



## Gender Equality

Both the UN Human Rights Committee and the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights have recently expressed their concern at the slow progress in modifying the language of Article 41.2 of the Irish Constitution on the role of women within the home.

In 2013, the Constitutional Convention made a recommendation to alter the relevant article by incorporating a more gender neutral clause, and made further suggestions with regard to modifying the electoral system and political education in schools in order to 'enhance the participation of women in public life'. While the Government accepted the potential amendment of Article 41.2, it stated that 'extensive consultations would be necessary'.

Article 41.2 of the Irish Constitution:

*In particular, the State recognises that by her life within the home, woman gives to the States a support without which the common good cannot be achieved.*

### Recommendations

*Ensure an independent review of the National Women's Strategy and devise a consultative process on its successor*

*Remove Article 41.2 from the Constitution and replace it with a gender neutral clause*

*Set timeframes within which gender balance on corporate boards must be progressed and steps taken to reduce the gender pay gap*

*Make available stable and sufficient funding for women's organisations at national and local levels*

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The National Women's Strategy 2007-2016 has attracted concern due to a lack of progress on certain objectives, including the reduction in the gender pay gap. Additionally, the Strategy has yet to be evaluated which would greatly assist in identifying key policy areas where implementation has been particularly slow and, since its expiry, civil society groups have yet to be consulted on a new strategy.

Despite vowing to take measures to increase the representation of women in decision-making roles, no solid plan of action has been taken to increase the number of women on corporate boards.

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## Updates in Government Report

The report notes the gender pay gap standing at 14.4% in 2012 compared to an EU average of 16.5% and a gap of 13.9% in Ireland in 2010.

Regarding women's participation in public life and decision-making roles the report notes the publication of *Towards Gender Parity in Decision-Making in Ireland* and EU Progress programme funded project to promote greater gender balance in leadership and decision-making in the public and private sectors.

The commitment in Budget 2016 to introduce 2 weeks paid paternity leave and work being carried out to develop proposals for necessary social welfare and family leave reform with a deadline of Sept 2016 for introduction of paternity leave and paternity benefit.

The recommendation of the Constitutional Convention on gender equality, or how it is being progressed, is not referenced in the State report.

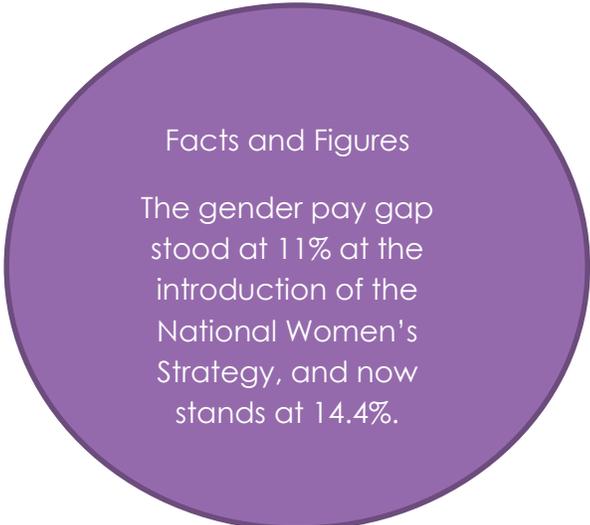
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## About Your Rights. Right Now

*Your Rights. Right Now* is a coalition of 17 Irish NGOs, trade unions and civil society groups established by the Irish Council for Civil Liberties (ICCL) in 2010 to coordinate the civil society response to Ireland's first examination under the Universal Periodic Review. This group was re-convened in 2015 in advance of Ireland's second examination. The coalition conducted a number of general and thematic consultations and invited written submissions to inform its report which was submitted to the UN in September 2015.

Members of the coalition are:

- Age Action
- Educate Together
- Free Legal Advice Centres
- Gay and Lesbian Equality Network
- Immigrant Council of Ireland
- Irish Congress of Trade Unions
- Irish Council for Civil Liberties
- Irish Family Planning Association
- Irish Penal Reform Trust
- Irish Traveller Movement
- Mercy Law Resource Centre
- National Women's Council of Ireland
- NUI Galway, Centre for Disability Law and Policy
- Pavee Point Traveller and Roma Centre
- Transgender Equality Network Ireland
- Union of Students in Ireland
- Disability Federation of Ireland



### Facts and Figures

The gender pay gap stood at 11% at the introduction of the National Women's Strategy, and now stands at 14.4%.

