

NWCI Annual Report 1999

National Women's Council of Ireland - Annual Report 1999
Changing Ireland for Women

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WHO ARE WE - ABOUT THE NWCI

The National Women's Council of Ireland, Comhairle Náisiúnta na mBan in Éirinn, is the national representative organisation for women and women's groups in Ireland and was founded in 1973 as the Council for the Status of Women. It is a non-governmental organisation. There are currently 150 women's organisations and groups from all parts of Ireland affiliated to the Council.

Over 25 years, the role of the Council has developed and changed. It has consistently addressed important and controversial issues affecting women and in recent years is represented at several national decision-making tables. In 1995 the Council adopted a new organisational structure and a new name - the National Women's Council of Ireland (NWCI).

Aims and Objectives

The vision of the NWCI is the creation of a society in which all women and men can participate with equal effectiveness as full citizens and in which the independence of women is determined by right. Through lobbying, campaigning and negotiating, the NWCI in partnership with affiliate organisations seeks to empower women to reach their full potential and celebrate their differences.

The NWCI is currently working with and on behalf of women in many areas including:

- Poverty
- Childcare
- Valuing and Sharing Unpaid Work
- Anti-Racism
- Gender-Proofing National Policy
- Health
- Violence
- Educational Disadvantage
- Employment
- EU and UN Affairs

Membership

The NWCI is committed to reflecting the diversity of women in Ireland today. Through its 150 affiliates organisations, urban, rural, local, regional and national, the NWCI represents an estimated 300,000 women. Affiliate organisations come from the following categories:

- Women's groups.
- Women's sections or committees of larger national organisations such as trade unions and political parties.
- Organisations where women comprise a majority of members.

Structure

NWCI policy is directed by the membership with representatives from affiliate organisations being invited to an Annual General Meeting. Each organisation has one vote at the AGM. At every AGM motions, submitted by affiliate organisations, are debated and voted on. The Chairwoman, Deputy Chairwoman and Executive Board are elected at the Annual General Meeting to a two year term of office. The

Executive Board meets monthly and has responsibility for guiding the policy activity of the NWCI.

Panel Meetings

In order to harness the expertise of the member organisations four panels have been established:

- Health
- Social Affairs
- Work
- Education

Member organisation can nominate a representative to each of the four panels. Each panel is responsible for the development of a programme of work on priority issues in co-operation with the Policy Team from the staff of the NWCI. A core theme is selected for each meeting with expert speakers providing input at the opening plenary. Panel meetings are held quarterly.

The function of the panels is to provide an opportunity for affiliates to:-

- Network and exchange information.
- Receive updates on NWCI activity.
- Provide the NWCI with affiliate updates.
- Become informed on the theme of each meeting.
- Participate in the development of NWCI policy.
- Support NWCI work on areas related to the panel theme.

NWCI Staff

The NWCI has a professional staff of sixteen people. The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for the operational activity carried out by the staff. She works in a Management Team with a Finance Manager, Communications Manager and Policy Manager

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRWOMAN

1999 was a year of new beginnings and endings. A lot of the work that began in 1995 as part of the implementation of the NWCi Strategic Plan began to bear fruit. Since then there is a changed external environment and the internal organisational changes within NWCi have strengthened its capacity as the recognised representative body for women.

Two of the most important developments in Ireland have been the Good Friday Agreement and the performance of the economy. The Good Friday Agreement has for the most part led to peace on the streets in Northern Ireland and has created new opportunities for cross border work between women on a whole range of common issues.

In 1999 the NWCi consolidated its links and relationships with women's groups in Northern Ireland, in particular through the 'Making Women Seen & Heard Project' and the 'POWER Partnership'. The Human Rights Commissions to be formed north and south offer a framework to ensure women's rights as human rights are kept in focus.

Ireland's new economy has led to opportunities for many women to become economically independent. While the high cost of childcare is a major concern for parents it remains a major barrier to women's participation in the labour market, particularly for lone mothers attempting to move out of poverty and social exclusion.

1999 saw the end of Partnership 2000. What progress has been made on the three issues the NWCi brought into P2000? - Childcare, women's access to labour market training and women's unpaid work. It is only fair to recognise that progress has been made on the childcare issue, however, Government must provide some financial assistance to parents for childcare costs. The report from the Working Group on the issue of women's access to labour market training is very disappointing and while the Central Statistics Office did undertake a study on the research methodologies needed to measure and value women's unpaid work, much more needs to be done.

The social partnership arena provides the NWCi with a framework for achieving progress on some policy issues. There are other issues of deep concern to women that seem to be intractable - the rise in the numbers of women travelling to Great Britain for abortions and the increasing levels of sexual crime and violence against women. Also of concern, are the

few women in politics and decision making. It makes one wonder do the political parties really care about gender equality?

As I take my leave as Chairwoman of NWCi I want to say a very public thank you to Katherine Zappone for her commitment and skill during her time as CEO. To all the other staff - old and new, many many thanks for your flexibility and commitment. In particular I want to thank Carol Fawsitt (former Deputy Chairwoman) for her skills and sense of humour, Caroline McCamley for all her work and glasses of wine and Margaret Erraught, a wise older leader who offered me many useful insights that prevented me from making unnecessary mistakes. To the two Executive Boards and the many women across the country who offered me support over the past four and a half years - thank you.

I am very pleased indeed to be handing over to my very dear friend Gráinne Healy who I know will provide wise and strategic leadership to the National Women's Council during her term of office.

Noreen Byrne
Chairwoman of the National Women's Council of Ireland (1995-1999)

As incoming Chairwoman of NWCi I am delighted to be taking over the leadership of NWCi at this exciting time. I am pleased to have been part of the organisation as it developed its internal capacity. A key role during my term will be to continue the strategic development of NWCi, so ably steered by Noreen Byrne, to ensure the continuation of our work on behalf of women and to strengthen the links with and capacity of our members. Key challenges will include celebration of diversity on this island and in Europe while pursuing our demand for women's equality as our right.

I am delighted to present this 1999 NWCi Annual Report and look forward to a successful term of office.

Gráinne Healy
Chairwoman of the National Women's Council of Ireland November 1999

NWCI - CHANGING IRELAND FOR WOMEN

NWCI - Changing Ireland for Women – Still vibrant after all these years!

WHAT OUR AFFILIATES SAY ABOUT OUR WORK

'NCNA is proud to be an affiliate of the NWCI. Our involvement in the Childcare 2000 Campaign reinforces our view of their professionalism. Their skill in co-ordinating and administering the campaign has brought the childcare issue to the top of the political agenda.'

National Children's Nurseries Association (NCNA)

'No other organisation is highlighting the issues of women's unpaid work and the importance of caring duties in the same way as the NWCI. The NWCI argues for choice for all women. As a lone parent organisation, this is important to us as we are often excluded in the broader debate, which is inclined to focus only on married women.'

One Parent Exchange and Network (OPEN)

'Membership of the NWCI connects us to policy making at the highest levels due to the status of the NWCI as a social partner and a member of the community and voluntary pillar. As a rural organisation it is important that we can voice our particular concerns in the NWCI panels. Most importantly membership connects us to the biggest women's network in Ireland where the friendships and contacts are invaluable.'

