



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



FEMINISTS ARE EVERYWHERE

NWCI Annual Report 2017



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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRPERSON



We are at a very pivotal time in Ireland and globally to make a real difference to women's equality. The #MeToo campaign has shone a very necessary spotlight on the abuse of women by those in powerful positions. This offers us opportunity to highlight and to redress the many other inequalities that exist for women.

2017 has been a very positive and busy year for NWCI and our member organisations. Our core funding from the Department of Justice was increased this year and we look forward to continued restoration to bring us back to at least pre-austerity levels in Budget 2018. The financial stability afforded by this support allowed NWCI to progress key goals in this the first year of our new Strategic Plan 'Driving Women's Equality 2016-2020'.

The year began with NWCI facilitating a collective shadow report to the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (UN CEDAW). We led an alliance of women's organisations in Geneva ensuring strong international recommendations for Ireland on a range of key issues for women's equality, including violence against women.

In March, over 500 delegates from across the globe came together for the 7th World Congress on Women's Mental Health in Dublin, co-hosted by NWCI and Trinity College Dublin. As part of the Congress, we launched the first ever video on women's mental health in Ireland. Our June AGM Morning Event, 'Feminists are Everywhere', was an enormous success and we were proud to give the first ever NWCI Award for Outstanding Feminist Leadership to feminist activist and social justice campaigner, Gráinne Healy. NWCI also honoured the women and children who were incarcerated in religiously-run, State funded institutions in Ireland, with the NWCI Solidarity Award. In November, we hosted a very successful event on the gender pay gap, chaired by RTÉ journalist Martina Fitzgerald.

We ended our year with two very significant women's leadership events. We welcomed over a hundred young feminists to #FemFest, our third annual conference for young women, by young women. An Taoiseach Leo Varadkar TD opened the event and committed to supporting NWCI in its work. From our future leaders to our current political leadership, we welcomed the establishment of the Women's Parliamentary Caucus in December for which NWCI is proud to act as secretariat.

I want to end by warmly welcoming our new members, both group members and individual members, who joined NWCI in 2017. NWCI membership provides you with an opportunity to shape our campaigns for a more equal Ireland for women and I encourage you to participate in our work.

I would also like to sincerely thank the previous and current board members, the director and staff of NWCI for their commitment and support over the last year.

Ellen O'Malley Dunlop



2017 was a very significant year for women's equality in Ireland and NWCI was at the forefront of change for women. 2017 has been a momentous year in our campaigning to secure complete and accessible healthcare for women and to secure a date for the referendum to repeal the Eighth Amendment.

We built on our successful advocacy in 2016 to have gender budgeting recognised by the government as a key transformational process for women. NWCI published a major piece of research on gender budgeting in Ireland and our expertise was publicly recognised by An Taoiseach, the Minister for Finance and the Joint Oireachtas Budgetary Oversight Committee. Our report launched in October, was followed by the Budget 2018 statement announcing the initiation of a Department of Public Expenditure and Reform-led equality budgeting pilot project within key departments.

The importance of feminist economic analysis was further highlighted in the work that NWCI did this year on the gender pension gap in Ireland. In conjunction with presentations to the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Social Protection, we launched our Budget 2018 submission 'Value for Money, Money for Values' by inviting politicians to come and discuss priorities for advancing women's equality with some of our members. The women had the opportunity to discuss the impact of the gender pension gap on their daily lives and politicians commented that their contribution was invaluable.

Violence against Women has always been a central advocacy and campaigning issue for NWCI. 2017 saw the launch of our EU ESHT Project and It Stops Now campaign, aiming to prevent and combat sexual violence and harassment and build a culture of zero tolerance in Higher Education Institutes throughout Europe. Our other work included the Irish Observatory on Violence against Women's '16 Days of Action' event 'Women Seeking Justice – Addressing the Low Levels of Prosecution for Violence against Women' in November.

In February, I was honoured to address the Citizens Assembly as it considered the Eighth Amendment to the Constitution, highlighting the experiences of women in Ireland who have been largely voiceless in this debate due to the stigma that surrounds abortion. I outlined how the Eighth Amendment disproportionately affects vulnerable women, including victims of rape, those who cannot afford to travel and those who are unable to travel due to their health or their immigration status. We were delighted to launch 'Every Woman – our model for affordable, accessible healthcare options for women and girls' in Dublin and Cork as part of this work.

The NWCI team is a committed and passionate group of women, whom I am proud to lead in their work to advance women's equality and represent our membership. I sincerely thank the team and our voluntary board members for all their work and dedication throughout the year.

Orla O'Connor, Director



The National Women's Council of Ireland's/Comhairle Náisiúnta na mBan (NWCI) mission is to lead and to be a catalyst in the achievement of equality for women.

We are the national representative organisation for women and women's groups in Ireland. A non-governmental, not-for-profit organisation, founded in 1973, we seek to achieve equality for women. We represent and take our mandate from our 180 member groups from across a diversity of backgrounds, sectors and geographical locations. We also have a growing number of individual members who support the campaign for women's equality in Ireland.

Our mandate is to take action to ensure that the voices of women in all their diversity are heard. Our vision is of an Ireland and of a world where women can achieve their full potential in a just and equal society.

NWCI's values and beliefs shape and inform all the work we do. They include:

- **Feminism** NWCI is a feminist organisation. We work to change society so that women and men have an equal say in the decisions that affect their lives.
- **Solidarity** between women in all their diversity, through empowerment, collaboration and participation of all women in Ireland and globally.
- **Collective action, collaboration and participation** NWCI is committed to work, where possible, based on collective action, collaboration and through participation, as preferential ways to achieve an equal and inclusive society where there is equality for all women.
- **The recognition of care in our society and the redistribution of care work between women and men** The recognition and valuing of affective care is fundamental to the achievement of equality for women.
- **Importance of human rights, global interdependence, justice and sustainability** NWCI believes in the dignity and human rights of all human beings. These rights are universal, inalienable and indivisible.
- **Intersectionality** NWCI acknowledges the intersectionality of women's lived experiences and in particular seeks to end discrimination on the grounds of gender, family status, religion, race, age, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, ethnicity or membership of the Travelling Community.
- **Protection and respect for the bodily integrity and security of women and girls** NWCI believes that bodily integrity is a human right and the right to make one's own choices about one's body for oneself is a basic personal freedom.
- **Promote women and girls' leadership to achieve an equal society** NWCI believes we must examine the role of women in leadership and promote women into decision making spaces at every level in order to promote solidarity amongst women and the generation of sustainable gender equal societies.
- **Right of women to economic independence** NWCI believes that every woman has a right to economic independence and that such a right pertains to women in employment or receiving social welfare.
- **Committed to build a society based on equality, respect, dignity and inclusivity** NWCI believes that women have the right to live in a society where equality principles rest on an understanding of respect, dignity and inclusivity for all women.



KEY EVENTS AND INITIATIVES IN 2017

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S WEEK

The World Congress on Women's Mental Health – Rights, Resilience and Recovery



For three days in March, Ireland became the centre of the conversation about women's mental health. Over 500 delegates from across the globe came together for the 7th World Congress on Women's Mental Health in Dublin's RDS, coinciding with International Women's Day.

NWCI co-hosted the World Congress with the International Association of Women's Mental Health (IAWMH) and Trinity College Dublin. The Congress highlighted the social determinants of health and explored the links between gender inequalities and women's mental health. Cutting edge research and practice was presented in key areas: the importance of gender sensitive mental health services; young

women and mental health; reproductive & maternal mental health; violence against women; mental health care for refugee, migrant and ethnic minority women; health inequalities and women's mental health; and mental health in the LGBTI community.

The Congress provided exceptional networking and learning opportunities for Irish and international mental health professionals, NWCI members and groups of various disciplines to meet and discuss best practices and innovative developments to improve women's mental health.



NWCI was delighted to mark International Women's Day with a special event at the World Congress on the 8th of March. The event highlighted the need for improved and targeted mental health services for women in Ireland and to tackle the inequalities that affect women's mental health. There was a special focus on the area of reproductive rights and the mental health implications of restrictive abortion regimes, such as in Ireland. Ailbhe Smyth, Convenor of Ireland's Coalition to Repeal the Eighth Amendment, gave a powerful keynote speech. Irish author Marian Keyes read from her most recent novel which tackles the issue of Irish women having to travel to the United Kingdom in order to access abortion. Irish poet Rita Ann Higgins, and the former Ireland Chair of Poetry, Paula Meehan gave poetry recitals.

Dublin Declaration on Abortion

There was a historic moment during the International Women's Day event, when a 'Dublin Declaration' on abortion was read out by the Congress co-hosts, NWCI, IAWMH and TCD. All delegates joined in to read the final words in unison.

The Congress's Dublin Declaration calls on all governments to guarantee that abortion services are available and accessible in a manner that ensures women's autonomy and decision-making is respected, in line with the best international health practice and in fulfilment of women's human rights.



'Out of Silence' Film Premiere, Dublin City Hall

NWCI collaborated with filmmakers Ishka films to produce a short film on women's mental health for the World Congress. The film premiered to critical acclaim in the beautiful Rotunda room at Dublin's City Hall. Launched by Helen McEntee, TD, Minister of State for Mental Health and Older People, *Out of Silence - Women's Mental Health in Ireland* is the first film in Ireland to focus on women's mental health. It begins the work of making visible women's particular experiences of mental health issues, highlighting that women's needs are different but equal to men's.



