



National Women's
Council of Ireland
Comhairle Náisiúnta
na mBan in Éirinn

Working to improve Women's Lives

Annual Report 2012

National Women's Council of Ireland

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Message from the Chairperson

The past year has presented NWCI with many changes, challenges and opportunities which have been grasped and worked on with enthusiasm by the Board, staff and NWCI's members. Collectively they have contributed enormously to the development of the organisation.

2012 also saw the resignation of our CEO Susan Mc Kay and the appointment of our new Director Orla O'Connor.

Cuts in funding and a new economic reality led the organisation to conduct a review in early 2012. The results pointed to the need for clear strategic direction and prioritisation and greater visibility for NWCI and the work that we do. It also recommended developing new and sustainable fundraising strategies.

As a result of the review we began the process of developing a new strategic plan 2013-2015 based on consultations with members, funders, staff and Board. We worked on developing a fundraising strategy and a membership development drive. We also focused on building our social media presence and making use of online campaigning tools. 2012 also saw the start of our new youth initiative The Y Factor which brings together many talented and committed young feminists. We look forward to seeing them taking on leadership

roles within the organisation in the coming years.

It has been a privilege for me to take on the role of

Chairperson of NWCI. I would like especially to thank my fellow Board members for their support, expertise and full engagement in addressing the challenges we have faced. I want to thank the previous Board for their work and commitment in steering the organisation through difficult times. I would like to thank the NWCI staff for their dedication, professionalism and determination to build a strong, inclusive and reputable organisation which we can all be proud of. I want to extend a particular thanks to our new Director Orla O'Connor who has been an exceptional leader, turning challenges to opportunities in a creative, exciting and innovative way.

We can now look forward, I believe, to seeing the NWCI go from strength to strength as a revitalised feminist organisation, growing our membership, continually building our profile with a renewed commitment to making Ireland a better and more equal place for all women.

Siobhan O Donaghue, Chairperson



Message from the Director

2012 was a very exciting year for NWCI and for me personally. I was honoured to accept the post of NWCI Director in October 2012.

In 2012 we celebrated key achievements for NWCI and women in Ireland. The introduction of quota legislation for women candidates in the general election was a significant victory.

2012 was also marked by the tragic death of Savita Halappanavar in University College Hospital Galway. 20 years after the X case we launched an online campaign to call for the introduction of legislation. Women and men responded in huge numbers, and by the end of the year over 72,000 emails had been sent to TDs in every constituency in Ireland.

Campaigning against injustices for women and working in collaboration to propose solutions were key features of our work. Our collaboration with the Justice for Magdalene Group, the 7 is too Young Campaign and with SIPTU have all been central to highlighting inequalities which women experience.

Placing women's needs and experiences at the centre of Ireland's economic recovery was a core aspect to our work. We worked with the HSE to highlight the different health needs of women and men and how to incorporate these into health service design, planning and delivery. We focused on how women have

experienced the recession and austerity differently to that of men and how women's voices are largely

absent from the economic debate.

2012 was also a year of significant change in NWCI. Dealing with the cuts to our income brought significant challenges. I want to thank the Board, both past and present, and all of the staff for using it as an opportunity to lead a change process within NWCI.

I want to thank the members for contributing to that process which will culminate in a new Strategic Plan for NWCI (2013-2015). I also want to thank our funders for supporting the organisation in establishing new priorities and strengthening our capacity to be the leading national women's membership organisation.

A high note in 2012 was President Michael D. Higgins' presence with us on International Women's Day. He reminded us of how critical it is for women to have a national voice in order to challenge the persistent inequalities between women and men. Our work this year is testimony to the difference NWCI is making in Ireland.

Orla O'Connor, Director



Who we are

National Women's Council of Ireland (founded in 1973) is the leading national women's membership organisation seeking equality between women and men. We represent our membership which includes 160 member groups as well as a wide range of supporting group and individual members from a diversity of backgrounds, sectors and locations.

Our **mission** is to lead and to be a catalyst for change in the achievement of equality between women and men. We articulate the views and

Our vision is of an Ireland, and of a world, where there is full equality between women and men.

experiences of our members and make sure their voices are heard wherever decisions are made which affect the lives of women.

Our **vision** is of an Ireland, and of a world, where there is full equality between women and men.

Our **values and beliefs** shape what we do and how we work, key among these are:

We are a **feminist** organisation. We believe that feminism is about working to change society so that women and men have an equal say in the decisions that affect their lives.

We are aware that women are not a

homogenous group and very keen to reflect in our work the **diversity** that exists among all women.

We believe that care work is essential to the common good, it performs vital social and economic functions. We see the **recognition and valuing of affective care** as fundamental to full equality for women.

We believe in the **fundamental dignity and human rights** of all human beings. We recognise that these rights are universal, inalienable and indivisible.

We believe the right to make one's own choices about one's body for oneself is at the very core of personal freedom. **Bodily integrity** is a human right.

We know that tackling inequality and creating a more equal society requires **tackling structural inequalities** as well as a shift in the balance from self-interested 'consumerism' to a friendlier and more collaborative society.

We believe that **women in leadership positions** (at all levels of society, locally, regionally, nationally and internationally) and the women's sector offer key sources of leadership and skills in relation to this change process.

Promoting Women in Decision Making

2012 was an exciting year for women's representation in politics and for our Women into Politics Project which is funded by the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust. We saw the introduction of political party gender quotas, signed into law by President Michael D. Higgins. While quotas are not the panacea to the under-

representation of women in Irish politics they will give more women the opportunity to face the electorate. We are proud to have played a key part in this campaign and we congratulate our member organisations and the many women inside Ireland's political parties who created this achievement.



Politicians and activists gather to celebrate the introduction of gender quotas in Ireland.

Constitutional Convention

Following the quotas legislation, we mobilised our members to achieve other reforms of the political system. The primary focus was on the Constitutional Convention. The Convention is a body of 33 politicians and 66 members of the public selected to discuss eight specified issues. NWCI – through the Free Legal Aid Centre – commissioned barrister and academic Dr Alan Brady of Trinity College to develop a paper on the topic of *Gender, the Constitution and Reform: Improving the Position of Women in*

the Irish Constitution. In this agenda-setting paper Dr Brady examined the legal questions raised by the issues identified for discussion at the Convention as well as a number of other areas we would like to see reformed. Dr Brady made recommendations to improve the status of women in areas relating to the clause on women in the home, recognising the role of civil society, alterations to the electoral system, developing an equality provision in the Constitution and introducing economic, social

and cultural rights.