Longford Women's Centre

'The NWCI provides one of the few outlets for older women at national level to highlight issues of concern to them in areas such as health, transport and life long learning.'

Older Women's Network

'The NWCI has been very supportive of our project over the past four years. We appreciate the effort that has been made to travel to Donegal to participate in and support our activities. The information we receive on national and international issues connects us to a wider picture.'

Second Chance Education Project for Women (Donegal)

'One of the most important roles of the NWCI is providing the opportunity for networking with other groups and sharing common experiences.' **Bodywhys**

'Participating in the NOW programme enabled us to develop our outreach education activities. By working with the other NOW Projects throughout the country we had an opportunity to bring the learning achieved through NOW to the policy makers at the Department of Education and Science.'

Centre for Women's Studies, NUI Galway

'The ASTI brings its experience of girls' education to the decision-making arena of the NWCI. It participates in shaping many policies developed by the NWCI, which are designed to benefit women.'

Association of Secondary Teachers in Ireland (ASTI)

'Panel meetings provide a great opportunity for discussing issues and raising awareness. It's great to know that the NWCI is there to talk to and to voice local women's issues.' **Dochas for Women (Monaghan)**

'The NWCI gives women from outside the capital the opportunity to channel their views and opinions and maintain a link with other organisations throughout Ireland. It provides access to education and information that would not otherwise be available. The NWCI is the main link in the chain of Irish Women's Network.' **Tralee Women's Forum**

'The NWCI has remained consistent in its commitment to the Task Force on Violence Against Women, contributing its experience and extensive skills to informing policy-making and supporting the NGOs involved in front-line service provision. The Network of Rape Crisis Centres especially appreciates the NWCI support of an inter-agency approach to ending violence against women in our communities.'

National Network of Rape Crisis Centres

WHAT THE POLITICIANS SAY ABOUT OUR WORK

'The NWCI does vast a vast amount of work, much of it behind the scenes, to promote equality in Ireland. Its influence on legislation ensures that the lives of women both urban and rural are bettered and enhanced.'

Mary O'Rourke TD, Minister for Public Enterprise

'In a world of inequality the NWCI is the voice for rights and reason; compassion and common sense.' **Liz McManus TD**

'For as long as the present power structures prevail the work of the NWCI will be necessary.' **Pat Rabbitte TD**

'Despite many advances, much remains to be done to ensure that the needs of women remain high on the agenda! The Celtic Tiger is not curing all our ills. Women are still suffering from poverty, low pay, domestic violence and other isolation that accompanies these problems. The work must go on.' **Senator Kathleen O'Meara**

'It is largely because of the work of groups like the NWCI that such progress has been made in regard to equality issues, but much remains to be done and I hope the NWCI will keep the pressure on whatever government is in office.' **Proinsias de Rossa MEP**

'The NWCI has played a pivotal role in representing a rainbow network of women's organisations. Long may it continue to do so. Congratulations to all.'

Mary Banotti MEP

'It would be easy to assume that much progress has been achieved for women but the NWCI keeps up the challenge to do more to assist many women who are still marginalised or suffering discrimination. Keep up the good work - you are still needed!' **Nora Owen TD**

HIGHLIGHTS FROM 1999

The Birth of the Millennium Project

In January 1999 the NWCI Millennium Project commenced. The project was a concept originated by Katherine Zappone, the then CEO of the NWCI, as a way of linking the creative work of women on the ground to national policy-making. It was also a way of creating an exciting link between affiliate groups and the NWCI through the use of participatory and action research where women themselves engage in research and analysis about issues important to them. She enlisted the help of Participatory Learning and Action (PLA) practitioner and researcher, Mary O'Reilly de Brun. They prepared a project proposal and with the help of several funders the Millennium Project was born.

International Women's Day – 8 March 1999

The NWCI celebrated International Women's Day with the launch of the NWCI guide to the euro for women. Mary O'Rourke TD, Minister for Public Enterprise launched the booklet and a euro-hunt. The reception and euro-hunt were hosted and sponsored by Arnotts Plc in their store in Henry Street. At the celebration Noreen Byrne, NWCI Chairwoman, thanked the politicians and the NWCI affiliates who enthusiastically agreed to participate in the euro-hunt. The participants were divided into teams of four and followed a treasure-hunt trail around the store converting specified merchandise from punts into euros. It really was a sight to see the intense competition between the Senators, MEPs, TDs and NWCI affiliates as they ran around Arnotts (often in the wrong direction) at breakneck speed searching for clues.

Making the Future Work: Women at the Heart of the Process North/South Conference on Gender Mainstreaming Cavan, 28-29 April 1999

An Taoiseach, Bertie Ahern, and Mary Wallace, TD, Minister for State at the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform sponsored this conference with the Making Women Seen and Heard Project in which the NWCI was a partner.

An Taoiseach; the NI Secretary of State; Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Lord Dubs; the First Minister Designate, David Trimble; Mo Mowlam, NI Secretary for State and the Deputy First Minister Designate, Seamus Mallon, addressed the conference.

There were one hundred participants, including senior civil servants from North and South and a broad range of women's groups involved in the project. The main speakers were Caroline Mechin, Chairwoman of the Council of Europe Steering Committee for Equality between Men and Women and Dr Christopher McCrudden, Reader in Law, University of Oxford.

The purpose of the conference was to begin a process of putting issues of concern to women at the heart of government policy.

Launch of Childcare 2000 Campaign – 25 May 1999

The Childcare 2000 Campaign was launched on 25 May, marking the beginning of a new phase in the childcare debate in Ireland. Noreen Byrne, NWCI Chairwoman spoke at the launch.

The organisations represented in the campaign are:

- The National Women's Council of Ireland (NWCI)
- The National Children's Nurseries Association (NCNA)
- IPPA - the Early Childhood Organisation
- The Irish National Organisation of the Unemployed (INOUE)
- Childminding Ireland
- An Comhchoiste Réamhscolaíochta Teo

The mission statement of the campaign is as follows:

Childcare 2000 Campaign seeks from government the implementation of a national childcare strategy which:

- Equally values all children and parents.
- Ensures the support and provision of quality, regulated childcare services.
- Prioritises the needs of children and families experiencing disadvantage and social exclusion.

All of these organisations are affiliates of the NWCI except the INOUE. A full account of campaign activities is on pages 15 and 16.

Third Annual Leadership Forum – June 1999

The NWCI Leadership Forum is a four-day residential course for women in leadership positions in community and voluntary organisations, who wish to develop their skills, build effective teams and advance the goals of their organisation.

The Third Annual Leadership Forum of the NWCI took place in Dublin City University from 28 June to 1 July 1999. For the first time NOW projects participants attended the Forum. Speakers included: Noreen Byrne, Chairwoman NWCI; Sergeant Sarah Myler, An Garda Síochána; Frances Fitzgerald, TD; Marian McGennis, TD; Ita Mangan, Consultant; Rosaleen Glacken, Deputy General Secretary, CPSU; Anne O'Donnell, NWCI and Jenny Carroll, Limerick Rape Crisis Centre.

