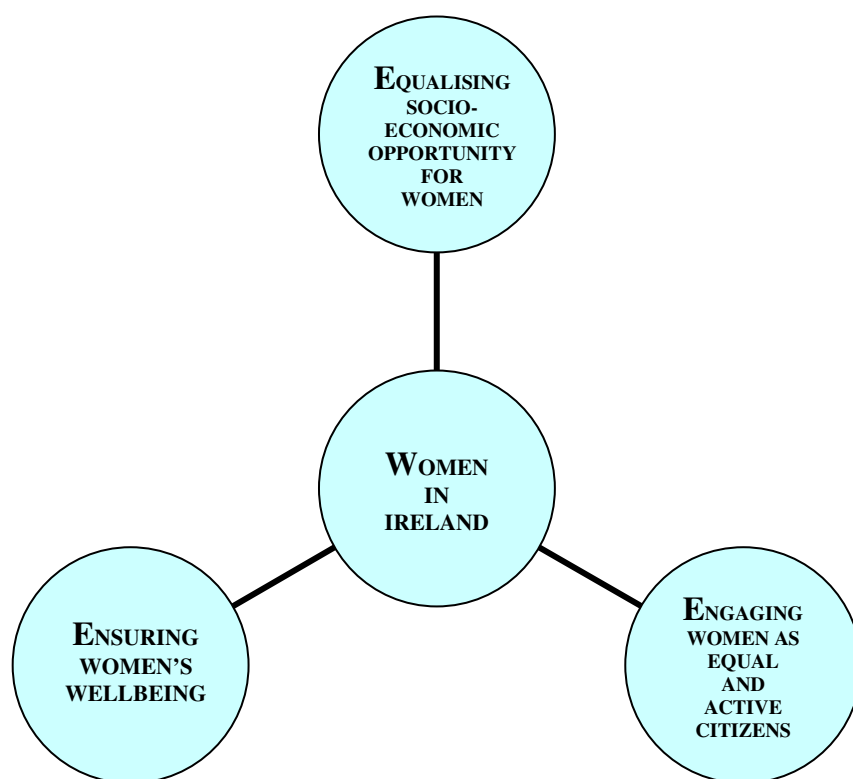


Implementing the National Women's Strategy 2007 – 2016



PROGRESS 2011/2012



AN ROINN DLÍ AGUS CIRT AGUS COMHIONANNAIS
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE AND EQUALITY



NATIONAL WOMEN'S STRATEGY
2007-2016

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1 Introduction

1.1 The National Women's Strategy (NWS), launched in April 2007, was the statement of the then Government's priorities in relation to the advancement of women in Irish society for the period 2007-2016. The Strategy contains 20 key objectives and over 200 planned actions which together aim to achieve *an Ireland where all women enjoy equality with men and can achieve their full potential while enjoying a safe and fulfilling life*¹. The objectives and actions contained in the Strategy are grouped under the three key themes of:

- Equalising socio-economic opportunity for women;
- Ensuring the well-being of women; and
- Engaging women as equal and active citizens.

1.2. Implementation of the Strategy is overseen by the NWS Monitoring Committee, which is chaired by the Minister of State with responsibility for Equality. The Monitoring Committee is representative of key Government Departments, relevant State Agencies and the Social Partners, including the National Women's Council of Ireland (NWCI). The third Progress Report on the implementation of the National Women's Strategy to end 2010 was submitted to Government in December 2011 and was published the same month.

1.3 This Progress Report, prepared by the Gender Equality Division, Department of Justice and Equality² is a combined report and outlines the progress made in implementing the Strategy during 2011 and 2012.

2. Operational environment

2.1 In Ireland, the economic downturn first began to manifest itself in the second quarter of 2008. In the early stages of the downturn, male employment was affected to a much greater extent than female employment due to the high numbers of men employed in the construction sector. By the end of 2012, there were a total of 294,600 persons unemployed. All of the annual increase in unemployment between Q4 2010 and Q4 2011 was accounted for by females (+3,900 or +4.1 per cent). In 2012, the first annual increase in employment was recorded since the second quarter of 2008. The increase, however, was just 1,200 (+0.1 per cent) and was accounted for by an increase of 700 in employment for males and an increase of 500 in employment for females. It is also worth noting that full-time employment fell by 12,900 (0.9 per cent) over the year to end 2012 and that this decrease was off-set by an increase in part-time employment of 14,000 (+3.2 per cent).

2.2 In the five year period between 2008 and 2012, a five percentage point decline in the female employment rate is observed. However, it is important to note that the male employment rate declined by fourteen percentage points over the same timeframe and that there was a significant increase in the population, both male and female in the same period. The female employment rate in Quarter 4/2012 was 55.4 per cent, compared with a rate of 55.2 per cent in Q4/2011 and a rate of 55.3 per cent in Q4/2010.

3. International dimension

3.1 *European Union*

3.1.1 The European Union, and in particular the Commissioner with responsibility for Employment, spoke during 2011 and 2012 about the need to maintain a focus on gender equality and gender issues during the economic downturn. In particular, the Commission was of the view that there was a need to ensure that gender is taken into account when Member States are planning their austerity measures for

¹ National Women's Strategy 2007 – 2016: Vision

² Gender Equality Division transferred to Department of Community, Equality and Gaeltacht Affairs for a period of ten months from June 2009.

economic recovery, bearing in mind the differential impacts these measures may have on women and men.

3.1.2 During 2011, the Presidency of the European Union was held by Hungary and Poland. The Council of the European Union is the principal decision-making institution in the EU. Council Conclusions relating to gender equality which were adopted during 2011 related to:

- *The European Pact for Gender Equality (2011-2020); and*
- *Review of the Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action – Women and the Economy: Reconciliation of Work and Family Life as a Precondition for Equal Participation in the Labour Market.*

3.1.3 During 2012, the EU Presidency was held by Denmark and Cyprus. Council Conclusions relating to gender equality which were adopted during 2012 are:

- *Gender equality and the environment: enhanced decision-making, qualifications and competitiveness in the field of climate change mitigation policy in the EU; and*
- *Combating violence against women, and the provision of support services for victims of domestic violence (Report and indicators developed in the context of the review of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action).*

3.1.4 The first European Pact for Gender Equality was adopted by the European Council in 2006. The Pact emphasised the importance of utilising women's untapped potential in the labour market, including by promoting women's empowerment in economic and political life, and of the need to close gender gaps, combat gender stereotypes and to promote better work/life balance for women and men.

3.1.5 A revision of the Pact was prepared under the Hungarian Presidency in the first half of 2011 to provide fresh impetus and to reaffirm and support the close link between the Pact and Europe 2020, the EU's key policy document for jobs and smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, and the European Commission's 'Strategy for Equality between Women and Men 2010-2015'. The draft Council Conclusions on the renewed European Pact for Gender Equality 2011-2020 were adopted by the ESPHCA Council in March 2011. A full copy of the text of the renewed European Pact for Gender Equality is attached at Appendix II.

3.1.6 In November 2012, the European Commission published its proposal for an EU *Directive on improving the gender balance among non-executive directors of companies listed on stock exchanges and related measures*. This dossier will be brought forward for negotiations under the Irish Presidency of the Council of Ministers of the EU in the first half of 2013.

3.1.7 The EU Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men adopted three Opinions during 2011 and two Opinions during 2012:

- Opinion on the Multiannual Financial Framework 2014-2020;
- Opinion on the gender dimension of integration of migrants;
- Opinion on the gender dimension of active ageing and solidarity between generations;
- Opinion on gender equality in the cohesion policy 2014-2020; and
- Opinion on a possible EU awareness raising campaign on violence against women and girls (VAWG).

3.1.8 The Europe 2020 Strategy adopted in mid 2010 sets out the EU's economic policy for the period to 2020 and aims to create a high technology sustainable economy. It includes an EU headline employment target of 75 per cent for women and men (aged 20-64) by end 2020, an ambitious target, particularly for countries badly affected by the economic downturn. It envisages that the economic engagement of increased numbers of women will assist in achieving this goal. Ireland's own National

Employment target under EU2020, which is contained in the 2011 National Reform Programme (and is re-stated in the NRP 2012 Update), is to “raise to 69-71% the employment rate for women and men aged 20-64, including through the greater participation of young people, older workers and low skilled workers, and the better integration of legal migrants, and to review the target level of ambition in 2014, in the context of a proposed mid-term review of the Europe 2020 Strategy”. In Q4/2012, Ireland’s employment rate for women and men aged 20-64 was 64.4 per cent.

3.2 *Council of Europe*

3.2.1 In October 2011, a Conference on “**Current Trends of Development of National Gender Mechanisms in European Countries**” was held in Kiev, Ukraine. The Conference was jointly organised by the Council of Europe and the authorities of Ukraine in the context of the Ukrainian Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe.

3.2.2 During 2011, the Council of Europe commenced the restructuring of the work of the CoE in relation to gender equality. The Council of Ministers agreed to the establishment of a Gender Equality Commission in place of the CDEG. The work of this commission will be overseen by the Inter-Governmental Steering Committee on Human Rights. The 47th and final meeting of the CDEG was held in November/December 2011.

3.2.3 The Council of Europe Transversal Programme on Gender Equality was launched in 2012. It aims to increase the impact and visibility of gender equality standards, supporting their implementation in member States through a variety of measures, including gender mainstreaming and action in a number of priority areas. The newly formed Gender Equality Commission is at the centre of this effort. A network of National Focal Points in each member state, the Gender Equality Rapporteurs appointed in the Council of Europe Steering Committees and monitoring bodies and the Committee of Ministers Thematic Co-ordinator on Equality and Trafficking provide crucial support to the work and activities of the Gender Equality Commission..

3.3 *United Nations*

3.3.1 The 55th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women took place in UN Headquarters in New York from 22nd February to 4th March 2011. The Priority Theme for the 55th Session was “Access and participation of women and girls in education, training, science and technology, including for the promotion of women’s equal access to full employment and decent work”. Agreed Conclusions on the Priority Theme were forwarded to the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) for adoption on 14th March 2011.

3.3.2 The following Resolutions were agreed and submitted to ECOSOC where they were adopted:

- 55/1 Mainstreaming gender equality and promoting empowerment of women in climate change policies and strategies.
- 55/2 Women, the girl child and HIV and AIDS.

3.3.3 The Review Theme of the Session was “The elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against the girl child”. This was based on the agreed conclusions from the 51st Session of the CSW in 2007.

3.3.4 The 56th Session of the CSW took place in UN Headquarters in New York from 27th February to the 9th March 2012. The Priority Theme for the 56th Session was “The empowerment of rural women and their role in poverty and hunger eradication, development and current challenges”. The 56th Session did not produce any Agreed Conclusions for adoption.

3.3.5 The Review Theme of the Session was “Financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women”, with an Emerging Theme for the Session of “Engaging young women and men, girls and boys, to advance gender equality”.

3.3.6 As previously mentioned in the 2010 Progress Report on the implementation of the National Women’s Strategy, in July 2010, a new UN organisation for Gender Equality and Women’s

Empowerment – UN Women, was established to consolidate the four existing UN bodies on women; UNIFEM, DAW, INSTRAW and OSAGI.

3.3.7 The main roles of UN Women are:

- To support inter-governmental bodies, such as the Commission on the Status of Women, in their formulation of policies, global standards and norms.
- To help Member States to implement these standards, standing ready to provide suitable technical and financial support to those countries that request it, and to forge effective partnerships with civil society.
- To hold the UN system accountable for its own commitments on gender equality, including regular monitoring of system-wide progress.

4. Progress on the Implementation of the National Women's Strategy in 2011/2012

Theme One – Equalising Socio-economic Opportunity for Women

4.1 This broad-ranging theme relates, inter alia, to increasing female labour force participation and the advancement of women into decision-making roles, closing the gender pay gap, supporting female entrepreneurs, ensuring women and girls can reach their full potential in the educational system, providing childcare and other supports to enable women to engage in the labour market and reducing the numbers of women experiencing poverty.

4.2 By the end of 2012, there were 860,900 women (aged 15-64) in employment, an annual increase of 500, giving a female employment rate of 55.4 per cent. An overview of the labour force in Ireland between 2008 and the end of 2012 shows that:

- The number of women in the labour market (both employed and unemployed) has fallen by 19,800 over the five years while the number of men in the labour market has fallen by 92,900.
- The number of women in employment has fallen by 64,000 over the period while the number of men in employment has fallen by 170,500.
- Between 2010 and 2011 the number of women in employment fell by 9,400 while the number of men in employment fell by 6,100. This is the first time that the number of women in employment has decreased by a higher amount than the number of men since the beginning of the economic crisis.
- The unemployment rate for women doubled over the five year period while the unemployment rate for men almost trebled over the same period. Male unemployment fell 15,200 (-7.2 per cent) to 196,200 over the year to Q4/2012, while female unemployment decreased by 4,100 (-4.0 per cent) to 98,500.
- The number of men in part-time employment has increased by 44,200 between 2008 and 2012. Just over 14 per cent of all men in employment work part-time compared with almost 36 per cent of all women in employment.

4.3 Equality for Women Measure

4.3.1 The purpose of the Equality for Women Measure is to make funding available to foster the engagement and advancement of women and gender equality in a number of economic sectors by focusing on three main strands:

1. Access to Employment;
2. Developing Female Entrepreneurship;
3. Career Development for Women in Employment.

4.3.2 The Measure is supported by the European Social Fund under the Human Capital Investment Operational Programme (HCIOP) 2007-2013. The Measure is delivered by Pobal Ltd. on behalf of the Department of Justice and Equality.

4.3.3 During 2011, a total of 3,299 women participated on the programme. A further 3,173 women participated on the programme during 2012. By the end of 2012, it is reported that 2,428 previous participants had moved into employment or into further mainstream training or educational courses.

4.4 Other initiatives under Theme 1

4.4.1 A number of initiatives funded by the Equality for Women Measure supported women's entrepreneurship while the City and County Enterprise Boards and Enterprise Ireland were also active in supporting women in entrepreneurship. The fifth annual National Women's Enterprise Day was held in November 2011, with the sixth annual NWED taking place in October 2012.

4.4.2 The development of childcare services continues, both to support working parents and with a focus on the benefits of early childhood development through the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme. The number of places established under the National Childcare Investment Programme now approaches 25,000.

4.4.3 Further detail on progress made under all the key objectives in Theme 1 - Equalising Socio-economic Opportunity for Women, during 2011 and 2012 can be found in Chapter 3 of this Progress Report.

5 Theme 2 – Ensuring the Wellbeing of Women

5.1 This Theme links a number of objectives contained in the Strategy, including work/life balance, health, promotion of physical activity, sexual and reproductive health, violence against women and human trafficking.

5.2 The promotion of work/life balance, and "family-friendly" policies, are regarded as key to enabling both women and men to reach their full potential in the labour market. The Progress Report contains information on a number of initiatives driven by the European Union, including enhanced provision of maternity leave for self-employed women and new provisions on parental leave. .

5.3 Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence and Human Trafficking

5.3.1 In 2010, Cosc, the National Office for the Prevention of Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence, completed its priority work on the development of a National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence for the five-year period from 2010 to 2014. In March 2010, the national strategy was approved by the Government and published.

5.3.2 During 2011 and 2012, a Strategy Oversight Committee monitored implementation of the strategy and assisted in identifying solutions to any high level difficulties or delays. The committee is chaired by the Secretary General of the Department of Justice and Equality. A report was submitted to the Strategy Oversight Committee in June 2011. In addition, progress on the implementation of the strategy was encouraged and monitored by Cosc on an ongoing basis. Overall, good progress was made on the implementation of the strategy. During 2012, Cosc undertook a mid-term review of the strategy and as a result of the review the targets attached to the activities in the strategy were recalibrated..

5.3.3 Cosc also reports on a very significant body of other work delivered by the Departments and Agencies with responsibility for addressing these issues.

5.3.4 The Anti-Human Trafficking Unit also reports considerable work on aspects of the support of victims of this abuse, the victims of which are most frequently women.

5.4 Cancer care

5.4.1 BreastCheck completed its national expansion in 2011. Between February 2000 (when BreastCheck first began screening) and the end of November 2011, the programme has provided 826,210 mammograms to 368,851 women and has detected 5,071 cancers. A total of 128,870 women were screened by BreastCheck during 2012.

- 5.4.2 In September 2011, CervicalCheck completed its first three year screening round. Since the launch of the programme in September 2008 to the end of August 2011, almost 950,000 smear tests have been processed and more than 720,000 eligible women aged 25-60 have had at least one free CervicalCheck smear test. In 2012, 323,961 women received at least one smear test with CervicalCheck. In May 2012, CervicalCheck established an electronic referral system for colposcopy services and introduced HPV testing post treatment to reduce unnecessary testing of women.
- 5.4.3 BowelScreen, the national colorectal screening programme commenced in late 2012. The programme aims to reduce mortality from colorectal cancer in men and women aged 55-74. It will be implemented on a phased basis starting with people aged 60-69. Colorectal cancer is the second most commonly diagnosed cancer in Ireland, with over 2,000 cases each year and is the second most fatal cancer.
- 5.4.4 The TReat Study of cancer care for older women was completed by the HSE during 2011. The results of the study were presented at two conferences in 2011.

5.5 HSE Crisis Pregnancy Programme

- 5.5.1 Statistics published by the British Department of Health in May 2012 show that the numbers of women who gave an Irish address when obtaining an abortion in Britain fell from 6,673 in 2001 to 4,149 in 2011. The estimated abortion rate (number of abortions per 1,000 women aged 15-44) has fallen from 7.5 in 2001 to 4.1 in 2011.
- 5.5.2 In 2011, over €3.2 million in funding was allocated to the area of crisis pregnancy and post-termination counselling and medical check-ups by the Crisis Pregnancy Programme, with a further €3.1 million allocated in 2012. Between 2011 and 2012, there were approximately 84,000 requests for information from the Positive Options service (via SMS requests and website visits) and approximately 118,000 visits to the www.positiveoptions.ie website. Over the same period, approximately 135,000 'Positive Options' materials were disseminated through crisis pregnancy counselling services, GP surgeries and colleges. The campaign was re-developed and re-launched during 2011 with newly executed TV, radio, poster and online advertising. The printed material of the campaign, including its poster, leaflet and wallet card, was re-designed in 2012.
- 5.6 Further detail on progress made under all the key objectives in Theme 2 – Ensuring the Wellbeing of Women, during 2011 and 2012 can be found in Chapter 4 of this Progress Report.

6. Theme 3 – Engaging Women as Equal and Active Citizens

- 6.1 The involvement of women in decision-making positions in all sectors is a prerequisite for any democratic society. This has been a key objective of EU, Council of Europe and UN policy for many years.
- 6.2 In Ireland, the low numbers of women in decision-making positions can be seen as a democratic deficit. In politics, the percentage of women in Dáil Éireann following the General Election in February 2011 was just 15 per cent (a slight increase of two percentage points on the pre-election figure). Ireland ranks in 24th place out of the 27 EU Member States for the percentage of women in the national parliament, well below the EU average of 24 per cent. Female representation in Seanad Éireann is higher at 30 per cent, due in large part to the appointment of seven female representatives, out of a total of eleven, by An Taoiseach, Enda Kenny, T.D., from among the Taoiseach's nominees to the Seanad in May 2011.
- 6.3 Following a proposal by the National Women's Council of Ireland, the Monitoring Committee of the National Women's Strategy established a Sub-Committee on Women in Decision-Making in 2010. The Sub-Committee met on eight occasions during 2011 and by 2012 had prepared a draft report. The final draft report will be submitted to Government in 2013.
- 6.4 Further detail on progress made in 2011 and in 2012 on all of the objectives contained in the Strategy under Theme 3 - Engaging Women as Equal and Active Citizens, can be found in Chapter 5 of this Progress Report.

7. Implementation of the National Women's Strategy

- 7.1 Implementation of the Strategy is overseen by the National Women's Strategy Monitoring Committee. The Monitoring Committee is representative of key Government Departments, relevant State Agencies and the Social Partners, including the National Women's Council of Ireland. The Monitoring Committee is chaired by the Minister of State with responsibility for Equality.
- 7.2 The objectives and actions contained in the Strategy fall under the remit of various Government Departments, reflecting the "whole-of-Government" approach of the Strategy. Annual progress reports are published on the Department's main website and on the gender equality website (www.genderequality.ie).
- 7.3 Further information on progress made during 2011 and 2012 on the objectives contained in implementing the National Women's Strategy can be found in Chapter 6 of this Progress Report.

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

INTRODUCTION

1. The National Women's Strategy (NWS), launched in April 2007, was the statement of the then Government's priorities in relation to the advancement of women in Irish society for the period 2007-2016. It was intended to have a resonance with all women in Ireland. Its vision is

*An Ireland where all women enjoy equality with men and can achieve their full potential,
while enjoying a safe and fulfilling life.*

2. The Strategy contains twenty Key Objectives and over two hundred Planned Actions. These objectives and actions are clustered under the three key themes of
 - Equalising socio-economic opportunity for women;
 - Ensuring the wellbeing of women; and
 - Engaging women as equal and active citizens.
3. The Strategy was prepared by the Gender Equality Division of the then Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform (D/JELR) under the direction of an Inter-Departmental Steering Committee.
4. A Monitoring Committee, representative of the key Government Departments, relevant State Agencies and the Social Partners, including the National Women's Council of Ireland (NWCI), has been established under the chairmanship of the Minister of State with responsibility for Equality. This Committee is tasked to review progress on the Strategy's implementation. The Committee met on one occasion during both 2011 and 2012.
5. Following the General Election in February 2011, responsibility for equality issues, including gender equality, transferred back from the Department of Community, Equality and Gaeltacht Affairs to which it was assigned in 2010 to the Department of Justice and Equality. To complement the Minister, a Minister of State was designated to the portfolio of Disability, Equality, Mental Health and Older People, working across a number of Departments.
6. The three key themes of the National Women's Strategy correspond with the aims of the Programme for Government 2011-2016, which contains a number of specific commitments in relation to gender equality, most notably in fostering greater female participation in public life, including in politics, and on State Boards. A list of the gender equality focused elements contained in the Programme for Government is attached at Appendix I.

STRUCTURE OF THE Joint 2011/2012 PROGRESS REPORT

7. This, the fourth Progress Report on the National Women's Strategy, prepared by the Gender Equality Division of the Department of Justice and Equality in collaboration with the relevant Departments and the State Agencies which together deliver the broad range of actions encompassed in the Strategy. The Report gives an overview of progress made in implementing the Objectives contained in the Strategy during 2011 and 2012. Earlier reports are available on the Department of Justice and Equality website (www.justice.ie).
8. The present chapter updates some of the key indicators which were included in the Strategy and includes a short overview of the key issues which have arisen in relation to gender equality and the advancement of women.
9. Chapter 2 outlines some of the developments which have taken place in an international context during 2011 and 2012, including the work of the multi-lateral organisations: the European Union, the Council of Europe and the United Nations.

10. Chapters 3, 4 and 5 respectively, look at progress by objective under each of the three key themes identified in the Strategy: equalising socio-economic opportunity; ensuring women's wellbeing and engaging women as equal and active citizens. These chapters include material supplied by the key Government Departments and State Agencies and incorporate relevant national and international statistics and contextual comment prepared by the Gender Equality Division, D/Justice and Equality.
11. Chapter 6 summarises progress on practical issues in relation to the mainstreaming of gender equality as a key element for the achievement of de facto gender equality.

OVERVIEW OF KEY INDICATORS DURING 2011/2012

12. Table 1 below shows an update of the key indicators which were included in the Strategy.

TABLE 1
UPDATE OF KEY INDICATORS ON WOMEN 1971 – 2012

| | 1971 | 1991 | 2007 | 2009 | 2011 | 2012 |
|---|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Number of women in population (000) | 1,482.5 | 1,772.3 | 2,118.7 | 2,241.6 | 2,315.5 | 2,315.8 |
| Number of marriages | 20,788 | 16,859 | 22,544 | 21,541 | 19,879 | 21,245 |
| Rate per 1,000 | 7.1 | 4.8 | 5.2 | 4.8 | 4.3 | 4.6 |
| Average age of woman on marriage | 25.1 | 25.8 | 31.1 | 31.3 | 31.7 | 31.8 |
| Number of births | 64,382 | 52,690 | 70,620 | 74,278 | 74,650 | 72,225 |
| Birth rate per 1,000 | 21.9 | 15 | 16.3 | 16.7 | 16.3 | 15.8 |
| Extra marital births | 1,709 | 8,766 | 23,170 | 24,532 | 25,157 | 25,344 |
| Extra marital births as % of total births | 2.7 | 16.6 | 32.8 | 33.0 | 34.0 | 35.0 |
| Total fertility rate | 3.5 | 2.1 | 2.03 | 2.1 | 2.04 | 2.01 |
| Percent of women aged over 15 in the labour force | 28.0 | 32.9 | 54.4 | 53.2 | 52.6 | 53.4 |
| Percent of married women in the labour force | 8.0 | 26.9 | 54.1 | 54.1 | 54.3 | 54.3 |

Source : Central Statistics Office, various

13. Table 1 shows that the number of women in the population continues to rise and this is explored further in the next paragraph. Table 1 shows that the birth rate remains high at 15.8 per cent with almost 75,000 births in 2011 and over 72,000 births in 2012. This will place a significant pressure on both the Social Protection budget and on the need for expanded school places in the coming years. The Irish fertility rate and birth rate are now among the highest in Europe.
14. The publication of the statistics from Census 2011, shown in Table 2 overleaf, allows for detailed comparison with figures from the previous two censuses in 2002 and 2006. The table shows a female population increase of almost 9.3 per cent in the inter-censal period, compared with a State level increase of 8.2 per cent and women in Ireland now account for just over 50 per cent of the total population. Between 2006 and 2011, the number of women in the population increased by almost 200,000. The CSO estimates that this includes a natural increase of almost 109,000 females, with the balance of 85,000 coming from net female migration. Net male migration is much lower at about 33,500 over the five year period.
15. Table 2 overleaf also shows the very significant increase (+ approximately 250,000) in the number of women of working age (25-64 years) over the past ten year period. This highly educated cohort has the potential to make significant contribution to economic growth in Ireland, particularly if they had access to affordable childcare services. This issue is dealt with further in Chapter 3.

TABLE 2
SELECTED CENSUS STATISTICS IN RELATION TO WOMEN – 2002, 2006 AND 2011

| | 2002 | 2006 | 2011 | % Increase/ (Decrease)'06 – '11 |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|---------------------------------------|
| Number of Women in Ireland | 1,971,039 | 2,118,677 | 2,315,553 | 9.29 |
| Number of Women born outside Ireland | 201,107 | 294,297 | 386,001 | 31.16 |
| Percentage of women born outside Ireland | 10.2% | 13.9% | 16.6% | 3.3 |
| Women/Girls in Ireland by Age Group | | | | |
| 0 – 14 | 403,384 | 421,405 | 478,401 | 13.52 |
| 15 – 24 | 315,817 | 311,725 | 289,352 | - 7.17 |
| 25 – 44 | 591,951 | 663,885 | 733,085 | 10.42 |
| 45 – 64 | 413,041 | 460,831 | 522,636 | 13.41 |
| 65 and over | 246,846 | 260,831 | 292,079 | 11.98 |
| Women in Ireland aged over 15 by Marital Status | | | | |
| Single | 616,073 | 679,831 | 687,829 | 1.17 |
| Married – first marriage | 712,582 | 756,349 | 830,142 | 9.75 |
| Remarried | 13,487 | 18,323 | 23,375 | 26.56 |
| Separated including deserted | 57,359 | 61,480 | 65,361 | 6.31 |
| Divorced | 18,904 | 32,308 | 49,685 | 53.78 |
| Widowed | 149,250 | 148,981 | 147,977 | -0.6 |

Source: Central Statistics Office Census 2011

16. Table 2 also shows a substantial increase (over 31 per cent) in the number of women born outside Ireland who are currently residing in Ireland. As a result, women, including girl children, born overseas now account for over one in six of all girls and women living in Ireland. The number of remarried (plus 26.56 per cent) and the number of divorced (plus 53.78 per cent) women in Ireland have also increased significantly since 2006. This suggests that the family dynamic has also undergone a radical transformation in the inter-censal period with more parents living apart and increased numbers of “step-families”.
17. The most recent inter-censal period (2006-2011) has shown the highest natural increase in the population at 45,000 persons per annum, with 73,000 births and 28,000 deaths. Preliminary figures for Census 2011 show that the sex ratio of the population (males per 1,000 females) has reversed with the 2011 figures showing 43,864 more females than males overall in the State, resulting in a sex ratio of 981 males for every 1,000 females. On a regional basis, Dublin had the lowest ratio with only 949 males for every 1,000 females.

CHANGES IN THE OPERATING ENVIRONMENT

18. During 2011, the economic environment showed little sign of improvement, with unemployment figures continuing to rise and the impacts of austerity measures being keenly felt, particularly amongst families. By the end of 2011, there were a total of 302,000 persons unemployed³. All of the annual increase in unemployment between Q4 2010 and Q4 2011 was accounted for by females (+3,900 or +4.1 per cent). The long-term unemployment rate increased from 7.3 per cent to 8.6 per cent over the year to Q4 2011, with long-term unemployment accounting for 60.3 per cent of total unemployment in Q4 2011, compared with 51.5 per cent in 2010 and 33.3 per cent in 2009. On a more positive note, the annual decrease in employment of 15,400 or 0.8 per cent was the lowest since the second quarter of 2008. This was comprised of a decrease of 6,100 or 0.6 per cent in the number of men in employment, while the number of women in employment decreased by 9,400 or 1.1 per cent.
19. The employment rate for women in Ireland at the end of 2011 was 55.4 per cent (or 840,800) with women accounting for almost 47 per cent of all persons in employment. Women in Ireland are still over-represented in part-time employment, with women accounting for just under 70 per cent of all persons employed in a part-time capacity. Of the 295,900 women classed as working part-time, just 26 per cent considered themselves to be part-time underemployed, i.e., willing/available to work more hours, compared with just under half of all men employed on a part-time basis. This suggests that

³ According to the Quarterly National Household Survey, regarded as the best indicator of employment/unemployment statistics

women might be prepared to sacrifice career development and financial gain in order to fulfil the caring roles which still fall disproportionately to women, even for those who have achieved high standards of education. The availability of quality, affordable and accessible childcare, in line with the Barcelona targets⁴, along with appropriate supports for eldercare and care of other dependents, are therefore central to allowing women to achieve their true potential in the labour market.

20. In 2012, there was an annual increase in employment of 1,200 or 0.1 per cent in the year to the fourth quarter of 2012. Male employment increased by 700, while female employment increased by 500. While the figures are small, this is the first annual increase in employment recorded since the second quarter of 2008. However, it is also worth noting that full-time employment fell by 12,800 (-0.9 per cent) over the year, while part-time employment increased by 14,000 (+3.2 per cent) thereby offsetting this decrease. While male unemployment remains significantly higher than female unemployment (16.6 per cent for men compared with 10.3 per cent for women in 2012), largely due to the collapse of the construction sector during the economic downturn, the figures for 2012 show that male unemployment fell by 15,200 over the year while female unemployment fell by just 4,100 over the same period. This suggests that men are more likely to be successful in securing new employment. Gender specific labour market activation measures may therefore be required to ensure that both men and women are sufficiently skilled and prepared to avail of new employment opportunities.
21. The long-term unemployment rate decreased from 9.1 per cent to 8.2 per cent over the year to Q4/2012. This is the first annual decrease in the long-term unemployment rate recorded since the second quarter of 2007.
22. The employment rate for women at the end of 2012 was 55.4 per cent with women accounting for almost 47 per cent of the total number of people in employment. Women remain overrepresented in part-time employment. Almost 38 per cent of women in employment (307,900) work part-time compared with just over 14 per cent of men (142,300). A greater percentage of men who work part-time are recorded as being part-time under-employed (i.e. willing and available to work additional hours), almost 46 per cent of men compared with just 26 per cent of women.
23. Despite the economic downturn, there are still new employment opportunities, particularly in the high technology sectors. However, there are still relatively few women in these sectors. Another area which appears to offer employment opportunities is the “caring” sector with many vacancies for suitably qualified carers being advertised regularly on the FÁS and other websites.
24. The CSO Population and Migration Estimates show that emigration among Irish nationals continued to increase sharply from 27,700 to 40,200 over the twelve months to April 2011, with Irish women accounting for over 42 per cent of this figure. Overall emigration is estimated to have reached 76,400 in the year to April 2011, an increase of 11,100 (or 16.9 per cent) on the 65,300 recorded in the year to April 2010. Net outward migration among Irish nationals increased from 14,400 in April 2010 to 22,400 in April 2011. Over the same period net outward migration of non-Irish nationals nearly halved from 20,200 to 11,000. These trends continued in 2012, with overall emigration reaching 87,100 in the year to April 2012, an increase of 10,700 (or 14 per cent) on the figure recorded in the year to April 2011. Irish nationals were the largest group of emigrants accounting for 46,500 or 53 per cent. Irish women accounted for 20,600 or just over 44 per cent of this figure. Net outward migration among Irish nationals increased to 26,000 in the year to April 2012. Net outward migration of non-Irish nationals was 8,400 over the same period.