This work was overseen by our Working Group on the Constitutional Convention.

The paper was launched at a Members Meeting in Cork where members agreed on NWCI's

"Maria and I were overwhelmed to be able to bring the words of those inspirational women to where they should have been heard almost eighty years ago." – Kathy Darcy

Kathy Darcy perform an excerpt from her play *This is My Constitution* based on correspondence between women and the government from the drafting of Bunreacht na hÉireann.

Orla O'Connor, Alan Brady, and Kathy Darcy were later hosted by Senator Ivana Bacik in a meeting with TDs from across the main political groupings.

strategy and policy for the Convention.

Members also saw Cork playwright and poet

Women in the Media

In early 2013 the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland (BAI), the body responsible for

Fewer than 1 in 4 voices on air belonged to women.

regulation of Ireland's radio and television stations, launched a draft *Code on Fairness, Objectivity and Impartiality in News and Current Affairs*. The draft contained a range of interesting proposals but had little to say on the lack of diversity on Ireland's airwaves.

Two members of NWCI's Women in the Media

Working Group, Dolores Gibbons and Lucy Keaveney, undertook a listening survey for one week. The survey monitored the numbers of female and male voices during key news and current affairs radio programmes. Fewer than 1 in 4 voices on air belonged to women on these programmes. The survey and our position paper were submitted to both the BAI and to the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Communications. The survey has become a benchmark for discussions on the issue and will be used to motivate the BAI to introduce changes among broadcasters.

Ensuring Women's Right to Health

NWCI has been at the forefront of advocating for the incorporation of a gender dimension into the Irish healthcare system. We work to ensure that our healthcare system reflects best international practice in relation to women's health and adopts a right to health approach. We raise awareness of women's health needs and the importance of gender specific diagnosis and treatment.

Launch of Equal but Different: Gender Mainstreaming Framework for the HSE

In November 2012 the Minister of State for Health, Kathleen Lynch TD launched the publication *Equal but Different: A Framework for Integrating Gender Equality in Health Service Executive Policy, Planning and Service Delivery*. The framework is the result of a unique collaboration between NWCI, the HSE and a wide range of organisations

concerned with health inequalities, including men's groups. Healthcare provision in Ireland has so far been gender blind. This innovative framework aims to make gender an important factor in healthcare policy and provision. It promotes gender mainstreaming as a way to improve service delivery, make better use of resources to address the needs of women and men, save on long term health costs and lower the burden of ill health. The framework will be translated into HSE policy during 2013.



Orla O'Connor, Director, NWCI, Kathleen Lynch TD, Minister of State for Health, Brian Neeson, HSE

Reproductive Rights

2012 marked the 20th anniversary of the X case. Over 70 people participated in our Members Meeting in February *From X to ABC: 20 Years of Inaction on Reproductive Rights*.

briefing also contributed to the formation of the Termination for Medical Reasons Group. In May 2012 we set up a Members Abortion Working Group to further develop our work on

legislation for X. The working group decided to develop a position paper that would provide a detailed analysis of our policy to lobby for access to safe and legal abortions in Ireland.

NWCI made a submission to the Committee of Ministers to the Council of

Legislate for X

The meeting highlighted the inaction by successive governments to legislate for the constitutional right to an abortion in life threatening pregnancies and identified innovative ways that NWCI could progress its mandate to support the introduction of safe and legal abortion in Ireland.

There was great interest from TDs and Senators in our briefing in Leinster House in April to coincide with the tabling of Clare Daly's Private Members Bill to give effect to the X case ruling. NWCI supported four courageous women who gave powerful testimonies of their experience in accessing abortion overseas because their fetuses had fatal foetal abnormalities. This

Europe in August to highlight the lack of progress in relation to the implementation of the A, B and C case.

Over 72,000 emails were sent by 16,000 individuals in every constituency in Ireland.

The Legislate for X e-mail campaign began in November. Following the tragic death of Savita Halappanavar in University College Hospital Galway over 72,000 emails were sent by 16,000 individuals in every constituency in Ireland. This overwhelming response contributed to the government announcement to legislate for X in 2013.

Time to Face the Crisis: Women and Smoking

Over 100 people from a diverse range of agencies and bodies attended a joint conference between the Irish Cancer Society (ICS) and NWCI to raise awareness of the crisis of women dying from lung cancer. The conference served to identify the reasons why women smoke, why it is so hard to quit and what can be done by all sections of society to address this crisis. Lung cancer has now become the main cause of cancer death in women, outstripping breast cancer deaths. The burden of smoking related illnesses is being

carried by women experiencing economic and social disadvantage. The conference highlighted the strong link between the reasons for women starting and continuing smoking and the persistent gender inequalities in our society. NWCI look forward to our continued collaboration with the ICS to raise awareness of the health effects of smoking and to urge the government to take on board the conference recommendations and dedicate resources to tackle this crisis.

Violence Against Women

NWCI continued to chair the Irish Observatory on Violence Against Women. We made valuable contributions to the Irish Government Review of the Law on Prostitution working with our partners in the successful and high profile Turn Off the Red Light Campaign which aims to criminalise the purchase of sex.

We made a presentation to the Oireachtas

Committee on Justice, Defence and Equality in December in relation to prostitution, highlighting its devastating effects on women's physical and mental health and its incompatibility with the achievement of equality between women and men.

Turn Off the Red Light
End Prostitution and Sex Trafficking in Ireland



Achieving Women's Economic Independence

In the context of on-going economic inequalities for women, supporting women to achieve and maintain economic independence is a key area of work for NWCI. It comprises work on employment and unemployment,

labour market activation, exploring the impact of the recession and consequent austerity on women, pensions, as well as on-going work that contributes to women's ability to combine work and family life, including care obligations.



Suzanne Griffin, SIPTU, Orla O'Connor, NWCI and Joan Burton TD, Minister for Social Protection at the launch of *Careless to Careful Activation Report*, October 2012
Photograph Moya Nolan

From Careless to Careful Activation: Making Activation Work for Women

In November, over 70 people attended the official launch by Joan Burton TD, Minister of Social Protection of an innovative report jointly commissioned by NWCI and SIPTU and funded by the Equality Mainstreaming Unit of the Equality Authority.