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**WOMEN'S
MENTAL
HEALTH IS
INVISIBLE.**

ORLA O'CONNOR,
DIRECTOR NWCI

The film explores a number of key themes to illustrate the gender differences in how women experience mental and emotional health, and the particular policy and practice responses needed to address women's specific needs. This is achieved via powerful testimonies from women sharing their personal experiences of mental health difficulties related to perinatal depression, intimate partner violence and eating disorders. Interviews from health professionals, researchers and mental health advocates point to the need for more research on this area to inform the design of mental health policies and services that are more responsive to women.



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**THERE'S AN
EXPECTATION
THAT WOMEN
ARE MORE
COMFORTABLE
DISCUSSING
THEIR FEELINGS.
I NEVER DID
THAT.**

GRACE CONWAY

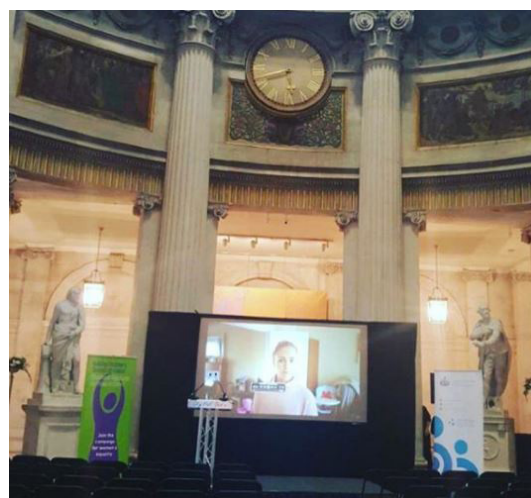
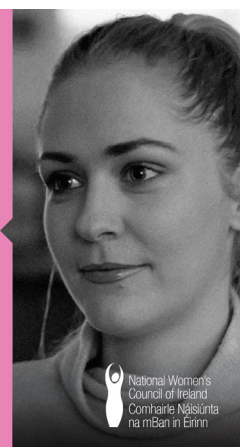
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**COMING FROM
DIFFERENT CULTURAL
BACKGROUNDS,
MIGRANT WOMEN
IDENTIFIED ISSUES
OF MENTAL
HEALTH WITH
ISOLATION, RACISM,
DISCRIMINATION
AND LANGUAGE
BARRIERS.**

SARAH DUKU



“
**I JUST FEEL
SO SORRY
FOR HER,
AND I'M SO
HAPPY THAT
I'M NOT
THAT GIRL
ANYMORE.**

EMMA MURPHY



#FEMINISTSAREEVERYWHERE – OUR AGM MORNING EVENT



'Feminists are Everywhere' was the title of our very successful AGM morning event that brought together over 150 members and supporters in June to discuss key issues for women's equality.

Tánaiste and Minister for Justice and Equality, Frances Fitzgerald TD gave the keynote address. Her inspiring speech was followed by a panel discussion chaired by Sarah McNerney, Newstalk Radio. Panellists included: Trish Long, Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures Ireland; Gráinne Healy, feminist activist and social justice campaigner; Claire McGettrick, Justice for Magdalenes; and Sarah Duku, Cairde. Panellists shared personal experiences which led to their interest in feminism and highlighted the need to work together collaboratively for women's equality.

In the run up to the event, NWCI ran a very effective social media campaign in which we asked our supporters to tweet why they are a feminist using the hashtag #FeministsAreEverywhere. Over 500 people actively used the hashtag and the campaign reached over 2 million people.



#FEMINISTSAREEVERYWHERE – OUR AGM MORNING EVENT

Inaugural NWCI Outstanding Feminist Leadership and Solidarity Awards

At the AGM, NWCI presented the first ever NWCI Award for Outstanding Feminist Leadership to feminist activist and social justice campaigner, Gráinne Healy. We were delighted to honour Grainne who, through her commitment, leadership and tireless work – going far beyond the issue of marriage equality – has contributed immensely to changing the face of Irish society for the better.

NWCI also honoured the women and children who were incarcerated in religiously-run, State-funded institutions in Ireland with the NWCI Solidarity Award. Margaret Joyce, herself a survivor, was presented the Solidarity Award to honour the perseverance and strength of all the women and children forcibly incarcerated in these institutions and in recognition of their struggle for justice.



GETTING WOMEN ON BOARD – HARNESSING WOMEN’S TALENT IN COMPANIES



In September, NWCI held a high profile ‘Getting Women on Board’ event, co-hosted by the Norwegian Embassy. Building on NWCI’s ‘Better Boards’ handbook, the event examined how to accelerate the pace of change and how to increase the number of women on private company boards in Ireland.

Keynote speakers included: Liv Monica Stubholt, business lawyer and a partner with one of Norway’s top law firms; Else Berit Eikeland, Norway’s Ambassador to Ireland; Margaret E. Ward, RTÉ board member and CEO of Clear; and Anne O’Leary, CEO of Vodafone Ireland. The discussion was chaired by journalist Alison O’Connor. Our two keynote speakers from Norway explained how the introduction of legislative gender quotas there in 2008 led to 40% representation of women on private company boards.



CLOSING THE GENDER PAY GAP IN THE MEDIA AND THE ARTS



In November, NWCI hosted an event on the gender pay gap with a specific focus on the media and arts sectors. While the issues relating to the gender pay gap are common to all forms of paid employment, we are aware that there are specific sectoral causes and for this reason we have decided to have a sectoral approach to addressing the pay gap. We believe this will facilitate a more in-depth discussion of the causes, consequences and solutions for women and for public and private organisations.

We organised the event in the context of our work on women's economic equality and women in leadership and also as part of our work on the Department of Justice and Equality's consultation on the gender pay gap. Our Director, Orla O'Connor, made a presentation on NWCI's 'No Small Change' submission to the Department's consultation. Other speakers included: Emma O'Kelly, Chair of the National Union of Journalists Dublin Broadcasting Branch; Sarah Durcan, Board Member of the Abbey Theatre, and founding member of Waking the Feminists; Senator Ivana Bacik; and Martina Fitzgerald, Political Correspondent for RTÉ. The event was livestreamed on NWCI's Facebook page.

WOMEN SEEKING JUSTICE – PROSECUTION FOR VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN



In December, to mark the 16 days of Global Action on Violence against Women, the Irish Observatory on Violence against Women hosted a 'Women Seeking Justice' seminar. The Observatory, which is chaired and convened by NWCI, organised the seminar in partnership with the European Parliament Liaison Office in Ireland.

The event was developed in line with the principles of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (the Istanbul Convention). According to the Convention, it is the obligation of the state to fully address violence against women in all its forms and to take measures to prevent this violence, protect its victims and prosecute the perpetrators.

Experts from a wide range of sectors and agencies examined how Ireland can establish a 'gold standard' prosecution process which supports victims of violence against women and holds perpetrators to account, while respecting the rights of the accused. Speakers included: Lynn Boylan, MEP; Deirdre Clune, MEP; Rebecca Coen BL, Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions; and Maria McDonald BL, the Victims' Rights Alliance. There was a panel discussion chaired by *The Irish Times* journalist, Conor Gallagher, with speakers representing An Garda Síochána, the criminal justice system and direct support services for women.

In November, NWCI welcomed over a hundred young feminists to Liberty Hall, Dublin for our third annual FemFest Congress. We were delighted to welcome An Taoiseach Leo Varadkar TD to open the event. In his speech, the Taoiseach highlighted the need for Government to look at the things that negatively constrain the life and career choices of young women. He spoke of the Government's commitment to enacting the Domestic Violence Bill, publishing a second Sexual Abuse and Violence in Ireland study, utilising gender budgeting and tackling the gender pay gap.

The day was designed by young women, for young women to discuss the importance of women in leadership and why young women in Ireland need more female role models. Delegates heard from a panel of speakers including: Sinead McSweeney, MD of Twitter in Ireland; Louise McSharry, presenter at RTÉ 2fm; and Sinead Aherne, captain of the Dublin Ladies Football Team. The panel was chaired by Dil Wickremasinghe, social justice campaigner and mental health podcaster.

Throughout the day delegates took part in workshops on reproductive health, campaigning to end sexual violence on 3rd level campuses and women in leadership. The workshops were followed by FemFest Talks where Siona Cahill, Union of Students in Ireland; Vanessa Lacey, Transgender Equality Network Ireland and Eileen Flynn, Irish Traveller Movement discussed the feminist issues that are important to them.

In the afternoon, Anna Cosgrave of the Repeal Project discussed standing out as a 'bossy woman'. Delegates were given a brilliant demonstration of young women throughout history from No Hate Speech Campaigner Demilade Adeniran. Jane Hayes Nally of the Irish Second Level Students' Union closed the session by summing up the themes that had been discussed throughout the day. FemFest ended with a rousing performance from the always exuberant Voices for Choice choir.