50:50 Vision Conference Celebrating 10 Years of New Opportunities for Women (NOW) Kilmainham, 9 November 1999

50:50 Vision was a major conference, the aims of which were:

- To celebrate the success of the NOW projects in Ireland.
- To showcase the work of the projects.
- To illustrate the lessons learned from NOW projects.
- To influence employment policy in the public and private sectors.
- To ensure that the lessons learned during the lifetime of NOW are mainstreamed into government policy-making.

Olivia O'Leary chaired the Conference. The key speakers were Ian Livingstone, EU Commission; Inez McCormack, President ICTU; Noreen Byrne, Chairwoman NWCI; Patricia Lee, NOW Programme Manager and Josephine Lally, NOW Project Advisor. The conference workshops were facilitated by

Áine Lawlor, RTÉ; Brenda Power, Sunday Tribune; Pádraig O'Móráin, The Irish Times, and Brian Dowling, Irish Independent.

NWCI Annual General Meeting

13 November 1999, Catherine McAuley Centre, Dublin

The 1999 AGM was very well attended with an air of excitement due to the impending elections. Current panel chairwomen, Ann Clune, Maureen Killeavy and Terri Harrison remained on the Executive, with elections for panel chairwomen due in 2000.

Gráinne Healy was elected Chairwoman and Mary Kelly was elected Deputy Chairwoman. The ordinary Executive members elected at the AGM were Margaretta D'Arcy, Gloria Frankel, Phil Harrington, Deirdre Healy and Tess Murphy. Once the election was over, delegates settled down to debate and vote on a list of motions on:

- Inquiry into the death of Rosemary Nelson.
- Availability of midwives for home births.
- National ban on weapons and weapon components.
- National ban on contributions to the arms trade.
- Ring-fencing of 25% of EQUAL funding for women.
- Availability of reports from Board meetings.
- A referendum on a national policy of non-membership of military alliances.
- Recording of minutes of plenary sessions at panel meetings.

NEGOTIATING FOR CHANGE - NWCI POLICY WORK

NESC

The National Economic and Social Council (NESC) completed its fifth review of economic and social strategy in December 1999 Opportunities, Challenges and Capacities for Choice. The report provided the foundations for the negotiations of the new national agreement. Fundamental to the Strategy is the commitment to a rights based approach, which includes civil, political, social, economic and cultural rights and obligations. From an equality perspective the NESC supported the creation of a Strategic Framework for Action on Equality which includes a comprehensive strategic implementation of the recommendations on past/current equality agendas and the development of equality agendas for the 'legislatively new groups' experiencing discrimination. In addition, the NESC supported the adoption of measures:

- To remove women from poverty.
- To progress individualisation of social welfare and taxation.
- To improve access to the labour market.
- To support the development of childcare infrastructure.
- To provide financial assistance to support childcare costs and
- To develop parental and other family leave.

Katherine Zappone represented the NWCI on NESC.

NESF

The National Economic and Social Forum (NESF) agreed its structures, work arrangements and work programme for 1999-2000. The Forum agreed to work through plenary sessions, Management Committee, Project teams and ad hoc working groups. The work programme focuses on the following areas and reports will be published in these areas during 2000.

- Local Employment Service
- Labour Market Shortages
- Social Housing
- Lone Parents
- Equality Issues

Gráinne Healy (Deputy Chairwoman, NWCI) represented the NWCI on the Management Committee of NESF and Labour Market Shortages team, Ursula Barry represented the NWCI on the Social Housing Team.

Gender and Equality Proofing

The Department of Justice Equality and Law Reform published Gender Proofing and the European Structural Funds: Outline Guidelines, commissioned from the Law Faculty of NUI (Cork). This Report was drawn up with the assistance of the Partnership 2000 Gender Proofing Working Group, on which Orla O'Connor represented the NWCI. Gender Proofing is defined in the Report as 'The (re) organisation, improvement, development and evaluation of policy processes, so that a gender equality perspective is incorporated in all policies at all levels and at all stages, by the actors involved in policy-making. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres, so that women and men benefit equally and inequality

is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality.' (Mullally 1999:17). The Report set out guidelines for the introduction of Gender Proofing for consideration by Government.

The Working Group then continued its work to advise on the development of equality proofing and the process required to introduce an integrated proofing process covering gender, poverty and equality. The Working Group recommended the establishment of a learning phase during the period of 2000-2003 to assess the introduction of gender proofing, poverty proofing within the National Anti Poverty Strategy (NAPS) and equality covering the nine target groups under the equality legislation. It also recommended the establishment of a Working Group to oversee the process in 2000.

P2000 and Preparations for the New National Agreement Negotiations

During 1999 the Government initiated an evaluation of the 4th social partnership national agreement, P2000, as a way of starting negotiations for a next national agreement (Programme for Prosperity and Fairness). As a member of the Community and Voluntary Pillar, the NWCI raised questions regarding the extent of change for women during this period of economic prosperity. The NWCI began the process of identifying the changes required for all women to participate fully in Irish society. In developing its recommendations for the new national agreement, the NWCI sought the views and expertise of its affiliates in a variety of ways. It also availed of the valuable knowledge bank gathered from the NOW (New Opportunities for Women) projects.

The NWCI priorities for the social partnership national agreement were compiled in Towards Women's Full Equality in the New Millennium.

The recommendations included were on the following issues:

- Childcare
- Women and Poverty
- Valuing and Sharing Unpaid Work
- Gender-Proofing National Policy
- Women and Health
- Women and Violence
- Women and Educational Disadvantage
- Women and Employment

POWER Programme Successfully Piloted

The POWER Partnership was formed by NWCI, Women's Support Network (N.Irl), WERRC (NUID) and School of Social and Community Sciences, University of Ulster. It was decided to deliver a tailor made course which would support women activists to overcome the obstacles they faced in politics and move into public engagement.

Noreen Byrne, Gráinne Healy, Joanne Vance, Eilis Rooney, Marie Mulholland, Ailbhe Smyth, Joanna McMinn and Margaret Martin developed POWER (politically organised women educating for representation). The POWER course was designed to support women's political development and place

women's participation in community development firmly within a political context.

The POWER programme was delivered twice over 1998/9. The six residential modules encouraged participation and built on the personal and political experience of the 40 women participants – many from NWCI affiliates. The lessons of POWER will be published at a seminar in 2000.

Health

During 1999 the eight regional Health Board Women's Health Advisory Committees continued to strive towards devising and implementing regional women's health plans. NWCI's health representatives worked with the Women's Health Co-ordinator to create a woman-friendly climate in the committees, which began to work in a more partnership-oriented way. Ring fenced funding was secured to develop strategies to improve local health services for women. By the end of the year most of the committees had finalised their regional plans and were able to focus on implementing their priority areas in co-operation with other units in the Health Boards.

Core activities during the year included:

- Four quarterly meetings with the NWCI health representatives.
- NWCI meeting with the Minister for Health and Children.
- Presentation to the Department of Health and Children's women's health seminar.
- The NWCI women's health policy paper was completed with input from the health representatives and interested affiliate groups. Priority issues in the paper included maternity services, carers and family planning. Bilateral negotiations were held with the Department of Health and Children on completion of the paper.

Violence Against Women

Noreen Byrne (Chairwoman) has represented the NWCI on the National Steering Committee on Violence Against Women since its establishment in December 1997. The purpose of the Committee is to provide a multi-disciplinary, multi-agency and cohesive response to the problem of violence against women.

