

CHARTER OF Zero Tolerance on Violence Against Women

This Charter Represents the Commitment of

to reject all forms of violence against women and strive to play our part in making Ireland a safe place for women and girls.

- ▶ We recognise that violence against women is a violation of fundamental human rights, a form of discrimination and a manifestation of historical and persistent unequal power relations between women and men.
- ▶ We believe violence against women is both a cause and consequence of gender discrimination, so it should be an integral part of all efforts to realise gender equality.
- ▶ We acknowledge that violence against women comes in many forms including domestic violence, rape and sexual assault, sexual harassment, prostitution and trafficking, pornography, female genital mutilation and forced marriage, and recognise the severe consequences it has on women and wider society.
- ▶ We condemn the denial and tolerance of such violence in Irish society and recognise the importance of public awareness campaigns and challenging of gender stereotypes through training, education, information initiatives and policy development in a range of sectors and professions.
- ▶ We believe that women's voices are central to tackling violence against women. The government must ensure adequate funding for, and meaningful consultation with, organisations addressing women's rights; and effective co-ordination between such organisations and relevant services including health, education, housing, employment and policing.
- ▶ We acknowledge the diversity that exists amongst women in terms of age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion and disability, and the specific and multiple forms of oppression and discrimination faced by particular groups of women. Responses to tackling violence against women must acknowledge and reflect this diversity.
- ▶ We believe it is important to guarantee women's protection from violence by ensuring equal access to and participation in supports and assistance, without discrimination on grounds of disability, ethnicity or legal status.
- ▶ We recognise the barriers that exist to stop women getting help including fear, self-blame, lack of effective legal sanctions, fear of losing one's legal status, controlling women's access to financial resources and property, poverty, emotional manipulation, direct / indirect discrimination and institutional racism.
- ▶ We believe that our laws and policies need to be reformed and strengthened to send out a strong message to perpetrators that violence against women is unacceptable and will be severely punished.
- ▶ We urge the Irish government to make publicly available up-to-date information and data on the nature and extent of violence against women on an annual basis to inform effective policy and legislative responses. Clear data disaggregated by gender and ethnicity is essential.
- ▶ We believe that supporting women's equality measures at local, regional and national level will have a positive impact on tackling violence against women though the empowerment of women.
- ▶ We pledge to show solidarity with women survivors of violence around the world, recognising that violence against women is a global phenomenon.

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ways we can effect change as an organisation and as individuals.

1. Support the call for the Irish government to ratify the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention) to ensure best practice and the government allocate adequate resources.
2. Organise education and awareness-raising sessions on the nature and extent of violence against women, sexual consent, power and entitlement and to challenge societal messages.
3. Challenge everyday gender stereotypes that contribute to a culture that tolerates violence against women.
4. Challenge victim blaming when and where we see it and focus the conversation on the perpetrators behaviour.
5. Challenge attitudes and behaviour that condone, minimize or joke about violence against women amongst friends, in our relationships, in our workplaces, in the police, courts and public spaces.
6. Support the call for a national research project to generate comprehensive data on all forms of violence against women in Ireland.
7. Listen to, believe and trust women and provide information about support services to empower women to exit their situation.