ACHIEVEMENTS IN IMPLEMENTING THE NATIONAL WOMEN’S STRATEGY 2011/2012

25. This Report shows that progress has been made across all Government Departments and Agencies to implement the National Women’s Strategy during 2011 and 2012. However, there are still significant deficits between women and men in many important sectors, particularly in decision-making roles, both in economic and political fields and the achievement of de facto progress in these areas remains a challenge, although this is also a key priority for Government.

⁴ In 2002, at the Barcelona Summit, the European Council set the targets of providing childcare by 2010 to at least 90% of children between three years old and the mandatory school age and to at least 33% of children less than three years of age.

CHAPTER 2

GENDER EQUALITY – THE INTERNATIONAL DIMENSION

INTRODUCTION

1. The European Union and all of the key multi-lateral bodies place considerable emphasis on gender equality. The concept of gender equality has been enshrined in EU legislation since the foundation of the EU in 1958 while the Council of Europe and the United Nations have addressed gender equality since their foundation in the 1940s. Each body continues to play a significant role in promoting gender equality.

EUROPEAN UNION ACTIVITIES ON GENDER

2. Both the Commission and its High Level Group on Gender Mainstreaming (representative of all Member States at official level) collaborate with each EU Presidency country and with the Council of Ministers of the European Union to advance a programme of activities in relation to gender equality during each semester. The Council of Ministers of the European Union is the principal decision-making institution in the EU. This will usually include the organisation of a Ministerial Conference and an Informal Ministerial Council. It will also frequently result in a major research report and a set of Council Conclusions on a gender equality related topic which are submitted to the Employment, Social Protection, Health and Consumer Affairs (ESPHCA) Council for final decision.
3. During 2011, in their successive EU Presidency roles, Hungary and Poland collaborated with other Member States, with the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) and with the Secretariat of the Council of Ministers to undertake active programmes on gender equality, culminating in Council Conclusions, adopted at the EPSCHA Councils during 2011, on the renewal of the European Gender Pact; and on work life balance as a pre-condition for labour market participation.

Council Conclusions on – The European Pact for Gender Equality (2011-2020)

4. The first European Pact for Gender Equality was adopted by the European Council in 2006. The Pact emphasised the importance of utilising women's untapped potential in the labour market, including by promoting women's empowerment in economic and political life, and of the need to close gender gaps, combat gender stereotypes and to promote better work/life balance for women and men.
5. A revision of the Pact was prepared during the Hungarian Presidency in the first half of 2011 to provide fresh impetus and to reaffirm and support the close link between the Pact and Europe 2020, the EU's key policy document for jobs and smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, and the European Commission's 'Strategy for Equality between Women and Men 2010-2015'. Council Conclusions on the renewed European Pact for Gender Equality 2011-2020 were adopted by the ESPHCA Council in March 2011.
6. A full copy of the text of the renewed European Pact for Gender Equality is attached at Appendix II. The salient points from the document are as follows:

- *THE COUNCIL urges action at Member State and, as appropriate, Union level in the following fields:*

Measures to close gender gaps and combat gender segregation in the labour market:

- a) *promote women's employment in all age brackets and close gender gaps in employment, including by combating all forms of discrimination;*
- b) *eliminate gender stereotypes and promote gender equality at all levels of education and training, as well as in working life, in order to reduce gender segregation in the labour market;*
- c) *ensure equal pay for equal work and work of equal value;*

- d) *promote women's empowerment in political and economic life and advance women's entrepreneurship;*
- e) *encourage the social partners and enterprises to develop and effectively implement initiatives in favour of gender equality and promote gender equality plans at the workplace; and*
- f) *promote the equal participation of women and men in decision-making at all levels and in all fields, in order to make full use of all talents.*

Measures to promote better work-life balance for women and men:

- a) *improve the supply of adequate, affordable, high-quality childcare services for children under the mandatory school age with a view to achieving the objectives set at the European Council in Barcelona in March 2002, taking into account the demand for childcare services and in line with national patterns of childcare provision;*
- b) *improve the provision of care facilities for other dependants; and*
- c) *promote flexible working arrangements and various forms of leave for both women and men.*

Measures to tackle all forms of violence against women:

- a) *adopt, implement and monitor strategies at national and Union level with a view to eliminating violence against women;*
- b) *strengthen the prevention of violence against women and the protection of victims and potential victims, including women from all disadvantaged groups; and*
- c) *emphasise the role and responsibility of men and boys in the process of eradicating violence against women.*

Council Conclusions Reviewing the Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action – Women and the Economy: Reconciliation of Work and Family Life as a Precondition for Equal Participation in the Labour Market

7. The Polish Presidency of the EU in the second half of 2011 prepared a set of draft Council Conclusions on a review of Critical Area F of the Beijing Platform for Action – Women and the Economy. Specifically the draft Council Conclusions were concerned with the ‘Reconciliation of Work and Family Life as a Precondition for Equal Participation in the Labour Market’. The draft Council Conclusions were adopted by the ESPHCA Council in December 2011.
8. In particular, the agreed Council Conclusions call on Member States to:
 - Step up or continue efforts to support the reconciliation of work, family and private life for both women and men, including through formal care provision, parental leave and other family-friendly leave arrangements;
 - Step up measures which aim to achieve the 2002 Barcelona childcare targets⁵;
 - Increase efforts to implement measures to encourage men to share family and domestic responsibilities equally with women, including by increasing efforts to combat persisting gender stereotypes linked to the traditional division of labour and caring responsibilities; and
 - Encourage employers to adopt family-friendly measures related to flexible working arrangements and part-time work for both women and men, without any negative effects on career prospects.

⁵ Barcelona targets: see page 12

9. The European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE), in close cooperation with the Polish Presidency, had prepared the background evaluation report on ‘Women and the Economy: Reconciliation of Work and Family Life as a Precondition for Equal Participation in the Labour Market’, which formed the evidence on which to base the Council Conclusions.

Other Presidency Actions in 2011

10. EU Presidency Conferences and/or Informal Councils on Gender Equality held during 2011 focused on the following topics:

Informal Meeting of Ministers for Family and Gender Equality (Cracow, 21 October 2011) and Presidency Conference

- An Informal Meeting of Ministers for Family and Gender Equality was organised by the Polish Presidency on 21 October 2011 in Cracow. The Minister of State with responsibility for Equality attended on behalf of Ireland. A policy discussion focused on advancing the blockage on progress on the draft Maternity Leave Directive, on which the European Parliament had adopted a particular stance in 2010, which would give rise to very significant expenditure on the part of a number of Member States who therefore found it difficult to adopt the Parliament’s proposals.
 - A new Trio Declaration on Gender Equality was signed by the Trio of Presidencies (Poland, Denmark and Cyprus) at the Informal Ministerial Meeting. It states that ensuring equal opportunities in practice is an urgent priority in a broad range of policy areas as a prerequisite for ensuring growth, prosperity and welfare and for meeting the employment targets of the Europe 2020 Strategy.
 - An Expert Conference on ‘Mechanisms for reconciling professional and family roles for women and men as a chance to actively participate in the labour market’ coincided with the Informal Ministerial Meeting.
11. During 2012, Denmark and Cyprus chaired the Council of Ministers of the European Union and during the year, they promulgated Council Conclusions relating to gender equality and the environment; and to combating violence against women and the provision of support services for victims of violence against women.

Council Conclusions on – Gender Equality and the Environment: enhanced decision-making, qualifications and competitiveness in the field of climate change mitigation policy in the EU

12. On an initiative of the Danish Presidency, the EPSCHA Council adopted Council Conclusions on ‘Gender equality and the environment: enhanced decision-making in the field of climate change mitigation policy in the EU’ In June 2012. The draft Council Conclusions have a specific focus on climate change mitigation⁶ policy and are particularly concerned with increasing women’s participation in climate change decision-making and the need to boost the number of women graduates in educational fields relevant to that area, including natural sciences and technologies. In particular the Member States are called upon to:
 - Take active and specific measures aimed at achieving a balanced representation of women and men in decision-making in the field of climate change mitigation at all levels.
 - Eliminate gender stereotypes and promote gender equality at all levels of education and training, as well as in working life, in order to reduce gender segregation in the labour market within industries, research bodies and other areas that are linked with climate change mitigation.

⁶ The United Nations defines mitigation, in the context of climate change, as a human intervention to reduce the sources or to enhance the sinks of greenhouse gases. Examples include: reducing our reliance on fossil fuels, switching to more renewable sources of energy (solar, wind, etc.), improving the insulation of buildings and expanding forests and other “sinks” to remove greater amounts of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere.

- Dismantle the barriers that still impede women's access to the highest levels in post-graduate education and research – especially in disciplines such as STEM⁷ and with respect to leadership positions related to decision-making in the field of climate change mitigation – in order to make use of untapped talent.
- Identify and overcome remaining financial, administrative, cultural and mobility obstacles and create more attractive and flexible working conditions in the scientific and technological fields, including by means of measures to reconcile work, family and private life, for the benefit of both women and men.

The Council of Ministers was also invited to take note of an evaluation report prepared by the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE), in close cooperation with the Danish Presidency, on '*Women and the Environment: Gender Equality and Climate Change*'. The report includes four indicators focusing on climate change decision-making and on educational fields relevant to that area:

- a) Proportion of women in climate change decision-making bodies at the national level in the EU Member States;
- b) Proportion of women in climate change decision-making bodies at the EU-level;
- c) Proportion of women in climate change decision-making bodies at the international level;
- d) Proportion of female tertiary graduates of all graduates in natural sciences and technologies at the EU and Member States level.

Council Conclusions on – Combating violence against women, and the provision of support services for victims of domestic violence (Report and indicators developed in the context of the Review of the Beijing Platform for Action)

13. The topic for Council Conclusions adopted at EPSCHA in the second half of 2012 was “Combating violence against women, and the provision of support services for victims of domestic violence”. These were based on a study, commissioned by the Cypriot Presidency and prepared by EIGE, on the relevant indicators developed in the context of the Review of the Beijing Platform for Action⁷). In particular, the Council Conclusions call for the following:-

- collection of comparable, reliable, regularly updated statistics;
- provision of appropriate and sustainable funding;
- registration and handling of complaints;
- provision of appropriate training for the relevant professionals dealing with victims and perpetrators;
- support services for victims of violence; and
- long-term awareness-raising activities.

The Council of Ministers was also invited to take note of an accompanying report prepared by the European Institute for Gender Equality, in close cooperation with the Cypriot Presidency, entitled the "Review of the Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action by the EU Member States: Violence against women: Victim support".

Other Presidency Actions in 2012

14. Specific initiatives linked to Gender Equality undertaken by the Danish and Cypriot Presidencies of the Council of Ministers during 2012 focused on the following topics:

⁷ STEM – Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics.

Public Policy Debate on Women on Corporate Boards

- Denmark included a public policy debate on Women on Corporate Boards during the ESPHCA Council meeting in February 2012. The Minister of State with responsibility for Equality participated in the ministerial debate on behalf of Ireland. The Minister favoured a strengthening of the role of women on corporate boards but found that the targets of the Commission would be a challenge to achieve.

Conference on Combating Violence against Women, Nicosia, 8-9 November 2012

- The Cypriot Presidency held a Conference on Combating Violence against Women in Nicosia on 8-9 November 2012. The main aims of the Conference were to review the progress made in recent years in Europe and to present good practices that are implemented in the fields of preventing, combating and protecting women against violence.

15. Legislative Proposal on Women on Corporate Boards

Following a public consultation, on 14th November 2012, the Commission published its proposal for an EU *Directive on improving the gender balance among non-executive directors of companies listed on stock exchanges and related measures*. The following is a summary of the key points of the Commission's proposal:

- Listed companies, which do not have a presence of the under-represented sex of at least 40 per cent of non-executive directors, are obliged, under Article 4 of the proposed Directive, to make the appointments to these positions, on the basis of a comparative analysis of the qualifications of each candidate, by applying pre-established, clear, neutrally formulated and unambiguous criteria, in order to attain the said percentage at the latest by 1st January 2020. A shorter deadline for achieving the objective (1st January 2018) is set for listed companies which are public undertakings.
- Article 4 provides that, in the presence of equally qualified candidates of both sexes, priority will be given to the candidate of the under-represented sex, unless an objective assessment, taking account of all criteria specific to the individual candidates, tilts the balance in favour of the candidate of the other sex. This is necessary to ensure that the objectives comply with the case law of the Court of Justice of the European Union concerning positive action.
- Article 6 obliges Member States to lay down rules on sanctions applicable in case of breach of this proposed Directive. The sanctions are left to Member States to decide but must be effective, proportionate and dissuasive.
- Article 3 of the proposed Directive excludes from the scope of the Directive listed companies which are small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), as defined by Commission Recommendation 2003/361/EC of 6th May 2003.

Europe 2020 Strategy

16. Europe 2020 is the European Union's strategy for economic growth for the coming decade in order to ensure that the EU continues to be a smart, sustainable and inclusive economy. The Union sets five ambitious objectives on employment, innovation, education, social inclusion and climate energy, to be reached by 2020. Each Member State will adopt its own national targets in each of these areas, and progress on the achievement of these targets will be monitored closely by the European Commission. The Commission has issued the following guidelines...
17. The Europe 2020 Strategy promotes inclusive growth and the need for increased economic engagement of women, noting that:

"Inclusive growth means empowering people through high levels of employment, investing in skills, fighting poverty and modernising labour markets, training and social protection systems so as to help people anticipate and manage change and build a cohesive society..."

Europe needs to make full use of its labour potential to face the challenges of an ageing population and rising global competition, policies to promote gender equality will be needed to increase labour force participation thus adding to growth and social inclusion".

18. Member States are required to prepare their National Reform Programmes to address the key aims of the Strategy, which in respect of gender and women, includes:

- Achieving an EU-27 employment rate of 75 per cent for men and for women, aged 20 to 64, by 2020;
- Increasing the numbers of women in scientific research; and
- Increasing the numbers of women in managerial positions in scientific research.

19. The Joint Employment Report is prepared as a forward looking analysis, which expands on the key employment messages contained in the European Commission's Annual Growth Survey. In the text of the Report, which was adopted by the Employment Council on 7th March 2011, the following points addressed to national Governments in relation to the labour market participation of women and the work-life reconciliation balance:

*"There is a clear need to foster women's greater involvement in the labour market. The overall employment rate of women in Europe is still only 62.4% (20-64). **Inadequate fiscal treatment of 2nd earners** (higher effective taxes for married women than for single earners) is seen in some countries as an obstacle impeding continued female participation in or returning to the labour market. **High marginal effective tax rates** resulting from the family based taxation elements, the phasing out of means-tested or income-based benefits (such as child benefit or housing benefits) together with the lack of use of in-work benefits, are potential obstacles for the re-entry of women to the labour market for some Member States."*

*"**Involuntary part-time work among women** is still an issue in some Member States, as a result of inadequate childcare facilities during working hours or after-school, and is also due to the lack of services for children and other dependent persons. Moreover, care for the elderly and disabled is becoming a significant challenge with the ageing population, both for society and for women. In some Member States the **reintegration of women into the labour market** is further impeded due to unfriendly career break labour markets and unbalanced take-up of parental responsibilities. In some countries lengthy (financed) parental leave risks being a hindrance for career development and imposes severe fiscal burdens on the public budget and on productivity due to skill depreciation."*

20. Although the material has already been stated to some extent in the preceding paragraphs, the end of the Report as adopted by the Employment Council also contains a number of note-worthy recommendations regarding priorities in the realm of structural labour market reforms which require immediate attention, some of which have a gender focus, including:

- *Targeted temporary reductions in employer social security contributions, for disadvantaged groups and particularly in the cases of newly hired youngsters, women or parents returning to work, older unemployed workers or low income earners, can facilitate transitions into employment. Nonetheless, these reductions should not jeopardise the financial stability of social security systems;*
- *Female employment could also be stimulated by providing more in-kind assistance combined with reducing the marginal effective tax rate of second earners. More generally, interlinking tax and benefits so that those eligible for non-employment benefits get for instance an earned income tax credit for income stemming from work can attract the inactive to employment;*
- *Supporting flexible working arrangements (flexitime, teleworking) for those returning from parental leave could also ease the reconciliation of work and private life and contribute particularly to women's employment. Extending full-time day-care facilities, especially for children under 3 years old, is essential to ensure that the negative impact of parenthood on employment, mainly affecting women, is strongly reduced. In addition, a more equal take up of parental leave between both parents is necessary to compensate the possible review of relatively*

long parental leave schemes where they have a negative impact on labour market performance of women.

21. The Joint Employment Report for 2012, which was adopted by ESPHCA Council on 17th February 2012, suggests that “...while the 2011 priorities and measures remain broadly valid, and further implementation of reform is essential, it is necessary to deploy additional efforts, in conjunction with national social partners, under certain priority areas”.

Mentioned under the heading of ‘Structural Labour Market Reforms to Support Growth: Key Priorities’ is the need for “...policies to facilitate employment prospects for women and encourage second earners into the labour market”.

The Report recognises that employment opportunities thus far have not led to secure and full-time employment and women are disproportionately effected by this trend “The increase in employment has mainly been within temporary contracts and part-time jobs. Women are slightly over-represented compared to men in temporary work while the share of part-time workers is far higher for women than for men”.

The economic downturn and lack of employment opportunities is also putting social safety nets under increased stress, particularly with regard to pensions. The Report notes that women are particularly vulnerable in this regard “The revenues for pension schemes have dropped considerably in many countries as a consequence of increases in unemployment and part-time work and the stagnation of wages contribution. Moreover, the persistence of gender inequalities in the labour market represents one obstacle hindering women from contributing to their pension”.

Unemployment levels have also led to risks of long-term exclusions for some groups, particularly lone-parents “The crisis has led to increased risks of long-term exclusion from the labour market and society...In 2010 the share of people living in jobless households exceeded 10% in seven Member States. Among such jobless households, lone parents, mainly women, and their children are particularly at risk of long-term exclusion”.

One of the more striking aspects of the economic downturn has been its effect on labour market participation rates particularly in the variation of participation rates across gender and age groups “...the overall stability in participation rates hides diverging developments for women and men and across different age groups. Women have been increasing their participation, mostly due to the “added worker” effect (women stepping into the labour market as a consequence of their partners losing their jobs) whilst the participation rate for men has been decreasing. The participation of older workers (both men and women) increased, reflecting the effects of increases in retirement ages and the phasing-out of early retirement schemes, while the activity rates of young people have been constantly decreasing”.

European Commission Annual Report on Equality between Women and Men

22. In 2011, the European Commission presented its first annual report on equality between women and men following the adoption of the Europe 2020 Strategy and its own Strategy for Equality between Women and Men 2010-2015. The 2010 Annual Report is structured around the five priority areas identified in the Strategy and in the Women’s Charter, which was adopted by the Commission in March 2010. The Report states that from next year each Annual Report will focus on a particular theme.
23. The Commission report outlines developments in gender equality in the EU during 2010 and presents statistics on the five priority areas identified in the Commission’s Strategy, namely: equal economic independence; equal pay for equal work or work of equal value; equality in decision-making; dignity, integrity and an end to gender-based violence; and gender equality outside of the EU. The Report also highlights new developments in the Member States.
24. Some of the key points from the report under the five priority areas are as follows:

Equal Economic Independence:

- The Report emphasises the importance of employment for women's economic independence and to avoid the risk of poverty in old age through adequate pension provision.
- The Europe 2020 Strategy, the EU's key document for jobs and smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, has as one of its headline targets, to raise the employment rate for women and men aged 20-64 to 75% by 2020. The Report recognises the difficulty which many Member States may face in reaching this target due to the economic crisis.
- The overall employment rate for women in Europe in 2009 was 62.5%. The corresponding figure for Ireland for the third quarter of 2010 was 57%.

Equal pay for equal work or work of equal value:

- The gender pay gap stands at 17.5% across the EU as a whole, with Ireland just below the average at 17.1%.
- The reasons for the gender pay gap are complex and multi-faceted and include: the unequal distribution of care and domestic responsibilities; the lack of pay transparency; the vertical and horizontal segregation of the labour market; and women's overrepresentation in part-time employment.
- Council Conclusions on the gender pay gap were prepared under the Belgian Presidency (July-Dec 2010) and were adopted by Council in December 2010. In the Conclusions Member States are invited to adopt or pursue a comprehensive set of measures to tackle the causes of the gender pay gap linked to the labour market inequalities between women and men.
- The Council Conclusions also called for the establishment of a European Equal Pay Day. The Commission Report states that the first European Equal Pay Day will be held in spring 2011.

Equality in Decision-Making:

- Women are underrepresented in decision-making roles across all sectors in many of the EU Member States, including Ireland.
- In 2010, the EU average number of female members of national parliaments (single/lower houses) was 24%. In Ireland, this figure was just 13.7%, leaving Ireland ranked in 23rd place out of the 27 EU Member States. (Following the recent Irish General Election this figure has increased to 15.1%)
- The Commission Report makes mention of the recommendation from the 2010 report of the Oireachtas Joint Committee on the Constitution, which stated that, when examining the issue of electoral reform, political parties should pursue positive measures to promote gender equality in its membership, including in the selection of candidates for election.
- Only 3% of the largest publicly quoted companies (blue-chip companies) across the EU have a female chair of the highest decision-making body. In Ireland this figure is slightly higher at 5% but is still disappointingly low.
- Independent international research has shown a correlation between companies with women in decision-making positions and good corporate performance.

Dignity, Integrity and an End to Gender-Based Violence:

- Council Conclusions on *The Eradication of Violence against Women in the European Union* were prepared under the Spanish Presidency in the first half of 2010 and adopted by Council in March 2010.
- Ireland is one of ten Member States listed in the Commission Report as having launched a new strategy on violence against women during 2010. In March 2010, the Minister for Justice and Law Reform launched the National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence 2010-2014. Cosc – The National Office for the Prevention of Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence, is responsible for the implementation of the Strategy.

- The Commission Report notes that in 2011 the Commission will propose a package of legislative and practical measures aimed at changing attitudes towards victims and bringing them into the heart of the criminal justice system. This ‘victims’ package will also include measures to combat gender-based violence more effectively.

Gender Equality Beyond the Union:

- The 15th anniversary of the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA) was celebrated in March 2010 during the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) at the United Nations.
 - The 10th anniversary of the Millennium Declaration and of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security were also marked during 2010.
 - During 2010, the Department of Foreign Affairs was actively engaged in the development of Ireland’s National Action Plan to implement UN Security Council Resolution 1325.
 - In July 2010, a new UN organisation for Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment – UN Women, was established to consolidate the four existing UN bodies on women; UNIFEM, DAW, INSTRAW and OSAGI. Irish Aid was to the forefront in advocating for the establishment of this new organisation. Ireland played an active role in the negotiations to agree the United Nations General Assembly resolution for the establishment of this new Gender Entity.
 - UN Women, the new UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, became operational in January 2011.
25. The Commission published its 2011 Annual Report on Equality between Women and Men during 2012. This was the first occasion that the Report was annexed to the Communication on the Application of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights. The Report gives an overview of the performance and activities organised at EU level during 2011 to address the five priority action areas of the Commission’s *Strategy for Equality between Women and Men 2010-2015*.
26. Some of the key points from the Report under the five priority areas are as follows:

Equal Economic Independence:

- The Report emphasises that it will only be possible to reach the Europe 2020 employment target of a 75 per cent employment rate for women and men aged 20-64 by 2020 if there is a clear commitment to gender equality.
- The EU average employment rate for women aged 20-64 in 2010 was 62.1 per cent compared with an employment rate of 75.1 per cent for men aged 20-64. The female employment rate for women aged 20-64 in Ireland was 60.4 per cent in 2010, somewhat below the EU average. Just one Member State, Sweden, had reached the 75 per cent employment target for women, while twelve Member States had reached the employment target for men.
- The Report recognises that reconciling work, family and private life is still a major challenge for many women in Europe. Labour market participation of mothers is 21.1 percentage points lower than for women without children. Conversely, labour market participation of fathers is 8.7 percentage points higher than for men without children.

Equal Pay for Equal Work and Work of Equal Value:

- The EU average Gender Pay Gap (GPG) figure for Member States in 2010 was 16.4 per cent. Ireland had a GPG of 12.6 per cent in the same period.
- The first European Equal Pay Day was held on 5th March 2011. The date marked the 64 days women had to work more in 2010 to earn a man’s average annual pay. European Equal Pay Day will be held annually with the date changing each year to reflect the latest GPG figure.

Equality in Decision-Making:

- The Report outlines that the equal participation of women and men in decision-making processes and positions is a prerequisite for the advancement of women and for the achievement

of substantive gender equality. Across many EU Member States, women remain significantly under-represented in all decision-making fields, especially in corporate decision-making. This situation is at variance with the highly educated female population and represents an underutilisation of human resource talent and potential.

- During 2011, EU Vice-President and Commissioner for Justice, Citizenship and Fundamental Rights, Ms. Viviane Reding, called on companies to address the imbalance through self-regulation measures and to sign up to the ‘Women on the Board Pledge for Europe’, committing publicly listed companies to having 30 per cent female board members by 2015 and 40 per cent female board members by 2020
- In January 2012, only 13.7 per cent of board seats of the EU Member States’ largest publicly listed companies were held by women. In Ireland, the figure was just 8.7 per cent.
- In March 2012, the Commission published a report (*Progress Report on Women in Economic Decision-Making in the EU*) showing that progress in this regard had been limited. The Commission then initiated a public consultation process to inform any future initiatives, including legislative proposals, to address the gender imbalance.

Dignity, Integrity and ending Gender-based Violence:

- The Commission Report recognises that the lack of comparable data among Member States on violence against women is a major difficulty in addressing this issue.
- On 18th May 2011 a package of measures was adopted aimed at strengthening the rights of victims of crime. The package consists of a proposal for a horizontal Directive establishing minimum standards on the rights, supports and protections of victims of crime, a proposal for a Regulation on the mutual recognition of civil law protection measures (complementing the Directive on the European Protection Order) and a Communication setting out the Commission’s position on actions in relation to victims of crime. This package will apply to all victims, including women.
- The proposal for a Regulation on the mutual recognition of civil law protection measures will ensure that protection measures issued in one Member State can be recognised in another Member State thereby ensuring that women do not lose their protection if they move or travel between Member States.

Gender Equality in External Actions:

- In January 2011, the Human Rights and Democracy Department of the European External Action Service (EEAS) was established. Specific gender focus points have been selected in more than seventy EU-led delegations around the world.
- For the period 2007-2013, the EU external cooperation in the field of gender equality and women’s empowerment is financed not only, as a crosscutting issue through geographical instruments (European Development Fund, Development Cooperation Instrument and European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument) at national and regional level, but also by thematic instruments such as the “Investing in People” programme and the “Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights”. The first report on the implementation of the Action Plan on Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment was published in 2011. It gives an overview of what is being done in partner countries by the EU delegations and the Member States to promote gender equality and women’s empowerment. Ireland’s role in fostering gender equality and women’s empowerment in our partner countries is featured in this report.

European Union - Revisions to EU Family-Friendly Legislation

Self-Employed Gender Equal Treatment Directive – Council Directive 2010/41/EU on the application of the principle of equal treatment between men and women engaged in an activity in a self-employed capacity and repealing Directive 86/613/EEC.

27. This Directive aims to change the Community legal framework to provide a period of maternity leave for self-employed women and to recognise the contribution of assisting spouses to the family business

by providing them with social protection equivalent to that of their self-employed partners. It provides for 14 weeks maternity leave for female self-employed workers and assisting spouses.

28. The Directive was published in July 2010. Ireland was required to transpose the Directive by 5 August 2012. It was considered that immediate implementation of the Directive would introduce discriminatory practices into the Irish social insurance system with some spouses/life partners excluded depending on what status they held vis-à-vis the business. The Department of Social Protection sought, and was granted, additional time to transpose the Directive so that the wider issues can be considered and the legislation amended as required. Ireland now has until August 2014 to transpose the Directive.

Revised Parental Leave Directive – Council Directive 2010/18/EU

29. A revised framework agreement on parental leave was concluded between the European Social Partners (which included the EU representative organisations of both ICTU and IBEC) in June 2009. This led to a proposal from the European Commission to the European Council to repeal existing legislation in this area. The new legislation was published in March 2010 and Member States are required to transpose it within two years.
30. The main elements of the new Directive are as follows:
- The duration of Parental Leave will now be for 4 months. This was previously 3 months. Up to 3 of the 4 months will be transferable between family partners under this agreement.
 - It requires Member States to assess the need to adjust conditions for access and modalities of application of Parental Leave to the needs of parents of children with either a disability or long-term illness.
 - It confers the right on parents returning to work from Parental Leave to seek changes to their working hours or the structure of same. An employer is now legally obliged to consider the request but not obliged to grant this.
 - It provides for an assessment of the needs for additional measures to address specific needs in relation to adoptive parents.
31. Some positive aspects of the proposal include the balancing of gender responsibilities and gender equality. The fact that one month is non-transferable may encourage fathers to avail of Parental Leave while mothers may be induced to remain in the workforce.
32. Ireland's current statutory Parental Leave entitlement is 14 weeks per parent, per child and it is unpaid.
33. Ireland transposed the Directive by regulation in March 2013 and, in addition, is currently preparing a new Bill on Family Leave.

EU Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men

34. The EU Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men is composed of representatives from Member States' Government Departments, national bodies responsible for equal opportunities, employers' and employees' organisations at Community level, and observers such as the European Women's Lobby and others. The Advisory Committee assists the European Commission in formulating and implementing Community measures aimed at promoting equal opportunities for women and men. The Committee also encourages the continuous exchange of information and experiences gained on policies and measures taken in relevant fields between the Member States and the various other actors.
35. The Advisory Committee prepares Opinions at the request of the European Commission and also delivers Opinions on its own initiative. The Advisory Committee adopted the following three Opinions during 2011:

Opinion on the Multiannual Financial Framework 2014-2020

- The Opinion makes it clear that it will be impossible to reach the objectives of the Europe 2020 Strategy, particularly the target of a 75% employment rate for women and men by 2020, without a significant increase in women's employment.
- The Opinion also notes that EU funding for activities to increase women's employment rate and promote quality employment, to improve reconciliation policies for both women and men, to strengthen national care infrastructures, to tackle vertical and horizontal gender segregation in education and in the labour market, and to combat the gender pay gap and the increasing feminisation of poverty, is indispensable for reaching the objectives of the Europe 2020 Strategy and to counter the demographic challenges.

Opinion on the gender dimension of integration of migrants

- The Opinion examines the particular challenges which women and men migrants face, how the participation of migrant women in the workforce might be enhanced, and looks at good practice examples from Member States where gender is taken into account in integration policies.
- The Opinion notes that migrant workers, especially women, are disproportionately likely to be working in temporary, casual or atypical forms of employment and are also more concentrated in low paid, low-status jobs when in full time employment.

Opinion on the gender dimension of active ageing and solidarity between generations

- The Opinion notes that the European Union is experiencing a rapid increase in the ageing population. It is anticipated that the EU27 population aged 65 or over will increase from 17% in 2010 to 30% in 2060.
- The Opinion notes the different needs of women and men in old age including in respect of healthcare, housing, education, transport needs, etc. Women have a significantly higher at risk-of-poverty rate than men (21% vs. 16% in 2008). Women have a higher life expectancy rate than men but the number of quality-of-life-years for women is lower compared to men.
- In order to meet these current and future demographic challenges, the Opinion states that there is a need for a sustainable approach to active ageing which emphasises the business case for and the economic opportunities arising from a focus on active ageing, taking into account equality between women and men and the need to reinforce protection against all forms of discrimination.