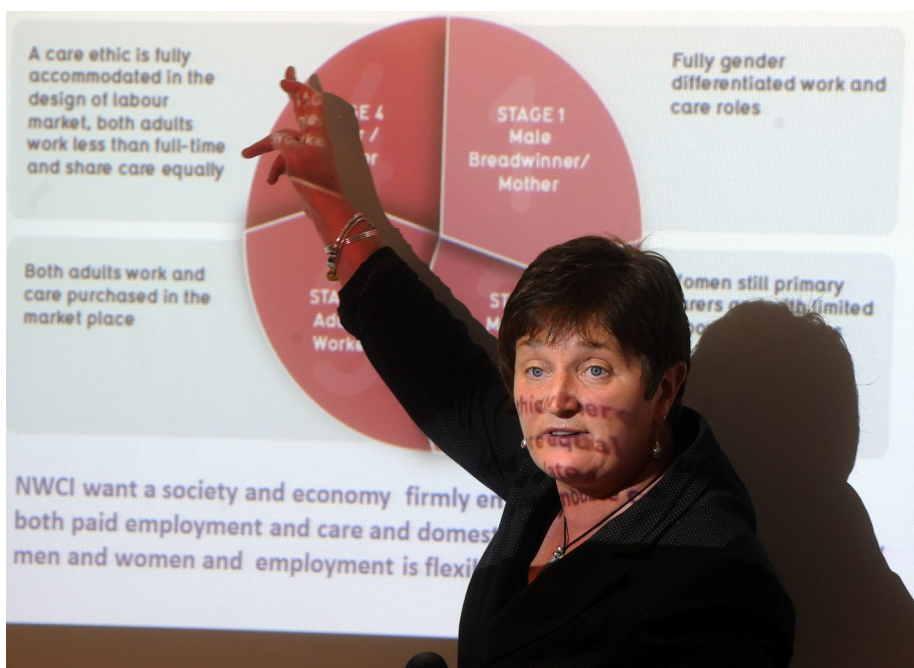
The report, *From Careless to Careful Activation:*

Making Activation Work for Women, focuses on the development of a model of Labour Market Activation that works for women. Activation is the strategy that links income supports such as social protection payments with interventions to support those on the Live Register into employment. The report was written by Dr

Mary Murphy, NUI Maynooth and produced in the context of government policy and EU obligations to increase the economic participation of women.

The report calls for a model of activation that is built on an ethic of care. This model would recognise that adults often have care responsibilities and would facilitate adults to work less than full-time to meet these

responsibilities. It also calls for reform of part-time work and extending the process of activation to those unemployed but not currently on the Live Register.



Dr Mary Murphy, NUI Maynooth Photograph Moya Nolan

Pre-budget Submission 2013

We submitted our NWCI Pre Budget Submission to Government in September 2012. The submission was developed in consultation with our members and presented a brief description of the current situation for women living in Ireland, including the situation pertaining to employment, unemployment, poverty, health, minority women, women with a disability, and domestic violence. It made a number of recommendations in the areas of child benefit,

early childhood care and education, promoting women's employment, welfare, pensions, lone parents, Travellers and Roma women, the Habitual Residence Condition, resourcing women's health and protecting the voice of women by ensuring that women's representative organisations are protected against further cuts.

Bearing the Brunt? Women and the Recession

In October 2012 we welcomed more than 70 participants to our seminar *Bearing the Brunt? Women and the Recession*.



Dr Pauline Conroy and Dr Ursula Barry speaking at the seminar *Bearing the Brunt? Women and the Recession*

drawing people from all over the island of Ireland to discuss the issue. The key note speakers were Dr Ursula Barry and Dr Pauline Conroy

who jointly presented their paper, *Ireland 2008-2012 Untold Story of the Crisis – Gender, Equality and Inequalities*. At the seminar Thora Thorsdottir provided an international perspective by outlining the Icelandic experience of tackling the economic crisis. In her presentation, Thora highlighted the importance of Gender Budgeting in the context of austerity.

The seminar was organised in the context of increasing evidence that the recession is having a significant impact on women internationally and in Irish society. Yet, public discussions and policy development and discourse about the recession and its impacts are not informed by any type of gender analysis. In response, NWCI, in association with TASC, organised the seminar



Thora Thorsdottir outlined the Icelandic experience of tackling the economic crisis.

7 is too young Campaign

As part of our work on care and childcare, we joined with OPEN and Barnardos to campaign against the changes announced in Budget 2012 to lone parents which involve lowering the youngest child's age to 7 in order to be eligible for Lone Parent Allowance. OPEN, a member of NWCI, representing and working with lone parents led the *7 is too Young Campaign* and focused on the Social Welfare Bill.

We held a joint Press Conference on 18 April before the Bill was announced in the Dail. When Joan Burton TD, Minister for Social Protection announced the Bill she stated that the changes to lower the age would not proceed until affordable childcare was in place and she advocated that a Scandinavian model of childcare was needed in Ireland. The membership endorsed the Campaign at our 2012 AGM.



Paul Kelly at the Press Conference on Child Benefit, December 2012 Photograph Moya Nolan

Campaigning to protect Child Benefit

NWCI lobbied extensively in 2012 to maintain the rates of Child Benefit. Mothers were in constant contact with NWCI to tell us how Child Benefit has become a core part of their household budgeting and that it is helping to pay the household bills for heating and

electricity. We joined with Parents Against Cuts to Child Benefit (PACUB) and held a press conference shortly before the Budget in December 2012 where mothers and grandmothers told their stories of why there should be no further cuts to Child Benefit.

The Legacy Project

The Legacy Project is NWCi's exciting new arts initiative. We initiated the Legacy Project to challenge mainstream representations of women and work and to look instead at the alternatives.

There are four core commissions led by artists, whose ongoing work chimes with the interests of the Legacy Project. The commissions will involve the unpacking of historical and contemporary ideas about work, society, and economy as well as advocacy and legacy building. An interest in the role of writing and the photographic image in making and breaking the status quo runs through the artists' ways of working. For some, this happens mainly in the research process, while in others this is at the centre of the completed work.

These commissions aim to create another kind of public dialogue that will amplify the advocacy work of NWCi, the membership, interested communities and individuals. They are equally about the contribution artists make to our knowledge of the world.

