



Report on AGM MOTIONS 2022

NWCI Youth Advisory Panel (YAP). The NWCI will work to establish a Youth Advisory Panel (YAP) made up of young women and girls to increase participation/engagement among these age groups & to ensure these groups are better represented throughout the work of NWCI.

Proposer: Irish Second-Level Students' Union (ISSU)

Seconders: Union of Students in Ireland (USI)

NWC Actions:

- We have held exploratory meetings with Plan International, Ombudsman for Children, Spunout, Community Foundation of Ireland, DRCC, Irish Traveller Movement and the Shona Project to inform the development of the YAP and explore what type of structure would work best.
- Through our planning and preparations for Femfest, we continued to build engagement with girls and young women, delivering focus groups to over 120 girls and young women.
- We met regularly with the proposers and seconders of the motion ISSU and USI to develop the invitation and accompanying documents.
- Internal discussions have taken place with the board and staff.
- Recruitment to the YAP began in March, nominations were sought from member groups for young women aged 18 – 25.
- We got a great response and have 32 young women who have taken a place on the panel representing a diversity of our members such as Women & Gender Studies UCD School of Social Policy, TENI, Belong to, Irish Traveller Movement and Independent Living Movement Ireland
- We held our first meeting online in May and the next meeting is planned for June. We have an in-person meeting in September. Our workplan will focus on getting to know the work of the organisation, informing campaigns around violence against women and climate justice.

Reaffirming the support of the NWCI for women and girls impacted by commercial sexual exploitation, prostitution, and human trafficking. Pursuant to its long-standing feminist, human rights-based approach to policy decision making and the current Beyond Exploitation campaign, the National Women's Council of Ireland re-states its commitment to the stance that prostitution and sex trafficking constitutes violence against women and is active in raising awareness on this issue

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

Proposer: Ruhama

Seconded: Sexual Exploitation Research Programme (SERP)

Reaffirming support for the Equality model as the most effective framework for tackling the inherent violence and harms, including harms to women's health and wellbeing, caused by the commercial sex trade, and ensuring support for women to exit. In light of recent, comprehensive research on the Irish sex trade, which highlights the inherent health harms and violence of prostitution¹, and demonstrates the positive impacts of the Equality model in shifting the burden of criminality² from those in prostitution to sex buyers and third parties who profit from sexual exploitation, NWC reaffirms its support for the Equality model as the most effective framework for tackling the inherent violence and harms, including harms to women's health and wellbeing, caused by the commercial sex trade, and ensuring support for women to exit.

Proposer: SERP – the Sexual Exploitation Research Programme

Seconded: INMO – the Irish Nurses and Midwives Organisation

NWC Actions:

- NWC was part of the executive committee that co-design the Third National Strategy that included prostitution and commercial sexual exploitation as VAW and developed actions across the 4 Pillars of the Strategy. A [press release](#) was issued to highlight this ground-breaking achievement and NWC will continue to support the full implementation of the Strategy.
- NWC included asks on the Pre-budget submission 2023 on exit services and supports for those who are in, or who wish to leave, prostitution or the sex trade; as well as in the Budget 2023 analysis, highlighting the lack of specific budget allocations in this area.
- In 2022, FemFest focused on raising awareness in schools, with NGOs and at the day of the event about sexual (including prostitution and pornography) and intimate partner violence and healthy relationships with a focus on prevention and protection, with young people. A Youth Advisory Panel will be in place in 2023 to continue with this work.
- The Observatory Shadow Report and its launch during the 16 Days of Activism, chaired and convened by NWC, included recommendations across the 4 pillars to end VAW, including prostitution, commercial sexual exploitation and human trafficking. During the launch of the report, it was included the voice of a survivor of prostitution to highlight recommendations in this area.
- We successfully secured funding from Community Foundation Ireland to continue the work of the Observatory to monitor progress on the Istanbul Convention and to continue our work to end on prostitution and the commercial sex trade through a new post of a violence against women officer.
- In September 2022, NWC published the [findings of a collaborative study](#) between NWC and UCD's Sexual Exploitation Research Programme (SERP) which explored attitudes to the sexual exploitation of women and girls in the commercial sex trade in Ireland, and its impact on gender equality. NWC also issued a [press release](#) to launch the study.

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- NWC [Submission on the General Scheme of the Criminal Justice \(Sexual Offences and HT\) Bill 2022](#) included the endorsement of ICI recommendations on the National Referral Mechanism for victims of Human Trafficking with regards best practice principles, in relation to the identification and support of victims of human trafficking.