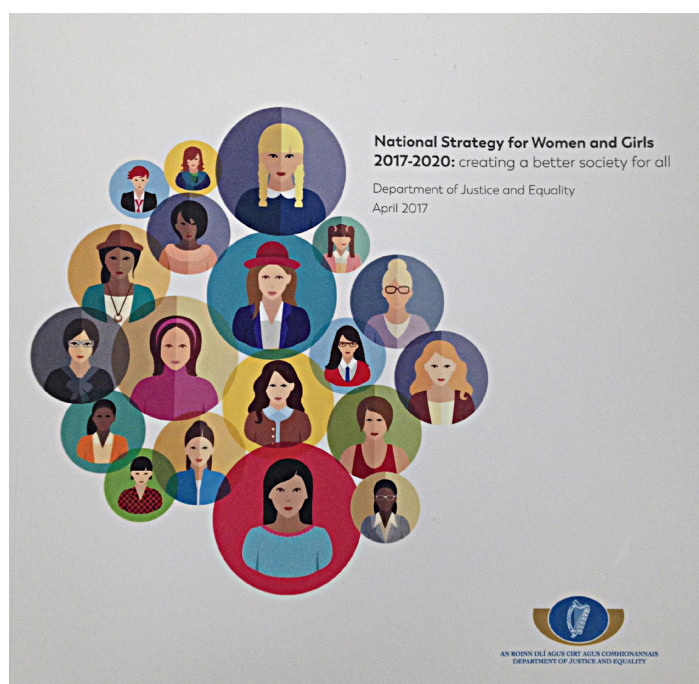
KEY ACHIEVEMENTS AND ENGAGEMENTS WITH POLICY MAKERS

Strong Recommendations in the National Strategy for Women and Girls 2017-20

In May, the Government launched the National Strategy for Women and Girls 2017-20. The vision presented in the new National Strategy is ambitious and includes important recommendations on family leave, affordable childcare, pay, pensions, and very importantly reiterates the Programme for Government's commitment to gender budgeting.

NWCI welcomed the opportunity to contribute to the development of this much needed strategy. In January, we carried out a consultation process, by calling for submissions from our membership and holding a members' meeting. The input from our membership was then used to inform our written submission to the Department of Justice and Equality. NWCI was a member of the Strategy Committee and was instrumental in ensuring that combatting Violence against Women was included as a core objective.

NWCI was named in the strategy as a partner with the HSE and the Department of Health to develop a Women's Health Action Plan. This was a key achievement, which we had campaigned for over a number of years, and will provide a real opportunity to ensure a focus on women's health needs.



SECURING STRONG CEDAW RECOMMENDATIONS TO IRELAND

In March, the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW Committee) published its assessment of Ireland's record on women's rights and equality. Their recommendations reflected many of the issues highlighted in NWCI's Shadow Report to the Committee, as well as the representations made by NWCI to the Committee during the two-day examination of Ireland in early February.

Reflecting the issues raised in our Shadow Report, the CEDAW Committee made recommendations, including:

Violence against Women: The Committee recommended ensuring the relevant institutions implement the gold standard in data collection and analysis on all forms of gender-based violence. Data should be disaggregated by, gender, age, ethnicity and relationship with the perpetrator.

The Committee also urged Ireland to 'conduct prompt, independent and thorough investigations, in line with international human rights standards', into all these allegations of abuse in institutions

Women's Leadership Roles: The Committee urged the introduction of temporary special measures, including quotas, to be used in conjunction with other policy measures to ensure real change, such as 'civic education programmes, mentoring and training programmes, childcare and eldercare..'

Women's Economic Independence: The Committee urged Ireland to take concrete measures to reduce the gender pay gap.

Specific Groups of Women: The Committee called for action for Traveller women on health, education, housing and employment outcomes and for the ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Women's Right to Health: The Committee also made detailed recommendations on the right to health for women in Ireland, including reproductive rights.

A full list of recommendations to Ireland is available on the CEDAW website.

CAMPAIGNING FOR A FAIR STATE PENSION SYSTEM



NWCI has been a leading voice in the campaign to reverse the 2012 eligibility changes to the state pension. In developing our 2018 Pre-Budget, NWCI worked with member organisations to address the budgetary cuts that disproportionately affected women. Throughout 2017, NWCI partnered with Age Action, Foras, Pensioners for Equality, Active Retirement Ireland and the Irish Country Women's Association to continue to campaign for fair pension provision for women.

Between February and June, NWCI organised a series of workshops to discuss pension inequality with women in Cork and Kerry. These workshops were organised with our members – National Collective of Community-Based Women's Networks, South Kerry Women's Association, the IRD Duhallow and Duhallow Women's Forum. The purpose of the project was to engage and empower older women to advocate for direct personal access to pensions that take into account the important role women play in providing unpaid care. The workshops covered how pension policy works and how to advocate for change, as well as presentations from local Citizens Information Centres and Age Action.

The women participating in the workshops shared their personal experiences and informed NWCI's lobbying work. The women were active over the summer collecting over 5,000 signatures for a petition calling on the Government to reverse the changes to the pension eligibility criteria introduced in 2012. In September, they travelled to Dublin for NWCI's pre-budget briefing where they spoke directly to their local representatives about inequality within the current state pension system.

In June, NWCI addressed the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Social Protection on indirect gender discrimination in state pension policy. We highlighted that decisions made over the period of recession have increased the gender pension gap in Ireland. NWCI advised the Committee that pension reform must ensure everyone can equally establish an entitlement to an adequate pension.

Building on this work, NWCI developed a guide in November, 'How to Lobby for Pension Equality for Women'. Over 600 copies of the guide, which was kindly supported by the Community Foundation of Ireland, were disseminated to support women and women's groups in local communities.

LOBBYING POLITICIANS ON NWCI'S PRE-BUDGET PROPOSALS



In September, we launched our 2018 Pre-Budget submission 'Value for Money, Money for Values', calling on the Government to tackle the deep inequalities women face in the pension system, to increase investment in affordable childcare and to eliminate violence against women. To launch the submission, NWCI held a briefing day in Buswells, attended by TDs and Senators from all parties. Over 70 Oireachtas members, including several Ministers, were briefed on NWCI's proposals for Budget 2018.

We were delighted to welcome women from NCCWN to the briefing, where they had the opportunity to discuss the impact of the gender pension gap on their daily lives. Many of the politicians commented on the invaluable contribution of these women to the day's discussions. We were also pleased to have members of NWCI's board of directors and representatives from NWCI member groups attend the briefing and engage with politicians.

In October, NWCI welcomed the Government Budget's increased investment in childcare and pensions but cautioned that broadening women's access to pensions and increasing the affordability of childcare would have put more money in women's pockets.



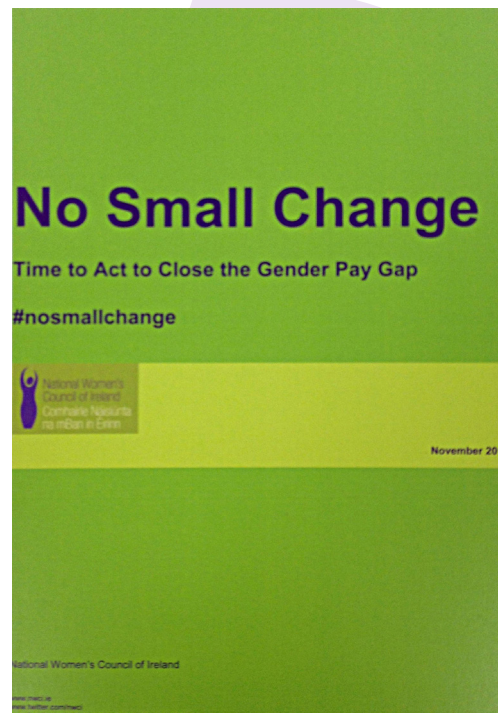
CLOSING THE GENDER PAY GAP - NO SMALL CHANGE



One of the big talking points of 2017 was the gender pay gap - in other words, the economic cost of being a woman. Current figures suggest the gender pay gap stands at 13.9% in Ireland. According to the World Economic Forum, it will take 217 years for disparities in the pay and employment opportunities of men and women to end.

The current Programme for Government and the National Strategy for Women and Girls 2017-2020 include commitments to reduce the gender pay gap. Reflecting these commitments, in August the Department of Justice and Equality launched a public consultation on tackling the gender pay gap.

During the development of our submission, 'No Small Change', NWCI identified six core areas that require specific measures: (1) access to justice; (2) pay transparency and targets; (3) job flexibility not insecurity; (4) the equal distribution of care work; (5) combatting occupational segregation; and (6) developing leadership roles for women. In particular, NWCI's submission called for a whole-of-Government approach that includes legislative action, effective monitoring, appropriate sanctions, individual, sectoral and professional strategies, gender proofing of our budget and comprehensive data collection.





For many years, NWCI has been a leading voice in the call for full reproductive rights for women in Ireland.

In February, NWCI was invited to address the Citizens' Assembly which was tasked by Government to consider if the Eighth Amendment should be put to the people in a Referendum. In our presentation we explained that our role is to give voice to the experiences of women in Ireland in this debate due to the stigma that surrounds abortion in Ireland and to support women's access to reproductive health services. We outlined how the Eighth Amendment disproportionately affects vulnerable women, including victims of rape, those who cannot afford to travel and those who are unable to travel due to their health or their immigration status. We also noted it is necessary to remove the criminal sanctions against women and medical professionals. This would provide for access to abortion to women in particularly vulnerable positions in a manner that protects their dignity, privacy and bodily autonomy.