Valerie Connor was appointed the Curator of the Project. Valerie has a wide range of experience in visual arts. She was previously

Visual Arts Director at Project Arts Centre, she co-curated local authority and independent art projects and was appointed as the Commissioner for Ireland's participation at the Venice and São Paulo Biennials in 2003 and 2004.

The Legacy Project involves four commissions



Copyright Miriam O'Connor, Work in Progress

which will work with members to explore representations of women's work. The commissioned artists are Vagabond Reviews, Sarah Browne, Miriam O'Connor and Anne Tallentire.

<http://www.nwcilegacyproject.com/>

Reaching out to Young People – The Y Factor Project

In 2012, we launched our new innovative youth initiative The Y Factor funded by Atlantic Philanthropies. The aim of The Y Factor is to empower and support young women and men as advocates and leaders for women's equality.



The Y Factor project got underway with the

The aim of The Y Factor is to empower and support young women and men as advocates and leaders for women's equality.

recruitment of a Project Co-ordinator, Elva O'Callaghan, and a Development Worker, Laura Maloney, in June 2012 with the support of the Centre for Applied Social Studies, NUI Maynooth. The new staff team quickly got to work raising awareness about the project, branding The Y Factor, establishing contact with key stakeholder organisations and identifying prospective partners. By the end of the year there were more than 100 organisations and

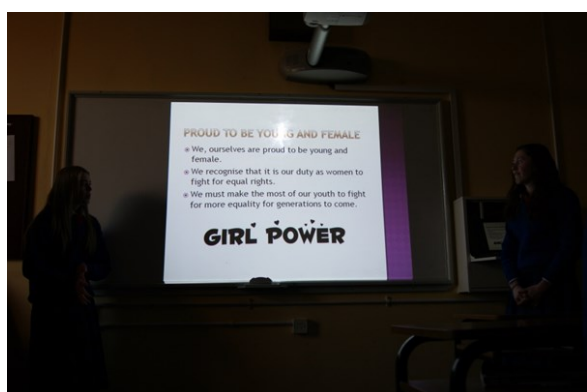
contacts on our database including youth organisations, education experts and a diverse range of young people interested in supporting the project. We had made face-to-face contact with many of these to explore possible collaborations.

The key principle underpinning The Y Factor is empowerment. To ensure this is meaningful it is important that young people are involved in driving the project. The Y Factor Steering Group was established in early Autumn and brings together eight highly active and motivated young women between the ages of 16 and 25. These young women were identified



St Vincent's School in Dundalk

through their positive engagements with NWC and other organisations and educational institutions. We strove to ensure that the Steering Group membership represents the diversity of young people in our society. We are proud that the group comprises those who bring expertise and experience as students and workers who have an insight into LGBTQ,



The Y Factor in St Vincent's School, Dundalk

migrant, disabled, working class and middle class issues for young people in relation to women's equality.

A core component of The Y Factor's work is the development of an education and discussion programme on women's equality for schools and youth projects. The Development Worker led the way in commencing a pilot programme for schools and youth projects that would involve three schools and three youth projects. St. Vincent's School in Dundalk was the first of these pilots to be rolled out, and further collaborations were agreed with

Poppintree Youth Project, Trinity Comprehensive, Ballymun and Malahide Community schools. The Y Factor also collaborated with Ballymun Women's Resource Centre to run a workshop on gender with youth workers employed by the City of Dublin Youth Services Board, and members of The Y Factor Steering Group and staff also delivered expert inputs on gender to youth and community work students at NUI Maynooth.

Recognising the key role of communications in reaching out to young people, The Y Factor team set up a Facebook page and Twitter account and recruited a website design company with whom they planned the content for a youth-friendly, dynamic and a highly functional Y Factor website. Quizzes, articles, competitions, infograms, images and videos were among the range of methods used to attract young people to these platforms and invite their comments and participation.

The Y Factor is a member of the Prevention and Early Intervention Network PEIN, an independent network of organisations working with children and young people.

<http://www.yfactor.ie/>

Celebrating International Women's Day

We were honoured to have our new President Michael D Higgins and his wife Sabina Higgins at our 2012 International Women's Day event. and working with groups which are members of the NWCI."

Paula Meehan, renowned Irish poet, gave



President Michael D. Higgins at our International Women's Day event 2012 speaking to Deabhla Glynn who directed the video *Would Ireland be different if it was run by women?*

readings of her inspiring and invigorating poems. Senator Katherine Zappone, and former NWCI CEO, spoke of the changes in Irish society for women and the importance of women's leadership for advancing women's equality and rights.

Senator Zappone also launched a new NWCI video asking people

The President spoke with such passion regarding women's rights, the achievements we have made in Ireland and the inequalities that still persist in Ireland and globally. He spoke of the importance of having NWCI to represent women and to advance women's rights in Ireland:

"The building of confidence among women is a key focus of the National Women's Council and I urge you to continue this work both centrally

Would Ireland be different if it was run by women? The video was part of our Women into Politics Project and was supported by the Tides Foundation and Luachra Productions. It articulates the issues about women in politics through the voices of ordinary women and men in Dublin. The video received over 3500 unique views and has been used in workshops and conferences on the topic throughout Ireland.

Building the Women's Movement

A key part of our work focuses on bringing women together in solidarity and supporting the women's movement to effect change in Ireland. We do this by organising events,

campaigns, trainings and providing support to our member organisations.

Working with our Members

National Women's Council of Ireland is primarily and fundamentally a membership organisation. We derive our mandate from our membership. We work with our members to create the conditions for the diverse voices of women to be heard and to be a strong and effective representative organisation for women's rights in Ireland.

Membership engagement and participation in the work of the organisation is key to our development and success. To this end we strive to provide regular opportunities for membership involvement. We do this through NWCI Members' Meetings (four per year), our AGM, thematic events and seminars, online and other campaigns, and through a new structure of membership working groups which are established on particular issues and themes. In addition members are regularly requested to provide feedback and comment on policy positions and submissions.

We respond to requests from members to take action on issues and to provide support to them in their work and campaigns they are undertaking where appropriate. We provide information and user friendly briefing papers on issues of relevance to our members.

Membership engagement and participation in the work of the organisation is key to our development and success.

Our Executive Board is elected from our members by our members and our recently introduced quota system for the Executive Board ensures that we will always have strong representation from communities of women experiencing multiple forms of inequality and social exclusion at Board level.