Taking Action on Violence Against Healthcare Workers. Considering the increasing incidents of violence against nurses, midwives, and healthcare workers as recorded by HSE – this motion: Reaffirms our absolute: Condemnation for violence of any kind against women. Calls for NWC support and action to lobby for an immediate review of the power of the Health and Safety Authority, and their role in investigating workplaces that record increasing incidents of assaults and calls on the Government to strengthen their powers. Condemns in the strongest possible terms the increasing evidence of this verbal, physical, and sexual assault against overwhelmingly women workers.

Proposer: Irish Nurses and Midwives Organisation

Seconded: SIPTU

NWC Actions:

- NWC communicated with INMO to support their work in this area. We supported and promoted the work and campaigns of the INMO across all social media platforms where The Irish Nurses and Midwives association raised awareness on assaults reported on their members and the spike in racist abuse against healthcare workers, and will continue to support where input is sought.

Workplace awareness of domestic violence. While domestic abuse can affect all genders, it is predominately female that it largely impacts and there are very few employers that currently recognise the need for a policy on or are aware that this might be an issue for their employees. We call on NWC to encourage IBEC & other Employer Associations to promote and strive for a policy such as this in the workplace.

Proposer: Mandate Trade Union

Seconded: Irish cancer Society

“Why ending gender-based violence is everybody’s business” We call on the NWC to support a campaign to bring about the ending of Gender-based violence. A culture shift needs to take place in the workplace to highlight the need for inclusive, psychologically safe conversations in the workplace and in society.

Proposer: Energy Services Union (of Ireland)

Seconded: SIPTU

NWC Actions:

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- Domestic Violence leave for victims/survivors: NWC issued a [press release](#) to demand for domestic violence leave to be paid in full and highlighting the risks of being paired with sick leave; we supported posts across all social media platforms to raise awareness about the risks of not having a domestic violence leave paid in full (as highlighted by Women's Aid). NWC included this ask on the Pre-budget submission 2023 and it is part of the Third National Strategy Implementation Plan (Action 2.4.10) and will continue to support the full implementation of it.
- NWC was part of the executive committee that co-design of the Third National Strategy, which includes Action 1.7 dedicated to making workplaces safer, in the public, private and other sectors, reducing opportunities for sexual violence and gender-based violence, including the ILO No 190 ratification. NWC will continue to support actions to implement and fund these initiatives.
- The National Observatory, chaired and convened by NWC, coordinated a Shadow Report to Greio and included recommendations on Article 40 regarding Sexual Harassment (including the ratification of ILO Conventions 190 and actively promote and implement the provisions of Code of Practice on Sexual Harassment and Harassment at Work).
- In April 2023, as part of the It Stops Now Campaign, it will be launched the Good Practice Guide, a document which aims to assist Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Ireland to implement, and give true life to, Safe, Respectful, Supportive and Positive – Ending Sexual Violence and Harassment in Irish Higher Education Institutions.
- As part of IWD, NWC conducted talks like at the National Lottery, we raised awareness on DSGBV and what companies and individuals can do to prevent it.
- NWC supported the collective bargaining efforts of SIPTU, INMO, ICTU and Forsa through support of the 'Valuing Community National Protest', key to support equality for women in the workplace.
- On May Day, NWC celebrated the achievements of worker organising and of trade unions and raised awareness about women continue to experience inequality in the world of work (e.g. women are more likely to be low paid or in precarious work, women continue to carry an unequal share of unpaid work in the home).
- At the NWC [Submission on the REVIEW OF CIVIL LEGAL AID SCHEME](#) it was included the gendered nature and gendered constraints accessing legal advice must take into account in the civil legal aid scheme (e.g. for people who want to take employment, employment equality or equal status claims to the Workplace Relations Commission, where women, often financially disadvantaged, cannot access the civil legal aid scheme, this is a real cause for concern) and the need to ensure the provision of free legal to all victims/survivors of domestic, sexual and gender based violence.
- In 2022, FemFest focused on raising awareness in schools, with NGOs and at the day of the event about sexual (including prostitution and pornography) and intimate partner violence and healthy relationships with a focus on prevention and protection, with young people. A Youth Advisory Panel will be in place in 2023 to continue with this work.