36. The Advisory Committee adopted the two following Opinions during 2012:

Opinion on gender equality in the cohesion policy 2014-2020

- The Opinion notes that the Structural Funds (cohesion policy) 2014-2020 will be the main investment instruments for support the key priorities of the Union as enshrined in the Europe 2020 Strategy and will also constitute the most important financial support available for the implementation of gender equality policy in the EU.
- The Opinion has been prepared to advise the European Commission as to how the cohesion policy can be used effectively to achieve the EU's commitments on gender equality over the period to 2020. The Opinion addresses the following three points:
 - How to ensure that the dual approach of gender mainstreaming and specific actions is improved in the implementation of cohesion policy funds for 2014-2020?
 - What are the specific suggestions on how to reinforce the gender dimension in the thematic objectives defined in line with the Europe 2020 objectives?
 - How could the Commission better cooperate with the authorities in Member States, other European institutions and civil society organisations to ensure that gender equality considerations form an integral part of all the investment priorities and are properly implemented?

- Overall, the Opinion recommends that in the 2014-2020 funding period, the role of Cohesion Policy in promoting equality between women and men must be strengthened. This is seen as necessary in order to reach the Europe 2020 targets and to redress the negative gendered impact of the economic crisis and of the ensuing austerity measures across Europe.

Opinion on a possible EU awareness raising campaign on violence against women and girls (VAWG)

- The European Commission's *Strategy for Equality between Women and Men 2010-2015* has as one of its five priority action areas 'Dignity, Integrity and Ending Gender-based Violence'. As part of its planned initiatives, it mentions a European-wide awareness-raising campaign on combating violence against women.
- This Opinion sets out the rationale for such a campaign and includes some recommendations as to how the campaign should be implemented. It is recommended that the campaign should include the following messages:
 - "Violence against women and girls is a violation of women's human rights, and is a cause and consequence of the structural inequality between women and men";
 - "Violence against women and girls is a cost for the whole society"; and
 - "Everyone is responsible for breaking the silence and filing a complaint: ending violence against women in the public sphere, at work and in the family or domestic unit".
- The Opinion also recommends that a framework for action is provided in order to guarantee efficiency, monitoring, evaluation and follow-up. In this regard, the Opinion suggests that the Commission should appoint an EU Coordinator to end violence against women and girls, a task-force gathering focal points and NGOs, and a focal point for this issue in all of the Member States.

Other EU Matters

The European Institute for Gender Equality

37. The European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) is a European agency created to support the Member States and the European Union in their efforts to promote gender equality, to fight gender discrimination and to raise awareness about gender issues. The proposal for its establishment was reactivated during the 2004 Irish Presidency.

38. The vision of the Institute is:

Making equality between women and men a reality for all Europeans and beyond;

while the Institute's mission is:

To become the European knowledge centre on gender equality issues.

39. The tasks of the Institute are:

1. To collect and analyse comparable data on gender issues;
2. To develop methodological tools, in particular for the integration of the gender dimension in all policy areas;
3. To facilitate the exchange of best practices and dialogue among stakeholders, and to raise awareness among EU citizens.

40. The Management Board of the newly established European Gender Institute met for the first time in 2007 and has met regularly since. The Board includes representatives of 18 of the 27 Member States on a three year rotational basis. A new Board was appointed in June 2010. Ireland is not currently a

member of the Board. All Member States are represented on the Experts' Forum, the Institute's advisory body, its principal function is to provide expertise and disseminate knowledge and awareness in the field of gender equality.

41. The budget for the Institute for the period 2007-2013 is €52.5 million. The Institute employs approximately thirty-nine staff including a number of Seconded National Experts (SNEs) who have been recruited to expand its expertise in the field of gender equality. The role of the EIGE in supporting the European Commission's Strategy for Equality between Women and Men 2010-2015 is as follows:

- To support the development and up-date of indicators in the critical areas of the Beijing Platform for Action (2011-2015);
- To set up a documentation centre accessible to the public with existing statistics, data and information, functioning models and approaches to gender mainstreaming (2012);
- To provide support to the development of mainstreaming tools and methods (2011-2015);
- To develop a gender equality index (2012); and
- To establish a virtual European Network on Gender Equality (2012).

EIGE Projects/Initiatives

- To celebrate International Women's Day on 8th March 2010, the EIGE announced the launch of its future "**Women of Europe**" resource pool. This is an ongoing project which contains information about women from all over Europe acting as role models and sources of inspiration for others. A woman can nominate herself or can be nominated based on any of the following:
 - How the nominee/nominator believes she/nominee has managed to break stereotypes about women.
 - How the nominee/nominator believes she/nominee achieved visibility and recognition by way of her actions.
 - How the nominee/nominator believes she/nominee has contributed to her society and to other women in particular.
- In 2011, the first twelve women were chosen from the resource pool to feature in the "**Women Inspiring Europe Calendar 2011**". A "**Women Inspiring Europe Calendar 2012**" was published during 2012. It is anticipated that this will continue to be an annual publication.
- EIGE has also established an excellent database of materials based on the indicators developed to measure progress at EU level in the attainment of the goals of the Beijing Platform for Action.

Gender Equality Index

- One of the key tasks set for the work programme of EIGE is the establishment of a Gender Equality Index as a tool to support decision-makers in assessing progress towards the achievement of de facto gender equality. Work on the preparation of the Index continued throughout 2012 through extensive consultations with experts. When complete the EU Gender Equality Index (GEI) will be a unique tool to measure progress on gender equality in the EU. The Index has been developed from an EIGE database of gender equality statistics which was developed in 2012, including statistics on gender-based violence and women and power. It is anticipated that the GEI will be launched by EIGE at a special event in June 2013.

Resource and Documentation Centre

- The long-term objective of EIGE's Resource and Documentation Centre (RDC) is to bring together in one place the memory of all gender equality work at EU and Member State level and to make it accessible to all, actively fostering cooperation between gender equality actors across the EU.
- It is anticipated that the RDC will be launched during 2013. It will be built around three main functions

- I. An online and physical documentation centre with access to approx. 24,000 gender equality resources that previously were scattered across a multitude of sources throughout the EU;
- II. A knowledge centre of gender equality knowledge produced by the Institute, including specialised research and databases; and
- III. The European Network on Gender Equality (EuroGender); an online collaborative platform where decision-makers, experts and other stakeholders can debate gender equality issues and share their expertise and resources.

EIGE Work Programme

42. The Mid-Term Work Programme for the Institute for the period 2010 - 2012 was adopted in April 2010. The focal areas identified in the work programme are as follows:
 - Completing the administrative and operational set up of the Institute;
 - Support to the research and policy work of the EU Institutions and the Member States;
 - Thematic or priority areas – including the concept of an EU Gender Equality Index to analyse gender gaps and to give the Member States a tool to encourage gender equality work;
 - Awareness-raising, networking and communication;
 - Dialogue and partnership.
43. The EIGE Annual Work Programme for 2012 was published in November 2011. During 2012 the Institute focused its work on two broad areas:
 - Collecting comparable and reliable data, and developing indicators on gender equality, including work in support of the EU Presidency Member States on aspects of the Beijing Platform for Action, which task is now a key function of the annual work programme of EIGE; and
 - Collecting, processing and disseminating research, information, methods and practices for gender equality work, including gender mainstreaming.
44. The EIGE Annual Work Programme for 2013 was published in November 2012. During 2013 it is expected that the Institute will focus its work on three specific areas:
 - I. The launch of the Gender Equality Index, offering users a broad range of indicators to measure progress on gender equality in Europe;
 - II. The roll-out of major functionalities of the Resource and Documentation Centre (RDC), gradually increasing users' access to a wide range of books, policy documents, grey literature and documentation on gender equality in Europe; and
 - III. The full establishment of the European Network on Gender Equality (EuroGender), to facilitate the pooling of resources and increase awareness of the importance of gender equality for Europe.

EIGE Publications

45. EIGE has published a number of research publications during 2011 and 2012. A selection of these publications can be found below. Full details of EIGE publications can be found at www.eige.europa.eu/content/publications
 - *Reconciliation of Work and Family Life as a condition of equal participation in the labour market, Report*, 20 October 2011
 - *Good Practices in Gender Mainstreaming: Mainstreaming gender into the policies and the programmes of the Institutions of the European Union and EU Member States*, 28 November 2011
 - *Violence against Women Victim Support: Report*, 7 December 2012
 - *Gender Equality and Climate Change: Report*, 5 May 2012
 - *Rationale for the Gender Equality Index for Europe*, 19 September 2012
 - *Mapping of gender training policies and practices in the European Union: Summary of Findings*, 13 November 2012
 - *The involvement of men in gender equality initiatives in the European Union*, 4 December 2012.

COUNCIL OF EUROPE

46. The Council of Europe has 47 member countries. 2009 represented the 60th anniversary of the establishment of the Council of Europe. The Council of Europe seeks to develop throughout Europe common and democratic principles based on the European Convention on Human Rights and other reference texts on the protection of individuals.
- In October 2011, a Conference on “**Current Trends of Development of National Gender Mechanisms in European Countries**” was held in Kiev, Ukraine. The Conference was jointly organised by the Council of Europe and the authorities of Ukraine in the context of the Ukrainian Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe.

Council of Europe Steering Committee for Equality between Women and Men (CDEG)

47. Within the context of its Human Rights Division, the Council of Europe (CoE) established a Steering Committee for Equality between Women and Men (CDEG) which meets twice a year. Ireland was also represented on the Bureau for the Steering Committee, which was tasked with the preparation of the work of the full Committee. The following is a summary of the work which was undertaken by the CDEG during 2011:

- **Publications:**
 - Study on ‘Combating the Isolation of Roma Women and Girls and Promoting their Empowerment. Invisible Lives – Roma Women in Greece’, December 2011
 - Study on ‘Discrimination against Lesbian and Bisexual Women and Girls and Transgender Persons’, December 2011
 - Study on ‘Combating Gender Stereotypes in Education’, December 2011
 - A handbook to combat gender stereotypes in the media ‘Women and Journalists First. A challenge to media professionals to realise democracy in practice, quality in journalism and an end to gender stereotyping’.
- **CSW Side-Event:**
 - The CDEG organised a side event for the 55th Session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women in February 2011 on “Combating gender stereotypes in education”, in conjunction with the Turkish authorities under their Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe.
- **Restructuring:**
 - During 2011, the Council of Europe commenced the restructuring of the work of the CoE in relation to gender equality. The Council of Ministers agreed to the establishment of a 16 person Gender Equality Commission in place of the CDEG on which all Member States of the CoE had been represented. The work of this new Commission will be overseen by the Inter-Governmental Steering Committee on Human Rights, which represents a significant change in procedure.
 - The 47th and final meeting of the CDEG was held in November/December 2011. The selection process for the new Commission was scheduled for January 2012.

Gender Equality Commission

48. A new approach to its work on Gender Equality was adopted by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe in late 2011, as a result of which the Transversal Programme on Gender Equality was launched in 2012. It aims to increase the impact and visibility of gender equality standards, supporting their implementation in Member States through a variety of measures, including gender

mainstreaming and action in a number of priority areas. The newly formed Gender Equality Commission, comprising the elected representatives of 16 of the Council Member States is at the centre of this effort. A network of National Focal Points, one in each Member State, the Gender Equality Rapporteurs appointed in the Council of Europe Steering Committees and monitoring bodies and the Committee of Ministers Thematic Co-ordinator on Equality and Trafficking provide crucial support to the work and activities of the Gender Equality Commission.

The Commission held two meetings in 2012, and has identified three priority topics for its work until 2014: Access to Justice, Women and the Media and Violence against Women.

The work programme therefore includes a focus on:

- Combating gender stereotypes and sexism with a particular focus on media and the image of women;
- Guaranteeing equal access of women to justice with a focus on access to justice for women victims of violence, persistent barriers in achieving equal access for women to justice and tackling the gaps in research and the lack of data disaggregated by sex;
- Preventing and combating violence against women, with a focus on the ratification and implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (the Istanbul Convention);
- Achieving balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making with a particular focus on monitoring the implementation of *Recommendation Rec(2003)3 of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe to member states on balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making*; and
- Gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures in the Council of Europe.

UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN – 55th AND 56th SESSIONS

49. The 55th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) took place in UN Headquarters in New York from 22 February to 4 March 2011. The Priority Theme for the 55th Session was “Access and participation of women and girls in education, training, science and technology, including for the promotion of women’s equal access to full employment and decent work”.

50. Agreed Conclusions on the Priority Theme were forwarded to the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) for adoption on 14th March 2011. In the Agreed Conclusions on “Access and participation of women and girls in education, training, science and technology, including for the promotion of women’s equal access to full employment and decent work”:

“The Commission stresses that education is a human right, and that equal access to education, training and science and technology empowers women and girls in the context of global economic and technological changes and promotes development, all human rights, human rights education and learning at all levels, as well as gender equality, the elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls and the eradication of poverty”.

51. In the Agreed Conclusions, the CSW also recommends targeted action by Governments, civil society, including NGOs, academia, employer organisations, trade unions, the media and others as appropriate, in the following areas:

- Strengthening national legislation, policies and programmes.
- Expanding access and participation in education.
- Strengthening gender-sensitive quality education and training, including in the field of science and technology.
- Supporting the transition from education to full employment and decent work.
- Increasing retention and progression of women in science and technology employment.
- Making science and technology responsive to women’s needs.

52. The following Resolutions were agreed and submitted to ECOSOC where they were adopted:

- 55/1 Mainstreaming gender equality and promoting empowerment of women in climate change policies and strategies.
 - 55/2 Women, the girl child and HIV and AIDS.
53. The Review Theme of the Session was “The elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against the girl child”. This was based on the agreed conclusions from the 51st Session of the CSW in 2007.
54. The 56th Session of the CSW took place in UN Headquarters in New York from 27th February to the 9th March 2012. The Priority Theme for the 56th Session was “The empowerment of rural women and their role in poverty and hunger eradication, development and current challenges”. Following a breakdown in the negotiations, the Commission was not able to adopt Agreed Conclusions on the priority theme at the 56th Session. Discussions at CSW had become more difficult in recent years due to a polarisation in thinking on the part of some delegations. Since no Agreed Conclusions on the priority theme were adopted, the Chair prepared a “Chair’s summary” reflecting the course of the discussions.
55. The Review Theme of the Session was “Financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women”, with an Emerging Theme for the Session of “Engaging young women and men, girls and boys, to advance gender equality”.
56. The following Resolutions and one decision were adopted by the Commission at the 56th Session:
- Ending female genital mutilation;
 - Situation of and assistance to Palestinian women;
 - Release of women and children taken hostage, including those subsequently imprisoned, in armed conflict;
 - Gender equality and the empowerment of women in natural disasters;
 - Eliminating maternal mortality and morbidity through the empowerment of women;
 - Indigenous women: key actors in poverty and hunger eradication; and
 - Women, the girl child and HIV and AIDS.

UN WOMEN

57. In July 2010, a new UN organisation for Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment – UN Women, was established to consolidate the four existing UN bodies on women: the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW), the International Training and Research Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) and the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women (OSAGI).
58. The Irish Permanent Mission in the UN and Irish Aid were to the forefront in advocating for the establishment of this new organisation. Ireland played an active role in the negotiations to agree the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 64/289 for the establishment of this new Gender Entity.
59. The main roles of UN Women are:
- To support inter-governmental bodies, such as the Commission on the Status of Women, in their formulation of policies, global standards and norms.
 - To help Member States to implement these standards, standing ready to provide suitable technical and financial support to those countries that request it, and to forge effective partnerships with civil society.
 - To hold the UN system accountable for its own commitments on gender equality, including regular monitoring of system-wide progress.
60. In September 2010, the UN Secretary General, Ban Ki-moon, announced the appointment of Ms. Michelle Bachelet as the first Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN Women. Ms. Bachelet was President of Chile from 2006 to 2010. UN Women focuses on priority areas of work that

are fundamental to women's equality and which can realise progress in implementing gender equality, namely:

- Violence against Women;
- Peace and Security;
- Leadership and Participation;
- Economic Empowerment;
- National Planning and Budgeting;
- Human Rights; and the
- Millennium Development Goals.

61. UN Women provides grants for innovative, high impact programmes by government agencies and civil society groups through two funds:

- The **Fund for Gender Equality** – a multi-donor initiative which is dedicated to programmes that increase women's economic opportunities and/or political participation at local and national levels. Since 2009, this Fund has provided targeted high impact grants totalling \$43 million in support of 55 grantee partners in 47 countries;
- The **UN Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women** – this initiative is managed by UN Women on behalf of the UN system and works to stop all of the diverse forms of gender-based violence that undercut women's rights across the world. To date, the Trust Fund has delivered more than \$86 million to 351 initiatives in 128 countries and territories.

Publications by UN Women:

62. A number of publications were prepared by UN Women during 2011 and 2012, including:

- 'Analytical Overview of the UN Joint Gender Programmes Portfolio', 2011;
- 'UNIFEM Strategic Plan (2008-2011) Evaluability Assessment', 2011;
- 'The Gender Dividend. A Business Case for Gender Equality', 2011;
- 'Women's Empowerment Principles. Equality Means Business', 2011;
- 'Ending Violence Against Women. Literature Review 2nd Edition', 2011;
- 'Prevent, Combat, Protect: Human Trafficking', 2011;
- UN Women Changing Lives in Africa 2012; and
- The Millennium Development Goals Report: Gender Chart 2012.

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION (ILO)

63. The International Labour Organization (ILO) is responsible for drawing up and overseeing international labour standards. It is the only 'tripartite' United Nations agency that brings together representatives of governments, employers and workers to jointly shape policies and programmes promoting Decent Work for All. The ILO was created in 1919, as part of the Treaty of Versailles that ended World War I, to reflect the belief that universal and lasting peace can be accomplished only if it is based on social justice. Since its foundation in 1919, the ILO has been committed to promoting the rights of all women and men at work and achieving equality between them.

64. Within the ILO, the Bureau for Gender Equality supports and advises constituents and Office staff at headquarters and in the field on matters concerned with promoting and advocating for gender equality in the world of work. It also manages an extensive knowledge base on gender issues, conducts ILO Participatory Gender Audits, and has a Gender Helpdesk which responds to queries to help strengthen the capacity of staff and constituents to address questions of equality in their work. The Bureau also coordinates the global ILO Gender Network, which brings together gender specialists and gender focal points at headquarters and in the field offices.

65. The ILO ***Action Plan for Gender Equality 2010-2015*** operationalises the 1999 ILO policy on gender equality⁸ which identified gender mainstreaming as the strategy to promote equality between women

⁸ *Gender Equality and Mainstreaming in the International Labour Office*, ILO, 1999.

and men. The Action Plan also facilitates effective and gender-responsive delivery of the Decent Work Agenda, in line with the 2009 International Labour Conference (ILC) resolution on *Gender Equality at the Heart of Decent Work*⁹.

66. A number of publications were prepared by the ILO with a gender focus during 2011 and 2012, including:
- 'Equality at Work: The continuing challenge – Global Report under the follow-up to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work';
 - 'Gender-based violence in the world of work: Overview and selected annotated bibliography';
 - 'Guidelines on sexual harassment at the workplace';
 - 'ILO Participatory Gender Audit: Relevance and use for the United Nations and its agencies';
 - 'Global Employment Trends for Women 2012'; and
 - 'Gender equality and decent work: selected ILO Conventions and Recommendations that promote gender equality as at 2012'.

⁹ *Gender Equality at the Heart of Decent Work*, ILC 98th Session, 2009.

CHAPTER 3

THEME ONE - EQUALISING SOCIO-ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY FOR WOMEN

INTRODUCTION

1. This key theme of the National Women's Strategy aims to equalise socio-economic opportunity for women by addressing their employment status, putting in place measures to overcome poverty which is more prevalent among women and looking at issues such as caring services which support the economic engagement of women.

Objective 1-A
To increase the participation of women in the labour force

CONTEXT

TABLE 3A
WOMEN AND MEN IN EMPLOYMENT – LISBON TARGETS ¹⁰

| Year (Q4) | Male Employment (aged 15-64) | | Female Employment (aged 15-64) | |
|-----------|------------------------------|------|--------------------------------|------|
| | Number | Rate | Number | Rate |
| 1998 | 932,700 | 72.8 | 614,900 | 49.3 |
| 2007 | 1,213,700 | 77.0 | 925,000 | 60.8 |
| 2008 | 1,143,400 | 72.6 | 911,200 | 59.3 |
| 2009 | 1,016,200 | 65.3 | 871,600 | 57.0 |
| 2010 | 973,000 | 63.1 | 850,200 | 55.7 |
| 2012 | 988,000 | 63.2 | 860,900 | 55.4 |

Source: CSO Quarterly National Household Survey (QNHS)

2. Table 3A above updates headline statistics on employment rates for women in Ireland which were originally contained in the Strategy, linked to the EU Lisbon Economic Strategy which had set a goal of 60 per cent for the employment rate for women aged 15-64 years by 2010. Ireland had exceeded this target in 2007 and by 2008, the economic downturn and a continuing increase in the baseline population led to a decrease in the employment rate for women, which is now at 55.4% (for women aged 15 to 64 years).
3. The Europe 2020 Strategy (the successor to the Lisbon Strategy) revised the baseline parameters for measuring employment as an economic target and set a headline target of a 75 per cent employment rate for women and men in the age group 20-64 by 2020¹¹. As Table 3B below illustrates, the employment rate for women has fallen 4.7 percentage points since the economic downturn, although the gender gap in employment has narrowed.

TABLE 3B
MALE AND FEMALE EMPLOYMENT RATES – EUROPE 2020 TARGETS

| Year (Q4) | EMPLOYMENT RATES FOR MEN AND WOMEN AGED 20 – 64 YEARS | | |
|-----------|---|--------|-------|
| | Male | Female | TOTAL |
| 2008 | 80.4 | 64.1 | 72.3 |
| 2009 | 72.1 | 61.8 | 66.9 |
| 2010 | 69.1 | 60.2 | 64.6 |
| 2011 | 68.2 | 59.4 | 63.8 |
| 2012 | 68.1 | 59.4 | 63.7 |

Source: Eurostat: Europe 2020 Indicators

4. Table 4 overleaf looks at trends in relation to employment for women in selected EU Member States. The table summarises the three Member States with the highest and the three Member States with the lowest employment rates for women (aged 20 to 64 only, in line with the EU 2020 headline target). Comparative data for men are included as are the Irish and EU mean data. Ireland ranked in 19th place in the employment rate for women aged 20 to 64 in 2010. Due to the corresponding fall in male employment, Ireland ranks highly in the absolute gender gap, which is now at 9 per cent, with Ireland now ranked in 9th position in terms of the absolute gap between women and men.

¹⁰ Based on ILO definitions.

¹¹ Ireland has been granted a derogation from this target to 69% to 71 per cent

**TABLE 4
EMPLOYMENT RATES (WOMEN AND MEN AGED 20-64) IN EU MEMBER STATES – 2010**

| | Employment Rate | | Gender Gap* | Rank by Gender Gap |
|----------------------------------|-----------------|-------------|-------------|--------------------|
| | Women | Men | | |
| | % | % | | |
| Top Three | | | | |
| Sweden | 75.7 | 81.7 | 6 | 6 |
| Denmark | 73.1 | 79.0 | 5.9 | 5 |
| Finland | 71.5 | 74.5 | 3 | 4 |
| IRELAND (19th) | 60.4 | 69.4 | 9 | 9 |
| EU – 27 Average | 62.1 | 75.1 | 13 | 17 |
| Bottom Three | | | | |
| Malta | 41.6 | 77.8 | 36.2 | 27 |
| Italy | 49.5 | 72.8 | 23.3 | 25 |
| Greece | 51.7 | 76.2 | 24.5 | 26 |

Source: Eurostat: European Commission 'Annual Report on Equality between Women and Men 2011'.

5. However a note of caution must be applied to these comparative data as they do not look at the level of attachment to the labour market. Women in some countries have a high level of attachment to the labour market but have also a particularly high level of part-time employment among those women. Table 4A below examines the employment rates on the basis of full time equivalence. This presents a very different scenario for women's attachment to the labour market.

**TABLE 4A
EMPLOYMENT RATES (WOMEN AND MEN AGED 15-64) MEASURED IN FULL TIME EQUIVALENTS
IN EU MEMBER STATES – 2010**

| | Employment Rate | | Gender Gap* | Rank by Gender Gap |
|----------------------------------|-----------------|-------------|-------------|--------------------|
| | Women | Men | | |
| | % | % | | |
| Top Three | | | | |
| Sweden | 61.9 | 72.3 | 10.4 | 7 |
| Finland | 61.8 | 67.0 | 5.2 | 3 |
| Denmark | 60.3 | 70.5 | 10.2 | 4 |
| IRELAND (19th) | 47.0 | 60.9 | 13.9 | 11 |
| EU – 27 Average | 49.9 | 68.0 | 18.1 | |
| Bottom Three | | | | |
| Malta | 35.3 | 72.1 | 36.8 | 27 |
| Italy | 40.7 | 66.4 | 25.7 | 25 |
| Netherlands | 45.1 | 71.4 | 26.3 | 26 |

Source European Commission: Report on Equality between Women and Men 2011

As Table 4A shows, there is a very significant gap in the employment rate for men and for women when the level of attachment to the labour market is considered. On average, the gender gap is over 18 percentage points, with a gap of almost 14 percentage points for Ireland. This table is not directly comparable with table 4 above because the base line data relate to a slightly different age group. However, it clearly illustrates that there is scope for much greater engagement by women in the labour market, both in Ireland and across Europe.

6. Table 5 below gives an overview of the labour force situation in Ireland in between 2008 and 2012.

**TABLE 5
PERSONS AGED 15 YEARS AND OVER CLASSIFIED BY SEX AND ILO ECONOMIC STATUS**

| | FEMALES (000) | | | | MALES (000) | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------|---------|---------|---------|-------------|---------|---------|---------|
| | Q4 2008 | Q4 2010 | Q4 2011 | Q4 2012 | Q4 2008 | Q4 2010 | Q4 2011 | Q4 2012 |
| In Labour Force | 978.5 | 963.0 | 962.9 | 959.4 | 1,278.6 | 1,205.2 | 1,198.6 | 1,184.1 |
| In Employment | 906.7 | 863.2 | 860.4 | 860.9 | 1,145.3 | 994.1 | 987.3 | 988.0 |
| Full Time | 608.4 | 553.9 | 557.8 | 553.0 | 1,052.1 | 869.0 | 853.6 | 845.7 |
| Part Time | 298.3 | 309.3 | 302.6 | 307.9 | 93.2 | 125.1 | 133.7 | 142.3 |
| Unemployed | 52.9 | 99.8 | 102.5 | 98.5 | 117.8 | 211.1 | 211.3 | 196.2 |
| Not in labour force | 824.2 | 864.6 | 866.0 | 874.5 | 487.2 | 566.2 | 567.1 | 578.5 |
| Total aged 15 or over | 1,788.0 | 1,827.6 | 1,829.0 | 1,833.9 | 1,750.3 | 1,771.4 | 1,765.7 | 1,762.7 |
| Unemployment Rate % | 5.5 | 10.4 | 10.6 | 10.3 | 9.3 | 17.5 | 17.6 | 16.6 |

Source: CSO various QNHS surveys

7. The following points of comparison between 2008 and 2012 are noteworthy from this table:
- The number of women in the labour market (both employed and unemployed) has fallen by 19,100 over the five years while the number of men in the labour market has fallen by 94,500.
 - The number of women in employment has fallen by 45,800 over the period while the number of men in employment has fallen by 157,300.
 - Between 2010 and 2011 the number of women in employment fell by 9,400 while the number of men in employment fell by 6,100. This is the first time that the number of women in employment has decreased by a higher amount than the number of men, since the beginning of the economic crisis. Between 2011 and 2012 there was a small increase in both female employment and male employment, with female employment increasing by 500 while male employment increased by 700.
 - The unemployment rate for women doubled over the five year period, while the unemployment rate for men almost trebled over the same period.
 - The number of men in part-time employment has increased by 44,200 between 2008 and 2012. Just over 14 per cent of all men in employment work part-time, compared with almost 36 per cent of all women in employment.
8. The CSO Quarterly National Household Survey (QNHS) for Q4/2011 shows that 52,000 women were unemployed for less than one year, compared with 61,800 men. The report also showed that 146,500 men were unemployed for more than one year, compared with 49,500 women. The Q4/2012 Report shows that 53,200 women were unemployed for less than one year, compared with 63,000 men. It also showed that 131,700 men were unemployed for more than one year, compared with 44,700 women.

9. **ACTIONS 2011/2012**

9.1 **Department of Justice and Equality: Equality for Women Measure**

- In May 2010 a new phase of the Equality for Women Measure covering the period 2010-2013 was launched. Following an appraisal process, a total of forty-one projects entered into contracts to deliver projects under the following three Strands of the EWM:
 - Strand 1 – Access to Employment;
 - Strand 2 – Developing Female Entrepreneurship; and
 - Strand 3 – Career Development for Women in Employment.
- Grant funding of up to €50,000 each was paid to the forty-one successful projects over the period mid 2010 to mid 2011.
- In 2011, a total of 2,399 women participated in EWM projects.
- A total of thirty-one projects were delivered under Strand 1 “Access to Employment” which aims to provide women who are currently outside the labour market with the social skills and/or education and/or training to return to the labour market.
- Having met the required criteria, a total of forty organisations, from the original forty-one projects, received a second tranche of funding of up to €50,000 each for the period mid 2011 to April 2012. In March 2012, existing EWM projects were invited to apply for additional funding of up to €33,333 each to continue projects in line with original proposals. This Year 2 extension phase covered the period from 1st May 2012 to 30th November 2012. Funding was approved for thirty-five of the EWM projects.
- In 2012, a total of 3,173 women participated in EWM projects across the three Strands.
- A more detailed report on the Measure is contained in Chapter 6.

9.2 **Services provided by FAS**

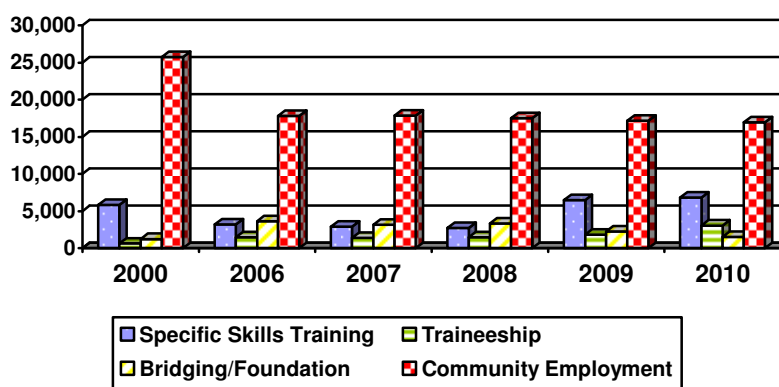
FÁS, the State training agency has primary responsibility for the provision of training to enable people to enter or advance in the labour market. Over the time period which coincided with sustained

economic growth in Ireland and the move towards full employment, FÁS reports that there had been a decrease in programme completions under a number of its training schemes. However the economic downturn has led to a reversal of this trend.

From 1st January 2012, responsibility for employment services and programmes transferred to the Department of Social Protection under the National Employment and Entitlements Service (NEES) and the Pathways to Work initiative, which was launched on 23rd February 2012. Labour market education and training is the responsibility of the Department of Education and Skills under the new Education and Training Authority, SOLAS, which is due to be launched during 2013.

The paragraphs which follow show women's uptake of the range of training interventions provided by FÁS to increase labour market participation in 2011.

TABLE 6
NUMBER OF FEMALES COMPLETING FAS PROGRAMMES BY PROGRAMME TYPE AND YEAR



FÁS Programme Completion by Gender – 2011
Standard Based Apprenticeship

- Apprenticeship is the recognised means by which persons are trained to become craftspeople in Ireland. The main craft trades have been designed by FÁS and come within the scope of the Statutory Apprenticeship system. Apprenticeship in Ireland is organised by FÁS in cooperation with the Department of Education and Skills, Employer Bodies and Trade Unions. The apprenticeship scheme is ‘Standards-based’. To help apprentices achieve these standards, the scheme provides alternating phases of on-the-job and off-the-job training in FÁS Training Centres and Educational Colleges. In 2011, a total of 7,618 people completed one of the off-the-job phases, of whom 29 (or 0.4 per cent) were women. This clearly shows the ongoing gender segregation which persists in the uptake of apprenticeships in Ireland.
- In this regard, it is worth noting that, as part of the 2012 Action Plan for Jobs, the Department of Education and Skills initiated a review of the Irish Apprenticeship training model, with a view to providing an updated model of training that delivers the necessary skilled workforce to service the needs of a rapidly changing economy and ensures an appropriate balance between supply and demand. The review is being undertaken in two phases:
 - The first stage was the preparation of a background issues paper which includes a factual description of the current system, including the governance arrangements, trends and forecasts in relation to recruitment, identified strengths and weaknesses of the current model and identifies the range of possible options for change, as well as information of models of apprenticeship in other countries.
 - In 2013, it is proposed that the second phase of the review will involve consultation with all key stakeholders on the options for change. The arrangements for this phase of the review are currently being considered. Any further changes proposed to apprenticeship will be considered in the context of the review.