Annual General Meeting 2012



Orla O'Connor, NWCI, Frances Fitzgerald TD, Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, Clare Treacy, INMO and NWCI Chair, Pauline Moreau, Department of Justice and Equality

We were delighted that Minister for Children and Youth Affairs Frances Fitzgerald could address our 2012 AGM. The Minister is the first ever Minister for Children and Youth Affairs and was the Chairperson the National Women's Council of Ireland from 1988 – 1992. The Minister pioneered the issue of women in politics and in 1992 when she was first elected to the Dáil.

Members Meetings 2012

- *From X to ABC: 20 Years of Inaction on Reproductive Rights*, 29 February 2012, Dublin
- *Debating the Fiscal Treaty Referendum*, 17 May 2012, Dublin
- *A Constitution for all Women*, 24 September 2012, Cork
- *Building a Strong Movement for Women's Equality*, 21 November 2012, Dublin

Working Groups 2012

We would like to thank all of our working group members for their tireless work and dedication during 2012

Abortion Working Group Members

- Ailbhe Smyth, Action on X
- Therese Caherty, Action on X
- Alison Begas, Dublin Wellwoman Centre
- Rhonda Donaghy, ICTU Women's Committee
- Maeve Taylor, Irish Family Planning Association
- Clara Fischer, Irish Feminist Network
- Clíona Saidléar, Rape Crisis Network Ireland
- Kate Murphy, Letterkenny Women's Centre
- Sandra McAvoy, UCC Women's Studies

Women and the Media Working Group Members

- Margaret E. Ward, Women on Air
- Dolores Gibbons, 50/50 group
- Dr Jane Suiter, DCU
- Anne O'Brien, NUIM
- Lucy Keaveney, Constance Markievicz Summer School
- Janice Gaffney, Independent Colleges
- Dr Mimi Doran, UCD

Constitutional Convention Working Group Members

- Nuala Ryan, UCD Women's Graduates Association
- Monnine Griffith, Marriage Equality
- Sinead Ní Chulichain, Irish Women Lawyers Association
- Dr Alan Brady, TCD
- Jennifer DeWan, Cork Feminista/NASC
- Deirdre Foley, 50/50 Group
- Fiona McCaffery Jones, Dóchas for Women
- Miriam Haughton, Individual
- Freda McCusker, Individual
- Orla McCaffrey, Galway Traveller

Recognising Women's Diversity— Case Studies

NWCI recognises the diversity of women's experiences. These case studies highlight some of the work we are doing with different groups of women in Ireland.

Supporting Women in Local Development

We support the National Collective of Community Based Women's Networks (NCCWN) through participating on the Board and the Employment/Finance Sub Committee. Cuts in funding are placing extreme strain on local women's projects and on-going sustainability continues to be a challenge. NWCI and NCCWN set out proposals in relation to the alignment process of community development and local development with Local Government in our joint submission *Putting People First, Putting Women in the Picture*. Our proposal sought to ensure the social inclusion of disadvantaged women in the reform of Local Government. Our recommendations focused on ensuring engagement of women in the new structures and to ensure that the proposed policy on Community and Local Development contains a clear focus on women.

Diverse Voices of Women - Breaking the Silence on Racism

This year the Irish Network against Racism (The Irish branch of the European Network against Racism) established a Women's Subcommittee chaired by NWCI. In October 2012 the Subcommittee organised a national conference on *Diverse Voices of Women - breaking the silence on racism*. The event, chaired by Anastasia Crickley, NUI Maynooth and member of the UN CERD Committee, brought together around 80 participants from a wide range of communities to participate in creative workshops and hear inputs from Michelle Bachelet UN Under Secretary General and head of UN Women (by video), Fakhra Salimi of the Mira Womens' Resource Centre (Oslo) and representatives of the National Traveller Women's Forum, the Domestic Workers Action Group and AkiDwA.



Participants at the Diverse Voices of Women Conference, October 2012 Photo Paula Geraghty

Irish Deaf Women's Group

In 2012 the Irish Deaf Women's Group celebrated their 20th Anniversary. Joan Burton TD, Minister for Social Protection and NWCI gave the keynote addresses at the launch of their celebrations in the Mansion House on 22 June 2012.



Our International Work

European Women's Lobby

NWCI is a Board member of the European Women's Lobby (EWL), the largest umbrella organisation of women's associations in the EU. EWL campaigns on violence against women including the issue of prostitution, women's economic and social engagement and women in decision making.

During 2012 EWL produced its position paper on Romani and Traveller Women. EWL highlighted the lack of access to abortion in Ireland and its impact on women and made a comprehensive submission to the Review of the Law on Prostitution in Ireland.

Ireland's National Action Plan for UNSCR 1325

In November 2011 the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) launched Ireland's National Action Plan for implementation of UNSCR 1325 (NAP) Women Peace and Security.

A Monitoring Group, chaired by Liz McManus, was set up in November 2012 to oversee progress on achieving the objectives, actions and targets in the NAP. NWCI was asked to nominate three representatives to sit on the

Monitoring Group in recognition of its work in bringing the NAP into fruition.

The persons selected were Siobhan Curran, Pavee Point Travellers Centre, Salome Mbugwa, Akidwa and Shirley Graham, Hannas House.

Other organisations represented on the Group include Irish Aid, Joint Consortium on Gender Based Violence, Amnesty International, the Defence Forces, An Garda Síochána and the Department of Justice.



Delegates from NWCI and Irish Liberia Support Group with members of the Development Education Network Liberia - Gender Action Project

Making Links with Liberia

Our Head of Outreach and Support provided support to the Development Education Network Liberia (DEN-L) in reviewing and planning their work during a one week visit to Liberia in January 2012. A key element of DEN-L is the Gender Action Project (GAP) which provides literacy training to women and a training for literacy trainers programme for women, organises a micro finance project, takes action on violence against women and

represents the voices of women in relevant policy fora and networks.

DEN-L is funded primarily by Irish Aid and Trocaire and like all NGOs is facing cuts and a move by funders to stop core funding and focus on programme funding only. We continue to keep in contact with the project.

Building Alliances

Cross Border Project

This cross border project *Women and Peace Building – Developing Shared Learning* is supported by the Special EU Programmes Body. The aim of this project is to build on the momentum created by UN Security Council Resolution 1325 which recognises that women experience war and conflict in a different way to men and that likewise the role that women potentially can play as active agents in peace building is unique.