NWCI welcomed the Citizens' Assembly's clear recommendations to remove the Eighth Amendment from the Constitution and their wider recommendations on reproductive healthcare, sexual health and relationship education and the improvement of obstetric care and services for pregnant women in Ireland.

In September, NWCI and many of our 180 member organisations joined the 40,000-strong March for Choice, to show our support for women who face difficult decisions in pregnancy.





Every Woman – Launching our Vision for Reproductive Healthcare for Women and Girls

In November, NWCI was delighted to launch Every Woman – our model for affordable, accessible healthcare options for women and girls. The model is based on extensive consultations with NWCI's members and women and men across Ireland. Every Woman highlights how reproductive health matters at all stages of women's lives, from sexual health education in schools, to contraception and pregnancy care, to menopause services in middle age.

We were thrilled that so many NWCI members attended our Every Woman launches in Dublin and Cork. It provided us with the opportunity to discuss our model with our membership, who had so closely informed the work.

A broad range of speakers from different sectors came to support Every Woman. At our Dublin launch we heard from: Suzy Byrne, disability rights activist; Alison Cowzer, East Coast Bakehouse and Investor on Dragon's Den; and Sonya Lennon, designer and entrepreneur. Speaking in support of Every Woman at the launch in Cork, we welcomed: three-time Olympian Derval O'Rourke; Dr Mary Favier, GP; and Dr Louise Crowley, Vice Dean of Law at University College Cork.



Gender Sensitive Mental Health Services



In 2017, NWCI engaged on a programme of work focusing on women's mental health, including co-hosting the World Congress on Women's Mental Health in March and production of the docu-film 'Out of Silence – Women's Mental Health in Ireland'. Following the premiere, we used the film to frame women's mental health and wellbeing conversations with member groups across the country. The information we are gathering from these conversations ensures that women's experiences of mental health and wellbeing are integrated into NWCI's mental health policy work. Our work with young women through our annual FemFest Congress has also highlighted that mental health is a significant issue for younger women, often related to pressure to conform to idealised body norms and to experiences of sexual harassment.

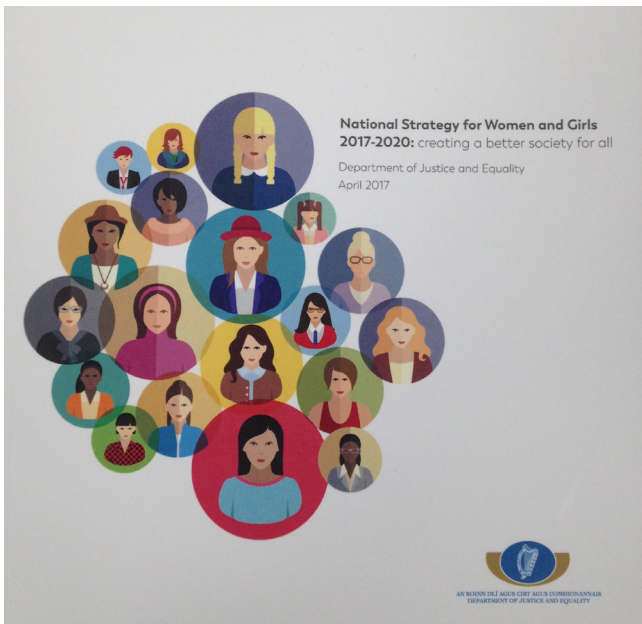
HPV Vaccination Alliance

In 2017, evidence emerged of a fall-off in the uptake of the HPV vaccine, which is offered to girls in the first-year of second level school each year. At our AGM, NWCI members voted to support efforts to increase the uptake of the vaccine. In August, NWCI and our members the Irish Cancer Society, Dublin Well Women Centre, USI, Marie Keating, and IFPA joined the HPV Vaccination Alliance. The Alliance is a group of more than 30 women's, children's and health organisations that have come together to sign a contract against cancer, specifically HPV-related cancers. The Alliance has pledged to raise awareness of the vaccine and its benefits in stopping cancer and saving lives.



Securing a Commitment to Development of a Women's Health Action Plan

In 2017, we welcomed the strong commitments in the National Strategy for Women and Girls to advance the physical and mental health of women and girls and to address the specific health inequities experienced by particular groups of women. We particularly welcomed the commitment to develop a Women's Health Action Plan (WHAP), a commitment which was negotiated between NWCI and the Department of Health. NWCI is embedded in the process to progress the strategy, including being named as responsible for the development of the WHAP in partnership with the Department of Health and the HSE.





In 2017, NWCI made recommendations and observations on the Draft Implementation Plan for the Framework Policy on Local and Community Development. We made submissions to the Department of Rural and Community Development on Local and Economic Community Plans, Local Community Development Committees, the National Planning framework and the Departmental Statement of Strategy. We continued to build strong relationships with relevant officials in the Department of Rural and Community Development. We also took part in the consultation on the redesign of the Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme (SICAP) emphasising the importance of reinstating disadvantaged women as a target group. Disadvantaged women have been included in SICAP 2.

NWCI joined the Community Work Ireland's central group and are represented on the World Community Development Conference Advisory Group. We were successful in submitting a joint abstract with the National Collective of Community Based Networks to deliver a joint workshop on feminism and community development at the conference in 2018. NWCI is an active participant on the Community Platform, working together in 2017 to highlight health inequalities.

Throughout the year, NWCI held several outreach and training sessions with local groups and networks, including the Cavan LCDC Equality Sub Group, National Public Participation Network Resource Workers Network and the Aontas Community Education Network. We participated in an Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission seminar on implementing the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty.

In 2017, NWCI convened two meetings of our women in local government policy advisory group to inform and support our work. We developed a paper on issues related to women in local government and development and a briefing outlining the need for research into the women's community sector.

WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP – THE WOMEN’S CAUCUS



In December, the Women's Parliamentary Caucus was established in the Oireachtas, with NWCI appointed as Secretariat. Our role involves organising caucus meetings, communicating with members and running its election process.

NWCI has been calling for a women's caucus to be established for many years and we were thrilled to see such strong cross-party support. With the establishment of the caucus, Ireland is following the positive worldwide trend of establishing specific parliamentary spaces for women, with approximately 86 women's parliamentary caucuses around the world.

Ireland's caucus is made up of current and former female members of the Oireachtas who are automatically included in as members, unless they choose to opt out.

In its first election, Deputy Catherine Martin was elected as Chairperson. The caucus will be working on issues that affect women and aims move a piece of legislation to coincide with the centenary of women's suffrage in 2018.



The Domestic Violence Bill



NWCI welcomed the new measures contained in the Domestic Violence Bill 2017, which was introduced to Seanad Éireann and is expected to be enacted in 2018. In particular, we welcomed the enhanced protection of and support for victims when they are going to court and the recognition of the new reality of online abuse. However, NWCI, along with our members, identified a number of amendments which would serve to strengthen the Bill and provide further protection for victims. After extensive debates and constructive co-operation, a total of 21 important amendments were agreed by the Seanad, including: the introduction of the criminal offence of coercive control and offences which will be considered aggravating factors in sentencing. Overall, this new Bill is a positive step forward and will improve the protections available to women and children experiencing domestic violence, and will also serve to pave the way for Ireland's ratification of the Istanbul Convention.

NWCI Submission to the Law Reform Commission



LAW REFORM
COMMISSION/COIMISIÚN UM
ATHCHÓIRIÚ AN DLÍ

In 2017, the Law Reform Commission began preparations for a new Programme of Law Reform and invited submissions on areas of law in need of reform. NWCI's submission concentrated on the need to examine the legal infrastructures designed to secure maintenance payments. In Ireland, a comparatively low level of maintenance is paid to lone parents by their former partners and only 35% are in receipt of child maintenance payments. If maintenance payments are not paid, are not paid on time, or if a second parent is unwilling to submit to an agreed maintenance payment regime, parents are forced to seek payments through an adversarial and costly court system. This court system process is particularly problematic for women who are seeking maintenance from an abusive partner or ex-partner.

It Stops Now Campaign



In April, we officially launched the Ending Sexual Harassment and Violence in Third Level Education (ESHTE) Project and the It Stops Now campaign. The project aims to prevent and combat sexual violence and harassment and to build a culture of zero tolerance in Higher Education Institutes (HEIs) throughout Europe.

NWCI hosted our first National Advisory Committee meeting in April. Members came from third level institutes, including senior staff and management, student union officers and counselling staff, alongside representatives from Cosc, an Garda Síochána and service providers. In December, we began the first of our series of staff and student focus groups examining harassment on campus. The findings from our focus groups will help us to develop both training modules and our tool-kit.

In March and December we hosted two Project Partner Steering Group meetings with core EU partners. The first meeting took place in Dublin and the second in Brussels.

In October, we published and disseminated the project's first report 'A Review of Data on the Prevalence of Sexual Harassment and Violence of Women Students in Higher Education'. In November, we presented the project in a workshop to young women as part of NWCI's FemFest. We also presented at the UCC Law Conference in November.