- The additional trades added to the existing portfolio of apprenticeship trades are in Electronic Security Systems, Industrial Insulation, and Farriery. A further three trades have been developed. Electronic Security Systems migrated from a Traineeship to apprenticeship. Please note there has been an amalgamation of trades over the past two years in the area of Printing and Wood trades and the current number of trades where registration is accepted is twenty-five. However, while this is welcome, it is probable that these apprenticeships will also attract male rather than female participants.

Specific Skills Training

- The Specific Skills Training (SST) Programme consists of courses which are employment-led and lead to qualifications that offer learners both generic and advanced skills. The courses are suitable for people with good personal skills, i.e. literacy, numeric and communication skills, and who meet the learner profile for the course. In 2011, a total of 14,458 people completed the SST Programme, of whom 4,330 (or 30 per cent) were women.

Traineeship

- The Traineeship Programme consists of occupational specific training courses that use a combination of off-the-job and structured on-the-job workplace training. Courses are developed in conjunction with social partners, union/employer organisations and regulatory bodies. The training objectives and curricula of Traineeship programmes reflect current market needs and provide skills training appropriate to the needs of learners and employers. In 2011, a total of 2,444 people completed the Programme, of whom 1,765 (or 72 per cent) were women.

Bridging/Foundation Programmes

- Foundation Training Programmes include courses for people who have left school early and/or mature people who have been out of work for a considerable period of time. The courses can be flexible in delivery and concentrate on basic personal skills development, career direction and skill sampling, with a view to progression to Specific Skills Training programmes or entry to the labour market. In 2011, a total of 2,892 people completed the Foundation Programme, of whom 1,013 (or 35 per cent) were women.

Return to Work Programmes

- The Return to Work Programme is suitable for people who may have been out of paid employment for a long time and who are interested in returning to the labour market. The programme is mainly for mature adults who have good basic skills, i.e. literacy, numeric and communication skills. The programme can be flexible in delivery and concentrates on personal development, building self-esteem, career planning, and selected technical and soft skills. In 2011, a total of 369 people completed the Return to Work Programme, of whom 174 (or 47 per cent) were women.

Community Training Programmes:

Local Training Initiative

- The Local Training Initiative (LTI) Programme is a project-based training and work experience programme carried out in the local community and run by local community groups. The programme allows local communities to carry out valuable and necessary projects of benefit to their communities, while at the same time training participants in areas related to the project work so that participants can go on to gain employment or to progress to further training. Anyone who is unemployed and over the age of sixteen, with any level of literacy, is eligible to participate. In 2011, a total of 2,914 people completed the LTI Programme, of whom 1,449 (or 50 per cent) were women.

Linked Work Experience

- In 2011, a total of 121 people completed the Linked Work Experience (LWE) Programme, of whom 62 (or 51 per cent) were women.

Community Training Centres

- Participants at the Community Training Centres (CTCs) are primarily young men and women between sixteen and twenty-one years of age who have left school without completing formal examinations (the Junior Certificate) who are experiencing difficulties in finding a job and who

are keen to gain a qualification. While this is the priority target group for CTCs, they can also provide a service for other young people under the age of twenty-five who are disadvantaged and unemployed, with agreement from FÁS. In 2011, a total of 1,514 people completed CTC Programmes of whom 624 (or 41 per cent) were women.

Specialist Training Providers

- FÁS contracts with twenty Specialist Training Providers (STPs), such as the National Learning Network, in its centres country-wide to deliver training courses to people with disabilities who require more intensive support than would be available in non-specialist training provision. In 2011, a total of 1,442 people completed training provided through Specialist Training Providers of whom 642 (or 44 per cent) were women. FÁS notes that the numbers completing training provided by STPs has remained broadly similar for the last five years, as has the proportion of female participants.

Employment Programmes:

Community Employment

- The criteria for participating on the Community Employment (CE) programme are based on the age of the participant and the length of time the participant has been in receipt of various social welfare payments. Generally, it is provided for people aged twenty-five years of age or older. Certain groups, such as people from the Traveller community or refugees, are eligible to participate if aged eighteen or over. In 2011, a total of 31,125 people completed a term on the Community Employment Programme, of whom 16,846 (or 54 per cent) were women. FÁS reports that a significant portion of these participants would have continued to participate on the programme for a further year.

Rural Development

- Axes 3 and 4 of the Rural Development Programme (RDP) Ireland (2007-2013) provide significant levels of funding towards the objectives of improving the quality of life in rural areas and the diversification of the rural economy. The funding available under the current Programme is significantly more than was available under the previous Programme and overall responsibility for the delivery of the Programme rests with the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine.
- The measures in the RDP are open to men and women equally. In this context, equality has been and will continue to be promoted. The involvement of women, young people and older workers is identified as a priority and is expressly incorporated in measures under Axis 3. During 2011, data in respect of female participation was collected under a number of specific indicators as set out in table 7 below. The Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government reports annually to the European Commission on these indicators through the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine.

**TABLE 7
FEMALE PARTICIPATION IN THE RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME DURING 2011**

| | Women under 25 | Women over 25 | Total |
|--|-----------------------|----------------------|--------------|
| Creation or development of enterprises by women | 31 | 163 | 194 |
| Number of jobs created for women | 54 | 217 | 271 |
| Number of women who received a training activity | 4,810 | 10,360 | 15,170 |

Source: Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government.

9.3 Department of Social Protection

Pathways to Work:

The Programme for Government 2011-2016, includes a commitment to introduce a better approach to how the State engages with and supports the unemployed to get back into the workforce. The Department of Social Protection launched the 'Pathways to Work' initiative on 23rd February 2012. 'Pathways to Work' is primarily focused on those who have been out of work for a year or more. Its

aim is to get 75,000 people who are currently long-term unemployed back into the workforce and to reduce the average time spent on the Live Register from twenty-one months to less than twelve months by the end of 2015. The initiative has five Strands:

1. More regular and ongoing engagement with people who are unemployed;
2. Greater targeting of activation places and opportunities;
3. Incentivising the take-up of opportunities;
4. Incentivising employers to provide more jobs for people who are unemployed; and
5. Reforming institutions to deliver better services to people who are unemployed.

Support for Lone Parents:

- The Department of Social Protection (D/SP) is currently undertaking a comprehensive reform of the One-Parent Family Payment (OFP). These reforms are designed to tackle long term welfare dependency and the high rates of lone parents who are in consistent poverty. The reforms see a reduction in the age threshold of the youngest child at which a lone parent is still eligible for the OFP. The age is being reduced to seven years of age on a phased basis between July 2013 and the end of 2015.
- Lone parents who still have an income support need may apply for another social welfare payment. It is likely that the majority of lone parents will apply for Jobseeker's Allowance (JA). Once they are in receipt of a JA payment, lone parents will have access to the D/SP's full range of activation supports. These supports are designed to improve individuals' prospects of securing employment. They will identify any skill gaps an individual may have and offer them access to education, training or employment programmes to address these gaps thereby improving their employability. To assist lone parents to make the transition from OFP to JA, a new subsidised afterschool childcare scheme is in the process of being piloted. This scheme will provide afterschool care for lone parents on JA who take up employment or engage in an employment support programme.

9.4 Equality Authority/National Women's Council of Ireland

In 2012, with funding from the Equality Authority's Equality Mainstreaming Unit, the National Women's Council of Ireland (NWCi), in cooperation with SIPTU, initiated research to develop a woman-friendly model of labour market activation and to identify the supports that female claimants of job seekers payments, one parent family payment recipients and qualified adults need to return to sustainable employment.

The Report '*Careless to Careful Activation: Making Activation Work for Women*' was launched by the Minister for Social Protection on 22nd November 2012. The Report aims to gender mainstream labour market activation policy and practice and to influence constructively the development of labour market policy implementation. It provides a framework for gender mainstreaming. It also demonstrates how activation policy can be implemented in a way that is coherent with gender equality objectives at EU and national levels. The Report is available to view at www.nwci.ie/publications/fullist/careless-to-careful-activation-making-activation-w/

| |
|---|
| <p style="text-align: center;">Objective 1-B To decrease the gender pay gap</p> |
|---|

CONTEXT

10. As indicated in the National Women's Strategy, the measurement of the gender pay gap is subject to different interpretations, resulting in wide variations in statistics. While the European Commission and Eurostat published data drawn from the EU Survey on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC) for some years, there were reservations about these data. For Ireland it showed a gender pay gap of 9 per cent in recent years. One of the weaknesses of this data source was the fact that it included part-time workers working fewer than 15 hours per week. It was likely, given employment trends that most of these workers would be female and the data would therefore be skewed.

11. In its 2010 Report on Equality between Women and Men, the European Commission revised its methodology and published data based on men's and women's average gross hourly earnings. Table 8 below is drawn from the European Commission's Report on Equality between Women and Men 2011 and relates to data for 2010. The Table shows that Ireland recorded a gender pay gap of 12.6 per cent in 2010, almost four percentage points below the EU27 average of 16.4 per cent.
12. Issues affecting the gender pay gap are also complex and a wide number of factors are considered to impact upon it. These include segregation in the labour market, traditions and stereotypes, balancing work and family/private life and the undervaluing of women's work. For example, the introduction of a minimum wage and the greater availability of childcare following implementation of the Equal Opportunities Childcare Programme and its successor National Childcare Investment Programme, are likely to have impacted positively on the gender pay gap in Ireland. However extensive statistical research based on gender disaggregated data is required before valid conclusions can be reached.

TABLE 8
GENDER PAY GAP 2010 – EU

| Top Four | | IRELAND/EU AVERAGE | | Bottom Four | |
|----------|-----|--------------------|------|----------------|------|
| Poland | 1.9 | IRELAND (13TH) | 12.6 | Germany | 23.1 |
| Slovenia | 4.4 | | | Austria | 25.5 |
| Italy | 5.5 | EU – 27 | 16.4 | Czech Republic | 25.5 |
| Malta | 6.1 | | | Estonia | 27.6 |

Source: European Commission

13. ACTIONS 2011/2012

The following actions have been reported by Government Departments and Agencies during the period 2011 and 2012:

13.1 National Minimum Wage

- In its decision of 23 November 2010 and in the context of the publication of the National Recovery Plan, 2011-2014, the then Government confirmed its intention to introduce legislation to reduce the minimum hourly wage rate by €1 per hour to €7.65. The reduction was also included as a commitment in the original Memorandum of Understanding between Ireland and the EU/ ECB/ IMF 'Troika'. The NMW was subsequently reduced with effect from the 1st February 2011 by order pursuant to section 11 (1) of the National Minimum Wage Act 2000, as amended by section 13 of the Financial Emergency Measures in the Public Interest Act 2010.
- The current Programme for Government contained a commitment to reverse the February 2011 reduction. Agreement was reached with the Troika on this reversal. The increase was provided for in the Social Welfare and Pensions Bill 2011 and was effected by the National Minimum Wage Act 2000 (Section 11) (No.2) Order 2011 on July 1st 2011.
- The National Employment Rights Authority (NERA) conducted 1,169 inspections under the National Minimum Wage Act during 2011. The inspections found a compliance rate of 51 per cent and recovered €268,234 in unpaid wages. In 2012, NERA conducted 1,316 inspections under the National Minimum Wage Act. The inspections found a compliance rate of 51 per cent and recovered a further €323,176 in unpaid wages.

13.2 Reform of Minimum Wage Setting Mechanisms at Sector Level

- The main objective of the Industrial Relations (Amendment) (No. 3) Bill 2011, presented to Dáil Éireann in December 2011¹², was to protect the lowest paid and most vulnerable workers covered by the Joint Labour Committee system through a comprehensive reform of the statutory wage setting machinery operating at sector level.
- The measures set out in the Bill were devised in order to strengthen the legal framework for the Employment Regulation Order and Registered Employment Agreement sectoral wage mechanisms in the light of deficiencies in the original legislation identified in the judgement of

¹² Enacted on 24th July 2012 as the Industrial Relations (Amendment) Act 2012 No. 32 of 2012

the High Court in *John Grace Fried Chicken Limited & Others –v- The Catering Joint Labour Committee & Others* delivered on 7th July 2011. As a consequence of this High Court ruling, the legal framework of Employment Regulation Orders covering minimum wages and working conditions in the sectors covered by Joint Labour Committees ceased to apply with effect from 7th July 2011.

- In this regard, it is worth noting that women tend to be disproportionately represented in lower paid service employment where the JLC wage rates had previously applied. The Bill was enacted as “The Industrial Relations (Amendment) Act 2012” and it came into effect on 1st August 2012. The main provisions of the Act implement the commitment in the Programme for Government 2011-2016 to reform the Joint Labour Committee system and rectify deficiencies in the legal framework highlighted in the High Court judgement in the John Grace Fried Chicken case. The Act also reflects recommendations for reform that were set out in the Independent Review of Employment Regulation Orders and Registered Employment Agreement Wage Setting Mechanisms in April 2011.

13.3 European Equal Pay Day

- Council Conclusions on the Gender Pay Gap adopted during the Belgian Presidency of the EU in 2010 called for the introduction of a European Equal Pay Day to highlight the issues surrounding the persisting gender pay gap.
- The first European Equal Pay Day was held on 5th March 2011. This date was chosen to mark the number of extra days (64) women in Europe must work during 2011 to match the amount of money earned by men in 2010. The event aimed to raise awareness throughout Europe of the gender pay gap. As part of the initiative, an online gender pay gap calculator was launched to help employers and employees to visualise the pay gap. It is anticipated that European Equal Pay Day will be held each year with the date changing in line with the current GPG figure.
- The second European Equal Pay Day took place on 2nd March 2012. In 2012, the European Commission also launched the ‘Equality Pays Off’ initiative. This initiative aims to help raise awareness in companies of the gender pay gap, its causes and consequences and to support the companies in their efforts to tackle it. The project also aims to raise awareness of the business case for gender equality and equal pay and to help companies to achieve sustainable business success by gaining access to untapped female talent.

13.4 European Parliament

- The European Parliament adopted a Resolution on 24th May 2012 on the *application of the principle of equal pay for male and female workers for equal work or work of equal value*. Some of the key points from the Resolution are as follows:
 - To undertake a review of the gender recast Directive 2006/54;
 - To continue to implement awareness raising campaigns on the gender pay gap; and
 - For Member States to implement job classification systems.

13.5 Ibec and the Equality Authority

- In response to the internationally recognised gender pay gap that exists, Ibec with the support of the Equality Authority developed a gender pay audit template to assist organisations to carry out an equal pay audit with the main focus being on gender equality and transparency, while maintaining a perspective on other relevant equality criteria and grounds.
- The tool was designed to systematically inform and support employers in assessing how to carry out an equal pay review. The assessment tool enables employers to measure the existing pay rates, identify any gaps and further enhance their ability to harness workplace equality, take corrective action in a timely fashion to eradicate any pay discrepancies that might be identified, and provide a more equitable workplace.

Objective 2
To promote the advancement of women in the labour force

CONTEXT

14. This objective has two points of focus – efforts to engage women in a broader range of economic (labour) sectors and efforts to enable women to rise to more senior positions in their work place. Both may require a breakdown of barriers and stereotypes.
15. Table 9 below, shows that the number of women employed as “managers, directors and senior officials” has continued to grow during 2011 with an annual increase between 2010 and 2011 of just under 8.3 per cent in the number of women employed in this sector, compared with an annual increase of just under 1.4 per cent for men. In 2012, this trend was reversed with the number of women employed in this sector decreasing by 4.1 per cent while the number of men employed in the sector increased by 8.4 per cent. Women now account for just under 30 per cent of all persons employed in this area. In the “professional” occupations, women now account for just over 58 per cent of all those employed in a professional capacity. Conversely, women account for just over 9 per cent of all persons employed in “skilled trades” and just over 15 per cent of persons employed as “process, plant and machine operatives”. Women are over-represented in the occupations of “caring, leisure and other service” at just under 85 per cent, and in the “sales and customer service” sector at just under 67 per cent of the total number employed.

TABLE 9
EMPLOYMENT: BROAD OCCUPATIONAL GROUPS BY SEX 2009, 2010, 2011 AND 2012 ('000)

| Broad occupational Group | Men | | | | | Women | | | | | Women as % of total | | |
|--|---------|---------|---------|---------|------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|------------------|---------------------|---------|---------|
| | Q4 2009 | Q4 2010 | Q4 2011 | Q4 2012 | % change 2011/12 | Q4 2009 | Q4 2010 | Q4 2011 | Q4 2012 | % change 2011/12 | Q4 2010 | Q4 2011 | Q4 2012 |
| Managers, directors and senior officials | 96.3 | 93.5 | 95.1 | 103.1 | 8.4 | 46.0 | 42.4 | 46.0 | 44.1 | - 4.1 | 30.98 | 32.41 | 29.96 |
| Professionals | 144.9 | 146.4 | 143.2 | 145.3 | 1.5 | 189.4 | 198.3 | 194.9 | 206.0 | 5.7 | 57.85 | 57.79 | 58.64 |
| Associate professional and technical | 124.9 | 131.9 | 130.2 | 132.1 | 1.5 | 77.6 | 78.3 | 80.9 | 85.3 | 5.4 | 37.42 | 38.14 | 39.23 |
| Administrative and secretarial | 50.6 | 46.8 | 41.3 | 42.2 | 2.2 | 192.0 | 177.8 | 174.7 | 163.9 | -6.9 | 79.24 | 80.67 | 79.52 |
| Skilled trades | 283.8 | 248.2 | 244.7 | 244.8 | .04 | 27.9 | 25.9 | 23.6 | 25.4 | 7.6 | 9.74 | 9.06 | 9.40 |
| Caring, leisure and other services | 21.3 | 19.5 | 22.3 | 22.7 | 1.8 | 127.2 | 122.3 | 125.3 | 123.0 | -1.8 | 86.48 | 84.84 | 84.42 |
| Sales and customer service | 46.6 | 54.4 | 57.7 | 53.0 | -8.1 | 105.5 | 103.4 | 106.9 | 106.8 | -0.09 | 65.93 | 64.96 | 66.83 |
| Process, plant and machine operatives | 113.9 | 123.2 | 127.8 | 120.9 | -5.4 | 17.5 | 22.7 | 23.1 | 22.8 | 1.3 | 15.58 | 15.32 | 15.87 |
| Elementary | 130.6 | 122.3 | 120.4 | 119.3 | -0.9 | 86.1 | 87.5 | 80.9 | 80.4 | - 0.6 | 43.62 | 40.32 | 40.26 |
| Other /Not Stated | 3.1 | 7.8 | 4.5 | 4.6 | 2.2 | 2.4 | 4.6 | 4.0 | 3.1 | -22.5 | 40.22 | 54.23 | 40.25 |
| Total | 1,016.2 | 994.1 | 987.3 | 988.0 | .07 | 871.6 | 863.2 | 860.4 | 860.9 | 0.06 | 46.63 | 46.51 | 46.56 |

Source CSO QNHS

ACTIONS 2011/2012

16. The following actions have been reported by Government Departments and Agencies during 2011 and 2012:

16.1 Department of Justice and Equality

- The Gender Equality Division has researched and provided executive/secretarial support to the Sub-Committee of the NWS Monitoring Committee which has looked at the role of women in decision-making, including in senior management positions. It is expected that the report of the Sub-Committee will be submitted to Government in 2013.

16.2 Equality Authority

- During 2011 and 2012, the Equality Authority’s Mainstreaming Unit supported a number of projects with a focus on facilitating equality change at enterprise level with a particular emphasis on gender equality.
- SIPTU (Services Industrial Professional Trade Union) and the Commercial Mushroom Producers (CMP) reviewed the existing employment policies and procedures for workers in the mushroom industry to ensure their compliance with equality legislation. Many of the workers on mushroom farms are migrant women. They developed an Employment Handbook for employees in the mushroom industry. Given the variety of languages spoken by employees in this sector, the Handbook was translated into Polish, Russian, Latvian, Lithuanian and Romanian.
- The Irish Business and Employers Confederation (IBEC) researched, developed and piloted a gender pay review tool. During the pilot phase of this project, IBEC engaged with a range of organisations to ensure the review tool was relevant and effective. The review tool was piloted amongst different companies across a variety of sectors. These included a number of Irish Medical Devices Association companies and a multinational financial services company based in Dublin. The gender review tool will be disseminated and promoted with employers at HR forums, IBEC events and networks.

Objective 3

To support more women as entrepreneurs

CONTEXT

17. This objective seeks to encourage more women to become entrepreneurs. Although the availability of childcare and of improved work/life balance options is central to the needs of entrepreneurs as well as to employees, some women find that self-employment and entrepreneurship better enables them to link work and family life. That said, statistics from the County and City Enterprise Boards (CEBs) show that significant numbers of women participate in the CEBs’ “Start your Own Business” courses but this high level of activity is not actually translating into business start ups.
18. The Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) Report for Ireland for 2010 (published in 2011) and the GEM Report for Ireland for 2011 (published in 2012) show that men are more active as early stage entrepreneurs than women. The rate of early stage entrepreneurship among men in 2010 was 9.5 per cent, almost two and a half times more than the rate of early stage entrepreneurship among women at 3.9 per cent. In 2011, the rate of early stage entrepreneurship among women increased slightly to 4.2 per cent; however, the corresponding rate for men was still two and a half times greater at 10.3 per cent. The level of early stage entrepreneurship among women in Ireland in 2011 at 4.2 per cent is at a similar level across the EU (5.1 per cent) and the OECD (5.8 per cent), however, it is significantly behind the rate in Australia (8.4 per cent) and the United States (10.4 per cent). Table 10 below shows that early stage entrepreneurship by women in Ireland grew between 2006 and 2007 before falling back sharply in 2008 with a further slight decrease in 2010, before increasing slightly during 2011.

TABLE 10
WOMEN EARLY STAGE ENTREPRENEURS 2006, 2007, 2008, 2010 and 2011

| | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2010 | 2011 |
|-------------------------|------|------|------|------|-------|
| Ireland | 4.2% | 5.9% | 4.0% | 3.9% | 4.2% |
| United States | 7.4% | 7.3% | 8.8% | 7.0% | 10.4% |
| Average across the OECD | 4.3% | 4.3% | 4.8% | 4.6% | 5.8% |
| Average across the EU | 3.5% | 3.6% | 3.9% | 3.7% | 5.1% |

Source: *Entrepreneurship in Ireland 2010, Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) & Entrepreneurship in Ireland 2011, Global Entrepreneurship Monitor*

19. On a more positive note, the GEM Report shows that in 2010 women accounted for 29 per cent of early stage entrepreneurs in Ireland compared with 26 per cent in 2008. The rate of female established owner managers in Ireland at 5.0 per cent is also higher than the OECD (4.5 per cent); EU-15 (4.7 per cent); and EU-27 (4.1 per cent) averages.

20. In 2011, the differences in attitudes of women and men towards entrepreneurship were as follows:
- More men were likely to know someone who had become an entrepreneur in the previous two years (45 per cent) than women were (34 per cent);
 - More men were confident that they had the necessary skills and knowledge to start a business (55 per cent) than women (36 per cent);
 - A higher proportion of women (46 per cent) than men (37 per cent) reported that a fear of failure would prevent them from starting a business.
21. The GEM Report notes that a broadly similar proportion of male (78 per cent) and female (74 per cent) early stage entrepreneurs in Ireland expect to become an employer within five years, as a result of their entrepreneurial activities. However, a greater proportion of male (24 per cent) than female early stage entrepreneurs (6 per cent) have significant growth ambitions for their new businesses¹³. A much higher proportion of male early stage entrepreneurs (65 per cent) are focused on export markets than are female early stage entrepreneurs (49 per cent).
22. Previous GEM Reports have highlighted the fact that early stage entrepreneurs tend to be highly educated with a very high proportion of women early stage entrepreneurs having post secondary education. This trend is continued in 2011 with 75 per cent of female early stage entrepreneurs recorded as having post secondary education compared with 70 per cent of male early stage entrepreneurs.

ACTIONS 2011/2012

23. The following actions have been reported by Government Departments and Agencies during 2011 and 2012:

23.1 Department of Justice and Equality: Equality for Women Measure

As mentioned previously, the Equality for Women Measure was re-launched in 2010 and included a strand to make funding available to support women as entrepreneurs. Fifty three project applications were submitted and following evaluation ten were selected for funding, to receive a total of more than €393,000 in ESF and Exchequer funding. During 2012, nine entrepreneurship projects were selected for funding, to receive a total of more than €252,000 in ESF and Exchequer funding.

During 2011, a total of 891 women availed of training under the Entrepreneurship Strand of the EWM, bringing the cumulative total for the period to 1,001 women.

During 2012, a total of 1,069 women received training under the Entrepreneurship Strand, bringing the cumulative total for the period to 2,070 women. This data excludes the figures for National Women's Enterprise Day (NWED). It is noted that a total of 197 women (18.4 per cent) who participated in entrepreneurship development have moved to early stage entrepreneurship in 2012.

23.2 Enterprise Ireland

The **Entrepreneurship and Regional Development Unit in Enterprise Ireland** is evaluating various promotional programmes and 'Start your own Business' courses aimed at female entrepreneurs. The Unit is also researching the main factors which contribute towards female owned High Potential Start Ups in Ireland and international comparisons for female owned SMEs.

- In 2012, Enterprise Ireland launched a new "women in business" drive to support female entrepreneurs. Key initiatives included sponsoring several awards, including:
 - the Network Ireland national conference and awards in September 2012;
 - the Women Business Awards in October 2012; and
 - the Image Magazine Entrepreneur Awards in November 2012.
- Enterprise Ireland has also worked to create awareness of the supports available to women entrepreneurs through partnership with several women entrepreneur networks in Ireland.

¹³ 'Significant growth expectations' is defined as those expecting to employ 20 or more within five years.

- Enterprise Ireland launched their first financial supports specifically targeted to female entrepreneurs in July 2012. Initially a fund of €250,000 was made available for a Competitive Feasibility Fund for female entrepreneurs to cater for ten grants of up to €25,000 each. In September 2012 this fund closed. It had received in excess of 120 applications and due to this overwhelming response and the quality of the applications received, the fund was increased to €350,000 to allow Enterprise Ireland to offer feasibility support to twenty successful applicants.
- In October 2012, the success of the Competitive Feasibility Fund was followed by a competitive start up fund for female entrepreneurs. Applications under the Female Entrepreneur Competitive Start Fund closed in December 2012, with a total of 86 applications received. The ten successful applications have been notified of Enterprise Ireland's offer of investment.
- It is considered that both female entrepreneur funds have been a great success. They have allowed female entrepreneurs building their scalable businesses in worldwide markets to identify themselves to Enterprise Ireland and to seek the supports available to them to grow their businesses. The female funds have created a pipeline of female-led start ups across a wide range of sectors that in turn will lead to significant job creation and exports in the coming years.

23.3 City and County Enterprise Boards

- County and City Enterprise Boards (CEBs) have been very successful at attracting the active participation of women in their range of training programmes such as Start your Own Business courses and Management Development Programmes. During 2011, over 27,000 people participated on these training programmes of whom 56% were female.
- Figures for 2012 show that the CEBs supported around 12,000 women in business in Ireland that year. These steps to specifically support women, who are currently under-represented in the labour force and in business ownership, to enter self-employment and to develop their business can therefore be regarded as possessing a strong degree of "fit" with the aims and objectives of CEBs at local and national level.
- Many of the CEBs operate Women in Business Networks that provide both training and networking opportunities.

National Women's Enterprise Day 2011

- The fifth annual National Women's Enterprise Day took place on 16th and 17th November 2011 at the Portlaoise Heritage Hotel. This event, which is hosted by the County and City Enterprise Boards, received grant support from the European Social Fund (ESF) and the Irish Exchequer under the Equality for Women Measure. The event offers support to women who are already in business and to those who are thinking of starting a business and provides an opportunity to network and to avail of enterprise supports.
- Over 300 female entrepreneurs participated in the 2011 event. Keynote speakers included a number of prominent national and international entrepreneurs, including Debra Searle and Domini Kemp. The Minister for Social Protection, Ms. Joan Burton, T.D., also addressed the conference.
- Free, confidential, one-to-one mentoring sessions with experienced business entrepreneurs are also offered to conference participants.
- The event aimed:
 - To provide a national networking forum for women in business that will support them in starting and growing their businesses.
 - To promote best practice of networking and facilitation for women in enterprise.
 - To facilitate female entrepreneurs from throughout Ireland in developing useful business contacts and in improving their own business management/networking skills.

- To facilitate access to a broad range of specialist business information from relevant agencies.
- To provide one-to-one mentoring sessions for participant entrepreneurs with specialists from a range of fields.
- To highlight and promote female entrepreneurship.

National Women's Enterprise Day 2012

- The sixth annual National Women's Enterprise Day took place on 17th and 18th October 2012 at the Portlaoise Heritage Hotel. The event was once again hosted by the County and City Enterprise Boards and received grant support from the European Social Fund (ESF) and the Irish Exchequer under the Equality for Women Measure.
- Almost 300 female entrepreneurs participated in the event. Keynote speakers included a number of prominent national and international entrepreneurs, including Alyson Hogg and Ramona Nicholas. The Minister of State with responsibility for Equality, Ms. Kathleen Lynch, T.D., also addressed the conference, which again provided free one-to-one mentoring sessions with experienced entrepreneurs to participants.

23.4 Going for Growth Initiative

- The Going for Growth Initiative was launched in October 2007. The Initiative is supported by Enterprise Ireland and receives grant support from the European Social Fund (ESF) and the Irish Exchequer under the Equality for Women Measure.
- The Initiative aims to support women entrepreneurs with a clear aspiration for growth by providing peer support and the leadership of a more experienced or lead entrepreneur. Lead entrepreneurs include Colette Twomey, Chief Executive and co-founder of the Clonakilty Blackpudding Co., Mary McKenna, Managing Director of Tour America, and Elaine Coughlan, co-founder of Atlantic Bridge. Former lead entrepreneurs continue to be associated with the Initiative by serving on the advisory panel to further develop and strengthen the Initiative including, Anne Heraty, CEO, CPL Resources PLC, Mary Ann O'Brien of Lily O'Brien's Chocolates, Amanda Pratt, Executive Director of Avoca, Eileen Bergin, founder of the Butler's Pantry food shops; and Rita Shah of Shabra Plastics/Recycling.
- Graduates of previous cycles of the Going for Growth Programme include Rosey Sheehan, Broadway Bagels, winner of the WMB Entrepreneur of the Year 2008, Nikki Evans of PerfectCard Ltd., who was named WMB Entrepreneur of the Year 2010 and is now herself a lead entrepreneur with Going for Growth, and well known entrepreneur, Nicola Byrne of 11890.
- In order to be considered suitable for participation, entrepreneurs must already be the owner manager of a business which has been trading for at least two years. Participants are grouped by stage of development with a matched group of their peers in structured sessions which are led by lead entrepreneurs. In 2011, 60 female entrepreneurs participated in the Going for Growth Initiative. To date, over 160 female entrepreneurs have participated in a cycle of Going for Growth.
- The Going for Growth National Forum took place in March 2011. Approximately 40 per cent of participants were Enterprise Ireland clients with prospective clients also attending. 'Continuing the Momentum' a forum for past participants was held in November 2011 to kick start a programme for those who had previously completed a cycle of Going for Growth. Under this programme, graduates meet up with leads (mentors) to progress their business. Enterprise Ireland work with the leads to scale the graduate's businesses to an exporting level and in some cases increase employment and revenue. Enterprise Ireland also offers many training opportunities to these participant female entrepreneurs such as First Flight, Mentor Programme participation and Innovation Vouchers to name but a few.
- In November 2011, a call was made for a further 60 female entrepreneurs to participate in the Initiative during 2012. The roundtable sessions of this cycle took place during the first six months of 2012 and focused on the growth challenge. The questions explored over six sessions included –

- Why go for growth?
 - Is your business model fit for purpose?
 - How to increase profitability through increased sales?
 - What resources/capabilities do you need to underpin growth?
 - How will you manage growth?
 - What is the best growth path for your business?
 - How can you make sure that profitable growth is the result of all your effort?
- A Going for Growth Initiative website has also been developed www.goingforgrowth.com.
 - Going for Growth was selected to represent Ireland in the Investing in Skills category of the European Enterprise Awards 2011.
 - In 2012, over 50 participants of previous cycles of Going for Growth came together to continue the momentum through round table sessions, topic based workshops and a National Forum.