Activities of the Committee during 1999 included:

- First report published in March 1999.
- National Public Awareness Campaign launched December 1999.
- Commissioned research towards the production of a national directory of services for women who have experienced violence or the threat of violence.

Panel Meetings

Panel meetings in 1999 provided an opportunity to focus on particular policy issues and a mechanism for the views of affiliates to inform the work of the NWCI. During the year, panel meetings explored particular topics and questions provided by the Policy Team:

FIRST QUARTER

Education Panel: early school leaving; empowerment and adult education.

Work Panel: tackling low pay for women.

Social Affairs Panel: main income issues in tackling women's poverty.

Health Panel: making current health services more woman-friendly.

GENDER PROOFING QUESTION TO ALL PANELS.

SECOND QUARTER

Identifying key issues for the local elections and campaigning ideas; handout of sample questions for local election candidates provided by policy team.

THIRD QUARTER

Education and Awareness Workshop on Pornography (provided by Dr. Ger Moane of WERRC UCD and Women's Aid).

FOURTH QUARTER

Policy team provided a document on the outcomes for women in Budget 2000.

Planning panel activity for 2000.

NWCI Publications 1999

- E-Day: Are You Ready? - A Guide to the Euro for Women (March)
- New Opportunities for Women (NOW) Newsletter #5 (August)
- Womenzone NWCI Newsletter #1 (October)
- New Opportunities for Women (NOW) Project Catalogue 1997-1999 (December)
- Annual Report 1998 (November)
- Womenzone NWCI Newsletter #2 (December)

Submissions Made During 1999

- NWCI Response to the Irish Government's Report to the UN CEDAW Committee [United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women] (June)
- Response to the Green Paper on Adult Education in An Era of Lifelong Learning (July)
- NWCI Submission to the Equality Authority Strategic Plan, 2000-2002 (September)
- NWCI Pre-Budget Submission (October)
- Childcare 2000 Campaign Pre-Budget Submission (October)
- Towards Women's Full Equality in the New Millennium - Priorities for Social Partnership (November)

Committees/Working Groups on Which NWCI was Represented During 1999

National

- ADM (Area Development Management)
- Gender Equality Working Group
- An Bord Pleanála
- Childcare 2000 Campaign
- City of Dublin VEC
- Comhar - the National Sustainable Development Partnership
- Community and Voluntary Pillar
- Community Platform
- Dublin Transport Initiative
- Equality Authority
- Gender Equality Monitoring Committee
- Second Commission on the Status of Women Research
- Beijing Platform for Action Monitoring Committee
- Gender Proofing Working Group

- Higher Education Equality Unit
- Maternity and Early Child Health Services
- Midland Health Advisory Committee
- Monitoring Committee on Local Development Programme
- National Steering Committee on Cervical Cancer Screening
- National Economic and Social Council (NESC)
- National Economic and Social Forum (NESF)
- National Steering Committee on Violence Against Women
- NESF Management Committee
- P2000 Women's Access to Labour Market Opportunities Working Group
- POWER Partnership
- Role of Women in Agriculture
- Rural Development Forum
- Steering Group on National Breast Screening Programme
- Working Class Network
- Women's Education Initiative Working Group
- Women's Health Council

European

- EU Thematic Focus Group for NOW
- EU Thematic Focus Group on Crossing the Jobs Threshold
- EU Women in Decision Making Database
- European Women's Lobby Board
- EWL Observatory on Violence Against Women

NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN

NOW - out with a bang!

• *Patricia Lee Programme Manager NOW NSS*

1999 oh what a year! The National Women's Council of Ireland has lived through the past decade with New Opportunities for Women, offering support to promoting organisations, receiving EU funds and working with the Department of Enterprise Trade and Employment in the collation of data, detail and information. 1999 saw the culmination of all that was powerful in NOW, with projects achieving a significant impact at participant and organisational levels, trans-European partnerships and relationships forged, products developed, reports completed and the hosting of the 50:50 Vision Conference.

NOW was established in 1991 by the European Commission as a Community Initiative across all member states as a fund to innovate, research and develop employment programmes for women. It was intended to compliment existing national programmes, and labour market initiatives.

The diversity of women's situations and their unique ways of working have truly been reflected in the actions supported under NOW. The success of NOW is clearly demonstrated in the design, delivery and evaluation of relevant development, training and education opportunities specifically put in place to fill the gaps and meet the needs of women all across Ireland. The NOW projects were developed in the absence of a national programme, strategy or even a budget line to:

- Specifically tackle the gender pay differential.
- To address the issue of gender imbalances within the labour market.
- To establish an infrastructure for the care of children.
- To facilitate women's access into education, training, employment.

There were only minimum resources available to support women in breaking through the glass ceiling, to promote positive actions or to support those excluded from and wanting to return to the labour market.

In the Irish situation this European pilot initiative was used to breach the gaps in our national provision where educational, training and work initiatives that did exist were often rigidly locked into the established structures and were based on models of the labour market that are outdated. NOW attempted, on behalf of women, to counter the limited success of a system, which was focused on the needs of the providers and decision-makers rather than the needs of the clients and participants.

It will be a major travesty if mainstream bodies do not draw every possible benefit from this substantial EU investment. It is hoped that NOW not only provided an opportunity for those lucky enough to participate but also triggered a real and sustained systemic change. In order to tailor education and training to the realities of the labour market and society,

closer links must be forged between the NOW models of good practice and the mainstream.

The importance of mainstreaming the lessons from NOW was the clear message at our finale conference 50:50 Vision - 10 years of New Opportunities for Women, which was held in Dublin November 9th 1999. This conference focused on the achievements of NOW and provided the opportunity to meet and debate with those involved at all levels of gender equality. We invite you to read a copy of the conference proceedings which makes recommendations on four key areas of action:

- Reconciliation of work and family life.
- Occupational de-segregation.
- Access to education, training and work.
- Local development and decision-making.

The NOW projects explicitly set out to provide the training and employment conditions which succeed in bringing women into the labour market and should have been available in mainstream programmes. It is now the turn of the mainstream to follow the signposts constructed by NOW and translate this learning into effective labour-market initiatives.

Life Beyond NOW - What about the Participants?

• *Evelyn Browne, Tralee Women's Resource Centre*

The NOW 50:50 Vision conference was a striking visual representation of the impact of the NOW initiative for women all over Ireland. The variety of vocational areas, methods of approach, delivery of training and project development were as diverse as the women, the organisations and the regions of the country involved. Through project reports, summaries and evaluations, we dissected what we did. Much of this evaluation focused on what could have been better. How could we have done it better? What opportunity did we miss? Did we let anyone down? Who did we let down? Why?

The participants embraced the concept of 'New Opportunities for Women' as a golden opportunity and a chance to improve their economic situation. The EMPLOYMENT initiative came with the promise of employment. It came with the promise of a better way of doing things. It came with a lot of strings attached, because most of the promises of EMPLOYMENT cannot be carried out without the support and co-operation of the mainstream statutory bodies with responsibility for training, education, employment and enterprise creation. The women who participated in NOW projects, have come to expect that their work and effort is recognised. They have become informed, through their participation in NOW and through their contact

with women from other EU countries through transnational partnerships. They have learned to expect more from their government.