The Monitoring Committee for the Second National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual and Gender-Based Violence has included the ESHTE Project in the National Action Plan. This is the first inclusion for an NGO.

2017 saw the beginning of our awareness raising campaign development under the brand 'It Stops Now', including the first phase of our interactive website.



Irish Observatory on Violence against Women

NWCI chairs and convenes the Irish Observatory on Violence against Women. The Observatory, in existence since 2002, is an independent network of grassroots and national organisations monitoring progress on responses to violence against women and lobbying for policy and legislative changes. The Observatory currently has 19 member organisations, representing a broad coalition working together to press for real progress on eradicating all forms of violence against women in Ireland and worldwide. The Observatory met as a group four times during the year.

In 2017, the Observatory continued to press for Ireland's ratification of the Istanbul Convention. The Observatory participated on the advisory group on the Government's national awareness raising campaign, the monitoring committee of Government's Second National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual and Gender Based Violence and the National Steering Committee on FGM.

Current members of the Observatory include:

- *ActionAid Ireland*
- *AkiDwA*
- *Ascend*
- *Cairde*
- *Dublin Rape Crisis Centre*
- *Galway Rape Crisis Centre*
- *Immigrant Council of Ireland*
- *Irish Consortium on Gender Based Violence*
- *Love and Care for People*
- *Longford Women's Link*
- *National Collective of Community Based Women's Networks*
- *National Women's Council (chair and convenor)*
- *Oxfam Ireland*
- *Pavee Point Traveller and Roma Centre*
- *Ruhama*
- *Sexual Violence Centre Cork*
- *Sonas Domestic Violence Service*
- *Women's Aid*
- *YWCA Ireland*





NWCI has long campaigned for gender budgeting to be incorporated into government budgetary processes. In 2016, we welcomed the inclusion in the 2016 Programme for a Partnership Government of a commitment to equality and gender proof the budget. In 2017, NWCI set out to support decision-makers in undertaking the process of gender budgeting and to ensure their initiatives were based on international best practice to deliver real and meaningful change for women in Ireland.

The core element of the project was a major piece of research examining best practice from a range of jurisdictions with comparable policy making and budgetary processes. In setting out a framework for effective implementation in Ireland, the research informed the rest of NWCI's economic advocacy throughout 2017. The research report was launched in October, prior to Budget Day. As part of his Budget 2018 statement, the Minister for Finance announced the initiation of an equality budgeting pilot project within key departments to be led by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER). A Staff Working Paper on Equality Budgeting was also published alongside Budget 2018. In November, NWCI provided a learning and development session for high level civil servants, organised with the support of DPER.

NWCI is now recognised as a go-to organisation on gender budgeting, as evidenced in public statements made by the Minister for Finance, An Taoiseach and the Oireachtas Committee on Budgetary Oversight.



Welcome to our New Group Members 2017

2017 was a big year for NWCI, with 20 new group members joining the organisation. This demonstrates the increasing support from women around the country for our campaign work on women's mental health, women in leadership, pensions, gender budgeting, care and many more!

Human Rights

The **Adoption Rights Alliance (ARA)** advocates, on behalf of its 1400 members for equal human and civil rights for those affected by Ireland's closed secret adoption system. As Ireland continues to come to grips with its historical ill-treatment of women and children, ARA is keen to collaborate with NWCI on highlighting the inequalities affecting women and adopted children. It seeks to inform, enable, empower and represent those affected by the Irish adoption system by identifying their needs and advocating their rights to information. It is also committed to promoting a child centred best practice in adoption, alternatives to adoption and post adoption services. <http://www.adoptionrightsalliance.com/>

Atheist Ireland is an Irish advocacy group that promotes an ethical, secular society where the State does not support or finance or give special treatment to any religion. They have over 500 members. Atheist Ireland aims to promote an ethical and secular Ireland where structures and laws do not discriminate against women but respect them.

@atheistie www.atheist.ie <https://www.facebook.com/AtheistIreland/>

Belong To is Ireland's national service for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender young people. Founded in 2003 as a youth project in response to the need to provide targeted services to a marginalised minority group of young people, they are now a national direct service and advocacy organisation. They work with young people aged 14 to 24.

<http://belongto.org>

Exchange House Ireland provides Traveller-specific, professional, front-line services in Ireland. They are the largest Traveller specific service provider in the country with four main services: Family Support and Crisis Intervention Service; Children and Young Peoples' Service; Education and Training Service; and the National Traveller Mental Health Service. <https://www.facebook.com/exchangehouseireland/>

The **Irish Penal Reform Trust (IPRT)**, set up in 1994, is Ireland's leading non-governmental organisation campaigning for rights in the penal system and the progressive reform of Irish penal policy. Their work is underscored by a commitment to combating social injustice. IPRT has previously worked with NWCI as members of the Women in Prison Reform Alliance, and more recently around CEDAW. Ultimately, IPRT believe that equality and supports for the most vulnerable women in all of Irish society and social policy would lead to fewer women in prison. <http://www.iprt.ie/>

SPARK Single Parents Acting for the Rights of Our Kids is an organisation advocating for the rights of lone parents - of both sexes - and, therefore, those of their children. The organisation is very much member-driven, and offers support in all areas of lone parenting. The advocacy arm of SPARK is engaged in making submissions to Government, writing pre-budget and other submissions, and endeavouring to influence (and change) policy. They provide information on and conduct research among their members on issues such as social welfare payments, access to education (for lone parents and children), and also on issues relating to access, guardianship and co-parenting. <https://www.facebook.com/SPARKsingleparents>

Age Action is the national advocacy organisation on ageing and older people and promotes positive ageing and better policies and services for older people. Age Action is committed to women's equality. Working with and on behalf of women, they are also a voice for older women who can be doubly marginalised because of their gender and their age. Throughout 2017, Age Action and NWCI successfully campaigned together to address systemic discrimination in how women are treated in the pension system. This issue is now firmly on the national agenda and measures are being looked at to rectify the situation. www.ageaction.ie



Health

Féileacáin (Stillbirth and Neonatal Death Association of Ireland – SANDAI) is a newly formed, not-for-profit organisation that aims to offer support to anyone affected by the death of a baby during pregnancy or shortly after. The organisation was formed by a group of bereaved parents who supported each other after the death of their own babies and have now come together to formally offer support to other parents and families who find themselves in a similar situation. <http://www.feileacain.ie>

Irish Association for Infant Mental Health is affiliated with the World Association for Infant Mental Health. Established in 2009, they have 85 members who are professionals from a range of disciplines, working with infants, toddlers and their families in primary/secondary care health and community services, to support the healthy social-emotional-psychological development of infants and young children in the context of their primary care-giving relationships. <http://www.iaimh.ie>

Recovery Experts by Experience is a group of people who have lived through, and live with, mental health difficulties. Having recovered enough to function fully in society, they want to contribute to society, be active and campaign on behalf of others who are living with mental health difficulties. Being a group whose membership is mainly female, they are most concerned with questioning, interrogating, unpacking and challenging the patriarchal aspect of mental health care in Ireland.

Business

Far From Avocados is a Creative Digital Content Agency working with clients and brands to break new ground, realise more of their potential and challenge their own boundaries and demonstrate their relevance in today's world. They strongly believe in and adhere to women in decision-making and leadership. In their own workplace, they strive to give their female employees the very best in education and training so they can compete in today's competitive business world. <http://www.farfromavocados.com/>

Arts & History

The Complex Theatre is run by creative artists in a new Northside arts centre near Smithfield at Little Green Street, next to the old Fruit and Vegetable Market. The arts centre features nine artist's studios as well as two performance areas, rehearsal and exhibition space. Opened in 2009, the Complex Theatre complements the regeneration of the Market Quarter, attracting people from the locality and beyond to this historically rich and significant area of Dublin's Inner City. Their focus is on powerful work with social value, presented through an exciting innovative programme of original theatre, inspiring visual arts, music, comedy, dance and circus. NWCI group members have teamed up with the Complex Theatre on its 'Women in Debt' series of drama workshops which will culminate in an event in the Abbey in 2018. <http://www.thecomplex.ie>

MAMs Mothers Artist Makers Set up in 2016, MAM has a group membership of over 230 nationally, meeting up and down the country with children always included. Inspired by the 'Waking the Feminists' theatre movement, they are here to highlight the causes and effects of the disappearance of theatre practitioners who are mothers. They aim to establish structured, dignified pathways back to work for theatre practitioners who have taken time out from their career to parent. They collaborate with theatre organisations, venues and companies to develop family-friendly work policy and practice. <https://mamsireland.wordpress.com/>





Young Women

Irish Second Level's Students Union (ISSU) is the national umbrella body for over 500 school Student Councils, aiming to represent and connect Irish second-level students the length and breadth of the country, ensuring that the voice of the Irish second-level student is heard and striving for innovation and democracy within the education system. ISSU believes that young people are not merely citizens in waiting. Young people deserve better, they deserve to be heard. Young people can and will contribute positively to society. It is so important that voices, views and opinions of young people are heard, listened to and most importantly respected. <http://www.issu.ie/>

