on these issues, in particular in the context of the Universal Periodic Review, where many of our recommendations to fellow UN Member States addressed concerns regarding gender-based violence, sexual exploitation and abuse of women and girls, and the implementation of UN Security Council resolution 1325 and associated resolutions on women, peace and security.

236. Ireland supports key UN partners, including UN Women, in their work towards the elimination of discrimination against women and girls, the empowerment of women, and achievement of equality between women and men. This includes support to the United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women, and is complemented by Irish Aid's support for and engagement in the Irish Joint Consortium on Gender Based Violence, a unique collaboration between Irish Aid, the Irish Defence Forces, and Irish humanitarian, development and human rights organisations,
237. Despite serious financial constraints, Irish Aid's budget for gender equality has remained at a constant level in recent years. The OECD DAC reported that 35% of Irish aid in 2011 was "gender-focused", with gender equality as either a principal or significant objective.
238. A review of Irish Aid's Gender Equality Policy in 2010 noted that significant progress had been made in progressing gender equality in Irish Aid, including more specialised human resources in place with a network of gender advisors across the programme, and commending the establishment of a Gender Network across the Department of Foreign Affairs to facilitate lesson sharing and capacity development on gender equality.

Annex

PRINCIPAL PUBLICATIONS (AND WEBLINKS)

National Women's Strategy 2007 – 2016

<http://www.genderequality.ie/en/GE/Pages/National%20Women's%20Strategy>

National Women's Strategy 2007 – 2016 Progress 2007/2008

<http://www.genderequality.ie/en/GE/NWS%20Progress%20Report%202007-2008.pdf/Files/NWS%20Progress%20Report%202007-2008.pdf>

National Women's Strategy 2007 – 2016 Progress 2009

<http://www.genderequality.ie/en/GE/NWS%20Progress%20Report%202009.pdf/Files/NWS%20Progress%20Report%202009.pdf>

National Women's Strategy 2007 – 2016 Progress 2010

<http://www.genderequality.ie/en/GE/Progress%20Report%20for%202010.doc/Files/Progress%20Report%20for%202010.doc>

Gender Equality Conference: How To Elect More Women?

<http://www.genderequality.ie/en/GE/Pages/WP13000048>

EU Presidency Conference: Women's Economic Engagement and the Europe 2020 Agenda

<http://www.genderequality.ie/en/GE/Pages/WP13000054>

The texts of the following three reports will be available on the main and gender equality websites of the Department of Justice and Equality at www.justice.ie and on www.genderequality.ie from June 2014.

Progress 2011/2012 on the Implementation of the National Women's Strategy 2007-2016

Mid-Term Review of the National Women's Strategy 2007-2016

Towards Gender Parity in Decision-Making in Ireland