23.5 Department of Education and Skills

- Some 14,500 students participated in 2011 in the Student Enterprise Awards organised by the County Enterprise Boards and the Mini-Company Get Up and Go competition which is part of the Transition Year Programme. The top three winners of each competition will receive the Sean Lemass Award for Enterprise. A further 15,500 students participated in the 2012 Student Enterprise Awards. Two of the six winning teams were female and one of the other winning teams had a majority of female participants.
- Enterprise is part of Leaving Certificate Business Studies, the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme Link Modules, the vocational preparation and guidance aspects of the Leaving Certificate Applied and an option within Transition Year. Department of Education and Skills statistics for 2011 and 2012, in Table 11 below, show the gender breakdown of enterprise programmes under the Leaving Certificate Business Studies:

TABLE 11
LEAVING CERTIFICATE BUSINESS STUDIES – ENTERPRISE PROGRAMMES, 2011 and 2012

| | Total number | | Female | | Female % | |
|---|--------------|--------|--------|-------|----------|-------|
| | 2011 | 2012 | 2011 | 2012 | 2011 | 2012 |
| Leaving Certificate (L.C.) Business Studies | 18,083 | 17,249 | 9,259 | 8,556 | 51.2% | 49.6% |
| L.C. Vocational Programme Link Modules | 16,386 | 15,827 | 8,652 | 8,436 | 52.8% | 53.3% |
| L.C. Applied Programme | 3,194 | 3,226 | 1,469 | 1,516 | 46% | 47% |

- Within Transition Year, in 2011, 5,620 students followed the Mini-Company programme, of whom 62% were female. An additional 4,322 students followed other enterprise education programmes, of whom 56% were female. In 2012, 6,950 students followed the Mini-Company programme, of whom 61% were female, while 6,509 students followed other TY enterprise education programmes, of whom 50% were female.

Objective 4
To seek to ensure that girls and women achieve their full potential in the education system

CONTEXT

24. Subject choice, particularly at second level, is an important factor influencing future achievement both in education and in employment choices. For example, a certain mix of subjects may be required in

order to access some third level courses. It is essential that girls are facilitated to participate in the full range of subject options to ensure that their career choices are not limited in later life.

25. Gender mainstreaming in the education system is vital to ensure that a gender perspective informs all aspects of education. The education sector has been strongly focused on gender equality for many years, particularly through a strong focus on gender mainstreaming within the Department of Education and Skills and the broader education sector. However this has not hugely influenced subject choice, particularly in relation to course selection which would lead to greater involvement in sectors such as computing, architecture and engineering.
26. Table 12 below shows the actual number of pupils taking higher level science, mathematics and related subjects in 2007, 2009, 2010 and 2011 in the Leaving Certificate examination.

TABLE 12
NUMBERS TAKING SELECTED SUBJECTS 2007, 2009, 2010 and 2011

| Subject (higher level) | Boys | | | | | Girls | | | | |
|---------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|-----------------|
| | 2007 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | Absolute Change | 2007 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | Absolute Change |
| Biology | 5,441 | 6,858 | 7,293 | 8,410 | 2,969 | 12,080 | 13,244 | 13,676 | 14,267 | 2,187 |
| Chemistry | 2,407 | 2,614 | 2,686 | 2,743 | 336 | 3,322 | 3,423 | 3,610 | 3,529 | 207 |
| Mathematics | 4,472 | 4,681 | 4,554 | 4,479 | 7 | 3,916 | 3,739 | 3,836 | 3,758 | (-158) |
| Physics | 3,657 | 3,398 | 3,497 | 3,462 | (-195) | 1,566 | 1,296 | 1,380 | 1,320 | (-246) |
| Design/ Communication Graphics* | 2,610 | 3,714 | 3,781 | 3,552 | 942 | 268 | 396 | 452 | 442 | 174 |
| Construction Studies | 5,922 | 6,703 | 6,742 | 6,519 | 597 | 404 | 510 | 492 | 368 | (-36) |
| Engineering | 3,227 | 3,422 | 3,709 | 3,812 | 585 | 134 | 181 | 151 | 148 | 14 |

Source: CSO Women and Men in Ireland 2007, 2009, 2010 and 2011.

* In 2009 the Subject 'Technical Drawing' was renamed as 'Design and Communication Graphics'.

27. The figures in Table 12 above, show that the number of girls taking higher level mathematics fell by 158 (or 4 per cent) between 2007 and 2011, while the number of girls taking higher level physics decreased by 246 (or almost 16 per cent) over the same period. Having increased in 2010, the number of girls taking higher level construction studies fell by 36 (or 9 per cent) while the number of girls taking higher level engineering increased by 14 (or just over 10 per cent). Girls accounted for almost two-thirds of all students taking higher level biology but for less than 46 per cent of all students taking higher level mathematics and almost 28 per cent of students taking higher level physics.

ACTIONS 2011/2012

28. The following actions have been reported by Government Departments and Agencies during 2011 and 2012:

28.1 *The Department of Education and Skills:*

- The Department of Education and Skills (DES) has introduced a range of initiatives to encourage both girls and boys to take Higher Level Leaving Certificate Mathematics, including:
 - The introduction of Project Maths in all post-primary schools;
 - The provision of 25 bonus points for students who achieve a grade D3 or higher in higher level maths;
 - The funding of a postgraduate Diploma in Maths to upskill out-of-field Maths teachers; and
 - The prioritisation of Continuing Professional Development for Maths teachers.
- The Department notes that following the introduction of the measures outlined above, there has been an increase of 37 per cent in the number of girls presenting for higher level Maths in 2012 (5,159), compared to 2011 (3,758).
- The DES is committed to strengthening the quality of science teaching and learning, promoting increased scientific literacy and encouraging more students, both girls and boys, to choose science subjects. An important element of the Strategy for Science, Technology and Innovation

2006-2013 is to increase the proportions of students studying the physical sciences in senior cycle.

- “eQuality Measures” was made available to post-primary schools in late 2009. It consists of two DVDs and five booklets. It is available in digital format on www.scoilnet.ie. These resources focus specifically on formulating a gender equality policy, recommending changes within curriculum provision and recommending changes in teaching methodologies and other school practices.
- All post-primary inspectors received an input on eQuality Measures in September 2009.
- Inputs on gender and gender mainstreaming in the context of whole-school evaluation featured in the training provided to newly recruited inspectors at primary and post-primary levels in 2012.
- Specific gender focused questions are contained in templates utilised in Whole School Evaluations at primary level, specifically in interviews with principals and with parents and in the evaluation of the quality of whole-school planning.
- In primary evaluations relating to Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE), Physical Education (PE) and History indicators focused on gender equity are included.
- A document entitled “Prompt questions towards drafting a Policy in relation to Equality of Access and Participation (Equal Opportunities)” against which primary and post-primary schools can evaluate gender mainstreaming in the context of their school, has been made available to schools.
- Similarly at post-primary level, indicators to evaluate gender mainstreaming and gender issues are included in templates utilised in whole-school and subject inspections.
- Currently a working group of technologies inspectors at post-primary level is working towards the inclusion of specific questions regarding gender for use in the inspection of technologies.
- Overall provision for further and adult education programmes, including targeted supports for “hard-to-reach” groups of adults and women, was maintained at 2011 levels. The majority (65%) of participants in further and adult education programmes continue to be female.
- In 2011, as part of the Government’s Jobs Initiative, 3,000 additional part time Back To Education Initiative (BTEI) places and 1,000 full-time Post Leaving Certificate (PLC) were allocated to VECs, bringing total BTEI places to 12,000 and PLC places to 32,688.
- In 2011, 52 per cent of all FETAC certificates were awarded to female learners. This is an increase of 3 percentage points on the corresponding figure for 2010 at 49 per cent.
- In 2012, provision for the Adult Education Guidance Initiative (AEGI) support service was maintained at 2011 levels. Together with the Department of Children and Youth Affairs and FÁS, the Childcare in Education and Training Scheme (CETS) was introduced, which provides free childcare for eligible participants in a range of further education and training programmes.
- A number of gender-related research projects were completed under the auspices of the Gender Equality Unit of the Department of Education and Skills. This Unit was established to promote equal opportunities between men and women, in particular through a gender mainstreaming approach to education. This Unit has been subsumed into the Department’s Central Policy Unit.
- The Research and Development Committee of the Department of Education and Skills funds education-related research, including those related to gender issues. The number of research projects funded by the Committee has reduced significantly due to current financial constraints.

28.2 ***Supporting women into management posts in education***

- A number of workshops with female leaders and aspiring female leaders' have taken place in a number of locations and there are plans afoot to continue to provide these, as part of the local course provision in education centres.
- There have also been annual courses in Drumcondra Education Centre entitled “*Women into Leadership and Management in Education*”.
- Programmes available under the former Leadership Development Service (now part of the Leadership strand of Professional Development Service for Teachers) continue to be offered and are open to all established, newly appointed and aspiring school leaders. There is no specific course provision for women but the overall attendance statistics indicate that 66 per cent of participants on these leadership programmes are female.

28.3 ***Supports for young mothers***

- The educational element of the nine Teen Parenting Support Projects continued to be supported under the School Completion Programme at a cost amounting to €391,200 in 2011.
- The responsibility for the School Completion Programme transferred to the Department of Children and Youth Affairs in May 2011.
- The Department of Education and Skills is represented on the National Advisory Committee – Teen Parents Support Initiative. This Advisory Committee meets twice a year.

Objective 5-A

To ensure that childcare services are optimised to meet the needs of parents and children alike

CONTEXT

29. The need to develop childcare to support the labour market participation of women has been recognised in Ireland for the past fifteen years and had led to the implementation of the National Childcare Strategy and a significant increase in the availability of childcare services across Ireland.
30. Support towards the cost of children is met by the State through child benefit which is payable monthly to mothers (or guardians).
31. The ongoing availability of childcare is central to the continuing engagement of mothers in the labour market. In addition the European Union continues to emphasise the importance of greater sharing of family responsibilities between women and men as a key support for women's labour market participation and for their advancement into decision-making roles.

ACTIONS 2011/2012

32. The following actions have been reported by Government Departments and Agencies during 2011 and 2012:

32.1 ***Department of Children and Youth Affairs***

In 2011, the newly elected Government announced the setting up of the Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA), a new Government Department with responsibility for a range of issues including child welfare and protection, youth justice, the National Children's Strategy, family supports and early childhood care and education. The key responsibilities of the Department are:

- the direct provision of a range of universal and targeted services;

- ensuring high quality arrangements are in place for focused interventions dealing with child welfare and protection, family support, adoption, school attendance and reducing youth crime; and
- the harmonisation of policy and provision across Government and with a wide range of stakeholders to improve outcomes for children, young people and families.

32.2 *National Childcare Investment Programme*

The development of new childcare places under the National Childcare Investment Programme continues with over 24,000 of the planned 25,000 addition places now in operation. This is in addition to the 40,000 childcare places created under its predecessor the Equal Opportunities Childcare Programme (EOCP) 2000-2007. During the period 2000-2011, approximately €415 million in capital funding was invested under the EOCP and the NCIP.

32.3 *Developments in the Childcare and Pre-school sector:*

Significant developments were seen in the sector during 2010 with two new programmes, and the mainstreaming of a third programme (previously an interim programme). As a result, funding programmes run by the Childcare Directorate in the Department of Health and Children either meet or subsidise the childcare costs for families of approximately 100,000 children each pre-school year.

Free pre-school year in Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Programme:

The Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Programme was introduced with effect from 1 January 2010. It replaces the Early Childcare Supplement, which was paid directly to parents, regardless of whether they availed of paid childcare or not.

- The ECCE Programme is a universal scheme, open to Irish-resident children for one year, generally the year before Junior Infants, where the child is aged more than 3 years and 2 months and less than 4 years and 7 months on 1st September of that pre-school year. All participating services must have qualified staff and agree to implement *Síolta*, the National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education. Approximately 95 per cent of childcare and pre-school services participate on the programme.
- The programme has two main options:
 - Where the child is already attending daycare (in a 50-week model), the scheme provides for 2 hours and 15 minutes per day of programme based activities, with a €48.50 weekly reduction in the childcare facilities paid by the parent.
 - Where the child attends a 38-week pre-school (aligned with the primary school year), they are provided with a 3 hour pre-school session each day free of charge, with the State paying €64.50 capitation per week to the pre-school. A higher weekly capitation of €75.00 applies to a number of services with higher qualified staff. Nearly 90 per cent of children are in the pre-school/38-week option.
- The first intake into the programme was for a “short-year” from January 2010 (up to June 2010 in the pre-school model, and up to August 2010 in the daycare model). A total of 53,000 children participated in this intake, a participation rate of approximately 83 per cent among children who enrolled in Junior Infants in the following September.
- The first full year commenced in September 2010, with 63,000 children in the scheme, an estimated participation rate of 94 per cent. A significant number of additional children avail of alternative State funded pre-school settings, for example, Early Start, funded by the Department of Education and Skills, and HSE funded specialist pre-schools for children with special needs. A number of children receive alternative (and more generous) support from other Childcare Directorate schemes, so that the actual participation rate in State funded pre-school in the year before Junior Infants is estimated at over 97 per cent.
- The Government made a very significant commitment in 2011 and in 2012 to maintaining the universality of the free Pre-School Year in Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Programme. Despite the budgetary constraints that prevailed, the programme was maintained as a universal and free pre-school year. The universal nature of this programme is regarded as

critical for childhood development and for providing every child with early learning and preparation for school. The uptake during 2011 and in 2012 was again very high with some 95 per cent of eligible children availing of the programme. It is estimated that the State invests approximately €175 million each year in the scheme. The 2011/2012 school year was the first year in which the majority of Irish children had entered primary school having completed a full year in preschool through the ECCE. The Department of Children and Youth Affairs is currently collecting data on the impact of this. Anecdotally, schools have reported higher levels of 'school readiness', which is a positive outcome of the scheme.

Childcare Education and Training Support (CETS) Programme:

- The Childcare Education and Training Support (CETS) programme was introduced from September 2010 for trainees/students with FÁS and the VECS, to replace a €63.50 childcare allowance and, in some cases, a State subvention of €70.00 in community-based childcare settings. Under the new scheme, qualified parents receive free childcare places for their children, with the State paying the childcare provider €170.00 for the place. There is provision under the scheme for 2,800 Full-Time Equivalent places, which may be full-day, half-day or after-school places, and would vary in duration from ten weeks to fifty-one weeks, depending on the course attended by the parent. These 2,800 places benefit some 7,000 children, reflecting the fact that many courses are of relatively short duration so places are used by more than one child over the year.
- During 2011, the terms and conditions governing this programme were reviewed and changes were made to ensure a more cost effective and efficient delivery of this childcare support provision and from September 2012, a contribution of up to €25 per week must be met by the parents of children availing of this service.

Community Childcare Subvention (CCS) Programme:

- The Community Childcare Subvention (CCS) programme was introduced from September 2010 and mainstreams the interim Community Childcare Subvention Scheme 2008-2010 (CCSS). The new programme focuses supports to a greater extent to those in low income employment. The CCS subvents parents availing of community-based, not-for-profit, childcare, with fees paid on a tiered basis. Parents are charged the cost price of the childcare place, less the subvention they attract. The scheme has three subvention bands; A, AJ and B:
 - Band A – to receive band A subvention, a parent must be in receipt of one of the main D/SP benefits, including One Family Payment (OFP) or Family Income Supplement (FIS), and have a medical card. The payment from September 2012 on band A is €95 for those availing of a full day, five days per week, with pro rata payments for shorter days.
 - Band AJ – this band is a €50 subvention for a full day of childcare and is for parents who are in receipt of Jobseekers Benefit or Allowance, supplementary welfare allowance, Tús¹⁴ and the part-time job incentive programmes and have a medical card, with pro rata payments for shorter days.
 - Band B – this band is also €50 for a full day but has considerably lower subvention for shorter days. It is open to parents on medical cards or GP visit cards.
- Currently, the scheme supports almost 24,000 children, or 10,800 full-time equivalent places. There are approximately 6,000 further children in these services who do not qualify for subvention and who are charged the cost price of childcare places which averages €150.00 per week for full daycare.

Development of a fully professional childcare workforce:

- The Workforce Development Plan for the ECCE sector was published in December 2010. To date, the following has been achieved:
 - A review of national award standards for level 4, 5 and 6 awards on the national qualifications framework, which incorporate national practice guidelines (Sólta and

¹⁴ The Tús initiative is a community work placement scheme providing short-term working opportunities for unemployed people.

Aistear) and which are referenced against agreed national occupation role profiles (Model Framework for education training and professional development).

- Programme development against these new award standards is currently at an advanced state and the first level 5 programmes will be available through the VEC from September 2011.
- An audit of the qualification profile of the services under contract to deliver the ECCE programme has been completed and a number of support initiatives for upskilling staff are being developed, for example, an online learning initiative. The audit revealed that very substantial progress has been made towards achieving a minimum level of qualification across the workforce.
- An advisory panel drawn from third level education and training providers will advise on the suitability of education and training qualifications to practice as a graduate in ECCE settings.
- There has been a significant increase in the availability of degree programmes, from four in 2000 to fourteen in 2011. More flexible delivery options are also available.

32.4 *Developments at EU level:*

- There has been an increased level of interest by the European Union in Early Childhood Care and Education (ECEC) services, with a European Commission Communication published on ECEC services. The Council of the European Union has also invited Member States to:
 1. Analyse and evaluate existing ECEC services at national level in terms of their availability, proximity, affordability and quality;
 2. Introduce measures to ensure universal access to ECEC and to reinforce its quality; and
 3. Invest efficiently in ECEC as a long-term growth-enhancing measure.
- The Council has also invited the European Commission to support the Member States in identifying and exchanging good policies and practices via the open method of coordination. This is expected to involve a greater level of information sharing and testing of best practice in the EU over the coming years. The Department of Children and Youth Affairs will participate fully in this process. Given the high level of participation in the ECCE scheme in particular, the immediate priorities which Ireland will be particularly interested in learning from others is in effective and sustainable means of quality improvement in the sector.
- The Europe 2020 economic growth and employment policy mentioned in Chapter 2 also places considerable emphasis on the need for EU Member States to develop affordable quality childcare services to support the needs of women who are active in the labour market. This includes specific recommendations to certain Member States about their need to develop childcare services to support the labour market engagement of women. In this regard, it is worth noting from the EU's Annual Report on Equality between Women and Men that the employment rate for women of childbearing age¹⁵ falls from 76.8 per cent for women who do not have children to 64.7 per cent for women with children – showing a gap of 12 percentage points. The comparable data for Ireland are 76 per cent participation for women in this age group without children and just 57.2 per cent for women with children, a gap of almost 19 per cent. See table 17 in the next Chapter for additional information on this issue.

Objective 5-B

To ensure that the care infrastructure supports women's socio-economic engagement

CONTEXT

¹⁵ Women aged 25 - 49

33. The care of children, older family members as well as the care of other dependent persons has traditionally fallen to women in Ireland, as elsewhere in Europe. Accordingly, the EU has begun to emphasise the importance of a comprehensive caring infrastructure to support elder care and the care of other dependants to complement childcare. A number of EU Presidency initiatives have reviewed the importance of care sharing for elder care to ensure that these responsibilities do not fall to women only or impact upon the careers of women only.
34. Statistics from the Department of Social Protection, published in 2012, show that the primary beneficiaries of the range of income supports for carers in Ireland are largely women. Table 13 below shows the number of persons in different age groups in receipt of Carer's Allowance, Carer's Benefit and the Respite Care Grant in 2012. The number of very elderly people in a caring role is noteworthy as are the (mainly) female majority of carers.

TABLE 13
RECIPIENTS OF CARER'S ALLOWANCE, BENEFIT AND RESPITE CARE GRANT 2012

| Age | Carer's Allowance | | | Carer's Benefit | | | Respite Care Grant | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|--------|--------|-----------------|--------|-------|--------------------|--------|-------|
| | Male | Female | Total | Male | Female | Total | Male | Female | Total |
| Under 25 yrs | 126 | 404 | 530 | 2 | 4 | 6 | 1 | 8 | 9 |
| 25 - 29 yrs | 207 | 1,346 | 1,553 | 6 | 46 | 52 | 1 | 21 | 22 |
| 30 to 34 yrs | 369 | 2,834 | 3,203 | 23 | 187 | 210 | 2 | 35 | 37 |
| 35 to 39 yrs | 714 | 4,334 | 5,048 | 35 | 285 | 320 | 8 | 64 | 72 |
| 40 to 44 yrs | 1,178 | 5,825 | 7,003 | 30 | 245 | 275 | 14 | 132 | 146 |
| 45 to 49 yrs | 1,515 | 5,769 | 7,284 | 45 | 194 | 239 | 30 | 243 | 273 |
| 50 to 54 yrs | 1,565 | 4,846 | 6,411 | 47 | 170 | 217 | 55 | 387 | 442 |
| 55 to 59 yrs | 1,458 | 4,229 | 5,687 | 46 | 137 | 183 | 73 | 442 | 515 |
| 60 to 64 yrs | 1,250 | 3,870 | 5,120 | 37 | 74 | 111 | 76 | 514 | 590 |
| 65 to 69 yrs | 1,089 | 3,325 | 4,414 | 19 | 6 | 25 | 129 | 510 | 639 |
| 70 to 74 yrs | 804 | 2,220 | 3,024 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 179 | 445 | 624 |
| 75 to 79 yrs | 567 | 1,360 | 1,927 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 177 | 347 | 524 |
| 80 years and over | 345 | 660 | 1,005 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 164 | 244 | 408 |
| Total Recipients | 11,187 | 41,022 | 52,209 | 290 | 1,348 | 1,638 | 909 | 3,392 | 4,301 |

Source: Statistical Information on Social Welfare Services 2012, Department of Social and Family Affairs

ACTIONS 2011/2012

35. The following actions have been reported by Government Departments and Agencies during 2011 and 2012:

35.1 Department of Social Protection

Carers' Allowances

- In Budget 2011 and in Budget 2012, the weekly rate of Carer's Allowance and Carer's Benefit for carers over 66 years of age was maintained. The rate of Carer's Allowance and Carer's Benefit for a carer under age 66 years was reduced by €8 (3.8 per cent) to €204 and €205 respectively in 2011 but these revised rates were maintained in Budget 2012.
- Budget 2011 and Budget 2012 also provided for the half rate Carer's Allowance to continue to be paid to people providing full-time care and receiving another welfare payment. The Department of Social Protection reports that they continue to promote the possibility of care sharing by two carers.
- The rate of the annual Respite Care Grant was maintained at €1,700.
- Since the introduction of the Carer's Allowance in 1990, payments to carers have been significantly increased and expanded. Carer's Allowance was increased in 2007, 2008 and 2009 by 12.1 per cent, 6.5 per cent and 3.3 per cent, respectively. As a result, even with the reduction announced in Budget 2010 for carers less than 66 years of age, the weekly rate of payment for the carers allowance was still almost 20 per cent higher in 2012 than in 2006 and more than 147 per cent higher than in 1997.

Supports for Carers

- The Minister for Social Protection and senior officials of the Department of Social Protection met with representative agencies including the Carers' Association in February 2011 and again in November 2011 in advance of Budget 2012. A further meeting with representative groups was held in November 2012, ahead of Budget 2013. The Department continues to keep in regular contact with its representative agencies.
- Carers were identified as a priority theme under the 'Economic and Social Disadvantage Category' in the Dormant Accounts allocation for 2007. The focus of the carers' measure is to provide training to assist carers in undertaking their caring role. The Department of Social Protection is the lead Department for this measure and the funding is being channelled through the Department's Vote. Pobal are administering the measure on behalf of the Department and are responsible for the on-going monitoring and evaluation of the programme. Twelve groups were approved for funding in December 2008. Funding of €1.48m has been allocated from 2009-2011. A further €191,000 was spent on this measure in 2012.

35.2 Department of Health

National Carer's Strategy

- The Government continues to support carers and the people they care for within the resources available. The Programme for Government committed to develop National Carer's Strategy to support carers and to address issues of concern and as a result, the National Carer's Strategy '*Recognised, Supported, Empowered*' was published in July 2012. It is a cross-Departmental strategy that sets the strategic direction for future policies, services and supports provided by Government Departments and Agencies for carers.

Residential Care

- The Nursing Homes Support Scheme, which ensures that long-term nursing home care is affordable and accessible for those who require it, commenced in October 2009. This addressed several of the objectives set out in *Towards 2016*, e.g.
 - There should be appropriate and equitable levels of co-payment by care recipients based on a national standardised financial assessment,
 - The level of state support for residential care should be indifferent as to whether that care is in a public or private facility,
 - No current resident of a nursing home, public or private, should be put at a disadvantage by whatever new co-payment arrangements for residential care are introduced.
- The Scheme was reviewed in 2012. The review examined, amongst other issues:
 - The ongoing sustainability of the Scheme;
 - The relative cost of public versus private provision;
 - The effectiveness of current methods of negotiating price in private nursing homes and in setting price in public nursing homes; and
 - The balance of funding between residential and community care.

The views of relevant stakeholders were sought as part of the review with submissions requested by 16th July 2012. The Department of Health received 61 submissions from a broad range of individuals, statutory bodies, nursing homes, professionals, groups representing the interests of older people and organisations in the community and voluntary sector. It is expected that the review will be completed in 2013.

Community Services

- The Programme for Government 2011-2016, commits that "the Fair Deal system of financing nursing home care will be reviewed with a view to developing a secure and equitable system of financing for community and long term care which supports older people to stay in their own homes".
- The outcome of the review of the Nursing Homes Support Scheme, due to be completed in 2013, will inform this piece of work.

| |
|--|
| Objective 6-A To reduce the numbers of women experiencing poverty |
|--|

CONTEXT

36. There is evidence to show that some women are more exposed to the risk of poverty than their male counterparts. This may be caused by one or more of a number of factors. By taking time out of the workforce to raise children, women can affect their long term income level and pension entitlement. Women are more likely to become lone parents, frequently experiencing a reduction in family income and ultimately pension entitlement.
37. The three main Irish indicators of poverty are:
- at-risk-of-poverty (below 60 per cent of median disposable income, equivalised to take into account household size),
 - material deprivation (lack of two of the eleven defined basic necessities) and
 - the overlap of the two, known as consistent poverty. Consistent poverty is the indicator used to set national poverty targets.
38. The national poverty target, which is set out in the National Action Plan for Social Inclusion 2007-2016, is to reduce the rate of consistent poverty to between two to four per cent by 2012 and to eliminate it by 2016 (as measured by a consistent poverty rate of less than two per cent). This target applies across the lifecycle, including for both men and women. The Government decided to review the national poverty targets in 2011 and initiated a public consultation and stakeholder engagement to inform the review. Arising from the review, the Government revised and enhanced the national social target for poverty reduction to that as stated in 40.3 below.
39. The EU poverty target as set out in the Europe 2020 Strategy (see Chapter 2 for further detail) is to lift at least twenty million people out of the risk of poverty and exclusion across the EU by 2020. The Irish contribution¹⁶ to the Europe 2020 poverty target is to reduce by a minimum of 200,000 the population in combined poverty (either consistent poverty, at-risk-of-poverty or basic deprivation). As at 38 above, the Government decided to review these targets in 2011 and the enhanced national social target for poverty reduction is related in 40.3 below.

ACTIONS 2011/2012

40. The following actions have been reported by Government Departments and Agencies during 2011 and 2012:
- 40.1 *Social welfare payment rates*
- In Budget 2011, the rate of payment for widows of pension age was maintained. The rate for widows under 66 years of age (both contributory and non-contributory) was reduced by €8 per week. In Budget 2012, the weekly rates of payment for widows, widowers and surviving civil partners (both contributory and non-contributory) pension were maintained. However, in keeping with payments closely reflecting PRSI contributions paid over a working life, the number of PRSI contributions required for this payment will increase from 156 contributions to 260 paid contributions in December 2013. This was provided for in Budget 2012. However, the use of both records for consideration of entitlement continues.
 - The rate of payment for Qualified Adults over 66 years of age was maintained in Budget 2011 and in Budget 2012 at €206.30. It remains at 94 per cent of the maximum rate for State Pension (Non-Contributory) at €219.
 - In Budget 2011, there were reductions of between €5.30 and €5.70 for all Qualified Adult rates of payment for those under 66 years of age. The Qualified Adult rates for those under 66 years of age were maintained in Budget 2012.

¹⁶ The Irish combined poverty population is defined by combining two national poverty indicators: at-risk-of-poverty and basic deprivation. This approach captures a similar percentage of the population as the EU 'at risk of poverty or social exclusion' measure. There is an overlap of c80 per cent.

- Proposals concerning the future of qualified adult allowances for social assistance payments were considered in the context of proposals on developing a Single Working Age Assistance Payment.
- As referred to previously, since the launch of 'Proposals for Supporting Lone Parents (2006)', extensive consultation has taken place with relevant stakeholders. This has informed deliberations regarding the reform of the One Parent Family Payment (OFP) and the reforms of the scheme which are currently being implemented. This involves improving lone parent's access to education supports, childcare, training and employment.

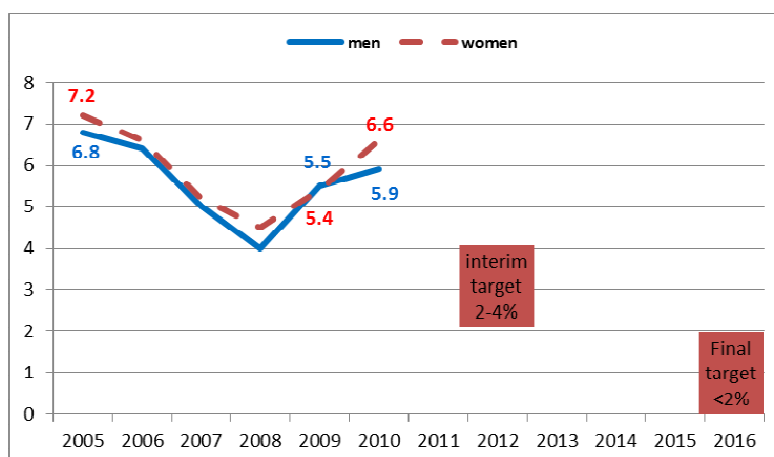
40.2 ***'Review of the Application of the Unemployed Benefit and Assistance Schemes Conditions to workers who are not employed on a full-time basis'***

- The Department of Social Protection conducted a 'Review of the Application of the Unemployed Benefit and Assistance Schemes Conditions to workers who are not employed on a full-time basis' which examined the application of the Jobseekers Benefit and Allowance scheme conditions to workers who are employed on a part-time, casual or systematic short-term basis. The recommendations contained in this Review and how the jobseeker schemes cater for atypical work patterns are under active consideration by the Department.
- The Minister for Social Protection has referred the issue of atypical employment and how it is currently catered for within the existing Jobseeker schemes to the Advisory Group on Tax and Social Welfare, for their consideration. The Advisory Group is expected to report on this issue by the end of 2013.

40.3 ***National Action Plan for Social Inclusion***

- The National Action Plan for Social Inclusion, the Government's strategy for tackling poverty and social exclusion, identifies twelve high level goals to meet the needs of vulnerable groups, including women, across the five lifecycle groups of children; people of working age; older people; people with disabilities; and communities. The Plan also identifies some one hundred and fifty actions by Departments and agencies with a remit in social policy, in order to make a decisive impact on poverty over the period to 2016.
- The national social target for poverty reduction, which sets out the Government's ambition for reducing and ultimately eliminating poverty, is *to reduce consistent poverty to 4% by 2016 (interim target) and to 2% or less by 2020, from the 2010 baseline rate of 6.3%*. This target applies to men and women as well as other lifecycle groups.
- Table 14 overleaf shows progress towards the national poverty target for women and men, using data from the CSO Survey on Income and Living Conditions 2010. This shows that, in 2010, the consistent poverty rate for women was 6.6 per cent, an increase of 1.2 percentage points on the 2009 rate of 5.4 per cent. The CSO advise that this increase represents no statistically significant change on the 2009 figure.
- The 2010 rate can also be compared with the 2005 baseline rate when the national poverty target was set of 7.2 per cent. The 2010 figure still represents an overall improvement of 0.6 percentage points, but is a dis-improvement compared with the low point of 4.5 per cent in 2008. Looking forward, there is a gap of 2.6 percentage points to be bridged if the 4 per cent interim national poverty target is to be reached for women.
- Table 15 overleaf shows that the poverty differential between women and men in 2010 was quite small at 0.7 percentage point (11 per cent in relative terms). This is slightly greater than in the baseline year, when the differential was 0.4 percentage points (6 per cent in relative terms). Interestingly, in three of the four intervening years the poverty differential between women and men was all but eliminated, including 2009 when the poverty rate was slightly lower for women than for men. This pattern indicates that there is no significant difference in the poverty risk between women and men in Ireland.