The Union of Students in Ireland (USI) is the national representative body for third level students in Ireland. They have membership in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, totalling over 354,000 members. USI works on all issues pertaining to students, from campaigning for access to higher education, to being active in the campaign to repeal the Eighth Amendment to the Irish Constitution. USI will work with NWCI on the recently launched #ItStopsNow campaign. www.usi.ie

Shona The Shona Project helps young Irish Girls through all the challenges associated with growing up in Ireland today. The website for girls shares inspirational content, celebrates difference and provides practical advice and a sharing hub on issues such a mental health, relationships, bullying, body issues, medical concerns, school and exams. The Shona Project also operates a school workshop roadshow highlighting bullying, body issues and self-esteem, an annual 'Young Women's Convention' for transition year students and an annual awards event. www.shona.ie

Violence Against Women

Ascend Domestic Abuse Service for Women provides support and information to women who have or are experiencing domestic abuse in their intimate relationships. Services include support, information, outreach support, court accompaniment services and personal development courses for women. Ascend is also involved in awareness raising and education about domestic abuse. Managed by North Tipperary Leader Partnership (NTLP) in partnership with Tusla, the Child and Family Agency, Ascend is the sole domestic abuse service covering North Tipperary which has a population of 70,219. <https://www.facebook.com/AscendDomesticAbuse/>

Education

National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA) is a charity and membership organisation. NALA exists to support people with literacy and numeracy difficulties so that they can take part fully in society and have access to learning opportunities that meet their needs. NALA is committed to literacy and numeracy development as a human right. They want to ensure no adult is left behind. www.nala.ie

Community

Dublin North West Area Partnership uses community development approaches to build the capacity of local community groups (LCGs) and to promote access for marginalised groups to personal development, training, education and employment/self-employment opportunities for individuals. DNWP adopt a programme of work aimed at promoting gender equality and providing support to disadvantaged women as a named target group. <http://www.dnwap.ie/>

Irish Farmer's Association Women's Committee The IFA Farm Family & Social Affairs Committee represents farm women and farm families within the association. It was established to recognise the role of women in farming, to deal with family and women's issues, to increase the involvement of farm women in IFA and to participate in the Women's Group of COPA (European Farmers) in Brussels. <http://www.ifa.ie/>

CEDAW DELEGATION IN GENEVA



In January, NWCI launched a detailed report examining Ireland's record under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). NWCI engaged in a comprehensive consultation process with our member organisations as well as with interested members of civil society to ensure a comprehensive Shadow Report. A total of 35 organisations made submissions and their views were incorporated and reflected in the final report. NWCI submitted the Shadow Report, which made more than 80 substantive recommendations, to the CEDAW Committee in advance of Ireland's examination under the Convention.

In February, NWCI, along with a strong civil society contingent, attended Ireland's examination in Geneva. NWCI Director, Orla O'Connor, delivered the oral address to the CEDAW Committee on behalf of a collective of organisations in attendance. NWCI and members of the delegation also met privately with the Committee. Our delegation focused on the need for gender proofing, monitoring frameworks, and disaggregated data collection.





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



In consultation with our membership, NWCI began facilitating Open Conversations on the Eighth Amendment, abortion and the Constitution in 2017. During these sessions, participants were given unbiased information about the legal impact of the Eighth Amendment and engaged in facilitated non-directive, non-judgemental discussions about abortion and the law.

Members who attended these Open Conversations said they left feeling more informed and better able to articulate their own views on reproductive healthcare. NWCI will continue to organise conversations in collaboration with member groups with the aim of visiting every County in Ireland to give our members the information and space they need to make informed decisions about the provision of reproductive healthcare in Ireland.



Our communications work went from strength to strength in 2017.

Here are some of the highlights:

- Many opinions pieces in local and national newspapers on topics, including: violence against women; care; economic independence; women's mental health; and young women in leadership.
- Working with members to raise the profile of important issues such as repealing the Eighth Amendment and the need to establish a gold standard prosecution process which supports victims of violence against women.
- Launch of a new website for NWCI's Every Woman Model of affordable, accessible healthcare options for all women and girls in Ireland.
- Launch of our 'It Stops Now' campaign Ending Sexual Harassment and Violence in Third Level Education, which reached 90,000 people through social media.
- Excellent coverage of #FemFest, where we were delighted to welcome An Taoiseach Leo Varadkar TD, and highlight our work with young women throughout the year.
- Taking off within an hour and trending on Twitter for 3 days around NWCI's 2017 AGM, #FeministsAreEverywhere was one of our biggest ever social media campaigns.
- High level coverage of NWCI's criticism of unacceptable and dangerous comments about sexual violence on a national radio station, with Orla O'Connor, Director interviewed on RTÉ, TV3 News, as well as local media.
- One of our biggest moments in 2017 came as part of the protest over the ownership of the National Maternity Hospital, organised jointly by NWCI, Uplift and Parents for Choice. Orla O'Connor, Director was interviewed on RTÉ's Nine O'Clock News, TV3 and Newstalk, and her speech was carried prominently in print media.
- NWCI's calls for the Gate Theatre to launch an independent investigation into the conduct of the former CEO received wide coverage, with comments carried in a number of national and regional print papers, as well as radio interviews.
- There was lots of coverage of NWCI's reaction to Budget 2018, particularly in relation to pension equality, with Orla O'Connor, Director appearing on RTÉ and a range of national and local radio, with extensive quotes in print media.
- An International Women's Day hub on our website, highlighting all of our members' International Women's Day news and events.
- Our reach increased on all of our social media platforms to over 22,000 followers on Twitter, over 17,000 on Facebook and over 1,000 on Instagram. Over 10,000 subscribers received five NWCI Newsflashes.
- NWCI became a verified account on Twitter, receiving a verified blue tick.



NWCI wins Social Media Award for Best Twitter – Non-Profit

In May, we were delighted to win the #Sockies17 social media award for Best Twitter, Non-Profit.



OUR TEAM IN 2017



Orla O'Connor,
Director



Teresa Byrne,
Receptionist (from August)



Sarah Clarkin,
Communications and Social
Media Officer



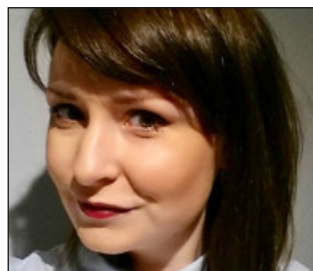
Marian Gallagher,
Receptionist



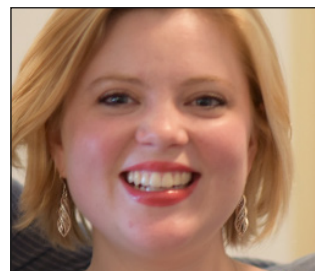
Anne Gibney,
Head of Finance and Operations



Laura Harmon,
Leadership Coordinator
(from February)



Sarah Henry,
Project Officer, ESHTe



Michi Hyams,
Leadership and Public
Engagement Officer
(from November)



Catherine Lane,
Women and Local Government
and Development Officer



Jenny Liston,
Health Policy Assistant
(from July)



Dr Cliona Loughnane,
Women's Health Coordinator
(from July)



Sarah Maloney,
Communications Assistant
(from September)



Jennifer McCarthy Flynn,
Coordinator, ESHTe



Helen Mullarkey,
Membership and
Development Officer



Eilís Ní Chaithnía,
Policy and Campaigns
Coordinator



Silke Paasche,
Head of Communications and
Membership



Denise Roche,
Legal and Policy Officer

Niamh Allen,
Head of Development (until September)

Leonie Brady,
Receptionist (until June)

Jacqueline Healy,
Women's Health and Human Rights Coordinator (until May)

Delphine O'Keeffe,
Policy Assistant, Women's Health (until March)

OUR TEAM IN 2017



We would like to thank the following people who worked with us and contributed to our campaigns in 2017:

- Pauline Cullen
- Audry Deane
- Grainne Healy
- Cara Holmes and Mia Mullarkey
- Sinead Jackson
- Camille Loftus
- Marie Lynch
- Deirdre Massey
- Kieran Murphy
- Mary Murphy
- Niamh O'Carroll
- Anna Visser
- Kathy Walsh





ELLEN O'MALLEY DUNLOP, CHAIRPERSON

Ellen is Adjunct Professor to the School of Law at the University of Limerick. She was the CEO of the Dublin Rape Crisis Centre for 10 years between 2006-2016. Previously, she worked as a Psychotherapist for 24 years and was the first female President of the Irish Council for Psychotherapy. She is currently a member of the Board of Gaisce, The President's Award and is Chairperson of the Audit and Risk Committee of the Legal Aid Board. For 22 years she has been Director of the Annual Bard Summer School Clare Island, Co. Mayo.



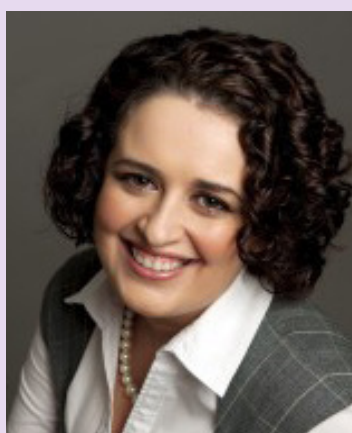
SHEILA DICKSON, DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON

Sheila has been a nurse for over 35 years and has been actively involved in the Irish Nurses and Midwives Organisation for a number of years, holding the office of President from 2008-2012, where she represented members locally, nationally and internationally. Sheila shares the vision of NWCI as a committed and active feminist and currently holds the position of Deputy Chairperson. Sheila is a Peace Commissioner, a member of the Killarney Marketing & Twinning Committee and a founding member of the Killarney Women's Network for Training & Empowerment (KWOTE).