Support the Right to Housing A motion to mandate NWC to campaign for the inclusion of positive housing rights in the constitution of Ireland

Proposer: Cork Simon Community

**National Women's Council of Ireland
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Seconded: Irish Council of Civil Liberties (ICL)

NWC Actions:

- NWC made a submission in August 2022 to the Housing Commission on a Referendum on Housing in Ireland calling for a referendum to create a constitutional right to Housing
- NWC is a member of Raise the Roof – homes for all campaign
- NWC participated in housing demonstrations in 2022 and in demonstrations surrounding the ending of the eviction ban in 2023
- NWC has consistently raised on social media and in traditional media that Ireland has one of the highest rates of female homelessness in the EU and Lone parent families, 86% of whom are headed by women, are the highest proportion of families living in emergency accommodation
- NWC included recommendations in our Pre Budget Submission 2023 recommending investment in a programme of public housing and support for those in the private rented sector.
- NWC advocated for the establishment of the eviction ban for those in the private rented sector and for its continuation in March 2023.

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Feminist Climate Action and Just Transition Community Work Ireland calls on NWC to prioritise action on climate change and a just transition, mainstreaming a climate justice perspective into the work of the organisation

Proposer: Community Work Ireland

Seconded: National Collective of Community Based Women's Networks (will be Women's Collective Ireland by AGM)

NWC Actions:

- Received funding for the 3 year CCAP joint project with CWI: "From the Ground up: Feminist Communities for Climate Justice"

From the Ground Up: Feminist Communities for Climate Justice campaigns for climate justice that reflects feminist and community work values. We mobilise communities, ensuring social inclusion and equality are central to climate policies and programmes.

This partnership between the National Women's Council and Community Work Ireland amplifies the voices of women and marginalised communities that are most impacted by climate change, building momentum in communities to engage, understand and influence climate policies.

From the Ground Up: Feminist Communities for Climate Justice will develop a feminist and community work analysis, deliver an accredited training programme, establish a Communities for Climate Justice Network, and develop resources and campaigns. #FromTheGroundUp

- Recruited a Climate coordinator and Climate officer
- Set up a climate advisory panel
- Public launch of project to take place in Sept 2023

Ensure that women are supported in returning to work following serious illness (cancer) To further a cross-sectoral and policy approach (e.g. employment, enterprise, justice, health, etc.) to ensure that women, returning to work following a serious illness (such as cancer), have a range of employment supports and protections available

Proposer: Irish Cancer Society

Seconded: Mandate Trade Union

Ensure entitlements for postponed maternity leave for people/women who have been diagnosed with and who are undergoing treatment for serious illness (including cancer) while pregnant or recently post-partum. No person should have to use or lose their maternity leave to receive treatment for serious illness. The NWCI and its members will continue to campaign for the postponement of maternity leave to pregnant people and mothers/people who have recently given birth and are undergoing treatment for serious illness (including cancer).

Proposer: Irish Cancer Society

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

Seconder: Mandate Trade Union

NWC Actions: NWC was in touch with Irish Cancer Society during 2022 to see what could be done to amplify and support their work in this area.

We supported the launch of the ICS's #LeaveOurLeave campaign across all social media platforms. ICS was leading political advocacy and legal amendments on this area following from this. NWC has previously fed into the campaign briefing for elected representatives and will continue to support where input is sought.

Commitment to elimination of HPV cancers. For the Government, HSE, and the National Screening Service to commit to and publish a strategy for the elimination of HPV cancers through the 90-70-90 strategy (consistent with the WHO elimination strategy and elements of Europe's Beating Cancer Plan).

Proposer: Irish Cancer Society

Seconder: 221 Plus

To support the greater participation of women in the BowelScreen programme to help detect colorectal cancers at the earliest possible stage. To call for the extension of the BowelScreen programme to people aged 50-74 and greater public awareness to participate in the programme to ensure the best outcomes.

Proposer: Irish Cancer Society

Seconder: 221 Plus

NWC Actions:

- NWC submitted comments to the National Screening Service on their new draft Health Equity Framework, with a particular emphasis on how marginalised groups of women can be reached
- NWC issued a [press release](#) to mark the final report of the Scally inquiry, to encourage women to have confidence in the screening service and to urge Government implementation of remaining recommendations from Professor Scally
- As a member of the Women's Health Taskforce, NWC will continue to support full plan implementation, including on Action 9 and Action 3 which includes reference to cancer screening and implementation of the National Cancer Strategy.
- NWC continues to share information from the HSE on screening programmes on social media channels.

Monitor and support the progression and equitable implementation of the Assisted Human Reproduction (AHR) Bill, 2017. The NWCI will continue to monitor the progression of the AHR Bill, and call for the integration of equitable and free access to fertility services (including counselling, preservation and treatment) within the legislation.