TABLE 14
Progress towards the national poverty target for women and men, 2005-2010



Source: Central Statistics Office *Survey on Income and Living Conditions* (2005-2010)

- The *Social Inclusion Monitor 2011* is the Government report on progress towards the national social target for poverty reduction. It is based on the CSO *Survey on Income and Living Conditions (SILC) 2011*. As well as the headline target, the monitor reports on supporting indicators which underpin progress towards the target, including at-risk-of-poverty and basic deprivation. The relevant data for women and men are presented in Table 15 below.

TABLE 15
POVERTY RATES FOR WOMEN AND MEN, 2011 AND 2010 (percentages)

| | Consistent Poverty ¹⁷ | | | At-risk-of-poverty ¹⁸ | | | Basic deprivation ¹⁹ | | |
|---------------|----------------------------------|------|-------------|----------------------------------|------|-------------|---------------------------------|------|-------------|
| | 2011 | 2010 | 2011 v 2010 | 2011 | 2010 | 2011 v 2010 | 2011 | 2010 | 2011 v 2010 |
| State | 6.9 | 6.3 | +0.6pp | 16 | 14.7 | +1.3pp | 24.5 | 22.6 | +1.9pp |
| Female | 6.9 | 6.8 | +0.1pp | 15.6 | 15.1 | +0.5pp | 26 | 23.5 | +2.5pp |
| Male | 6.9 | 5.8 | +1.1pp | 16.3 | 14.3 | +2pp | 23 | 21.7 | +1.3pp |

- In 2011, the overall percentage of people in consistent poverty was 6.9 per cent. The same proportion of women and men experienced consistent poverty in 2011. The consistent poverty rate for women was one percentage point higher than men in 2010 (6.8 per cent vs. 5.8 per cent). This change is not considered to be statistically significant.
- The at-risk-of-poverty rate (ARP) for women, in 2011, was 15.6 per cent compared with a rate of 16.3 per cent for men and a rate of 16 per cent for the general population. The increase in the ARP for women on the 2010 figures was 0.5 percentage points, which is lower than the increase experienced by men of two percentage points.
- The rate of basic deprivation for women, in 2011, was 26 per cent, which represents an increase of 2.5 percentage points on the 2010 rate. This is three percentage points higher than the rate for men and 1.5 percentage points higher than the rate for the general population in 2011.

¹⁷ Measures individuals who experience both at-risk-of-poverty and basic deprivation

¹⁸ Proportion of the population with an equivalised disposable income below 60% of the national equivalised median income

¹⁹ Captures individuals lacking two or more items from 11 basic necessities, due to a lack of income

TABLE 16
AVERAGE ANNUAL EQUIVALISED DISPOSABLE INCOME FOR WOMEN AND MEN, 2011 AND 2010
(absolute and percentage change²⁰)

| | Average annual equivalised disposable income | | | |
|---------------|--|---------|-----------------|-----------------|
| | 2011 | 2010 | 2011 v 2010 (€) | 2011 v 2010 (%) |
| State | €21,440 | €22,138 | -€698 | -3.2% |
| Female | €21,167 | €21,955 | -€788 | -3.6% |
| Male | €21,718 | €22,324 | -€606 | -2.7% |

- Table 16 above presents the average annual equivalised disposable income for females and males in 2011 and 2010. The female average annual equivalised disposable income in 2011 was €21,167 compared with a figure of €21,718 for males. The female average disposable income fell by €788 between 2010 and 2011 representing a reduction of 3.6 percentage points. The reduction in male average annual equivalised disposable income over the two years was €606 representing a lower reduction of 2.7 percentage points.
- Table 17 below outlines the average annual household disposable income for male and female headed households in 2011 and 2010. Female headed households had an average annual household disposable income of €35,936 in 2011, a decline of €2,489 (or 6.5 percentage points) on 2010. Male headed households had a significantly higher level of average annual household disposable income at €46,096 in 2011. This was a decrease of €684 (or 1.5 percentage points) on the 2010 rate of €46,780.

TABLE 17
AVERAGE ANNUAL HOUSEHOLD DISPOSABLE INCOME FOR MALE AND FEMALE HEAD OF HOUSEHOLDS, 2011 AND 2010 (absolute and percentage change)

| | Average annual household disposable income | | | |
|---------------------------------|--|---------|-----------------|-----------------|
| | 2011 | 2010 | 2011 v 2010 (€) | 2011 v 2010 (%) |
| State | €41,819 | €43,151 | -€1,332 | -3.1% |
| Female Head of Household | €35,936 | €38,425 | -€2,489 | -6.5% |
| Male Head of Household | €46,096 | €46,780 | -€684 | -1.5% |

(Note: Data on poverty rates by female/male head of households for 2011 are not available yet.)

Objective 6-B
To reduce the numbers of female lone parents who experience poverty

CONTEXT

41. The CSO Survey on Income and Living Conditions (SILC) for 2010²¹ noted that individuals (adults and children) living in lone parent households experienced the second highest rate of deprivation in 2010 at 50.3 per cent, only individuals living in accommodation rented at below the market rate or rent

²⁰ Equivalised income is averaged over all individuals in each household.

²¹ Figures for 2010 revised in February 2013.

free experienced a higher rate of deprivation at 52 per cent. The deprivation rate for the general population was 22.6 per cent.

42. Table 18 below gives statistics from the Department of Social Protection for 2011 which show that women predominate as recipients of D/SP family support payments as unmarried and separated parents, accounting for almost 98 per cent of recipients of these payments.

TABLE 18
NUMBER OF RECIPIENTS OF ONE-PARENT FAMILY PAYMENT BY
STATUS OF PARENT, AGE AND SEX, 2011

| Age Group | Unmarried Parent, Separated Parent | | Widowed or Surviving Civil Partner | | Total | |
|---------------------|------------------------------------|---------|------------------------------------|---------|--------|---------|
| | Males | Females | Males | Females | Males | Females |
| Under 25 yrs | 24 | 11,776 | 0 | 8 | 24 | 11,784 |
| 25 to 29 yrs | 100 | 17,431 | 0 | 28 | 100 | 17,459 |
| 30 to 34 yrs | 221 | 17,582 | 4 | 73 | 225 | 17,655 |
| 35 to 39 yrs | 333 | 15,479 | 13 | 135 | 346 | 15,614 |
| 40 to 44 yrs | 478 | 12,579 | 21 | 164 | 499 | 12,743 |
| 45 to 49 yrs | 427 | 7,988 | 34 | 182 | 461 | 8,170 |
| 50 to 54 yrs | 255 | 3,357 | 25 | 118 | 280 | 3,475 |
| 55 to 59 yrs | 131 | 990 | 20 | 67 | 151 | 1,057 |
| 60 to 64 yrs | 40 | 173 | 12 | 20 | 52 | 193 |
| 65 years and over | 5 | 7 | 3 | 4 | 8 | 11 |
| Total | 2,014 | 87,362 | 132 | 799 | 2,146 | 88,161 |
| Overall Total | 89,376 | | 931 | | 90,307 | |
| Women as % of Total | 97.7 | | 85.8 | | 97.6 | |

Source: Statistical Information on Social Welfare Services 2011, Department of Social Protection

ACTIONS 2011/2012

43. The following actions have been reported by Government Departments and Agencies during 2011 and 2012:

43.1 Department of Social Protection

- Following the publication in November 2010 of the Value for Money (VFM) Review on Child Income Supports (CIS) policies and associated spending programmes, a consultation seminar with interest groups and stakeholders was held in March 2011.
- In line with a finding of the VFM Review of CIS to further examine an outline proposal to bring together the components of the various CIS payments into a unified payment, the Department undertook a feasibility study of an integrated CIS payment during 2011.
- The feasibility study examines technical, operational and financial issues of an integrated CIS payment and considers the key design aspects of the payment and how it would work in practice.
- In line with the commitments contained in the Programme for Government, in June 2011, the Minister for Social Protection established the Advisory Group on Tax and Social Welfare, with the aim of harnessing expert opinion and experience to examine a number of specific issues and to make cost effective proposals for improving employment incentives and achieving better poverty outcomes, particularly child poverty outcomes. The Group commenced its work programme by prioritising the area of family and child income supports, taking into account the considerable level of analysis that has already taken place in relation to this issue, including a Department of Social Protection Value for Money Review of child income supports and a feasibility study as to how child and family income support payments might be integrated.
- The Group's Report was submitted to the Minister for Social Protection in 2012 and is likely to be published early in 2013. It is understood that the report makes important recommendations as to how Child Benefit could be maintained as a universal payment while reforming the current system of child and family income supports through a two-tier payment so as to better target those who need these supports most. While the Government has made no decision at this time on the core recommendations of the report, given the complexities of the issues involved, the

Report will assist the Government in considering the appropriate direction of policy on this issue.

- Since the launch of the Government Discussion Paper, *Proposals for Supporting Lone Parents* (2006), extensive consultation has taken place with a range of stakeholders. This has informed deliberations regarding reform of the One-Parent Family Payment (OPF) and future policy in relation to lone parents.
- As mentioned previously, the Department of Social Protection is currently undertaking comprehensive reform of the One-Parent Family Payment (OPF). (See paragraph 9.3 on employment above).
- In the past, income support for people of working age, including lone parents, has been passive in nature, with little systematic engagement by the State with the customer. This is now changing. Long-term welfare dependency and passive income support to people of working age are not in the best interests of the recipient, of their children or of society. Lone parent families continue to experience higher rates of 'consistent poverty' in comparison to the population generally:
 - EU-SILC figures show that, in 2010, 13.6 per cent of lone parents in Ireland were experiencing 'consistent poverty'. This figure increased to 16.4 per cent in 2011, the highest rate of consistent poverty reported.
 - In 2011, this compared to 6.9 per cent of two-parent households and to 6.9 per cent of the population as a whole.
 - This suggests that the long-term income support that the OPF scheme provided to lone parents up to 2011, until children were aged 18, or 22 if in full-time education, was not effective in addressing the poverty and social exclusion experienced by some of these families.
- The best route out of poverty and social exclusion is through paid employment. Work, and especially full-time work, may not be an option for parents of young children. However, supporting parents to participate in the labour market, once their children have reached an appropriate age, will improve both their own economic situation and the social well-being of themselves and their families.
- Overall, the reforms that are taking place aim to:
 - prevent long-term dependence on social welfare support and facilitate financial independence among parents;
 - recognise parental choice with regard to the care of young children, but with the expectation that parents will not remain outside of the labour force indefinitely; and
 - include an expectation of participation in education, training and employment initiatives, with the appropriate social welfare supports being provided in this regard.
- The reforms of the OPF scheme also bring Ireland's support for lone parents more in line with international provisions, where there is a move away from long-term and passive income support.
- In 2011, the combined value of child income supports (standard definition of Child Benefit plus Qualified Child Increases) was equivalent to 33 per cent of the minimum adult social welfare payment rate, while the wider definition (which includes the Back to School Clothing and Footwear Allowance) was equivalent to 35 per cent of the minimum adult rate. In 2012, the combined value of child income supports was equivalent to 33.3 per cent of the minimum adult social welfare payment (€186 per week) while the wider definition, as outlined above, was equivalent to 34.9 per cent of the minimum adult rate. These values were in line with the NAPinclusion target that the combined value of child income support measures be maintained at 33 per cent to 35 per cent of the minimum adult Social Welfare payment rate.

43.2 Equality Authority

- One Family, Ireland's national organisation for one-parent families, developed a project in partnership with Marks and Spencer, Boots and Superquinn. They produced a practical toolkit on tips for employing and retaining lone parents. *Six Steps to Promote Equality for Lone Parents in the Retail Sector* introduces the key elements of successful retail businesses as well as detailing six practical steps to promote equality for lone parents in the workplace. Finally, it showcases a number of good practice examples in this area from retail businesses.
- In 2012, One Parent Exchange and Network undertook a project to challenge myths and assumptions about lone parents. The project includes posters giving key information about the profile of lone parents in Ireland.

Objective 6-C

To reduce the numbers of women experiencing poverty by increasing pension cover

CONTEXT

44. As mentioned previously, periods away from the labour market among women can increase their risk of poverty. This also can influence their pension entitlement in later years. Accordingly the Pensions Board has actively engaged in awareness raising to encourage people to consider their pension needs at an early age.
45. In 2007, the Pensions Board published a comprehensive book entitled "Women and Pensions" which describes the ways in which women can provide financial security for themselves and their dependants in retirement. It addresses issues of particular interest to women such as maternity leave, career breaks and re-entering the workforce. It is worth noting that the CSO Women and Men in Ireland Report for 2011 notes that in 2009, 51 per cent of women in employment in Ireland had no pension provision other than the State pension. In 2009, only 5 per cent of women in Ireland had a personal pension, compared with 13 per cent of men.

46. ACTIONS 2011/2012

The following actions have been reported by Government Departments and Agencies during 2011 and 2012:

46.1 Department of Social Protection

- There were no changes to any State Pension rates in 2011 or in 2012 for people of retirement age.
- The percentage of women of retirement age who qualify for a social insurance pension is currently being reviewed by the State Pensions Sub-Group established under the National Pensions Framework to progress State Pension key milestones.
- Work is also ongoing to ensure the accuracy of information leaflets available to families working together in relation to their insurability under the social welfare code.
- The number of contributions required for State contributory pensions increased from 260 to 520 from April 2012 as provided for in legislation enacted since 1997. As provided for in Budget 2012, from September 2012, the rate of State contributory pension for new applicants is appropriate to the average number of contributions made. Those who have fewer contributions will receive a lower rate of pension. The homemakers disregard continues to be available for those who qualify for the scheme, who took time out of the workforce for caring duties.
- EU Directive 2010/41/EU is primarily concerned with issues relating to equality legislations but does also include provisions on social protection and access to Maternity Benefit for categories coming within the scope of the Directive. The Directive covers, among other things, the spouses of self-employed workers or, when and in so far as recognised by national law, the life partners

of self-employed workers, not being employees or business partners, where they habitually, under the conditions laid down by national law, participate in the activities of the self-employed workers and perform the same tasks or ancillary tasks.

- The deadline for transposition of the Directive was 5th August 2012. However, the Directive allows, in particular circumstances, for an extension of up to two years on the period allowed for the implementation of the social insurance provisions. Ireland secured an agreement to allow it to avail of this extended period and so the deadline for implementation of this Directive is now the 5th August 2014. The required provisions will be legislated for in a future social welfare bill so as to meet the extended deadline for implementation.

46.2 Pensions Board

- Women are a specific target group under the Pensions Board's National Pensions Awareness Campaign.
- The Pensions Board has produced an updated 'Women and Pensions Checklist'. The Checklist describes the ways in which women can improve financial security for themselves and their dependents in retirement. The publication acknowledges the impact that maternity leave, part-time working and breaks in employment can have on women's pensions and that these factors, coupled with the fact that women generally live longer than men, can leave women more vulnerable in relation to retirement.
- The Checklist also includes some practical information on how occupational or personal pensions can be affected by separation or divorce under Family Law. A booklet entitled 'A brief guide to the pension provisions of the Family Law Act' has been prepared by the Pensions Board. These provisions now also apply to civil partners and co-habiting couples.

CHAPTER 4

THEME TWO - ENSURING THE WELLBEING OF WOMEN

INTRODUCTION

1. It will be recalled that the National Women's Strategy makes mention of the WHO definition of "health" as "*a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing*". Accordingly, this Theme links a number of very different objectives, relating to topics as diverse as work/life balance and sport while also including a number of issues which can impact negatively on the lives of women, such as domestic violence and trafficking.
2. As noted previously, issues such as the sharing of family responsibilities, violence against women and human trafficking have been the focus of significant bodies of work at the EU, Council of Europe and the United Nations in recent years. In relation to the latter two topics, new Conventions at the Council of Europe provide structures to enable CoE Member States to achieve optimal provisions.

Objective 7

To enhance the work/life balance for women

CONTEXT

3. This objective reflects the ongoing debate at EU level about the need to address inequalities which persist in the sharing of family and caring responsibilities between women and men. This unequal distribution of caring/domestic responsibilities has a detrimental effect on women's full economic independence and their engagement in the labour market. This leads to a situation where our highly educated women and girls may not be reaching their full potential career wise resulting in persisting gender pay and pension gaps.
4. As previously mentioned in Chapter 2 on International Developments, the Revised *European Pact for Gender Equality 2011-2020* has as one of its priority areas: to promote better work/life balance for women and men, including by taking measures to:
 - a) *improve the supply of adequate, affordable, high-quality childcare services for children under the mandatory school age with a view to achieving the objectives set at the European Council in Barcelona in March 2002, taking into account the demand for childcare services and in line with national patterns of childcare provision;*
 - b) *improve the provision of care facilities for other dependants; and*
 - c) *promote flexible working arrangements and various forms of leave for both women and men.*
5. The Council Conclusions on '*Reconciliation of Work and Family Life as a Precondition for Equal Participation in the Labour Market*' prepared under the Polish Presidency of the EU in 2011 and adopted by the ESPHCA Council in December 2011, also highlight the need for work/life balance initiatives as a prerequisite for increased female labour market participation. As mentioned previously in Chapter 2, the Council Conclusions call on the Member States in particular to:
 - Step up or continue efforts to support the reconciliation of work, family and private life for both women and men, including through formal care provision, parental leave and other family friendly leave arrangements;
 - Step up measures which aim to achieve the 2002 Barcelona childcare targets²²;

²² Barcelona targets: see page 12

- Increase efforts to implement measures to encourage men to share family and domestic responsibilities equally with women, including by increasing efforts to combat persisting gender stereotypes linked to the traditional division of labour and caring responsibilities; and
 - Encourage employers to adopt family-friendly measures related to flexible working arrangements and part-time work for both women and men, without any negative effects on career prospects.
6. A report prepared in September 2011 by the European Institute for Gender Equality, in cooperation with the Polish Presidency, as an accompanying document to the Council Conclusions on **‘Reconciliation of Work and Family Life as a Precondition for Equal Participation in the Labour Market’** notes that:

“...when addressing the family and labour market policies in helping parents to combine work, private and family life, it is important to consider the challenges that one of the deepest and severest economic crises of the past fifty years may present to policy-makers.

...policy responses to the crisis, such as budgetary cuts for public care services, risk jeopardising the advances made in women’s employment and gender equality achieved over recent years, and as a consequence, conditions affecting work-life balance may worsen. Given that parents with small children usually are users of public care services, they are particularly sensitive to budgetary cuts, likely to be introduced in the majority of Member States as part of the fiscal consolidation process. Moreover, some employers may be tempted to limit or cut policies aimed at helping parents to reconcile the demands made by work, private and family life.

Yet crises can also be transformative moments, providing an opportunity for EU countries to explicitly recognise that the different gender impacts of policies need auditing and monitoring”.

7. The European Commission in its Annual Report **‘Progress on Equality between Women and Men in 2011’** notes that on average across the EU, the labour market participation rate of mothers is 12.1 percentage points lower than that of women without children, while the rate for fathers is 8.7 percentage points higher than that for men without children. Table 19 below, prepared from data taken from the European Commission Report, shows that Ireland falls below the EU average in this respect, with a labour market participation rate for mothers that is 18.8 percentage points lower than the participation rate for women without children. The figures for men in Ireland are broadly in line with the EU average, with a positive gap of 8.8 percentage points in the participation rate for men with children compared to men without children.

TABLE 19
EMPLOYMENT RATES OF MEN AND WOMEN AGED 25-49, DEPENDING ON WHETHER THEY HAVE CHILDREN (UNDER 12), 2010

| | Women | | | Men | | |
|---------------------|------------------|---------------|--------------|------------------|---------------|------------|
| | Without Children | With Children | Gap | Without Children | With Children | Gap |
| Top Three | | | | | | |
| Slovenia | 83.0 | 84.9 | 1.9 | 81.9 | 94.1 | 12.2 |
| Portugal | 76.5 | 74.6 | -1.9 | 79.8 | 91.2 | 11.5 |
| Lithuania | 78.2 | 74.9 | -3.2 | 67.1 | 80.2 | 13.1 |
| EU-27 | 76.8 | 64.7 | -12.1 | 81.0 | 89.7 | 8.7 |
| Ireland | 76.0 | 57.2 | -18.8 | 71.2 | 80.0 | 8.8 |
| Bottom Three | | | | | | |
| Czech Republic | 86.0 | 54.4 | -31.6 | 88.6 | 95.5 | 6.9 |
| Hungary | 78.2 | 49.3 | -28.8 | 77.1 | 84.5 | 7.5 |
| Slovakia | 80.4 | 53.7 | -26.7 | 78.4 | 89.4 | 11.0 |

Source: Eurostat, European Labour Force Survey, annual averages

8. The Commission’s Annual Report also measures inactivity and part-time work among women across the EU due to the lack of care services for children and other dependent persons, as a percentage of the total female population having care responsibilities. In 2010, the EU-27 average was recorded as 28.3 per cent. The corresponding figure for Ireland in 2010 was 49.1 per cent with only four Member States recording a higher percentage.

9. The European Commission's *A Women's Charter*, launched in March 2010, and its *Strategy for Equality between Women and Men 2010-2015* both have equality in the labour market and equal economic independence for women and men as priority areas for action. The reconciliation of work, family and private life is seen as an essential component in enabling women to achieve equality in the labour market. The Commission Strategy recognises that women continue to shoulder a disproportionate level of family and domestic responsibilities, which may limit career progression for women. In its Strategy, the Commission commits, as one of its key areas for action, to

“assess remaining gaps in entitlement to family-related leave, notably paternity leave and carers’ leave, and the options for addressing them”.

10. A proposal by the European Commission for an amendment to Directive 92/85/EEC to increase the statutory provision of maternity leave in the European Union from 14 weeks to 18 weeks has been under discussion at a Council Working Group for some time. It is worth noting that Irish provision in relation to maternity leave already exceeds the provisions in the European Commission proposal. Women in Ireland can currently avail of up to 42 weeks maternity leave of which 26 weeks attracts a payment and they may opt to take up to 16 weeks of additional unpaid leave for each confinement.
11. The European Commission proposal is subject to the co-decision of the European Parliament, which voted in October 2010 to extend the provisions for maternity leave to 20 weeks and to introduce paternity leave of 2 weeks, both on full pay. These proposed amendments represent a significant extension of the proposals previously considered at EU level. The issue now falls to be discussed again by the Council of Ministers.
12. During the Polish Presidency of the EU in 2011, an Informal Council was held in Cracow, Poland and the proposed Directive was discussed in detail. Presentations were also made by ETUC and BUSINESS EUROPE on the proposals. Ireland's position, in line with many other Member States, is that the European Parliament's amendments are inappropriate in the current climate of austerity.
13. As previously mentioned in Chapter 2, the Commission had also proposed the extension of maternity cover to self-employed women and assisting spouses. *Council Directive 2010/41/EU on the application of the principle of equal treatment between women and men engaged in an activity in a self-employed capacity and repealing Council Directive 86/613/EEC* was published on 7 July 2010. It provides for 14 weeks maternity leave for female self-employed workers and assisting spouses. It was considered that immediate implementation of the Directive would introduce discriminatory practices into the Irish social insurance system with some spouses/life partners excluded depending on what status they held in relation to the business. The Department of Social Protection sought, and was granted, additional time to transpose the Directive so that the wider issues can be considered and the legislation amended as required. Ireland now has an extension until August 2014 to transpose the Directive.

ACTIONS 2011/2012

14. The following actions have been reported by Government Departments and Agencies during 2011 and 2012:

14.1 EU Developments

As mentioned previously, *Council Directive 2010/18/EU* (Parental Leave Directive) was published in March 2010 and was transposed by Ireland following an agreed extension to the time period in mid 2013.

14.2 Equality Authority

- In 2011, the Equality Authority published a report *‘Workplace Equality in the Recession?’*²³ which examined the incidence and impact of the economic recession on workplace equality and equality policies. The study draws on data from the National Workplace Survey 2009 and the results can be compared with those of a similar study carried out in 2003. The study found that,

²³ Equality Authority and the ESRI: *‘Workplace Equality in the Recession? The Incidence and Impact of Equality Policies and Flexible Working’*. Helen Russell and Frances McGinnity (2011), .

between 2003 and 2009, there was a marked increase in the proportion of companies with equality policies and flexible working arrangements in place, particularly in the private sector. In 2009, some 84 per cent of employees were working in an organisation with a formal equality policy, compared with 75 per cent of employees in 2003. The study also found that the adoption by companies of a formal equality policy impacts positively on their employees' perceptions of workplace fairness, on workers' well-being and on organisational outcomes, including higher levels of organisational commitment and output innovation.

- The study also looked at four flexible working arrangements: flexible working hours, including flexitime; part-time work; working from home and job-sharing. The report found that in 2009, 30 per cent of employees worked flexible hours, including flexitime, and 25 per cent worked part-time. The variation between genders within these statistics is worth noting. The percentage of women and men, who worked flexible hours, including flexitime, in 2009, was not too dissimilar at 31.8 per cent for women and 26.5 per cent for men.
- However, the number of women who availed of part-time work at 38.9 per cent was more than treble the number of men at just 12.2 per cent. Approximately 12 per cent regularly worked from home during normal working hours, and 9 per cent were job-sharing. This represents a marked increase since 2003. Again there are gender variations to be found within these figures. The number of men involved in home working (14.2 per cent) is higher than the number of women (10.6 per cent). The study found that 'home working' was much more likely in professional or managerial jobs than in other sectors which suggests that 'home working' is a feature of 'high end', high skilled jobs. Conversely, the number of women availing of job-sharing (11.8 per cent) was higher than the number of men (6.8 per cent). The study found that job-sharing is more typical of jobs in hospitality and in the public sector and was most commonly available for associate professional and technical workers and clerical officers. The study also found that the availability of more flexible working arrangements in an organisation is associated with higher job satisfaction and increased output innovation.
- Flexible working arrangements were found to have mixed effects for participants, for example:
 - Part-time work reduces work-life conflict and work pressure significantly, even accounting for other factors.
 - Part-time workers and job-sharers tend to have lower earnings and lower autonomy compared to others with the same education and work experience.
 - Those who work from home during normal working hours have higher work-life conflict and work pressure, though they also have higher job autonomy and earnings.
- Thus it can be said that not all flexible working arrangements promote work-life balance, and those that do may be associated with trade-offs in terms of rewards and autonomy.

Objective 8-A

To improve the health status of women in Ireland through gender focused policies

CONTEXT

15. The Women's Health Council had actively fostered the development of health policy to maximise health for women in Ireland and to foster gender-focused health policies. Following the reorganisation of some of the State Agencies in 2009, the Council was subsumed into the Department of Health and Children on 1st October 2009. During 2011 and 2012, the Health Service Executive has actively engaged with the National Women's Council of Ireland to mainstream gender in the health services (further detail can be found overleaf).

ACTIONS 2011/2012

16. The following actions have been reported by the Health Service Executive in collaboration with the National Women's Council of Ireland (NWCI) to mainstream gender in the health services during 2011 and 2012:
- The NWCI received funding in 2011 from the HSE Health Promotion budget for a collaborative project with the HSE to produce a template for gender mainstreaming in the Irish health system.
 - An independent consultant, Dr. Jane Pillinger, was recruited by the NWCI in early 2011 to start work on the framework document and in particular to consult with a range of stakeholders on the issues. The draft report was examined by the HSE Steering Committee in November 2011.
 - The report has drawn on approaches taken in other countries such as Canada, Sweden, the UK and Northern Ireland. It contains a summary of consultations carried out during 2011 with key stakeholders identified by the HSE Steering Committee. It reviews existing commitments that the Irish State has made in relation to gender mainstreaming. The document identifies how the health care system can embrace the principles of human rights, equality, respect and dignity and sets out clear mechanisms and approaches to be adopted in the implementation of a gender mainstreaming strategy. It also provides practical advice on implementation.
 - A Women's Health and Human Rights Worker joined the NWCI in September 2011. She worked closely with the HSE gender mainstreaming Steering Committee to advance the mainstreaming strategy. During the final quarter of 2011, this officer met with some of the key stakeholders in health, both statutory and non-statutory, and also sought to engage parliamentarians on the importance of gender mainstreaming in the healthcare sector. She also provides ongoing support to NWCI members with a focus on health.
 - The ensuing Report of the HSE Gender Mainstreaming Steering Group '*Equal but Different: A framework for integrating gender equality in Health Service Executive Policy, Planning and Service Delivery*' was launched by the Minister of State with responsibility for Equality, Ms. Kathleen Lynch, T.D., in November 2012. An implementation plan was developed to implement key recommendations from the Report during 2013. The main actions to be rolled out include:
 1. To translate the framework into a HSE Gender Mainstreaming policy;
 2. To roll out two Gender Mainstreaming pilot projects in two health care settings (including in primary care; and
 3. To develop a two-day Gender Mainstreaming training for trainers programme that will be delivered to HSE staff from Quarter 4/2014.

Objective 8-B

To improve the physical health status of women in Ireland

CONTEXT

17. Education and awareness raising about health and prevention strategies, fitness, good diet, taking part in fitness and sports programmes and mass sports events e.g. women's mini marathon.

ACTIONS 2011/2012

18. The following actions have been reported by Government Departments and Agencies during 2011 and 2012:

18.1 HSE

Elder Abuse

- A dedicated Elder Abuse Service has been established in the HSE which responds to allegations of elder abuse, including referrals made concerning women who are generally accepted to be at greater risk of suffering from abuse. The HSE also publishes a report on Elder Abuse Services each year. This outlines the number of cases of elder abuse reported to the HSE, a description of

the services provided by the HSE to help older people, along with details of service developments. According to the Report for 2012, a total of 2,460 referrals were made to the service during 2012, an increase of 7 per cent on data for 2011. 62 per cent of these referrals related to women, the Report notes that this is consistent with previous years.

- The Report for 2012 also notes that in 2011 the National Steering Committee on Elder Abuse initiated a review of the HSE Elder Abuse Policy. The review was finalised in 2012. The key changes to the policy are summarised below:
 - Clearer roles and responsibilities set out for senior managers, line managers and all staff;
 - Enhanced procedures for staff on receiving and responding to allegations, suspicions or evidence of abuse or neglect;
 - Updated procedure for alleged abuse in designated centres for older people and HIQA notifications;
 - Guidelines on when to notify An Garda Síochána; and
 - Provision for elder abuse cases being managed by staff other than Senior Case Workers to be included in national elder abuse data returns.

18.2 Department of Health

National Positive Ageing Strategy

- Work is continuing on the development of a National Positive Ageing Strategy which will impact on the lives of all people, including women, as they age. The completion and implementation of the Strategy is contained as a commitment in the Programme for Government 2011-2016. It is expected that the Strategy will be published early in 2013.

Improve cancer screening and services for women

- The National Cancer Control Programme (NCCP) has established 8 symptomatic breast centres (with one satellite centre). Breast cancer diagnostic and surgical services are now delivered in the following major teaching hospitals:
 - Cork University Hospital
 - Waterford Regional Hospital
 - Galway University Hospital (+ attached Letterkenny General Hospital satellite centre)
 - Limerick Regional Hospital
 - Mater Hospital, Dublin
 - Beaumont Hospital, Dublin
 - St. James's Hospital, Dublin
 - St. Vincent's Hospital, Dublin
- All patients with any breast symptom are referred to and managed at one of these 8 (+1) centres.
- General practitioners have been issued with referral guidelines and with standardised referral forms. Most patient referrals are now made via these standardised forms. GPs have also been provided with the option to refer patients electronically through their own practice management software systems. Using the electronic referral format, the GP receives an automated acknowledgement of the referral from the specialist centre and a clinical response. GPs receive a clinical response within 5 working days. Education programmes have been put in place for GPs and primary care nurses. Guidelines on the management of breast pain have also been issued to GPs.
- The Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA – the national standards agency) has set standards for the performance of the specialist centres (e.g. around access and quality of care – urgent patients are seen within two weeks of the referral). These standards are monitored and monthly performance reports are provided to the NCCP. In turn, performance statistics are submitted by the NCCP for each centre to HIQA where they are published and open to public scrutiny. A target of 95 per cent is set against performance criteria.