The NOW projects all over Ireland have proven that there is a better way. Lessons have been learned and outcomes achieved. The enthusiasm and commitment with which project sponsors embarked on projects was transferred to the women participating on the projects. Many participants will go on to jobs or self-employment, but many more could benefit immensely from a continuation of support. For example, certain training needs may have been identified as part of the NOW project. Some women will require support in accessing that training after NOW is finished. If supports for child care and travel expenses for training, which were prevalent under NOW are removed, women will simply not be in a position to avail of training and the work of NOW will have been wasted.

Some NOW facts

- There were 104 NOW projects in Ireland in ten years.
- 10,500 Irish women and men participated in NOW projects and initiatives in ten years.
- IR£30,848,389 has been spent on NOW projects in Ireland over the

If the lessons of NOW, which have been articulated exceedingly well over the past decade by project sponsors and the NWCI, are taken on board by the 'mainstream', the aspirations of NOW participants and other women wishing to enter or return to the workforce will be met. You don't teach a child to walk and then tell her not to run.

Tralee Women's Resource Centre, 3 The Mall, Tralee, Co Kerry.

Tel: 066 7120622 Fax: 066 7120817 E-mail: brownee@iol.ie

MILLENNIUM PROJECT

The NWCI Millennium Project is a two-year (Participatory, Learning and Action) PLA research, analysis and action initiative aimed at building capacity in affiliate groups and encouraging a direct and dynamic link between the NWCI, women on the ground, and policy-makers. Problems, needs and policy recommendations emerging from the project will be taken up by the NWCI in order to positively re-shape public policies that affects the daily lives of women.

What is PLA? It's an approach to research based on a series of techniques for sharing and analysing information and knowledge, and planning positive action. PLA is particularly suited to finding practical solutions to problems faced by women. It's also an exciting way to 'map the future' - the techniques enable women to describe and then analyse plans, ideas and possibilities. For example - what would the ideal workplace for women look like? What creative ideas do women have about accessing education? To quote Ann Louise Gilligan, research consultant to the project, 'Women's ways of learning are varied. The systems and context of current education don't accommodate this and therefore learning is blocked. So, a gender-neutral stance in education policy is actually profoundly gender-biased. We need to address this in a creative and proactive way.' Seeing ordinary people as experts in their own right is what sets PLA apart from most other research approaches.

At the outset of the project, the NWCI invited affiliate groups to help develop the research mandate, using a consultative process to encourage members to name the issues they would like to see investigated. By combining this input from affiliates with the expertise of the NWCI Policy Team, six national issues clearly emerged for research: health, education, poverty, violence against women, local development and work.

The first year of the project was exciting and busy. In January, overseen by CEO Katherine Zappone, Project Manager, Mary O'Reilly de Brún, began to train the team in a variety of PLA techniques. Mary is an anthropologist and PLA practitioner/trainer who has worked with international NGOs and government agencies in Africa, Ireland, and the U.S.A. The Project Team included Ann Louise Gilligan; community activist, educator and researcher, Miriam Reddin-Beegan; an anthropologist specialising in women and organisational culture/work and Natasha Bailey; a Canadian woman committed to issues surrounding women's health.

Early in 1999, brochures publicising the project were sent to all affiliate Chairwomen. Information sessions were held in Dublin, Cork, Donegal, Galway and Longford. 'The best way to understand what PLA is all about is to participate in it. In each information session we engaged people in some PLA techniques so they could get a taste of what it's all about' said Natasha Bailey, administrative assistant and researcher to the project. The response from affiliates was immediate and applications began to arrive at the project office.

From March to September 1999, the team trained 118 women in 13 centres around the Republic in a wide range of PLA techniques. As later groups trained, earlier ones began their

research process. Reactions from participants were positive, including the following remarks: 'the method of teaching allowed for discussion and changes and that empowers the group'; 'the trainers were excellent'; 'PLA is an innovative way of mainstreaming voices which wouldn't normally be heard'; 'the miracle methods of PLA will put a march on our words'.

Across the country, 118 PLA facilitators worked in teams of two, gathering approximately 12 women from each affiliate organisations to research one of the 6 key issues of national significance. Each group was also offered the chance to choose a 'local issue', that they would love to research. This could be an issue very specific to the locality, or one shared with other women nation-wide. The Millennium Project Team provided ongoing support and encouragement to teams in all corners of the country, from Donegal to Cahirciveen, Galway to Dublin, Monaghan to Tipperary.

By Autumn 1999, research data began to flow into the project office. 'I was so excited to see the first tangible evidence of all the amazing work that had been done,' said Sarah Delaney, consultant researcher and analyst to the project. Sarah, an anthropologist with an interest in women's health issues and social policy, joined the team in October 1999 after Miriam left due to unforeseen circumstances. (The positive side to Miriam's departure was that she is now the mother of a healthy baby girl and the team keep her apprised of all the excitement in the project.) Also in the last quarter of the year, Katherine Zappone finished her term as CEO of the NWCI. She continued to act as an advisor to the Project.

The second year of the project promises to be no less busy. Analysis of all the incoming research will go on for several months. Research results will be integrated into the broader work of the NWCI. A second phase of PLA training will focus on social analysis, action planning and implementation. By January 2001, over 500 women in Ireland will have facilitated or participated in the process of doing their own research using cutting edge methods. Their voices will influence NWCI policy for years to come. We expect that many PLA facilitators will also discover that they can use their newly developed skills in other work.

Women involved in the Millennium Project have described how positive it is to participate in a unique project whose type and scope has not been seen elsewhere in Ireland: 'this is ownership from the heart'; 'the methods were flexible; it opens opportunities through shared ideas'; 'participants really appreciated that they were asked to give voice to their opinions'; 'they hope their voices will come through...'

The NWCI and the Millennium Project team are indebted to all participants for their generosity of spirit, the 'woman hours' they have given to the project, and the enjoyment that working with them has brought.

Project Manager, Mary O'Reilly de Brun, has a final comment about the project: 'Our task now is to make sure the final

results and recommendations that emerge by the end of January 2001 reach, not only policy-makers, but a wide public audience. These voices must be heard. Let's make a real splash with the NWCi Millennium Project!

CHILDCARE

Childcare 2000 Campaign

The Childcare 2000 Campaign was a very time-consuming part of the work of the NWCI during 1999. An Executive Board decision had been taken that childcare was to be the priority issue for the year and that working through a broad-based campaign was the most effective way to represent the women of Ireland on this issue. The major activities of the campaign during 1999 are outlined below.

Launch of Childcare 2000 Campaign

The Childcare 2000 Campaign was launched on 25 May 1999. (See account of launch on page 5)

The organisations in the campaign spent several months negotiating a commonly agreed set of recommendations, which were presented at the launch. The establishment of the Childcare 2000 Campaign was welcomed by NWCI affiliates, other community and voluntary organisations, politicians and the media. It was widely recognised that the coming together of six national organisations was a landmark in the long struggle to have childcare adopted as a national issue.