Proposer: Irish Cancer Society

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

Seconded: 221 Plus

NWC Actions:

- NWC highlighted the urgent need for publicly funded fertility services in Ireland in our budget submission and welcomed landmark investment in this in Budget 2023.
- NWC provided further analysis on the fertility investment along with policy recommendations for the development of services through the regional fertility hubs in our post-Budget briefing: *Gender Analysis of the Budget*
- NWC continues to work with Department of Health officials and Women's Health Taskforce members on the development of public fertility service and the urgent need to establish the Assisted Human Reproduction Regulatory Authority (AHRRA).
- NWC developed a surrogacy members briefing pack and hosted a membership meeting on this issue to explore whether it was possible for us to represent our membership on this divisive issue.

Support for provision of a once-off dedicated grant to parents/families of children who are diagnosed with cancer or other serious illnesses and requiring prolonged hospital care. To ask the Government to ring-fence funding to distribute a once-off monetary grant to support parents/guardians of seriously ill children with non-medical expenses.

Proposer: Irish Cancer Society

Seconded: Barnardos

NWC Actions: NWC met with ICS in 2022 to discuss joint-work. We reiterated that we are happy to support and endorse any of ICS campaign activities if helpful. ICS has let us know that their ask to Government on this has slightly changed since the motion. NWC offered to include the finalised ask in our PBS when available if appropriate.

Support the sustainability of Women's Collective Ireland (new name will be launched before June) and NWCI member groups to advance marginalised women's equality in order to help address poverty, social exclusion and inequality and support increased economic growth to strengthen the sector. We call on NWC to strengthen the women's community sector by supporting the sustainability of Women's Collective Ireland and the women's community development sector in order to support women's empowerment and advance women's rights on multiple fronts, including socio-economic rights.

Proposer: Women's Collective Ireland – new name will be launched before June (Currently NCCWN)

Seconded: Community Work Ireland

NWC actions:

- NWC actively pursued increased investment in Women's Community Development organisations through its pre-budget submissions and pre budget lobbying with TD's and Senators.

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- NWC's pre-budget submission 2023 included the following ask in its top 10 asks for budget 2023:
"Support the participation of marginalised communities/women across the island through increased funding to women's civil society organisations"
- Additionally, the pre-budget submission called for:
 - Increase funding to women's community organisations to meet their full costs
 - Ensure funding for services and programmes provides meaningful employment with decent terms and conditions for workers, including pay scales commensurate with experience & qualifications in alignment with public sector peers and pension provision, paid sick leave, and paid maternity leave
 - Provide multi-annual state funding to support community organisations to enable long term planning and staff recruitment and retention
- Members were consulted on the draft pre-budget submission and had an opportunity to influence
- NWC supported the 'Valuing Community National Protest' led by SIPTU, INMO, ICTU and ForSa. The protest called for fairness and better pay for Community and Voluntary Sector workers. NWC mobilised members to attend the protest and was a visible presence on the day as well as supporting on social media.

Citizens Assembly recommendation on Collective Bargaining

This AGM calls on the NWC to campaign for policy and legislation that will give effect to the Citizen's Assembly recommendation to establish a legal right to collective bargaining for women workers in the Republic of Ireland.

Proposer: SIPTU

Seconder: INMO

NWC actions:

- NWC made a submission to the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Gender Equality highlighting a right to collective bargaining as one of the most effective ways to create more equal redistribution of wealth, reduce inequality and address low pay.
- NWC included a recommendation on legislating for collective bargaining rights in its pre-budget submission. NWC members social media campaign to coincide with Budget 2023 included a contribution from Mandate.
- NWC included a recommendation on legislating for collective bargaining rights in its submission to the Low Pay Commission as part of its deliberations on the minimum wage and living wage
- NWC supported the collective bargaining efforts of SIPTU, INMO, ICTU and ForSa through support of the 'Valuing Community National Protest'. NWC mobilised members to attend the protest and was a visible presence on the day as well as supporting on social media.
- NWC held a May Day event in 2022 on women's collective struggles highlighting the potential for collective bargaining to improve women's equality at work. The event was held in Liberty Hall in Dublin. Speakers included Eilish Balfe from the SIPTU BIG Start campaign who spoke about the struggle for early years workers pay and recognition; Luisa Carty who spoke about ForSa's school secretaries campaign, their recent success in securing a pay deal and what remains to be done to secure

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pensions, Julia Marciniak from UNITE who spoke about her and her fellow migrant workers campaign in the hospitality sector which led to legislation on tips in the sector and also UNITE's campaign to support the safety of women workers in the sector who are leaving work late at night and Denise Curran, President of Mandate Trade Union who spoke about Mandates many campaigns in support of women workers.

- NWC will hold an event to mark May Day 2023, looking at women's struggles over the past 50 years and looking to the future and how a right to collective bargaining can advance women's equality