- There are approximately 2,700 breast cancers diagnosed in Ireland each year. Each of the specialist centres serves a population of 500,000. Each centre diagnoses a critical number of patients to justify its specialist designation.
- Triple assessment is provided to patients on their first appointment. The NCCP has developed a Programmatic approach to the delivery of radiotherapy services. It has also opened two new centres in Dublin (in Beaumont and St James's Hospitals).

BreastCheck

- BreastCheck was established in 1998 as a specialist agency to provide Ireland's first quality assured, population-based breast screening programme for women aged 50 to 64. The aim of BreastCheck is to detect breast cancer at the earliest possible stage.
- Breast screening commenced in the South and West in 2007. By October 2009, BreastCheck had begun screening in all remaining counties in these areas. BreastCheck completed its national expansion in 2011. Between February 2000 (when BreastCheck first began screening) and the end of November 2011, the programme has provided 826,210 mammograms to 368,851 women and has detected 5,071 cancers. A total of 128,870 women were screened by BreastCheck during 2012.

CervicalCheck

- A successful National Cervical Screening Programme has the potential to cut current incidence rates from cervical cancer by up to 80% in Ireland. The NCSS launched CervicalCheck – The National Cervical Screening Programme on 01 September 2008 and provides free smear tests to women aged 25 to 60.
- CervicalCheck became available to over 1.1 million women aged 25 to 60 on 1 September 2008.
- In September 2011, CervicalCheck completed its first three year screening round. Since the launch of the programme in September 2008 to the end of August 2011, almost 950,000 smear tests have been processed and more than 720,000 eligible women aged 25-60 have had at least one free CervicalCheck smear test.
- In 2012, 323,961 women received at least one smear test with CervicalCheck. In May 2012, CervicalCheck established an electronic referral system for colposcopy services and introduced HPV testing post treatment to reduce unnecessary testing of women.

BowelScreen

- BowelScreen, the national colorectal screening programme commenced in late 2012. The programme aims to reduce mortality from colorectal cancer in men and women aged 55-74. It will be implemented on a phased basis starting with people aged 60-69, who will be offered a free home test bowel screen every two years. Colorectal cancer is the second most commonly diagnosed cancer in Ireland, with over 2,000 cases each year and is the second most fatal cancer. The number of new cases is expected to increase significantly over the next ten years, mainly due to an increasing and ageing population.

Study of cancer care for older women

TReat Study 2011

- Subject recruitment and interviewing has been completed in the TReat Study of cancer care for older women. In-depth interviews were conducted with twenty-nine Cancer Nurse Specialists and with fifteen consultants treating women with cancer in twenty-four hospitals, nationally. In-depth interviews were also conducted with thirty-eight patients older and younger than 65 years of age, diagnosed with and being treated for breast, colon and ovarian cancer. Data analysis and interpretation is ongoing. The results were presented at two conferences in 2011.
 - CARDI International Conference about population ageing, "Ageing Globally, Ageing Locally", Dublin, November, 2011

- *Age as a factor in cancer treatment decisions – A qualitative study among healthcare professionals.*
- 3rd National conference on Population-based cancer research in Ireland. Dublin, November, 2011
 - *Does age effect cancer treatment decisions? A qualitative study among healthcare professionals.*
- An analysis of the national survey of consultants treating women with cancer has been completed and the manuscript is in preparation with a view to publication by the end of 2013.

Objective 8-C
To improve the reproductive and sexual health status of women in Ireland

CONTEXT

19. Since its establishment in 2001, the HSE Crisis Pregnancy Programme (formerly the Crisis Pregnancy Agency) has worked closely with Government Departments and Agencies to reduce the incidence of crisis pregnancy in Ireland.
20. Statistics, published by the UK Department of Health in May 2012, show that the numbers of women who gave an Irish address when obtaining an abortion in England and Wales fell from 6,673 in 2001 to 4,149 in 2011. The HSE Crisis Pregnancy Programme monitors the number of women travelling from Ireland for abortion annually and has found that the Netherlands is the only other country to which women resident in Ireland travel in significant numbers to access abortion services. Accordingly there appears to be quite a significant decrease in the number of women from Ireland who are availing of abortion as an outcome of a crisis pregnancy in the UK and the Netherlands. The estimated abortion rate (number of abortions per 1,000 women aged 15-44) has fallen from 7.5 in 2001 to 4.1 in 2011. (UK and NL figures)

ACTIONS 2011/2012

21. The following actions have been reported by Government Departments and Agencies during 2011 and 2012:

21.1 HSE Crisis Pregnancy Programme

- The Crisis Pregnancy Agency was integrated into the Health Service Executive on 1st January 2010. (The Health (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2009 (Commencement (No. 3) Order 2009). The Agency, now called the HSE Crisis Pregnancy Programme, is situated within the Integrated Services Directorate of the HSE as a national programme. The HSE Crisis Pregnancy Programme will function as a Unit within the HSE's Public Health Directorate in order to conclude its current Strategy.

Access to information on fertility, contraception and sexual health matters

- The HSE Crisis Pregnancy Programme (CPP) has developed a range of information resources on fertility, contraception and sexual health matters for women throughout their life-course.

Emergency Contraception

- In February 2011, the licence of a brand of emergency contraception available in Ireland was changed from prescription only to over the counter. The Crisis Pregnancy Programme viewed this development as an opportunity to work with stakeholders to unlock the potential of Emergency Hormonal Contraception (EHC) to reduce unplanned pregnancies in Ireland.
- As a result, in 2012, the CPP and the Irish Pharmacy Union launched a health education campaign on Emergency Contraception (EC), promoting its availability in pharmacies and the role of pharmacists in giving sexual health advice and information to the public. Over 1,600 community pharmacists received promotional materials, and the campaign was supported by poster advertisements in colleges, pubs and clubs. The campaign encourages the early use of EC. Over 100,000 Emergency Contraceptive leaflets, window stickers and posters were disseminated

in 2012 while the dedicated Emergency Contraception section on www.Thinkcontraception.ie also received approximately 20,000 page views.

Adolescent Women

- B4udecide.ie is an education initiative that aims to encourage young people (aged 14 to 16) to make healthy, responsible decisions about relationships and sexual health. It comprises a website and resource materials for teachers and youth workers. In 2011, there were over 67,000 visits to the b4udecide.ie website, with a further 17,000 visits in 2012.
- In 2011 and 2012, the Crisis Pregnancy Programme attended a number of events to showcase the b4udecide.ie education initiative, including the Young Social Innovators, Dáil na nÓg and Youth Advocate Programme (YAP) events.
- Relevant lesson plans for youth workers were published and disseminated in 2011 to youth work settings via the National Youth Council of Ireland (NYCI). In addition, the Crisis Pregnancy Programme partnered with the NYCI to roll out training and, at the end of 2011, commenced an evaluation of the education initiative in youth work settings nationwide, which was progressed during 2012.

Women in Early Adulthood

- The ‘Think Contraception’ Campaign (aimed at women and men aged 18-24 primarily, with women and men aged 25-30 as a secondary target group) contains information on fertility, contraception and sexual health. The campaign is well recognised among the target audience and has maintained high awareness levels of approx. 80% since 2002.
- In 2011, the website www.thinkcontraception.ie received over 76,000 visits, with a further 73,000 visits during 2012. The campaign’s Facebook page received approximately 7,000 ‘likes’ in 2012.
- Campaigns to distribute ‘Think Contraception Protection Packs’ continued at the Oxegen music festival, and in colleges, universities, and outside pubs and night clubs and about 100,000 were distributed during 2012.
- In 2011, 170,000 ‘Think Contraception’ leaflets were disseminated, while a further 200,000 were distributed during 2012. This included a large scale dissemination of ‘Think Contraception’ sexual health leaflets to pharmacists nationwide (87,000 leaflets to display in pharmacies but, primarily, for use by pharmacists during emergency contraception consultations as a means of discussing primary methods of contraception with women of all ages).
- A new phase of the Think Contraception campaign was launched in 2012, using TV sponsorships, on-the-street promotion, poster and digital advertising and social media connections to promote its key message to promote the use of condoms to avoid the risk of STIs or unplanned pregnancy.

Women aged 35-55

- ‘Contraception 35-55’ is a leaflet on contraception, fertility and sexual health information aimed at women between the ages of 35 and 55. During 2011, large scale dissemination of this leaflet took place through pharmacies, GP surgeries and hospitals, with approximately 8,000 leaflets distributed to pharmacies alone, while a further 16,000 were distributed in 2012.

Developing a framework to ensure equity of access to contraception services for women

- The HSE Crisis Pregnancy Programme continues to strategically invest in research to implement evidence informed approaches to communications and information campaigns, policy and service provision ‘The Irish Contraception and Crisis Pregnancy Study 2’, initiated to examine attitudes, knowledge and experiences of sexual risk-taking and crisis pregnancy was published

in 2012²⁴. It facilitates comparison with earlier data collected in 2003 and 2005 and is informing the work of the CPP in relation to information and service provision.

- During 2011 and 2012, the HSE Crisis Pregnancy Programme (CCP) continued to work with the Irish College of General Practitioners (ICGP) to fund GP training in Long Acting Reversible Contraception (LARC). The three year pilot programme (2008-2010) to develop standards was evaluated and in 2011 the ICGP began to roll out the training nationally.

21.2 Department of Education and Skills and HSE Crisis Pregnancy Programme

Relationships and Sexuality Education Resources

- The Department of Education and Skills and the HSE Crisis Pregnancy Programme have collaborated for a number of years to improve implementation of Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE). Students at post-primary level are given a clear understanding of the male and female reproductive systems and of the development stages from conception to birth. Professional development for teachers is provided on an ongoing basis. In the course of the school year 2011/12 approximately 5,526 teachers engaged with the SPHE support service, of whom, 406 teachers attended in-service training that was specifically focused on the delivery of Relationships and Sexuality Education.
- During 2011 and 2012, the TRUST pack, a relationships and sexuality education resource for senior cycle students in post primary schools, comprising a DVD and lessons on human reproduction and fertility, contraceptive methods, unplanned pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections continued to be rolled out nationwide.

21.3 HSE Crisis Pregnancy Programme

Ensuring that information and counselling services are available in cases of crisis pregnancy

- The 'Positive Options' campaign developed by the HSE Crisis Pregnancy Programme promotes the availability of free, non-judgemental counselling services and has been operational since 2003. The campaign printed material was re-designed in 2012, including its poster, leaflet and wallet card. It continues to receive about 70,000 requests for information annually, while material is also disseminated through crisis pregnancy counselling services, GP surgeries and colleges and at the Women's Mini Marathon.

Increasing awareness of post-abortion medical check-ups and counselling

- The Abortion Aftercare campaign, developed by the HSE Crisis Pregnancy Programme, aims to raise awareness of the availability of free State-funded post-abortion medical check-up and counselling services.
- In 2011, services were advertised through print and online media and through the Abortion Aftercare leaflet, directing over 11,000 visits to the website www.abortionaftercare.ie, while a further 8,000 visits to the website were made in 2012. Approximately 15,000 Abortion Aftercare leaflets were distributed primarily to GPs nationwide through hand delivery service. Research in the end of 2011, showed that approximately 30% of women said that they were aware of free post-abortion services, which is very positive considering the small size of the campaign.

Improving access to and delivery of Crisis Pregnancy Counselling and Post-Abortion Medical and Counselling Services nationally

- In 2011, over €3.2 million in funding was allocated to post-termination counselling and medical check-ups by the HSE Crisis Pregnancy Programme, with a further €3.1 million allocated in 2012. This funding provided for the delivery of free, non-judgemental counselling through 15 service providers operating at 50 locations throughout Ireland.
- Part of this funding was channelled specifically to improve standards through training and supervision and for the ongoing delivery of the Crisis Pregnancy Counselling Skills Certificate Course with the National University of Ireland, Maynooth (NUIM). In addition, in 2011, the first in a series of Masterclasses for health professionals, whose work clients may experience a crisis

²⁴ Irish Contraception and Crisis Pregnancy Study 2010

pregnancy was delivered by NUIM and over 90 Counsellors/Social Workers and volunteers working in State funded Crisis Pregnancy Counselling Services had completed the NUIM Certificate Course by the end of 2012. The Course has been externally evaluated and is well regarded.

21.4 HSE Obstetrics and Gynaecology Programme Update

- Work has commenced on the implementation of the objectives of the HSE's National Programme on Obstetrics and Gynaecology. These include:
 - the implementation of the miscarriage misdiagnosis report in the 19 maternity units, such as the provision of training for all disciplines and the purchase of new ultrasound machines.
 - the development and dissemination of national guidelines. The guidelines published in 2011 by the programme were: the *Delivery after previous caesarean section*; *Investigation and management of late fetal intrauterine death and stillbirth*; *Diagnosis and management of pre-eclampsia and eclampsia*; and *Obesity and pregnancy*.
 - in 2012, a significant number of guidelines were published by the programme including: *Intrapartum Fetal Heart Rate Monitoring*; *Management of Early Pregnancy Miscarriage*; *HIV and Pregnancy*; *National Infant Feeding Policy for Maternity and Neonatal Services*; and *Clinical Practice Guidelines for Antenatal routine enquiry regarding violence in the home*
- The "Whatsupmum.ie" website has been developed in conjunction with the HSE to bring together advice and support from healthcare professionals to new and expectant families. The website allows pregnant women and new parents to access expert advice from midwives, gynaecologists, paediatricians and other healthcare professionals during their pregnancy and while caring for their newborn.

Objective 8-D

To improve the mental health status of women in Ireland

CONTEXT

22. Following the publication of "A Vision for Change" by the Mental Health Commission, an independent Monitoring Group was established to review progress on its implementation. The structure of the Strategy addresses the needs of both women and men collectively with some short reference to gender specific issues such as perinatal mental health. The reports of the independent Monitoring Group to date have not made mention of gender specific initiatives.
23. 'A Vision for Change' recognises that "...women are at peak risk of mental illness in the perinatal period, contrary to commonly held beliefs that this is a wholly healthy time in a woman's life". The difficulty of prescribing medication for women during pregnancy can also have a negative impact on treating mental illness during pregnancy. The Report also notes that in 2003 "the rate of deliberate self-harm for women was 241 per 100,000 and for men was 177 per 100,000", while it is estimated that there is an annual incidence of 10 cases of anorexia nervosa per 100,000 population for females compared with 0.5 for males.
24. The CSO publication 'Women and Men in Ireland 2011' notes that:
 - In 2009, the rate of admission to psychiatric units for men was 456.0 per 100,000, compared with a slightly lower rate of 449.8 per 100,000 for women.
 - The male rate of admission for schizophrenia was over 60 per cent higher than the female rate while the female rate of admission for depressive disorders was over one third higher than the male rate.

- The rate of male deaths due to suicide (17 per 100,000) was over four times the female rate.
25. These statistics suggest that there are significant gender differences in the types of mental illness experienced by women and men and it follows that the treatment plans and programmes must also be tailored to their differing gender specific needs.

ACTIONS 2011/2012

26. The following actions have been reported by Government Departments and Agencies during 2011 and 2012. However none specifically target women.

26.1 HSE

During 2011 and 2012, the HSE continued to deliver its two mental health awareness campaigns aimed at the general population www.yourmentalhealth.ie and at young people www.letsomeoneknow.ie. Budget 2012 provided a special allocation of €35m for mental health in line with the Programme for Government. Funding from this special allocation is being used primarily to

- strengthen Community Mental Health Teams in both Adult and Children's mental health services;
- improve access to psychological therapies and counselling services in primary care;
- implement suicide prevention strategies in line with *Reach Out* – the National Strategy for Action on Suicide Prevention; and
- facilitate the re-location of mental health service users from institutional care to more independent living arrangements in their communities in line with *A Vision for Change*.

Funding from the special allocation for mental health provided in Budget 2012 was also used to enable the HSE to work closely with the Irish College of General Practitioners to advance initiatives on the vital role played by Primary Care in mental healthcare in Ireland. These include a *Distance Learning Programme for GPs* which is a ten module distance learning programme for GPs and Primary Care workers.

Specialist mental health services to individuals with more serious emotional problems are provided by Consultant-led Mental Health Teams.

26.2 Department of Education and Skills

Mental Health in the SPHE Programme in Schools

- During 2011, an interdepartmental committee involving the National Office for Suicide Prevention, the National Educational Psychological Service, the HSE, and the education sector was tasked to develop a framework for schools on promoting positive mental health. A *Framework for Junior Cycle* was launched in October 2012. The Framework is underpinned by eight principles, one of which is *Well-Being*, which involves contributing to the student's physical, mental, emotional and social well-being and resilience. *Staying Well* and *Managing Myself* are two of the six key skills embedded in the Framework. A new short 100 hour course is currently being developed by the NCCA and this will be made available to schools as part of the new Framework. In addition, schools will be able to provide their students with formal certification to recognise their achievements in this area.
- New Guidelines to provide practical guidance on how post-primary schools can promote mental health and well-being and school connectedness in an integrated way are due to be published by the Department of Education and Skills early in 2013. The Report of the Anti-Bullying Working Group is also due to be presented to the Minister for Education and Skills in January 2013.

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| Objective 8-E To promote healthy lifestyles for the women of Ireland |
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CONTEXT

27. This objective links a healthy lifestyle with the achievement of optimal health.

ACTIONS 2011/2012

28. The following actions have been reported by Government Departments and Agencies during 2011 and 2012:

28.1 HSE and/or Safefood Promoting Healthy Eating

- Increasing access to healthier food choices, particularly for less well off women and women in the workplace, is still being addressed by the HSE “*Healthy Food for All*” campaign in partnership with Crosscare²⁵. The core work of Healthy Food for All is funded by the Department of Social Protection, the HSE, and Safefood. The ‘*Healthy Food for All*’ campaign has three key objectives:
 - To support capacity and good practice for Community Food Initiatives which increase access to and availability of healthy food for low income groups.
 - To advocate for and support the development of an improved school food framework.
 - To promote a greater understanding of food poverty across all aspects of public policy.
- ‘*Healthy Food for All*’ completed the final year of its three year Development Plan in 2010. An independent evaluation found that the campaign had been successful in raising awareness of food poverty issues and that the campaign had made progress in developing the links between policy and practice, due to their activities in the community and at national level. The report concluded that there was a clear rationale for a singular focus on food poverty and for the continued existence of the HFfA. A new Development Plan 2011-2013 was prepared during 2011 and a Board of Management has been established.
- In September 2012, Healthy Food for All published *A Good Practice Guide for Breakfast Clubs*. The Guide was launched by the Minister for Social Protection, Ms. Joan Burton, T.D. It provides information on setting up and running a breakfast club.
- ‘*The Good Practice Guide for Community Food Initiatives*’ was officially launched in late 2010. Healthy Food for All continued to disseminate the guide during 2011 through existing community infrastructure where possible, including Family Resource Centres, Community Dieticians, Integrated Development Companies, Healthy Living Centres and various rural and community networks.
- The all-island Demonstration Programme of Community Food Initiatives 2010-2012 promoted greater access and availability of healthy food in low income areas using a community development approach. The programme consisted of seven projects across the island of Ireland, all of which received intensive support from a Development Worker. The Demonstration Programme, funded by Safefood, completed the third of its three year programme in 2012.
- In March 2011, the Irish Universities Nutrition Alliance (IUNA) launched the results of the National Adult Nutrition Survey. The survey found that almost a quarter of all adults aged 18 to 64 are obese and that 37 per cent of all adults in the same age bracket are classified as overweight. The survey also found that Irish adults consume less than the World Health Organisation (WHO) recommended intake of fruit and vegetables. A total of 1,500 adults took

²⁵ In 2012, Healthy Food for All established itself as an independent company with charitable status.

part in the survey which is the third in a series of such studies funded by the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food.

- In May 2011, Safefood launched the ‘Stop the Spread’ campaign. This is a two-year all-island initiative which comprises television and radio advertising as well as a campaign pledge. Safefood is asking all adults on the island of Ireland to check whether their waist size indicates that they are carrying excess weight. The campaign is also supported by pharmacies which distributed free measuring tapes. Related research released in January 2012, shows that despite two out of three adults on the island of Ireland being overweight, only 40 per cent of adults classify themselves as such and therefore thousands of women and men are failing to recognise that they are overweight and therefore at increased risk of Type 2 diabetes, heart disease and some cancers. Only one in four of the population (23 per cent) told their partners that they needed to lose weight, with women more likely to do this than men. Building on the success of the campaign to date, pharmacists and GPs continue to support the initiative.
- The National Obesity Campaign is an Island of Ireland Campaign in Partnership with Safefood which established the All Island Obesity Action Forum, which brings together a wide range of stakeholders from over 31 organisations from both the areas of food and physical activity. The Forum holds bi-annual workshops including, in 2011 and 2012 workshops which looked at:
 - June 2011: Weigh to Men’s Health – this event held in Belfast focused on excess weight as a men’s health issue which needs to be recognised both by men and by health practitioners.
 - November 2011: Counting up the pounds – the economic cost of obesity – this workshop held in Dublin aimed to highlight existing and forthcoming data on the economic cost of obesity. ,
 - June 2012: Childhood Obesity – this workshop held in Belfast aimed to highlight childhood obesity as an important area for the promotion of healthy eating and physical activity. It looked at how best to approach childhood obesity at a community level.
 - November 2012: Overweight and Obesity in Practice – this workshop held in Dublin discussed the important role healthcare professionals play in the fight against overweight and obesity, looking at their awareness and comfort in raising the issue with patients, their role in normalising discussion and management, and in reducing the stigma associated with overweight and obesity. The event also launched new research findings on healthcare professionals’ attitude to overweight and obesity, undertaken by University of Ulster and the NUI Galway.
- In November 2012, *The Cost of Overweight and Obesity on the Island of Ireland* was published. This Report, funded by Safefood and conducted by University College Cork (UCC), estimated the annual cost of overweight and obesity in the Republic of Ireland (RoI) at €1.13 billion. Of this figure, 35 per cent of total costs (€398 million) represented direct healthcare costs, i.e. hospital in-patient or out-patient care; GP and drug costs. However, two thirds (65 per cent) of the economic costs were indirect costs in reduced or lost productivity and absenteeism which amounted to €728 million annually. UCC found that overweight and obesity accounted for 2.7 per cent of total health expenditure in the RoI. The Report also found that the prevalence of obesity in 18-64 year olds in the RoI has increased significantly between 1990 and 2011, from 8 per cent to 26 per cent in men, and from 13 per cent to 21 per cent in women.

28.2 HSE Promotion of Alcohol Awareness

- The HSE ran a public information campaign on underage drinking, www.yourdrinking.ie. This campaign began in 2008 and continued in 2011 and 2012, to increase awareness about the extent of underage drinking, the ease of access which young people have to alcohol and the benefits in delaying the age at which young people start to drink.
- From 1st December 2011, the HSE began screening people in four hospital emergency departments for harmful and hazardous drinking patterns. If people attending the hospital have hazardous drinking patterns they will be offered brief advice and information on services

available in their locality. The aim of the initiative is to intervene at an early stage and reduce the number of people progressing to alcohol dependence. International evidence has shown that there are great benefits to be had from this type of prevention programme.

- The HSE has also produced a booklet “*Festival Care – Guidelines on the Management of Alcohol and its Related Harms at Festivals and Events*”. The “Festival Care” package aims to assist festival organisers or promoters to address the possible negative consequences that can arise from alcohol misuse by offering guidance on the management of alcohol and its related harms at events and providing a communication plan for events that focuses on issues such as personal safety and information to parents.

28.3 Department of Health

- The Report of the Steering Group on a National Substance Misuse Strategy was launched in February 2012. It recommended the further development of a coordinated approach to prevention and education interventions in relation to alcohol between all stakeholders in educational institutions (including third level); greater coordination of prevention activities at both national and local levels to target, among others, excessive drinking generally, and those who are pregnant or likely to become pregnant; and the ongoing development and monitoring of Social and Personal Health Education (SPHE) Programme in schools. In addition, the group recommended low-risk weekly guidelines of alcohol consumption for women; and that labels on alcohol products sold in Ireland should include the number of grams of alcohol per container, along with calorific content and health warnings in relation to consuming alcohol in pregnancy. Specific proposals based on the recommendations of the report are currently being developed.

28.4 HSE Smoking Cessation Supports

- Work commenced on the development of a HSE Tobacco Control Framework, to be delivered over a five year period. One specific action which relates to women and aims to “*Work towards the integration of services in all regions and prioritise areas of highest smoking prevalence i.e. lower socio economic areas, mental health and maternity settings when planning and delivering tobacco cessation services.*”
- In June 2011, the HSE launched a new Anti-Smoking Campaign, QUIT, aimed at encouraging smokers to quit. The campaign message is ‘1 in every 2 smokers will die of a tobacco related disease – Can you live with that? QUIT’. The campaign highlights the serious impact that smoking has not only on the smoker themselves but also on their friends, family and loved ones. The campaign also highlights the range of supports that are available to smokers. Research shows that quitters who use supports like the National Smokers’ Quitline, online help, smoking cessation services or medications are twice as likely to succeed. The HSE has developed a range of advertisement and information materials based on presenting the 1 in 2 statistic this includes a radio and television campaign. QUIT incorporates paid media (TV, radio, bus shelters, etc.), public relations, online and phone support, counselling and clinics, special events and promotions, all aimed at the core target audience of smokers aged 25-39. The campaign has shown marked and sustained increases in the numbers of people seeking help to quit.
- Smoking Cessation Services within the HSE offer a wide variety of services in different areas. Specialist Smoking Cessation Counsellors are trained to deliver these services on a full-time, part-time or sessional basis nationally. Health Promotion Departments within the HSE also offer an extensive programme of training that includes developing skills for healthcare practitioners to support people wishing to stop smoking. They also provide support to schools around the issue of smoking and substance misuse, and support to workplaces on developing smoking policies.
- The HSE funds the National Smokers Quitline which, in conjunction with the Irish Cancer Society, provides smoking cessation advice and a support service. This provides the public with access to a telephone support service from a trained smoking cessation counsellor. Referral to local smoking cessation services can also be arranged. A quitting booklet is offered and sent out to all callers who request it. There have also been a number of social marketing campaigns on smoking developed in Ireland over the past number of years.
- In June 2011, the European Commissioner for Health launched the ‘Ex-smokers are Unstoppable’ campaign. The campaign aims to help 25-34 year olds to quit or to continue to

stay away from tobacco and become “unstoppable” in their smoke-free lives. The campaign promotes the positive benefits of a life without tobacco; which include better health, better social interaction, more money and of course a better quality of life.

- When the second phase of the campaign was launched in September 2011, the Health Commissioner noted that over 500,000 smokers had already accessed the campaign’s social media pages across Europe and that over the three months between the launch of the two phases over 20,000 smokers were already actively using iCoach, the interactive smoking cessation tool. Phase two of the campaign consists of a comprehensive advertising campaign on the benefits of smoking cessation in all EU Member States, participation at sporting, consumer and health events and partnering with key employers to promote smoking cessation in the workplace.

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| Objective 9 To increase the number of women participating in Sport and Physical Activity in Ireland |
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CONTEXT

29. This objective envisages a holistic approach to women’s health by encouraging more involvement in sport and in mass participation events in order to improve women’s overall well being.

ACTIONS 2011/2012

30. The following actions have been reported by Government Departments and Agencies during 2011 and 2012:

30.1 HSE and/or Irish Sports Council Promotion of Physical Activity

- The HSE provide an information/resources service on nutrition & physical activity to schools, workplaces, community organisations, health centres, GPs and Pharmacies via Health Promotion Departments and HSE Distribution Service.
- Following the publication of the HSE’s national physical activity guidelines, which provide clear, concise and user-friendly guidance to support the public, professionals and policy makers in promoting physical activity across the population, in October 2011, the new Get Ireland Active website was launched. The aim of the website is to encourage people to become more physically active by creating awareness of the opportunities for physical activity at local, regional and national levels in Ireland. The website also contains information about the benefits of physical activity, how to get started, how to get motivated, etc.
- In November 2011, a new EU Health Literacy Survey was published. The results of the survey found that four out of ten people in Ireland have difficulty understanding information about health. Vulnerable groups such as those experiencing long term illness, financial hardship and those from lower socio-economic groups were seen to have the lowest levels of health literacy.

30.2 Irish Sports Council

- A ‘Women in Sport’ Review was carried out in 2011 and programmes are now evaluated on the basis of increased participation, close monitoring and evaluation and sustainability.
- The ‘Women in Sport’ networking/information sessions have been replaced by development seminars and workshops which provide a networking opportunity for women.
- The ‘Women in Sport’ funding scheme has been operational since 2005 and funds both National Governing Bodies (NGBs) and Local Sports Partnerships (LSPs).

- Increased level of participation by women in sports, as evidenced by the Irish Sports Monitor 2011 Annual Report, has been achieved through 'Fit for Life' running and meet and through train groups in other sports. These initiatives are operational on a year round basis. The Irish Sports Monitor 2011 shows that there were very significant increases in the levels of engagement with sport across active and social participation measures. This occurred most notably in relation to active participation in sport which recorded a rise from 34 per cent in 2009 to 46 per cent in 2011. This report also showed that 50.4 per cent of women are actively participating in physical activity.
- The 'Women in Sport Programme' is featured on a dedicated Facebook site. This allows for greater interaction between participants and sports providers. The 'Women in Sport' website has been replaced by social media in order to provide more realtime information and interaction with participants.
- A national network of Local Sports Partnerships has been developed. Through this network women are informed of events taking place in their area through newsletters and social media sites including the 'Women in Sport' Facebook page.
- 'Women in Sport' promotional material is made available to all bodies running 'Women in Sport' events. The brand is also reinforced on the social media sites.
- The funding for 'Women in Sport' initiatives has been ringfenced to assist sporting bodies to develop increased capacity to offer specific sporting opportunities to women. In 2012, targeted funding for special initiatives to attract/retain women's involvement in sport was just over €1 million. This was broken down into €635,000 for National Governing Bodies (NGBs), €270,000 for the Football Association of Ireland (FAI) and €120,000 for the Local Sports Partnerships (LSPs).
- According to the SPEAK Report 2011 an additional 22,390 female participants took part in 145 local Women in Sport (WIS) programmes. Forty-nine of these WIS programmes were new programmes started in 2011 leading to 5,965 women participating. The 2012 SPEAK Report shows an additional 29,543 female participants took part in 172 local WIS programmes. Thirty-seven of these WIS programmes were started in 2012 leading to 4,000 women participating.

Objective 10

To ensure the health and safety of pregnant and breast feeding women at work

ACTIONS 2011/2012

31. The following actions have taken place during 2011 and 2012:

31.1 European Union

- A proposal by the European Commission for a Directive to amend Directive 92/85/EEC on the introduction of measures to encourage improvements in the safety and health at work of pregnant workers and workers who have recently given birth or are breastfeeding was forwarded to the European Parliament in 2009.

31.2 HSE

- A National Breastfeeding Co-ordinator has been appointed within the HSE who will advocate for development of workplace breastfeeding policy and a campaign, launched in 2009 by the HSE Breastfeeding Strategy Implementation Committee (BSIC) aimed to increase breastfeeding rates in Ireland by two per cent a year.
- The HSE rolled out a campaign 'Breastfeeding Friendly' in 2011 pertaining to Breastfeeding to mark National Breastfeeding Week from 1-7 October 2011 and was replicated in 2012. The campaign aimed to portray breastfeeding when out and about as a normal, natural part of everyday life. The 'Breastfeeding Friendly' campaign sought to highlight that:

- Breastfeeding is the perfect way to feed children and also fits in with the demands of modern life;
 - Women should be supported to continue to breastfeed for as long as they wish;
 - We can all work together to encourage greater social acceptance of this important and natural practice when women are out and about.
- The theme for 2012 was ‘Good Health begins with Breastfeeding’ which focused on the importance of breastfeeding for the health of children and mothers. For mothers, the message was that breastfeeding helps to protect against ovarian and breast cancer as well as helping them to maintain a healthy weight.