Role of NWCI in the Campaign

As the largest of the organisations involved, the NWCI agreed at the outset to provide the administrative back-up to the campaign and to be the venue for campaign meetings. Anne O'Donnell, NWCI Communications Manager, was appointed Campaign Co-ordinator and Ciara McKenna, NWCI Communications Assistant, was appointed Campaign Administrator. Orla O'Connor is the NWCI policy expert on the Campaign Committee.

Briefing for Candidates in Euro and Local Elections

On 31 May candidates in the local and Euro elections were invited to a briefing on childcare in the NWCI offices. Candidates were provided with handout material to assist them in dealing with questions on childcare on the doorsteps. A Question and Answer session with representatives from all the Childcare 2000 organisations on a panel was also conducted. This event was a great success with approximately 40 candidates in attendance.

Campaign Invited to Meet Minister Mary Wallace

On 15 June a delegation from the campaign met with Mary Wallace, Minister for State at the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform. The Minister was presented with the Campaign proposals and a discussion took place between campaign members and the Minister.

TD-Day

TDs invited to visit childcare facilities all around the country

As part of its summer campaign activities, June 28 was designated for TDs all around the country to visit childcare centres in their locality. The purpose of these visits was to inform elected representatives about the reality of caring for

children in such centres. Campaign members believed that the experience of spending some time in an environment with childcare workers, children and parents would enhance awareness about the difficulties being confronted by childcare providers and parents.

Presentation to Interdepartmental Committee on Childcare

On 14 July a campaign delegation made a formal presentation to the Interdepartmental Committee on Childcare at a meeting in the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform. A detailed document outlining the rationale underlying the campaign proposals was prepared and presented to the committee.

Lobbying Meetings

During the Autumn campaign members undertook a comprehensive series of lobbying meetings. Political parties, Government Departments and other relevant organisations were targeted including:

- IBEC
- Labour Party
- Department of Social Welfare
- Fine Gael
- Department of Finance

Make Your Mark for Childcare

Launch of Childcare 2000 Pre-Budget Submission

On 13 October the pre-budget submission of the campaign was launched. TDs, Senators and MEPs were invited to join the Childcare 2000 Campaign and children from Nippers Nursery and First Steps Montessori to participate in a painting session and Make Their Mark for Childcare.

Budget 2000

In the run-up to the budget, there was increasing optimism in the NWCI and the other campaign organisations that comprehensive and radical childcare measures would finally be implemented. The Minister presented a childcare package costing 46 million on the supply side, which was welcomed by the campaign. The investment of 23 million to supply childcare in disadvantaged areas was particularly praised. However, in the absence of payments to parents, the value of such provision is greatly diminished. The campaign must go on to fight another day!!

Despite the disappointment of the budget, the work of the campaign has been enormously valuable in creating public and political awareness about the issue of childcare. It has provided the NWCI with the really worthwhile experience of working on an equal basis with a group of affiliate organisations. All organisations within the campaign believe that our work will eventually bear fruit for the children, parents and childcare providers of Ireland.

EUROPEAN ACTIVITIES

• *Gráinne Healy, Deputy Chairwoman NWCi and Board Member of the European Women's Lobby (EWL)*

European Activities During 1999

1999 was a year of exciting EU projects, significant inputs and increased profile of NWCi at EU level through the work of the European Women's Lobby.

Conference on Women in Decision Making in Paris

In spring of 1999, NWCi Chairwoman, Noreen Byrne and Deputy Chairwoman, Gráinne Healy, travelled to a major EU conference on Women in Decision making in Paris. All EU ministers present signed the 'Paris Declaration'. Chris Flood T.D. signed on behalf of Ireland. The declaration states that support will be given to ensure that women and men have equality in decision making in society. Gráinne Healy addressed the conference and delivered a paper that critically examined the NWCi social partnership experience in Ireland. The paper was well received and was of great interest to women in other states where social partnership is underdeveloped or entirely absent.

EWL Projects

The EWL launched an exciting project which allows women to dialogue, debate with decision makers and get informed on important EU issues contained in Agenda 2000 - the EU document which lays out the key issues facing members of the EU in the coming years. With a web site and a series of theme sheets which explain EU policy on Rural Women, Enlargement and Structural Funds, this project was launched in Ireland at the NWCi panel meeting in September. Those who attended that meeting were given an overview of the EWL, its history and its work programme by EWL Board Member, Deputy Chairwoman, Gráinne Healy, followed by a chauffeur driven preview of the site and its contents from project co-ordinator Malin Bjork from EWL in Brussels!

Observatory on Violence Against Women

The EWL's Policy Action Centre's Observatory on Violence Against Women is chaired by Gráinne Healy who facilitates a group of European experts on violence against women to share

their expertise for the benefit of all European women at EU level. The Observatory produced an interesting research document Unveiling the Hidden Data that shows the invisibility of domestic violence. The Observatory also circulates a news sheet to strengthen the links between those organisations working at the coalface of this issue with policy makers at an EU level.

As part of a Daphne funded project (EU's Violence against women fund), the EWL's Observatory co-ordinated high profile events across EU member states (including Ireland) to mark the 16 days of action on violence against women.

NWCi is delighted that Daphne is to become a multi-annual programme in receipt of 50 million ECUs over 5 years. NWCi played its part in this lobbying campaign at national and EU level and got the support of senior Irish ministers for this proposal.

EWL General Assembly *Helsinki, June 1999*

The Chairwoman and Deputy Chairwoman accompanied Una McManus and Mary O'Hara (Executive Board) to the EWL General Assembly (GA) in Helsinki. The key work of the GA was the revision of the lobby's statutes. As the process got gravely bogged down a proposal that the EWL needs to consult with all its members and carry out a strategic review was made and adopted by the GA.

A snapshot of other EWL work

- Supporting Gender Mainstreaming across all EU policy areas.
- Reviewing the National Employment Actions plans of all governments.
- Lobbying for a fifth equal opportunities programme.
- Developing project proposals to target young women.

AFFILIATE ACTIVITIES

Donegal Women's Network

Representatives from various women's groups in Donegal gathered to march through the streets of Letterkenny on International Women's Day. The march, which was vibrant and energetic, highlighted the difficulties women face in accessing training and employment schemes because they are not on the live register. Other elements in this campaign involved making presentations on the issue to the local partnerships and submitting articles to local newsletters. A sub-group continues to work on this issue.

An Cosán

October marked the opening of An Cosán, the new home of the Shanty Educational Project, located in the heart of Jobstown in Dublin. The building is so called because it offers local people a path to learning, leadership, and enterprise. It was opened by the Taoiseach and the Tánaiste, who commended the efforts of the community and the co-founders Ann Louise Gilligan, and Katherine Zappone in realising the dream of a new community education facility in Tallaght West.

Network Ireland

National President, Fran Murrin, has overseen many major changes within Network Ireland over the past twelve months, including a move from a voluntary organisation to a full time business organisation. In September 1999 Network Ireland, through the financial assistance of Bank of Ireland, appointed its first full-time Director, Elaine Dowdall, and established a national headquarters in Dublin. Membership of the organisation increased by 30%. Funding was recently secured from Skillnets to run a nation-wide business development and training programme for Network members. Network currently has sixteen branches.