SARAH BENSON

Sarah is the CEO of Ruhama, the NGO working nationally with women affected by prostitution including victims of sex trafficking providing a broad holistic range of services, including exiting supports, on a free, confidential non-judgmental basis. Previously, Sarah managed the National Domestic Violence Helpline with Women's Aid. She has extensive experience of work in the community and voluntary sector both in Ireland and abroad. Sarah is currently also the Chairperson of CAP International, an international network of frontline organisations working in the field of prostitution/human trafficking.



OLWEN DAWE

Olwen is a past President and National Executive Officer of Network Ireland; she is also a Board Member of Poetry Ireland and CoisCéim Dance Theatre, and chairs the Policy Committee for the NCFA. Olwen is a Policy Analyst and Consultant, working predominantly in the area of gender equality and diversity in arts and culture, and public sector organisations, including, most recently, advising the NLI and Abbey Theatre on their diversity and gender equality policy and strategy.



CATRÍONA GRAHAM

Catriona is Policy and Campaigns Officer with the European Women's Lobby where she works on women's sexuality, health, wellbeing and rights, including leading campaigning efforts on combatting the exploitation of the sex trade. She also works to promote intersectional values, including promoting migrant women's rights and girls' rights. Catriona formerly sat on the Board of Co-Orch Dublin, has worked at the Immigrant Council of Ireland and the Children's Rights Alliance and volunteered with Ruhama. She is active in volunteering for repeal of the Eighth Amendment.



SUZANNA GRIFFIN

Suzanna has been a long-time activist with the trade union movement and has been recognised for her role in championing women's rights. Suzanna serves on the Public Administration and Community Division in SIPTU, on the SIPTU Equality Committee and also represents the union on the ICTU Women's Committee.



MIRIAM HOLT

Miriam has over 14 years' experience working in the area of women's human rights in the community sector in a voluntary and professional capacity. She is National Co-Ordinator of the NCCWN, which manages and delivers a Women's Equality & Development Programme through its 17 locally based Women's Community Development Projects throughout Ireland. The main aims of the NCCWN are to help to address poverty, social exclusion and gender inequality experienced by women and to give a voice to community women at local and national level.



LOUISE LOVETT

Louise Lovett is the CEO of Longford Women's Link (LWL), a substantial rural women's NGO that advocates on the issues that impact women and their families. Louise is committed to the fundamental purpose of providing a space for women to 'develop their voice' in order to address the myriad of issues they and their families face. Louise was recognised for her work on behalf of marginalised women and children by being awarded the Image Magazine Social Entrepreneur Business Woman of the Year 2017. Prior to working in the community and voluntary sector, Louise gained extensive management and strategic planning experience working in the corporate sector for over 27 years. Louise is Chairperson of Longford County Childcare Committee (LCCC), a member of the Longford LCDC, the Midlands Regional Joint Consultative Housing Forum (MRJHCF), the Longford Westmeath Children & Young People's Services Committee (CYPSC) and of Longford County Council's Socio Economic Strategic Policy Committee.



ROSALEEN MCDONAGH

Rosaleen is a long-time human rights activist, particularly on issues affecting Travellers, Roma, women and people with disabilities. Rosaleen has built her feminist analysis and career from her subjective experiences as a Traveller woman and a woman with a disability. She worked in Pavee Point Traveller and Roma Centre for ten years where she jointly managed the Violence against Women programme. She is a playwright and a regular contributor to *The Irish Times* writing from the perspective of a Traveller feminist. She is currently a PhD candidate in Northumbria University.



NUALA RYAN

Nuala, a dedicated feminist and a long-standing member of NWCI, represented the Irish Federation of University Women for ten years. She has a special interest in European affairs and has been the Irish representative on the European Network of Women (ENOW) and the board of the European Women's Lobby in Brussels. Currently, she is Chairperson of a Prison Visiting Committee. Nuala's work reflects her concerns regarding women's social exclusion and her commitment to the importance of education in women's lives.



PAULINE SARGENT

Pauline is the founder of DigiWomen, an organisation that promotes and shares the work of women makers and users of technology. DigiWomen are part of the IBM Global Entrepreneur Programme and are working on providing real-time analytics on women in STEM. As a member of the Smart Dublin Network Advisory team, DigiWomen aims to provide linkage and collaboration opportunities for solving city challenges and improving city life for all women using smart technologies. Pauline is also the owner of Social Zavvy, a digital marketing company and an integral part of Pauline's work is lecturing with Dublin Business School.

Submissions

- Submission to the Department of Justice and Equality on the National Women's Strategy and Action Plan 2017-2020, February 2017
- NWCI Shadow Report in advance of Ireland's examination under the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), February 2017
- Submission to POBAL on the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme, February 2017
- Submission to the Department of Justice and Equality on Amendments to the Domestic Violence Bill, March 2017
- Submission to Department of the Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government on the Ireland 2040 National Planning Framework, April 2017
- Submission to the Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government on the development of guidelines for the implementation, monitoring and review of Local Economic and Community Plans, April 2017
- Submission to the Department of Justice and Equality in response to their open consultation concerning measures to tackle the gender pay gap, September 2017
- Submission to the Department of Health on the Health Service Capacity Review, September 2017
- Submission to the Law Reform Commission on Areas Requiring Law Reform: Examine Legal Infrastructures Designed to Secure Maintenance Payments, October 2017
- Submission to the Department of Rural and Community Development on their Statement of Strategy, October 2017
- Submission to the Government Departments - Pre-budget Submission: Value for Money and Money for Values: Making the National Budget Work for Women, October 2017
- Submission to the Department of Justice and Equality - No Small Change. Closing the Gender Pay Gap, November 2017
- Submission to the Department of Rural and Community Development on the Local Community Development Committees Quality and Capacity Review, December 2017

Other Publications

- How to Lobby for Pension Equality for Women. Supported by the Community Foundation of Ireland, July 2017
- A Review of Data on Prevalence of Sexual Violence and Harassment of Women Students in Higher Education in the European Union, October 2017
- Every Woman - affordable, accessible healthcare options for women and girls in Ireland, November 2017
- An easy-to-read poster on pension equality, proofed by experts by experience from Inclusion Ireland, November 2017

NWCI is Chair of

- Irish Observatory on Violence Against Women

NWCI is Board Member of

- European Women's Lobby
- Community Work Ireland

NWCI is Member of

- Alcohol Health Alliance
- Community Platform
- Community and Voluntary Pillar
- European Anti-Poverty Network
- HPV Vaccination Alliance
- HSE Tobacco Control Partners Group
- HSE Patient Forum
- Irish Cancer Society Trial Steering 'We Can Quit' Committee
- Local Advisory Group, Trinity College Dublin's Mapping the Pathways to Universal Healthcare project
- Oversight Group of the Second National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security 2015-2018
- National Public Participation Network Advisory Group
- National Steering Committee on FGM
- National Steering Committee on Violence Against Women
- National Women's Strategy – Monitoring Committee
- Turn off the Red Light Campaign – Core Group



Board of Directors 2017

Frances Byrne (Chairperson)
Sheila Dickson (Deputy Chairperson)
Louise Lovett*
Miriam Holt
Sarah Benson
Rosaleen McDonagh*
Suzanna Griffin *
Catriona Graham
Olwen Dawe
Nuala Ryan
Pauline Sargent*

* Indicates directorship of National Women's Council of Ireland only

New Elected Chairperson June 2017

Ellen O'Malley Dunlop

Company secretary

Anne Gibney

Registered office

100 North King Street
Dublin 7

Auditor

Browne Murphy & Hughes
Chartered & Certified Accountants
28 Upper Fitzwilliam Street
Dublin 2

Bankers

Bank of Ireland
Lower Baggot Street
Dublin 2

Solicitors

Gartlan Furey Solicitors
20 Fitzwilliam Square
Dublin 2



Board Meetings & Subcommittees

There were 6 Board meetings during 2017.

Attendance at meetings

Frances Byrne	3 meetings
Sheila Dickson	4 meetings
Miriam Holt	4 meetings
Sarah Benson	4 meetings
Rosaleen McDonagh	4 meetings
Suzanna Griffin	5 meetings
Louise Lovett	3 meetings
Olwen Dawe	5 meetings
Catriona Graham	6 meetings
Pauline Sargent	4 meetings
Nuala Ryan	6 meetings
Ellen O'Malley Dunlop	3 meetings



Governance Subcommittee

Members of subcommittee

Catriona Graham, Ellen O'Malley Dunlop, Louise Lovett, Miriam Holt, Kate Harnett (Legal Adviser), and Anne Gibney

Subcommittee met twice during 2017 and communicated through email on specific issues.

Louise, Miriam, Catriona and Anne attended both meetings and Ellen and Kate attended one.