The project involves a partnership between NWCI, the Women's Resource and Development Agency and the Community Foundation for Northern Ireland. Two project

seminars supported by NWCI were held in the Southern Border Counties in 2012. The first in Dundalk on 8 June on the theme of *Women: Violence, Community Safety and Security* with keynote speakers Dara Larkin from Communities Connect and Ellen O'Malley Dunlop of the Dublin Rape Crisis Centre. The second seminar was held in Monaghan on 15 November 2012 on the theme *Women: Your Community, Your Role, Have Your Say!*, chaired by Cllr. Ciara McPhillips with a key note address by Siobhan Mc Loughlin – Donegal Travellers Project.



Sinead Lynch, Women and Peace building Project Co-ordinator Southern Border Counties, Noirin Clancy, Women into Public Life Project and Lynn Carvill, Women's Resource and Development Agency, Belfast

Working with SIPTU

During 2012, we built a strong and positive partnership with SIPTU to address the needs of unemployed women and of women in the workforce, particularly low paid women. We were successful in our joint application to the Equality Mainstreaming Unit of the Equality Authority to fund a research project on the activation of women from welfare to

employment. We jointly issued a press statement on EU Gender Pay Gap Day, to highlight how women continue to earn less than men and to emphasise the importance of protecting women in low paid employment.

Equality Budgeting Campaign



We joined with the Irish Feminist Network (IFN) in the Equality Budgeting Campaign. We facilitated funding to the Campaign from the Equality Authority for the IFN to develop a briefing document. The campaign seeks to promote equality budgeting as a core part of the budget process and has been successful in raising the public profile of the need for equality budgeting.

Communicating our Message

As a national membership organisation communications with our members and with women and men throughout Ireland and beyond is crucial. In 2012 we redeveloped our approach to communications with a much stronger focus on social media while at the

same time continuing to actively promote the NWCI in traditional media. To reinforce our work in this area, we recruited a full time Communications and Membership Development Officer, Silke Paasche, who started in August 2012.

In the Media

NWCI got coverage on all of its important topics throughout the year. We commented on current political developments and pro-actively contacted journalists for coverage of our events and campaigns. on a wide range of women's and equality issues, including legislation for X and reproductive rights, the Constitutional Convention, child benefit, women and austerity, childcare and many more.

We issued a total number of 34 press releases

Social Media

In 2012 we really kick-started our presence on social media with very promising results. At the end of 2012 we reached almost 4000 followers on Facebook. On Twitter the number of followers increased from under 800 to over 2100 over the year. Social media allows us to connect with women and men on an on-going and immediate way throughout the country and beyond. It enables our supporters to stay informed about our activities, even though they might not always be able to attend our events in person. It is also an important mechanism for us to receive information on the issues for women in Ireland and be connected to our members and other women's groups nationally and internationally.

Newsflash

We continued to regularly provide information to all our members and an increasing number of subscribers through our Newsflash which became monthly in 2012. At the end of the year, subscriptions to the Newsflash increased to over 8,000 people

E-campaigning

The success of our Legislate for X campaign was partly due to the ease of use of our e-campaigning tool on our website. In a straightforward three step process, people can select their constituency and send a well formulated template letter from their personal e-mail address to each TD and Senator individually. We are planning on developing this form of campaigning further in the future.

Our Team



Orla O'Connor
Director



Rachel Doyle,
Head of Outreach and Support



Anne Gibney
Head of Finance and Operations



Jacqueline Healy
**Women's Health &
Human Rights Worker**



Laura Maloney
The Y-Factor
Development Worker



Eoin Murray
Women into Politics
Project Coordinator



Elva O'Callaghan
Y Factor Project Coordinator



Silke Paasche
**Communications and Membership
Development Officer**



Valerie Connor
Legacy Project Curator

In addition, the following staff members worked with us in 2012.

- Susan McKay, CEO (Resigned in January 2012)
- Michelle Culbert, Information & Social Media Co-ordinator (Until end of May 2012)

We would like to sincerely thank our fantastic interns and volunteers for their invaluable contributions in 2012.

- | | | |
|------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| • Elise Warren | • Lisa Deegan | • Rebecca Vasiu |
| • Aoife Campbell | • Lauren Farrell | |

We also would like to thank the following people who worked with us in 2012.

- | | | |
|----------------|-------------------|------------------|
| • Maria Lynch | • Niamh O'Carroll | • Jane Pillinger |
| • Sinéad Lynch | • Julie O'Neill | • Kathy Walsh |

Our Executive Board



Siobhan O Donoghue, Chairperson, Migrants Rights Centre of Ireland

Siobhan has been an activist for equality and justice for 20 years. She is a Community Worker and is the director of MRCI for 10 years. Siobhan has worked on many initiatives concerned with women's equality including coordinating the publication of Community Work approach to overcome Violence Against Women (CWC), membership of the National Equality Proofing Guidelines working Group (DJELR) and author of *Private Homes A Public Concern* (MRCI).



Salome Mbugua, Deputy Chairperson, AkiDwA- The African & Migrant Women's Network Ireland

Salome is the founder and National Director of AkiDwA, the African and Migrant Women's Network Ireland. Her background is in Social Work and Community Development. She serves on a wide range of Boards and Committees, including on the advisory group coordinated by NWCI on development of the National Action Plan on Resolution 1325, women, peace and security by the Department of Foreign Affairs.



Sarah Benson, Ruhama

Sarah Benson is the CEO of Ruhama, the NGO working nationally with women affected by prostitution including victims of sex trafficking. Previously Sarah managed the National Domestic Violence Helpline with Women's Aid. She has extensive experience of work in the community and voluntary sector both in Ireland and abroad. Sarah is currently also the Irish Expert for the European Women's Lobby Observatory on Violence against Women.



Frances Byrne, OPEN

Frances Byrne is the CEO of OPEN, the national network of one-parent families. A former Deputy Chairwoman of the NWCI, Frances represents NWCI's affiliates on the Monitoring Committee of the National Women's Strategy. Frances is a member of the Steering Groups of the Equality & Rights Alliance and the Advocacy Initiative.