Pavee Point

On 7 December 1999 Pavee Point project held a conference on the challenging issue of racism and violence against women. The conference was organised as part of the NOW initiative to highlight the particular needs of Traveller women. The conference was planned as part of the international campaign of 16 days of action against violence against women during the European year of activities against violence against women. The keynote speakers included: Pragna Patell - a founding member of the Black Women's organisation Southhall Black Sisters, Hillary Mc Collum - an Irish feminist who worked on the national (England and Wales) strategy on violence against women launched in June 1999; and Judy Atkinson who developed the indigenous Therapies Program, providing skills for working with people traumatised by violence. A drama presentation was performed on the difficulties experienced by Traveller women in trying to access services.

LOT (Lesbians Organising Together) – LEA NOW Project

The Lesbian Lives national billboard campaign was launched in Dublin on 14 June with the help of Jan O'Sullivan TD, Mary Coughlan TD, Patricia Mc Kenna MEP, John Gormley TD and Alibhe Smyth, Director of Women's Education Research and Resource Centre (WERRC) at UCD. Using the popular medium of billboard advertising, and an information pack, Lesbian Education Awareness (LEA/NOW) are endeavouring to challenge attitudes to lesbianism and raise awareness of the issues faced by Irish lesbians.

NATIONAL WOMEN'S COUNCIL OF IRELAND LIMITED
A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE AMALGAMATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR
THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 1999

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The directors present their report together with the amalgamated financial statements of National Women's Council of Ireland Limited and National Women's Council of Ireland Education and Training Limited for the year ended 31 December 1999.

Principal Activity

The principal activity of the company during the period was the working together to transform society into a just and equitable community, a community in which all women and men can participate with equal effectiveness as full citizens, in which the independence of women is determined by right. The directors consider the company's state of affairs at the balance sheet date to be satisfactory.

Results and Dividends

The amalgamated results for the year are set out on page 21.

Directors

In accordance with the Articles of Association the directors are not required to retire by rotation.

Health and Safety of Employees

The well being of the employees of National Women's Council of Ireland Limited and National Women's Council of Ireland Education and Training Limited is safeguarded through the strict adherence to health and safety standards. The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 1989 imposes certain requirements on employers and the company has taken the necessary action to ensure compliance with the Act.

Auditors

The auditors of National Women's Council of Ireland Limited and National Women's Council of Ireland Education and training Limited, Grant Thornton, Chartered Accountants, the successor firm to John Woods, continue in office in accordance with the provisions of Section 160(2) of the Companies Act, 1963.

On behalf of the Board of National Women's Council of Ireland Limited and National Women's Council of Ireland Education and Training Limited.

Gráinne Healy and Mary Kelly, Directors (17 May 2000)

STATEMENT OF DIRECTOR'S RESPONSIBILITIES

Directors' Responsibilities

Company law requires the directors to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of the affairs of the company and of the profit or loss of the company for that year. In preparing those financial statements the directors are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the company will continue in business.

The directors are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the company and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Acts, 1963 to 1999. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

On Behalf of the Board

Margaretta D'Arcy, Philomena Harrington, Terri Harrison, Anne Clune, Gráinne Healy, Deirdre Healy, Mary Kelly, Maureen Killeavy, Gloria Frankel, Tess Murphy.

AUDITORS' REPORT ON THE AMALGAMATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS OF NATIONAL WOMEN'S COUNCIL OF IRELAND LIMITED

To the members of National Women's Council of Ireland Limited A company limited by guarantee

The amalgamated financial statements of National Women's Council of Ireland Limited for the year ended 31 December 1999 have been prepared from the audited financial statements of The National Women's Council of Ireland Limited and the National Women's Council of Ireland Education and Training Limited for the year ended 31 December 1999.

We have audited the financial statements of National Women's Council of Ireland Limited and National Women's Council of Ireland Education and Training Limited which have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

Respective responsibilities of directors and auditors

As described on page 19 the directors of National Women's Council of Ireland Limited and National Women's Council of Ireland Education and Training Limited are responsible for the preparation of financial statements. It is our responsibility to form an independent opinion, based on our audit, on those statements and to report our opinion to you.

Basis of Opinion

We conducted our audits of National Women's Council of Ireland Limited and National Women's Council of Ireland Education and Training Limited in accordance with Auditing Standards issued by the Auditing Practices Board. An audit includes examination, on a test basis, of evidence relevant to the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. It also includes an assessment of the significant estimates and judgements made by the directors in the preparation of the financial statements, and of whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the company's circumstances, consistently applied and adequately disclosed.

We planned and performed our audits of National Women's Council of Ireland Limited and National Women's Council of Ireland Education and Training Limited so as to obtain all the information and explanations which we considered necessary in order to provide us with sufficient evidence to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or other irregularity or error. In forming our opinions we also evaluated the overall adequacy of the presentation of information in the financial statements.

Opinion

In our opinion, the financial statements of National Women's Council of Ireland Limited and National Women's Council of Ireland Education and Training Limited give a true and fair view of both companies' affairs as at 31 December 1999 and of both companies' balances on income and expenditure accounts for the year then ended and both have been properly prepared in accordance with the companies Acts 1963 to 1999.

We have obtained all the information and explanations we consider necessary for the purposes of our audits of National Women's Council of Ireland Limited and National Women's Council of Ireland Education and Training Limited. In our opinion, proper books of account have been maintained by National Women's Council of Ireland Limited and National Women's Council of Ireland Education and Training Limited. The financial statements of National Women's Council of Ireland Limited and National Women's Council of Ireland Education and Training Limited are in agreement with the books of account.

In our opinion, the information given in the directors' report on page 19 is consistent with the financial statements of National Women's Council of Ireland Limited and National Women's Council of Ireland Education and Training Limited.

Grant Thornton
Chartered Accountants and Registered Auditors
17 May 2000

**AMALGAMATED INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 1999**

	Note	1999 IR£	1998 IR£
<u>INCOME</u>			
Grants and donations received	2	805,177	656,706
Transfer to capital grant		(30)	(9,882)
		<hr/>	<hr/>
		805,147	646,824
<u>EXPENDITURE</u>			
Staff costs	3	368,045	308,504
Programme and project management		130,746	143,725
Administration expenses		62,554	58,691
Building expenses		84,212	70,518
Consultancy & professional fees		110,261	26,517
Organisation costs		31,183	30,620
Communication expenses		27,189	30,614
		<hr/>	<hr/>
		814,190	669,189
Excess (deficit) of income over expenditure		<hr/>	<hr/>
		(9,043)	(22,365)
Income and expenditure account brought forward		9,848	26,544
Exchange gain		940	5,669
		<hr/>	<hr/>
Income and expenditure account carried forward		1,745	9,848
		<hr/>	<hr/>

The financial statements were approved by the board on 17 May 2000 and signed on its behalf by Gráinne Healy, Chairwoman & Director and Mary Kelly, Deputy Chairwoman & Director.

The notes on pages 23 to 25 form part of these financial statements.

