



International Women's Day, 2012

Fact-sheet

The challenges faced by women in Ireland and internationally.

1. The economic challenges facing women

- Women here earn on average 17.1% less than men.
- Only 123,000 women in Ireland earn more than €50,000 per year in comparison to 254,000 men
- Women earn an average of 55% of what men earn from occupational and private pensions.
- 7 out of 10 men are in the labour force (working or unemployed) while only 5 out of 10 women are in the labour force.
- Unemployment rate for women rose from 4% to 8.1% (2009) and is now 10.4%, a very sharp increase.
- Lone parent households (the majority of whom are women-headed households) reported the highest levels of poverty at 18.5%.
- Women do 80% of domestic and care work in Irish society, making a significant and invaluable contribution but prohibiting them from giving time to other forms of participation as citizens.

2. Women in decision making and public life

- There are only 25 women TDs; the highest number ever. This means that the Dáil has never been less than 85% male.
- Women are less than a third of members of state boards, 17% of local authority councils and just over a third of VEC members.
- Although women are 85% of primary teachers they represent only 53% of primary school managers.
- There have been only 91 women elected to the Dáil since the foundation of the State.

- Our 16 member Cabinet includes only three women, including the first ever woman to serve as Attorney General.
- Although our first women Director of Public Prosecutions and President of the Supreme Court have all been appointed the highest levels of the legal profession are dominated by men. Only 1 of the 6 Supreme Court Justices is a woman. Only 3 of the 35 High Court Justices is a woman.

3. Women's health, well-being and human rights

- Women are more likely to go to hospital – 343 discharges per 1000 women as against 305 per 1000 men.
- Demand for services to assist victims of violence against women has risen by 40% in the past two years.
- Despite numerous legal cases in the Irish courts thousands of Irish women each year still have to travel overseas to have access to a safe and legal abortion.

4. Cut-backs to the women's sector

- An average of 15% was cut from the budgets of women's networks and organisations, in Budget 2011.
- The NWCi had its funding cut by 35%.

5. Women outside of Ireland

- Women from sub-Saharan Africa spend about 40 billion hours a year collecting water. (Around 2.5 times as much as men).
- An average of 65% of employed women in sub-Saharan Africa and south Asia work in agriculture in rural areas – but they receive only 5% of agricultural extension services.
- Of the 72 million children who are not in primary school, 54% of them are girls.
- Girls do 85% more than boys of unpaid care and domestic work, thus limiting their capacity to attend school.
- Although women are only allowed to serve in combat positions in a small number of highly militarised societies (such as the USA and Israel) women are still the primary casualties in times of conflict.
- In the Democratic Republic of Congo 48 women are raped every hour; 12% of the population have been raped at least once.

Sources

Tackling the gender pay gap in the EU European Commission, 2012.

Women and men in Ireland, Central Statistics Office, 2012

I'm every woman, ICTU Women's Conference Report, 2012

Older women and pension inequalities, CARDI grants programme, 2012

Because I am a girl Plan International [2011]

Estimates and Determinants of Sexual Violence Against Women in the Democratic Republic of Congo
American Journal of Public Health [2011]

Who Cares? NWCI [2010]

UNWomen