We comply with the Governance Code for Community, Voluntary and Charitable Organisations in Ireland. We confirm that a review of our organisation's compliance with the principles in the code was conducted July 2017. This review was based on an assessment of our organisational practice against the recommended actions for each principle. The review sets out actions and completion dates for any issues that the assessment identifies need to be addressed.

Employment Subcommittee

Members of subcommittee

Ellen O'Malley Dunlop, Sheila Dickson, Louise Lovett, Orla O'Connor and Anne Gibney

Subcommittee did not meet during 2017 as working group of employment subcommittee was established to review/update the Employment Handbook. This work continued throughout 2017.

Audit/Finance Subcommittee

Members of subcommittee

Suzanne Griffin, Sheila Dickson, Ellen O'Malley Dunlop, Orla O'Connor and Anne Gibney

Subcommittee met twice during 2017. Sheila, Orla and Ellen attended one meeting; all other members attended both meetings.

Guiding Principles for Fundraising

NWCI is committed to following the guidelines as outlined in the Statement of Guiding Principles for Fundraising. This statement exists to improve fundraising practice, promote high levels of accountability and transparency by organisations fundraising from the public and to provide clarity and assurances to donors and prospective donors about the organisations they support.

The main work and activities of NWCI for 2017 were in line with our strategic plan 2016 - 2020.

Income & Expenditures

INCOME

Department of Justice & Equality	481,756
Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs - Social Partnership	18,840
Members subscription	24,695
HSE	85,000
Pobal SSNO	90,000
IHREC	12,000
Department of Arts, Heritage & Gaeltacht	5,993
Rental income	36,000
Community Foundation of Ireland	2,500
Donations	514
Other	51,879
TOTAL INCOME	€ 809,177

EXPENDITURE

Staff Costs	640,795
Office Running Costs	34,453
Rent, Cleaning & Relocation	67,202
Communication & Information	18,287
Governance and Statutory Costs	11,199
Investment Management	8,492
Professional Fees	135
Programme Activities	130,390
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	€ 910,953



The financial results for the financial year ended 31st December 2017 show a net deficit of €101,776 (2016: net surplus €346,170).

Income

National Women's Council of Ireland (NWCI) and National Women's Council of Ireland (E&T) raised total income of €809,177 for the financial year ended 31st December 2017 (2016: €1,097,995).

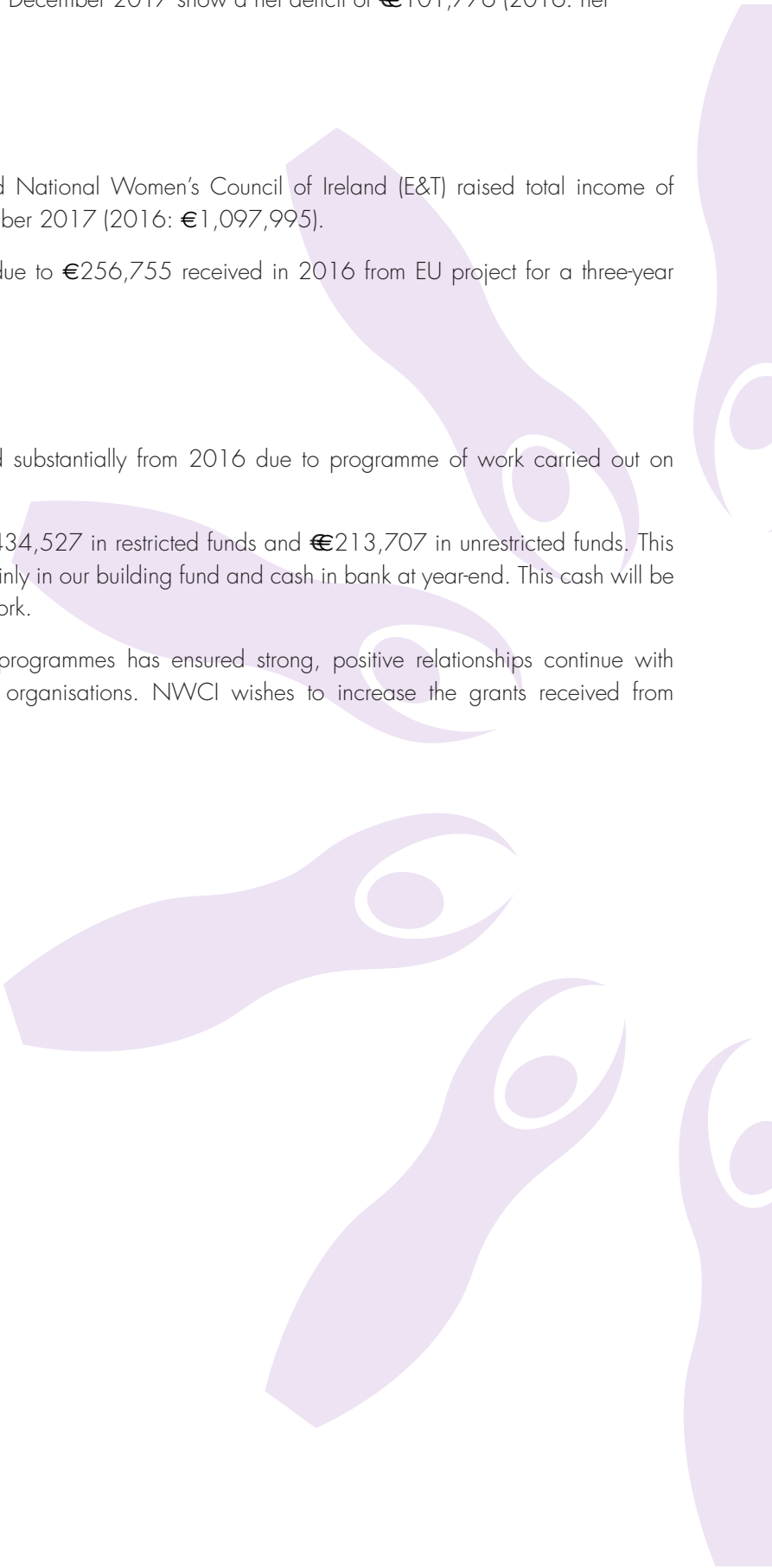
The main reason for this decrease in income was due to €256,755 received in 2016 from EU project for a three-year programme of work.

Expenditure

Total expenditure for the year at €911k increased substantially from 2016 due to programme of work carried out on EU project in 2017.

The balance sheet is showing strong reserves of €434,527 in restricted funds and €213,707 in unrestricted funds. This increase in the balance sheet position is reflected mainly in our building fund and cash in bank at year-end. This cash will be used in 2018 to carry out agreed programmes of work.

NWCI's ability to deliver quality, value-for-money programmes has ensured strong, positive relationships continue with Government Departments, Trusts and Philanthropic organisations. NWCI wishes to increase the grants received from membership and non-statutory organisations.



National Women's Council of Ireland – Amalgamated

Income & Expenditure Account for the Year Ended 31st December 2017

	Restricted	Unrestricted		
	Funds	Funds	Total	Total
	2017	2017	2017	2016
	€	€	€	€
€				
Incoming Resources				
Donations	-	25,209	25,209	75,353
Charitable Activities	253,026	494,942	747,968	974,146
Investment Income	-	36,000	36,000	48,496
Total Incoming Resources	253,026	556,151	809,177	1,097,995
Resources Expended				
Raising Funds	(3,805)	(2,893)	(6,698)	(7,845)
Charitable Activities	(400,507)	(503,748)	(904,255)	(743,980)
Total Resources Expended	(404,312)	(506,641)	(910,953)	(751,825)
Net (Deficit)/Surplus for the Financial Year	(151,286)	49,510	(101,776)	346,170

These financial statements were approved by the Directors on 11th April 2018 and are signed on their behalf by:
Ellen O'Malley Dunlop, Chairperson and Sheila Dickson, Deputy Chairperson.



National Women's Council of Ireland – Amalgamated

Statement of Financial Position as at 31st December 2017

	2017 €	2016 €
Fixed Assets		
Tangible Assets	314,193	320,605
Current assets		
Debtors	14,207	7,701
Cash at Bank and in Hand	374,788	502,153
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Creditors: Amounts Falling Due Within One Year	388,995 (54,954)	509,854 (70,985)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Net Current Assets	334,041	438,869
Creditors: Amounts Falling Due After One Year	-	(9,464)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	648,234	750,010
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Reserves		
Restricted Funds- Building Development	179,575	185,987
Restricted Funds	254,952	406,238
Unrestricted Funds	213,707	157,785
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Members' funds	648,234	750,010

These financial statements were approved by the directors on 11th April 2018 and are signed on their behalf by: Ellen O'Malley Dunlop, Chairperson and Sheila Dickson, Deputy Chairperson.

These summary accounts have been extracted from the statutory financial statements of the National Women's Council of Ireland and the National Women's Council of Ireland Education & Training Company Limited by Guarantee. Those statutory financial statements, on which the Auditors (Browne Murphy & Hughes) expressed an unqualified audit opinion, will be filed with the Registrar of Companies following the Annual General Meeting. Copies of the full audited financial statements have been sent to members and are available on the NWCI Website (www.nwci.ie).







National Women's Council of Ireland
100 North King Street
Dublin 7
www.nwci.ie

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