AMALGAMATED BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 DECEMBER 1999

	Note	1999		1998	
		IR£	IR£	IR£	IR£
<u>FIXED ASSETS</u>					
Tangible assets	5		42,986		52,758
<u>CURRENT ASSETS</u>					
Debtors	6	61,679		99,616	
Cash at bank and in hand		66,759		11,684	
		<u>128,438</u>		<u>111,300</u>	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	7	(155,640)		(132,072)	
		<u> </u>		<u> </u>	
<u>NET CURRENT ASSETS (LIABILITIES)</u>			(27,202)		(20,772)
Total assets less current liabilities			<u>15,784</u>		<u>31,986</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	8		(1,539)		(9,638)
Net assets			<u>14,245</u>		<u>22,348</u>
			<u> </u>		<u> </u>
<u>CAPITAL AND RESERVES</u>					
Deferred income	9		12,500		12,500
Income and expenditure account			1,745		9,848
Capital employed			<u>14,245</u>		<u>22,348</u>
			<u> </u>		<u> </u>

The financial statements were approved by the board on 17 May 2000 and signed on its behalf by Gráinne Healy, Chairwoman & Director and Mary Kelly, Deputy Chairwoman & Director.

NOTES TO THE AMALGAMATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 1999

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

1.1 Accounting Convention

The financial statements are prepared under the historical cost convention in accordance with FRSSE.

The company has taken advantage of the exemption in FRS1 from the requirement to produce a cashflow statement because it is a small company.

1.2 Tangible Fixed Assets and Depreciation

Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write off the cost less residual value of each asset over its expected useful life, as follows:

Fixtures, fittings and equipment - 20% straight line

1.3 Pensions

The pension costs charged in the financial statements represent the contribution payable by the company during the year.

1.4 Government Grants

Grants received are credited to deferred revenue. Grants towards capital expenditure are released to the profit and loss account over the expected useful life of the assets. Grants towards revenue expenditure are released to the profit and loss account as the related expenditure is incurred.

2. GRANTS RECEIVABLE

	1999 IR£	1998 IR£
Department of Justice, Equality & Law Reform	305,000	200,000
Programme grants and income	47,442	61,429
Annual subscriptions	6,770	7,110
EU - Information Project	–	15,550
EU 4th Action Programme	32,752	40,714
EU - Employment NOW	221,213	249,403
Private donor	192,000	82,500
	<u>805,177</u>	<u>656,706</u>

3. EMPLOYEES

Number of employees

The average monthly numbers of employees during the year were: 16 14

Employment costs		
Wages and salaries	330,961	276,839
Social welfare costs	37,123	29,300
Other pension costs	1,706	2,365
	<u>369,790</u>	<u>308,504</u>

4. TAX

Neither National Women's Council of Ireland Limited nor National Women's Council of Ireland Education and Training Limited had any trading or investment income and therefore no provision for tax is required.

The notes on pages 23 to 25 form part of these financial statements.

**NOTES TO THE AMALGAMATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 1999 (cont'd)**

5. TANGIBLE ASSETS	IR£
<i>Cost Fixtures, fittings & equipment</i>	
At 1 January 1999	91,291
Additions	13,786
At 31 December 1999	<u>105,077</u>
<i>Depreciation</i>	
At 1 January 1999	38,533
Charge for the year	23,558
At 31 December 1999	<u>62,091</u>
<i>Net book values</i>	
At 31 December 1999	<u>42,986</u>
At 31 December 1998	<u>52,758</u>

	1999	1998
	IR£	IR£
6. DEBTORS		
4th Action Programme debtor	21,202	8,030
Grants receivable	–	35,500
FÁS Jobs Initiative debtor	819	1,586
Other debtors	8,828	3,677
Prepayments and accrued income	30,830	50,823
	<u>61,679</u>	<u>99,616</u>

	1999	1998
	IR£	IR£
7. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE within one year		
Bank overdraft	42,480	53,733
FÁS Jobs Initiative advance	–	3,360
Tax creditors	14,626	13,067
Capital grants (note 10)	4,165	4,165
Accruals	53,010	57,747
	<u>114,281</u>	<u>132,072</u>

<i>Tax creditors</i>		
Tax and social welfare costs included in tax creditors: PAYE and PRSI	14,626	13,067
	<u>14,626</u>	<u>13,067</u>

	1999	1998
	IR£	IR£
8. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE after more than ONE YEAR		
Capital grants (note 10)	3,521	9,638
	<u>3,521</u>	<u>9,638</u>

**NOTES TO THE AMALGAMATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 1999 (cont'd)**

	1999	1998
9. DEFERRED INCOME		
<i>Childcare research</i>		
Received to 1 January 1999	–	23,000
Expenditure during year	–	(23,000)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
At 31 December 1999	–	–
	<hr/>	<hr/>
<i>Department of Health</i>		
Received to 1 January 1999	12,500	12,500
Income received during year	12,500	–
Expenditure during year	(12,500)	–
	<hr/>	<hr/>
At 31 December 1999	12,500	12,500
	<hr/>	<hr/>
<i>Deferred income</i>		
At 31 December 1999	12,500	12,500
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	1999	1998
	IR£	IR£
10. CAPITAL GRANTS		
<i>Receipts</i>		
At 1 January 1999	30,706	20,824
Received during year	30	9,882
	<hr/>	<hr/>
At 31 December 1999	30,736	30,706
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Transfer to income and expenditure account		
At 1 January 1999	16,903	9,636
Amortisation during year	6,147	7,267
	<hr/>	<hr/>
At 31 December 1999	23,050	16,903
	<hr/>	<hr/>
At 31 December 1999	7,686	13,803
	<hr/>	<hr/>
11. FINANCIAL COMMITMENTS		
At 31 December 1999 the company had annual commitments under non-cancellable operating leases as follows:		
	1999	1998
	IR£	IR£
<i>Land and buildings</i>		
Expiry date: Between one and five years	33,813	–
In over five years	–	33,813
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	33,813	33,813
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12. APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The financial statements were approved by the board of directors at a meeting held on 17 May 2000.

LIST OF STAFF, EXECUTIVE BOARD, AUDITORS, ETC.

DIRECTORS

Margaretta D'Arcy
Philomena Harrington
Terri Harrison
Anne Clune
Gráinne Healy
Deirdre Healy
Mary Kelly
Maureen Killeavy
Gloria Frankel
Tess Murphy

SECRETARY

Angela Ramsbottom

COMPANY NUMBER

241868

REGISTERED OFFICE

16-20 Cumberland Street South, Dublin 2

AUDITORS

Grant Thornton,
Chartered Accountants,
Woods House,
Carysfort Avenue,
Blackrock,
County Dublin.

BUSINESS ADDRESS

16-20 Cumberland Street South, Dublin 2

BANKERS

Bank of Ireland,
P.O. Box 3131,
Baggot Street,
Dublin 2.

STAFF

Chief Executive	Katherine Zappone
NOW Programme Manager	Patricia Lee
Finance Manager	Angela Ramsbottom
Communications Manager	Anne O'Donnell
Policy Analysts	Susan McNaughton
	Orla O'Connor
Policy Assistant	Maeve Healy
Women's Health Co-ordinator	Audry Deane
NOW Project Advisors	Josephine Lally
NOW Resource Assistant	Sinéad Jackson
Administrator	Caroline Hulme
Membership Assistant	Imelda Brown
Communications Assistant	Ciara McKenna
Receptionist	Gertrude Hoey
Finance Assistant	Ann Kinsella