Sheila Dickson, Irish Nurses and Midwives Organisation

Sheila is currently completing her term as President of the Irish Nurses & Midwives Organisation. She has helped to strengthen the role of Executive Council, and has successfully lobbied and consulted with key stakeholders. She has been the INMO representative at the NWCI members meetings for the past four years and has actively participated in these fora.



Suzanne Griffin, SIPTU

Suzanne has been involved in community development work for over 25 year and has been a Trade Union activist for over 20 years holding many and various elected representative roles. She is currently Vice President of SIPTU's Public Administration and Community Division, a member of SIPTU's Equality Committee and of the ICTU's Women's Committee.



Moninne Griffith, Marriage Equality

Moninne is the Director of MarriageEquality, a single-issue organisation working for equal marriage rights for same-sex couples in Ireland. Moninne worked on the Equality Authority's report on enabling Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual individuals to access their rights under the Equality law. Before moving to the not-for-profit sector, Moninne was a practicing solicitor for ten years and continues to volunteer in this area for the Free Legal Advice Centres in Dublin.



Miriam Holt, National Collective of Community Based Women's Networks - NCCWN

Miriam has over 10 years experience working in the area of women's human rights in the community sector in a voluntary and professional capacity. She is National Co-Ordinator of the NCCWN which provides a networking space for disadvantaged women's networks at local and national level. The NCCWN also manages the Women's Local and Community Development Programme involving 17 locally based community development women's projects throughout Ireland. Miriam is currently Board member of the Waterford Women's Centre.



Catherine Lynch, Longford Women's Link—LWL

Catherine is a Board member of LWL a local women's organisation that seeks to ensure women of Longford can reach their full potential in a safe and equal society. Catherine previously worked as Head of services with LWL. She has worked with NCCWN and the National Consultative Committee on Racism - NCCRI. She also lectures in UCD and NUI Maynooth on equality issues and has worked with the European Network Against Racism - ENAR Ireland.



Rosaleen McDonagh, Pavee Point Travellers' Centre

Rosaleen is a Board member of Pavee Point Travellers Centre. She Co-ordinated the Violence Against Women Programme in Pavee Point for 10 years and she is an active member of the centre for independent living. She has a lot of experience and a proven track record of representing the needs of Traveller, Roma and other marginalised women in national policy arenas as well as in the media.



Sharon Perry, Southside Women's Action Network, SWAN

Sharon has been involved in the voluntary and community sector since 1999. She was a Board member in SWAN from 1999-2010 and a Board member in Co. Wicklow Community Addiction Team 2007-2010. Currently she is a NCCWN Board member. She worked as a project worker within a community addiction team and as a coordinator of the Greystones family resource centre. She works as a family support worker of SWAN.



Rachel Doyle, Staff Representative, NWCI

Rachel is a member of NWCI's Senior Management Team and is responsible for the management, development and implementation of NWCI's outreach and support programme to its affiliates and to the women's sector. She is also responsible for developing and maintaining relationships with strategic partners. Rachel represents the NWCI staff on the Board.

NWCI Submissions 2012

- Submission to the Constituency Commission, January 2012
- Submission to the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland on the Draft Code on Fairness, Impartiality and Accountability in News and Current Affairs Broadcasting, March 2012
- Submission to Joint Oireachtas Committee on Communications on Women's Representation in News Media, April 2012
- Submission to the European Union as part of Consultation on Gender Quotas for Women on Corporate Boards, May 2012
- Shadow report on Ireland's Progress under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, May 2012
- Submission to the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on the Implementation of the A, B and C Case, August 2012
- Submission to the Review of the Law on Prostitution, September 2012
- Submission to the European Commission Consultation on the 2013 EU Citizenship Report "EU citizens – Your Rights, Your Future", September 2012
- NWCI Pre-Budget Submission, September 2012
- Putting People First, Putting Women in the Picture: Proposal to ensure the Social Inclusion of Disadvantaged Women in the Reform of Local Government, December 2012

Women's Human Rights Alliance Submissions 2012

- Women's Human Rights Alliance Speaking Note to UN Human Rights Council, March 2012
- Submission to the Irish Aid Review, April 2012
- Submissions to Ireland's Draft Report to UN Committee on International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, May 2012
- Submission to UN Committee Against Torture, May 2012

Committees 2012

NWCI is Chair of

- Women's Human Rights Alliance
- National Observatory on Violence Against Women
- Women's Committee, Irish Network against Racism (INAR) - Irish branch of the European Network against Racism

NWCI is Board Member of

- European Women's Lobby
- National Collective of Community Based Women's Networks (NCCWN)
- Start Strong

NWCI is Member of

- National Women's Strategy—Monitoring Committee
- National Childcare Coordinating Committee
- National Steering Committee on Violence against Women
- HSE Gender Mainstreaming Steering Group
- Turn Off the Red Light Campaign—Core Group
- Bill of Rights/Economic-social, cultural rights coalition with Amnesty International, the Wheel and the ICCL on ESCR and the Constitutional Convention
- 50/50 Group - Dublin Steering Committee
- Civil society Campaign on Bahrain with INTO & INMO
- NCCWN - Employment and Finance Sub Committee,

Legal & Administrative Information

Company secretary	Anne Gibney
Registered office	2/3 Parnell Square East Dublin 1
Auditor	Grant Thornton Chartered Accountants & Registered Auditor 24 - 26 City Quay Dublin 2
Bankers	Bank of Ireland Lower Baggot Street Dublin 2
Solicitors	O'Donnell Sweeney Solicitors The Earlsfort Centre Earlsfort Terrace Dublin 2

BOARD MEETINGS & SUBCOMMITTEES

There were 9 Board meetings during 2012.

Attendance at Board meetings

Siobhan O 'Donoghue	8 meetings
Salome Mbugua	5 meetings
Moninne Griffith	9 meetings
Miriam Holt	6 meetings
Catherine Lynch	5 meetings

Members elected at June AGM. There were 5 Board meetings held after the AGM.

Sarah Benson	4 meetings
Sheila Dickson	3 meetings
Frances Byrne	4 meetings
Sharon Perry	2 meetings
Rosaleen McDonagh	4 meetings
Suzanne Griffin	3 meetings

Memo & Arts & Standing Orders Subcommittee

Members of Subcommittee

- Clare Treacy
- Maura Butler
- Moninne Griffith

The Subcommittee met twice during 2012.

- Clare Treacy attended one meeting.
- Maura Butler and Moninne Griffith attended both meetings.

Financial Report

Financial Review of the Year

The activities of the National Women's Council of Ireland for 2012 focused on the updating of our Strategic Plan.

The principal activities carried out in 2012 and which are reflected in the income and expenditure accounts for the year are as follows:

- Consultation with members on revised Strategic Plan
- Lobbying to increase the presence of women in decision-making arenas
- Raise awareness about the exclusion of women from participation in Irish politics and educate and mobilise our membership and other civil society organisations to bring about change on this issue
- We continue to analyse the gender impact of economic developments, policy and decisions and strategies on women's economic status in Irish and EU context with the support of the EWL.
- Participating in the National Women's Strategy Coordinating Committee.
- Management of the Irish Observatory on Violence Against Women.
- Develop the Gender Mainstreaming Framework with the HSE & Gender Mainstreaming Steering Group
- Significantly increasing our visibility and that of our members in the media and other public fora.
- Participating in conference organized by member groups and trade unions
- Continued development of the website to provide a more dynamic, relevant and interactive forum for the organisation, its members and the general public
- Working with the Members through the outreach and support programme.
- Holding regular Executive Board Meetings
- Continuing to develop our support and outreach services to NWCI members and other marginalised women's groups
- Attending European Women's Lobby (EWL) meetings
- Hosting of annual events (Members Meetings, AGM, and International Women's Day (IWD) Event)
- Represented on management boards
- Production and dissemination of publications (Annual Report and Pre-Budget Submission (web based and in-

- house printing)
- Continuing to apply for new and existing sources of funding and working on sourcing new premises
- Worked with young women through the NWCI youth initiative, The Y Factor Project
- Increasing communication with women through social media
- Supporting the National Collective of Community Based Women's Networks
- Develop the Legacy Project and Arts project focused on the theme of women and work

Our Funders 2012

We sincerely thank all of our funders for supporting our work in 2012.

- Department of Justice, Equality & Defence
- Atlantic Philanthropies
- Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust
- Health Service Executive
- Equality Mainstreaming Unit of the Equality Authority
- Department of the Environment, Community & Local Government
- Tides Foundation
- Carnegie Trust UK

Income & Expenditure

Income

	€
Department of Justice & Equality	350,000
Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs - Social Partnership	20,000
J Rowntree Charitable Trust	71,014
HSE	141,586
Equality Authority	25,000
Members Fees	21,871
Atlantic Philanthropies	240,176
Misc. Income	23,787
Bank Interest	2,098
TOTAL INCOME	€ 895,532

Expenditure

	€
Staff Costs	421,784
Professional Fees	6,720
Programme activities	130,924
Office Running Costs	53,916
Governance and Statutory Costs	10,914
Premises Costs	82,512
Communication Costs	12,589
Relocation Costs	5,373
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	€ 724,732

The 2012 accounts show a surplus of €170,800 which is made up of €192,531 restricted funds which will be carried forward to 2013 and a deficit of (€21,731) which is unrestricted funds. Over the last number of years the company accumulated unrestricted reserves, as a

contingency fund, which amounted to €18,219 at the end of 2012. The directors regard this level of unrestricted funds as inadequate for contingency purposes and have resolved to try to increase the level of unrestricted funds in the future.

Summary Accounts for the National Women's Council of Ireland Limited

Amalgamated Balance Sheet as at 31st December 2012

	2012	2011
	€	€
FIXED ASSETS		
Tangible assets	984	3,136
CURRENT ASSETS		
Debtors	8,978	8,982
Cash at bank and in hand	462,504	551,570
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	471,482	560,552
CREDITORS: Amounts falling due within one year		
	21,277	283,299
	<hr/>	<hr/>
NET CURRENT ASSETS	450,205	277,253
	<hr/>	<hr/>
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES	451,189	280,389
	<hr/>	<hr/>
RESERVES		
Restricted – building development fund	206,050	206,050
Restricted fund – other	226,920	34,389
Unrestricted fund	18,219	39,950
	<hr/>	<hr/>
MEMBERS' FUNDS	451,189	280,389
	<hr/>	<hr/>

The Financial Statements were approved by the directors on 8 May 2013 and signed on its behalf by; Siobhan O'Donoghue, Chairperson and Sheila Dickson, Director.

These summary accounts have been extracted from the statutory financial statements of the National Women's Council of Ireland Limited and the National Women's Council of Ireland

Education & Training Ltd. Those statutory financial statements, on which the Auditors (Grant Thornton) expressed an unqualified audit opinion, will be filed with the Registrar of Companies following the Annual General Meeting. Copies of the full audited financial statements have been sent to members and are available on the NWCI Website (www.nwci.ie).

Summary Accounts for The National Women's Council of Ireland Limited

Amalgamated Statement of Financial Activities

	Restricted Funds	Unrestricted Funds	Total 2012	Total 2011
	€	€	€	€
INCOMING RESOURCES				
Voluntary Income				
Grants	497,776	350,000	847,776	662,630
Membership Subscriptions	-	21,871	21,871	20,292
Other	16,889	6,898	23,787	19,919
Investment Income				
Bank Interest	-	2,098	2,098	3,458
	-----	-----	-----	-----
Total incoming resources	514,665	380,867	895,532	706,299
	-----	-----	-----	-----
RESOURCES EXPENDED				
COST OF GENERATING INCOME	7,123	12,293	19,416	17,323
CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES	312,242	364,271	676,513	642,203
GOVERNANCE COSTS	2,769	20,661	23,430	23,367
RELOCATION COSTS	-	5,373	5,373	128,205
	-----	-----	-----	-----
Total resources expended	322,134	402,598	724,732	811,098
	-----	-----	-----	-----
Net incoming/ (outgoing) resources	192,531	(21,731)	170,800	(104,799)
Total funds at beginning of year	240,439	39,950	280,389	385,188
	-----	-----	-----	-----
Total funds at end of year	432,970	18,219	451,189	280,389
	=====	=====	=====	=====

The Financial Statements were approved by the directors on the 8th May 2013 and signed on its behalf by; Siobhan O'Donoghue, Chairperson and Sheila Dickson, Director.



National Women's Council of Ireland

4th floor

2/3 Parnell Square East

Dublin 1

Website: www.nwci.ie

Twitter: www.twitter.com/NWCI

Facebook: www.facebook.com/NationalWomensCouncilofIreland