31.3 ESRI Research on breastfeeding

- The ESRI *Perinatal Statistics Report* published annually, shows statistics on breastfeeding. Three editions, covering 2009 to 2011 incl. have been published since the last report on the NWS. They show that:
 - The percentage of babies exclusively breastfed on discharge from hospital continues to increase, from 45 per cent in 2009 to 47 per cent in 2011, an increase of 14 per cent over a decade.
 - Breastfeeding was found to be more common than artificial feeding when mothers were aged thirty years and older.
 - The presence of exclusive breastfeeding at discharge from hospital varied by geographic location with infants born to mothers in Dublin County, Kilkenny, Waterford reporting the highest rates of exclusive breastfeeding in the successive reports.
 - Mothers in a higher professional occupation recorded breastfeeding rates of over 62 per cent compared to the lowest rate for unemployed mothers of whom between 27 per cent and 30.8 per cent breastfed in the different reports.

31.4 HSE CPP/ Equality Authority

- Published in 2011, the HSE Crisis Pregnancy Programme/Equality Authority’s research on ‘*Pregnancy at Work*²⁶’ found that up to 30 per cent of the women surveyed had experienced unfair treatment during pregnancy. At its most extreme, unfair treatment included dismissal. This was reported by 5 per cent of women employed during pregnancy. The finding that 10 per cent of women surveyed reported loss of salary or denial of promotion suggests that prejudicial attitudes towards pregnancy and childcare responsibilities continue to be a factor limiting women’s career progression. This research took place before the economic downturn became very pronounced and the situation may have been aggravated since then.
- In 2011, the Equality Authority also published ‘*Pregnancy and Employment: A Literature Review*²⁷’. The report brings together evidence from a range of national and international sources on:
 - Pregnancy discrimination at work;
 - The health consequences of working during pregnancy; and
 - The impact of having children on women’s future careers and earnings.

31.5 IBEC/Equality Authority

- There is international evidence that women’s career progression is impacted negatively because of a lack of proactive support around their maternity leave period and upon their return to work. To address some of these difficulties and to ensure the process was a positive one for employee and employer alike, IBEC with the support of the Equality Authority developed a suite of proactive resources for employers on interaction with women pre and post-maternity leave.
- The toolkit has seven sections to address the key areas from the practical workplace structures like cover during maternity leave to more equality focused and best practice measures such as

²⁶ *Pregnancy at Work: A National Survey*, Helen Russell, Dorothy Watson and Joanne Banks.

²⁷ *Pregnancy and Employment: A Literature Review*, Helen Russell and Joanne Banks.

training for line managers, policies and procedures. This toolkit has been widely disseminated to employers at IBEC events and conferences.

- In addition, and partly in response to the *'Pregnancy at Work'* research referred to at 31.4 above, IBEC with the support of the Equality Authority began a project to develop best practice guidelines and a training module for managers on how to carry out a risk assessment and manage pregnant workers. The guidelines looked at:
 - the legal and compliance requirements for pregnant workers under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005, the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations (S.I. No. 299 of 2007) and the Maternity Protection Acts;
 - the methodology to carry out a general workplace pregnancy health and safety risk assessment;
 - the tools to carry out a person-specific pregnancy health and safety risk for the unique circumstances for an individual pregnant employee;
 - the culture to encourage employees to inform the employer of her pregnancy at an early stage so that she can be fully supported and protected;
 - the steps to take for a legal and managerial perspective to evaluate the options and implement the best outcome following risk assessment;
 - the interaction and conversations with the pregnant employee;
 - the role of the employer/manager in providing a supportive environment to employees during pregnancy and ensuring employees are aware of their full maternity and parental leave entitlements; and
 - the role of flexible working arrangements in managing pregnant employees and those returning from maternity leave.
- In 2012, with funding from the Equality Authority's Equality Mainstreaming Unit, IBEC, in conjunction with Retail Ireland, developed best practice guidelines for employers and a managers' training module on *'Managing the Health and Safety of Pregnant Employees in the Retail sector – Guidelines to Positively Manage and Support Pregnant Employees in your Retail Organisation'*. These guidelines contain advice on how best to manage pregnant employees and those returning from maternity leave in order to minimise health and safety/discriminatory risks for pregnant workers, particularly in the retail sector. The training module focuses on how to implement the guidelines.
- The guidelines and training module have been disseminated and promoted to employers at HR for a, IBEC events and networks. The guidelines and training module are available to IBEC member companies via the members' section of the IBEC website. They have also featured in IBEC HR communications to over 6,500 HR practitioners via the HR link and at IBEC's Annual Employment Law Conference in May 2012.

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| Objective 11 To protect women from bullying and harassment in the workplace |
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CONTEXT

32. Much had been written in recent years about the problem of workplace bullying which can be perpetrated against workers of both sexes, but where women are more frequently the victims. The Health and Safety Authority (HSA) published the *'Code of Practice for Employers and Employees on the Prevention and Resolution of Bullying at Work'* in May 2007.

33. The Equality Authority's Annual Report for 2010, which was published in July 2011, states that the Authority received 52 bullying queries and 100 harassment queries under the Employment Equality Acts during 2010 and in the same period received 17 harassment queries under the Equal Status Act. The Annual Reports of the Equality Tribunal also show that a number of cases of bullying and harassment are referred to and determined by the Equality Tribunal every year.

ACTIONS 2011/2012

34. The following actions were reported for 2011 and 2012.

34.1 Health and Safety Authority

- The Health and Safety Authority's Annual Report for 2010, published in June 2011, states that inspections of anti-bullying policies were undertaken during 2010 in 1,049 companies with more than 50 employees. Employers were found to have written records relating to bullying complaints in 33% of the workplaces inspected. Employers were found to meet requirements in relation to other key aspects of the Code of Practice in approximately 80% of cases.
- In its Annual Report for 2012, the HSA states that inspections of anti-bullying policies were undertaken during 2012 in 607 companies. The presence of an anti-bullying policy was confirmed in 87 per cent of these inspections. Where present, 91 per cent included a definition of bullying, as well as identifying investigation procedures and appeals mechanisms.

34.2 Equality Authority

- In June 2012, a revised Code of Practice for the prevention of harassment in the workplace was published. The Employment Equality Act 1998 (Code of Practice) (Harassment) Order 2012 was prepared by the Equality Authority after consultation with IBEC, ICTU and other relevant organisations representing equality interests. The revised Code aims to give practical guidance to employers, employers' organisations, trade unions and employers on:
 - What is meant by sexual harassment and harassment in the workplace;
 - How it may be prevented; and
 - What steps to take if it does occur to ensure that adequate procedures are readily available to deal with the problem and to prevent its recurrence.
- The revised Code thus seeks to promote the development and implementation of policies and procedures which establish working environments free of sexual harassment and harassment and in which the dignity of everyone is respected.
- Part 4 of the revised Code states that "*Employers should adopt, implement and monitor a comprehensive, effective and accessible policy on sexual harassment and harassment*".

Objective 12

To combat violence against women through improved services for victims together with effective prevention and prosecution

CONTEXT

35. The Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform announced the establishment of Cosc, the new executive office to address violence against women and other forms of sexual and domestic violence, at the launch of the National Women's Strategy in April 2007.

ACTIONS 2011/2012

36. The following actions have been reported by Cosc on behalf of the sector and on its own behalf during 2011 and 2012:

36.1 *National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence, 2010-2014:*

- In 2011 and 2012, Cosc, the National Office for the Prevention of Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence, continued its priority work on the implementation of a National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence 2010 to 2014.
- Cosc is working to ensure cross-government implementation of the strategy through action based on primary and secondary interventions. Primary intervention relates to the prevention of domestic, sexual and gender-based violence through generating greater understanding, increasing recognition and raising awareness. Secondary intervention deals with responding to the violence concerned by ensuring better provision of services to and protection for victims, improving co-ordination and dealing with the offending behaviour of perpetrators. The overall aim of the strategy is the development of a strong framework for sustainable intervention to prevent and effectively respond to domestic, sexual and gender-based violence.
- During 2011, a Strategy Oversight Committee, chaired by the Secretary General of the Department of Justice and Equality, monitored implementation of the strategy and reviewed a progress report in June 2011. In addition, progress on the implementation of the strategy was encouraged and monitored by Cosc on an ongoing basis. Overall, good progress was made on the implementation of the strategy. Progress reports on the implementation of the strategy are now published twice-yearly on the Cosc website at www.cosc.ie/en/COSC/Pages/WP10000015.
- During 2012, Cosc undertook a mid-term review of the strategy and as a result of the review the targets attached to the activities in the strategy were recalibrated. The review was published on the Cosc website at www.cosc.ie/en/COSC/Pages/WP08000151.

36.2 *Awareness-raising and funding:*

- Good progress was made on the implementation of the 2011 Information Programme. There were a range of activities in the media. A number of articles on the National Strategy were published in journals. Presentations on the National Strategy and domestic and sexual violence were given at seminars and conferences nationally. The “Your silence feeds the violence” poster campaign continued.
- Cosc awarded over €298,000 in funding to 62 groups under the 2011 scheme which provides grant funding to local and national groups to raise awareness of domestic, sexual and gender-based violence and the services that are available to victims. A total of €243,760 was provided by Cosc to 59 groups during 2012.
- The final draft of the report of Cosc's survey of awareness raising programmes in post-primary schools was submitted to the Minister.
- Guidelines devised by Cosc in 2011 aim to encourage a shift from a focus on activities only relating to the victim to an inclusion of a focus on the perpetrator and bystander whilst also ensuring that information on support services continues to be made available to victims/survivors. These guidelines were incorporated in a Communications paper on approaches to Promoting and Developing an understanding of Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence, developed by Cosc in 2012 as a guidance to organisations and to professionals. It presents material related to the general population and to two population specific groups, namely the Traveller community and the migrant community.

36.3 *School programmes:*

- In conjunction with Cosc the Union of Students of Ireland (USI) launched an art, videography and photography competition to encourage third level students to speak up if they know someone who has been affected by intimate partner violence.
- Cosc provided funding to USI under the Cosc Awareness Raising Grant Scheme to promote awareness among third level students of domestic, sexual and gender-based violence. The campaign was rolled out by USI in 20 third level colleges across Ireland in November 2011. Alongside the competition 5,000 wristbands were distributed to students to raise awareness of

intimate partner violence. The winning artwork will be used by USI in awareness raising materials to promote understanding and recognition of intimate partner violence amongst third level students.

36.4 *Publications and Committees:*

- Cosc’s report on domestic and sexual violence service provision and co-ordination in Ireland was completed in 2011.
- “ONE-STOP SHOP” - a committee representing support services and state agencies was established by Cosc. The discussion paper to examine a one-stop-shop option for greater accessibility to services for victims of domestic and sexual violence was developed and updated. The committee has identified three pilot programmes that it proposes to evaluate during 2011 and 2012.
- The Attrition Committee met in 2011 to finalise a report on attrition at initial reporting stage, investigation stage and court process stage. A number of recommendations were forwarded to the relevant bodies including An Garda Síochána, the Legal Issues Sub-Committee of the National Steering Committee on Violence against Women and appropriate division of the Department of Justice and Equality for consideration and actions.
- The Cosc-led Data Committee has met six times since its inaugural meeting in November, 2010. Key outcomes of the committee’s work have been:
 - The development of a Data Plan which was finalised in the first quarter of 2011. It sets out a way forward for the work of the Data Committee and comprises three stages: consideration of data needs; improvements in the short term in data collection; and improvements in data collection in the medium or longer term.
 - The identification of compelling data needs across relevant State agencies including; An Garda Síochána, the Courts Service, the Probation Service and the Health Service Executive. Significant progress has been made in this area. The list is not a final one: it is a working document of the Data Committee which will be continually updated as more is learned about the extent of compelling data needs.
 - Ongoing work on the development of data on the prevalence of domestic and sexual violence in consultations between Cosc and the Central Statistics Office.

36.5 *Perpetrator Programmes:*

- During 2011 and 2012, Cosc continued to monitor progress of, and contribute to, the work of a working group on the integrated management of high risk offenders. Several meetings of the Perpetrator Programmes Committee took place during the year. The committee advises Cosc on the development and implementation of policy and practice in relation to domestic violence perpetrator intervention programmes in accordance with the actions contained in the national strategy.
- A particular focus of Cosc continued to be data collection practices by domestic violence perpetrator programmes, along with analysis of this data as well as protocols between the programmes, partner contact groups and referral agencies. The programme reporting template designed by Cosc and issued to Perpetrator Programmes for completion and its analysis in Cosc informed a revised form to issue in 2012 as well as a form seeking data on partner contact work done with partners and ex-partners of programme participants.
- Funding of €650,000 was provided to three organisations to run at total of thirteen programmes during 2012.
- Cosc continued to monitor progress on the implementation of the new prison treatment programme for convicted sexual violence perpetrators.

36.6 *Amendments to Legislation*

General amendments to the Domestic Violence Act 1996

- The Civil Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2011 [Act No.23 of 2011], enacted on 2 August 2011, amended the Domestic Violence Act 1996, making the following changes:
 - S. 60(a)(i) of the Civil Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2011 amended subparagraph 2(1)(a)(ii) of the Domestic Violence Act 1996. It states that for the purpose of obtaining a safety order, an applicant may include an individual that “is not the spouse or civil partner within the meaning of the Civil Partnership Act 2010 of the respondent and is not related to the respondent within the prohibited degrees of relationship, but lived with the respondent in an intimate and committed relationship prior to the application for the safety order.
 - S. 60(a)(iii) of the Civil Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2011 inserted a new subparagraph 2(1)(a)(v) into the Domestic Violence Act 1996. This states that for the purposes of obtaining a safety order, an ‘applicant’ may include being ‘a parent of a child whose other parent is the respondent’.
 - S. 60(b) of the Civil Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2011 amended s. 3(1)(b) of the Domestic Violence Act 1996 to state that for the purposes of obtaining a barring order, an ‘applicant’ can include a person who “is not the spouse or civil partner within the meaning of the Civil Partnership Act 2010 of the respondent and is not related to the respondent within the prohibited degrees of relationship, but lived with the respondent in an intimate and committed relationship for a period of at least six months in aggregate during the period of nine months immediately prior to the application for the barring order.

36.7 Council of Europe work on Violence against Women and Domestic Violence

- The Council of Europe Convention on Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence was agreed by the Council of Europe Ministers Deputies in January 2011 and was opened for signature at the Council of Europe Ministers Meeting in Istanbul in May 2011. Now known as the Istanbul Convention, for it to enter into force, ten ratifications are required to include at least eight Member States. While 26 Council of Europe States had signed the Convention by end 2012, just one had ratified it (Turkey).

36.8 Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government

- Action 10 of the National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence 2010-2014 relates to policy guidance for housing authorities to assist effectiveness and consistency in the development of housing responses for victims of domestic violence. A small working group has been established by DECLG with representatives from DECLG, Cosc, HSE, HSCA and the Local Authority Managers Association to examine housing responses to domestic violence.

Objective 13

To address the issue of trafficking of women and children

CONTEXT

37. In recent years, evidence of the practice of human trafficking began to emerge in Ireland. International intelligence led to the multi-lateral organisations highlighting the international character of this problem.
38. According to the ‘*Annual Report of Trafficking in Human Beings in Ireland for 2011*’, there were fifty-three cases of alleged trafficking in human beings involving fifty-seven alleged victims reported to An Garda Síochána during 2011. Of these fifty-seven alleged victims almost 85 per cent were female. Table 20 overleaf provides a breakdown of the fifty-seven alleged victims by gender and by type of exploitation reported. The Table shows that women account for almost 92 per cent of all alleged victims of sexual exploitation and over two-thirds of all alleged victims of labour exploitation.

TABLE 20
ALLEGED VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS IN IRELAND BY
GENDER AND TYPE OF EXPLOITATION, 2011

| Exploitation type | Gender | | | Gender as % of Total | |
|--------------------------|--------|------|-------|----------------------|------|
| | Female | Male | Total | Female | Male |
| Sexual | 34 | 3 | 37 | 91.9 | 8.1 |
| Labour | 9 | 4 | 13 | 69.2 | 30.8 |
| Labour and Sexual | 1 | 1 | 2 | 50.0 | 50.0 |
| Uncategorised | 4 | 1 | 5 | 80.0 | 20.0 |
| TOTAL | 48 | 9 | 57 | 84.2 | 15.8 |

Source: 'Annual Report of Trafficking in Human Beings in Ireland in 2011'.

ACTIONS 2011/2012

39. The following actions have been reported by the Anti-Human Trafficking Unit (AHTU) of the Department of Justice and Equality during 2011 and 2012:

39.1 *Support services for victims of human trafficking:*

- Appropriate support mechanisms have been put in place including four dedicated units established in Department of Justice and Equality, Garda National Immigration Bureau, Legal Aid Board and HSE.
- A wide range of victim care services are provided. These include health services (mental, emotional and physical care), legal services, accommodation, material assistance (supplementary welfare allowance, rent allowance), access to the labour market, vocational training and education, police services, repatriation, translation/interpretation services, and access to education for dependent children.
- In February 2012, a guide entitled '*Services for Victims of Child Trafficking*' was published. The following services are available to all potential and suspected victims of human trafficking.
 - Accommodation (Reception and Integration Agency (RIA)).
 - Health Care and care planning (HSE).
 - Legal Services (Legal Aid Board (LAB)).
 - Education for minors (Dept of Education and Skills)
 - Assistance in transferring to mainstream services where appropriate (Asylum Seekers and New Communities Unit, Department of Social Protection (ASNCU))
 - Vocational training and employment programmes where appropriate (FAS)
 - Crime Prevention Officers and Witness Protection where appropriate (An Garda Síochána)
 - Assisted Voluntary Return where appropriate (International Organisation for Migration (IOM)/Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service (INIS), RIA)
 - Compensation Mechanisms (Criminal Injuries Compensation Tribunal (CICT)), Courts, Employment Rights bodies.
 - Interpretation services, when appropriate,
 - Information (AGS/AHTU/LAB/ASNCU)

39.2 *Awareness raising and training*

2011

- The Department of Social Protection issued Anti-Human Trafficking Guidelines to frontline staff in January 2011.
- In September 2011, an education pack was distributed to the Civic, Social and Political Education (CSPE) classes in secondary schools throughout Ireland. Each pack included leaflets, a poster, a booklet and information cards to facilitate a group learning activity.

- The Anti-Human Trafficking Unit (AHTU) also held an art competition for students in Transition Year, 5th Year and 6th Year, to design a cover for a Guide to Service Providers on Child Trafficking.
- To mark EU Anti-Human Trafficking Day, the AHTU ran a series of radio ads on RTÉ 1, RTÉ 2 and RTÉ Lyric fm for a week in October 2011.
- A US Judge along with a representative from the Garda National Immigration Bureau gave a presentation on human trafficking to Circuit Court Judges at their Annual Conference in November 2011.
- Leaflets and Bookmarks providing information on human trafficking were distributed at events such as The Irish Nurses and Midwives Organisation (INMO) annual conference in April 2011.
- Awareness raising packs were also distributed to Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade staff on missions abroad.

2012

- An article on human trafficking was submitted to the Irish Hotels Federation (IHF) in January 2012 for distribution to its members while a further article was submitted to the Irish Vocational Education Association (IVEA) in February 2012 for inclusion in their newsletter.
- An information note on human trafficking was uploaded to the website of the Office for the Promotion of Migrant Integration in May 2012.
- The AHTU and An Garda Síochána gave a number of presentations on human trafficking in third level institutions during 2012.
- A Photography and Video/Social Media competition for third level students was launched on 18 October 2012 to coincide with EU Anti-Human Trafficking Day.
- The AHTU released its first electronic newsletter on human trafficking on 18 October 2012. It is intended that a newsletter will be issued every three to four months.

39.3 An Garda Síochána:

A comprehensive programme of training in the area of human trafficking has been undertaken within An Garda Síochána. In total 656 Gardaí have now completed an intensive three day training course entitled “Trafficking in Human Beings; Prevention, Protection, Partnership and Prosecution”. In addition, a further 3,200 members of An Garda Síochána have received awareness raising training relating to human trafficking. During 2012, human trafficking awareness raising training was also delivered to 25 Criminal Interdiction Awareness Officers (Traffic Police Managers) and to 43 Continuous Professional Development Trainers (responsible for training Gardaí nationwide). The overriding aim of the training is to provide members of An Garda Síochána with knowledge of indicators of human trafficking, where to look and how to identify victims of human trafficking.

- The Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland jointly re-launched the ‘Blue Blindfold’ awareness raising campaign for the general public on 18 January, 2011 to reinforce its central message – ‘*Don’t close your eyes to human trafficking*’.
- During 2011, six articles were published in a wide range of publications including Metro Éireann, the Researcher, Airlines International Magazine and the World of Irish Nurses. Information articles were also distributed to members of the National Board for Safeguarding Children and the Intercultural Education Advisory Group (IEAG).
- Throughout 2011, the Anti Human Trafficking Unit (AHTU) gave fourteen presentations to various groups including the Refugee Appeals Tribunal, the IEAG, the Kerry Stop Sex

Trafficking Group, the National Education Welfare Board and the Asylum Seekers and New Communities Unit of the HSE. A number of presentations were also given in third-level institutions such as Dublin City University, the National University of Ireland, Maynooth and the Waterford Institute of Technology.

- The Criminal Assets Bureau support anti-human trafficking investigations conducted by GNIB and other Garda Divisions on an on-going basis by seeking to attach the proceeds of the crimes of human traffickers.
- The National Referral Mechanism has been put in place for the identification of victims of trafficking which includes information and referrals from NGOs and others to An Garda Síochána. This is an on-going activity from year to year.

39.4 *EU/International*

- The Criminal Law (Human Trafficking) Act 2008 contains extensive provisions in relation to the trafficking of persons for the purposes of labour exploitation, sexual exploitation and removal of organs. It provides for penalties of up to life imprisonment and/or an unlimited fine for these offences.
- The Act will be amended in early 2013 to give effect to EU Directive 2011/36/EU which contains an expanded definition of trafficking in human beings. This amendment to the legislation will also contain a definition of 'forced labour', following the acceptance by both the Minister for Justice and Equality and the Government of a '*Report on the Adequacy of the Current Irish Legislation in relation to the Criminalisation of Forced Labour*', which was submitted to the Minister for Justice and Equality in late 2012. The Report recommended that for the purposes of clarity, 'Forced labour' should be defined in legislation.

CHAPTER 5

THEME THREE - ENGAGING WOMEN AS EQUAL AND ACTIVE CITIZENS

INTRODUCTION

1. The advancement of women into decision making roles has been a key objective of European and multi-lateral social policy for many years. The Council of Europe recommends that the membership of national parliaments include representation of at least 40 per cent of persons of each sex. Similar targets have been set by the European Union.

Objective 14
To increase the number of women in decision-making positions in Ireland

CONTEXT

2. The involvement of women in decision making positions may bring them into politics or into senior positions in professional life. There is evidence from recent research in Scandinavian countries and in France that female participation in the boards of major publicly quoted companies has correlated directly with the success of those companies, in terms of stock market performance and profits. A number of European countries now have significant female presence in national politics and at Ministerial level.
3. Table 21 below shows statistics gathered by the European Commission in relation to women's participation in national politics across all Member States. The three top ranked countries and the three bottom ranked countries are shown, as is the EU average and the statistics for Ireland.

TABLE 21
WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN NATIONAL POLITICS – EU – 2005 - 2012

| % of women in single/lower House of National Parliament | | | | | % of women serving as Senior Ministers | | | | |
|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| | 2005 | 2009 | 2011 | 2012 | | 2005 | 2009 | 2011 | 2012 |
| Top Three | % | % | % | % | Top Three | % | % | % | % |
| Sweden | 49 | 47 | 45 | 44 | Sweden | 50 | 45 | 50 | 54 |
| Finland | 38 | 40 | 42 | 43 | France | | | | 49 |
| Denmark | 38 | 38 | 38 | 41 | Finland | 47 | 60 | 47 | 47 |
| EU 27 | 23 | 24 | 24 | 26 | EU 27 | 22 | 26 | 25 | 27 |
| IRELAND (24th) | 13 | 13 | 15 | 15 | IRELAND (20th) | 21 | 20 | 13 | 13 |
| Bottom Three | | | | | Bottom Three | | | | |
| Malta | 9 | 9 | 9 | 9 | Greece | 5 | 6 | 6 | 6 |
| Hungary | 9 | 11 | 9 | 9 | Slovakia | - | - | - | 7 |
| Cyprus | 16 | 16 | 11 | 11 | Estonia/Slovenia | - | - | - | 8 |

Source: European Commission Database on Women and Men in Decision-Making

4. The first part of the table refers to women's participation in national parliaments. These statistics refer to the Dáil only in Ireland's case; women's representation in Seanad Éireann is somewhat higher at 30 per cent. With a female participation rate of only 15 per cent following the General Election in 2011, Ireland ranks 24th of the 27 Member States in terms of women's participation in the lower house of the national parliament. This is well below the EU average of 26 per cent. It is worth noting that the top three countries listed, along with Belgium are the only four EU Member States where female representation in national parliament either meets or exceeds the target of 40 per cent, while representation exceeds the UN critical impact level of 30 per cent in a further four Member States.
5. The second part of the table looks at female representation among senior Ministers. Here Ireland shows a marked decline on the figures for 2009 with women representing just 13 per cent of senior Ministers in 2012, leaving Ireland ranked joint 20th of the 27 Member States. The EU average was 27 per cent and five Member States exceeded 40 per cent, with a further four exceeding 30 per cent of women in senior Ministerial roles.

Women in Business Leadership

6. Table 22 below reviews women's participation as leaders in business. Drawn from the European Commission's Annual Report on Equality between Women and Men 2011 and the Commission's Database on Women and Men in Decision-Making, the table shows that there are relatively few women in the senior ranks of Irish business at present.

TABLE 22
WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION AS LEADERS IN BUSINESS - EU

| Percentage of Leaders of Business (*) who were Women 2010 | | Percentage of Members of Decision-making Body of Largest Publicly Quoted Companies (**) who were Women 2012 | |
|---|-----------|---|-------------|
| | % | | % |
| Top Three | | Top Three | |
| France/Latvia/Spain | 36 | Finland | 27.1 |
| Italy | 35 | Latvia | 25.9 |
| Estonia | 34 | Sweden | 25.2 |
| EU – 27 | 33 | EU – 27 | 13.7 |
| IRELAND (22nd) | 22 | IRELAND (20th) | 8.7 |
| Bottom Three | | Bottom Three | |
| Cyprus | 14 | Malta | 3.0 |
| Finland | 18 | Cyprus | 4.4 |
| Malta | 20 | Hungary | 5.3 |

Source: European Commission, Database on women and men in decision making.

Notes: (*)Data were collected in November 2011. (**) Data were collected in January 2012.

7. The table looks at two indicators. The first relates to the involvement of women as leaders in businesses, including the roles of directors and chief executives and as managers of SMEs. Under this indicator, Ireland ranks in 22nd place among Member States, at 22 per cent (an increase of 3 percentage points on the 2009 figure). The EU average is 33 per cent.
8. The second indicator in Table 22 looks at women's participation at board level in blue chip, publicly quoted companies. Here, Ireland ranks slightly higher than the previous indicator but, at 8.7 per cent, is only placed 20th of the 27 Member States and is below the EU average of 13.7 per cent. The Scandinavian Member States are to the fore in this indicator and the decision of the Norwegian Government to impose a quota of 40 per cent for board membership of its publicly quoted companies has created interest throughout Europe.
9. During 2011, EU Vice President and Justice Commissioner, Ms. Viviane Reding, called on all publicly listed companies in the EU to take voluntary steps to increase women's participation on corporate boards to 30 per cent by 2015 and to 40 per cent by 2020. In order to advance this target, Commissioner Reding met with the chief executives and chairs of the boards of publicly listed companies to discuss the under-representation of women on corporate boards. Commissioner Reding has also communicated with all Member States asking that Gender Equality Ministers proactively address this target.
10. Commissioner Reding also invited all publicly listed companies in Europe to sign up to the "**Women on the Board Pledge for Europe**" to commit to reaching the voluntary targets above. During 2011, a number of high profile companies, including LVMH Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton and Guerlain, signed up to the Pledge. Commissioner Reding indicated that she would review the situation in March 2012 and if credible progress had not been made that she would be ready to take the necessary legislative steps at EU level.
11. The Danish Presidency held a public policy debate on Women on Company Boards at the EPSCO Council meeting in February 2012. During the debate, Commissioner Reding again indicated that if sufficient progress was not achieved quickly enough with industry self-regulation, she would explore different policy options including possible legislative measures for increasing women's representation on company boards. In March 2012 a Commission report showed that the call for voluntary targets had produced little improvement with women's representation standing at around 13.7 per cent.
12. In March 2012, the European Commission launched a three month long public consultation process to inform its approach on future actions to be taken, and this brought over 500 submissions. Following an

analysis of the results of the consultation, Commissioner Reding decided to prepare a legislative proposal.

13. As previously mentioned in Chapter 2, on 14th November 2012, the Commission published its proposal for an EU *Directive on improving the gender balance among non-executive directors of companies listed on stock exchanges and related measures*.
14. This dossier will be brought forward for negotiation under the Irish Presidency of the Council of Ministers of the European Union in the first six months of 2013.
15. The Irish Government has committed since 2002 to increase female representation on State Boards so that women occupy at least 40 per cent of these places. Nevertheless, while there has been some increase in female representation in recent years, progress towards the target has been slow.

ACTIONS 2011/2012

16. The following actions have been reported by Government Departments and Agencies during 2011 and 2012:

16.1 *Oireachtas*

- The Electoral (Amendment) (Political Funding) Bill 2011 was published on 15th December 2011 and was enacted as the Electoral (Amendment) (Political Funding) Act 2012 on 28th July 2012.
- This legislation includes a provision that political parties will face a cut of half their State political funding if they do not have at least 30 per cent women and 30 per cent men candidates at the next general election. This will then rise to 40 per cent after a further 7 years. Payments made to political parties under the Electoral Acts are linked to performance at a general election.
- The General Election Results Publication includes details of the total number of candidates; the number of women candidates; the number of women as a percentage of the candidates; the number of women elected; and the number of women as a percentage of members elected.

16.2 *NWS Sub-Committee on Women in Decision-Making*

- As previously mentioned in the 2010 Progress Report, in 2010, the NWS Monitoring Committee approved the Terms of Reference for the establishment of a 'Sub-Committee on Women in Decision-Making'. The inaugural meeting of the Sub-Committee was held in December 2010.
- The aim of Sub-Committee is to advance Objective 14 of the National Women's Strategy by considering and setting in train a range of measurable and targeted actions to advance the position of women in key decision-making positions in Ireland. This objective and the work of the Sub-Committee link with international recommendations that women should fill at least 40 per cent of places in decision-making roles at all levels to ensure a balanced democracy.
- Membership of the Sub-Committee on Women in Decision-Making is drawn from the Monitoring Committee, with IBEC, Congress, the National Women's Council of Ireland, the Equality Authority and key Government Departments all represented.
- During 2011, the Sub-Committee was chaired by the Minister with responsibility for Equality, in the first instance by the former T.D. Ms. Mary White, and following the February 2011 General Election by Minister of State, Ms. Kathleen Lynch, T.D.
- Secretarial support is provided by Gender Equality Division, Department of Justice and Equality.
- During 2011, the Sub-Committee met on eight occasions to examine the international literature on the issues surrounding the low participation of women in Ireland and abroad in decision-making roles and to hear evidence from a number of experts in this field. In its draft report,

completed late in 2011, the Sub-Committee proposed a series of recommendations for improving the current situation in the following areas:

- Women in management positions in employment (both Public and Private sector employment and in the trade unions);
 - Women on Boards (both Corporate and State Boards);
 - Women in Politics;
 - Women in the Diplomatic Service; and
 - Women in the Judiciary.
- In line with its Terms of Reference, the Sub-Committee will forward its draft report to the NWS Monitoring Committee for approval. If approved, it is anticipated that the report will be sent to Government in 2013.

16.3 *Conference on Women in Politics*

- On 20th January 2012, the Minister of State with responsibility for Disability, Equality, Mental Health and Older People, Ms. Kathleen Lynch, T.D., held an extremely successful cross-party Conference in Dublin Castle, entitled ‘How to Elect More Women?’.
- The Conference aimed to explore the issue of women’s increased participation in Irish political life and to promote discussion on the changes needed if political parties are to fully embrace the need for greater equality in political life.
- Although the Conference was not initially planned to coincide with the announcement by the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government of the proposed Bill on candidate quotas (subsequently enacted in July 2012 as the Electoral (Amendment) Act 2012), the Conference provided a timely opportunity for all of the political parties to address this issue.
- The event was oversubscribed, with over 330 participants, the maximum number which Dublin Castle could accommodate.
- The Conference featured guest speakers from all of the main political parties, including the Taoiseach, the Tánaiste and the Minister for Justice and Equality; academics; and international guest speakers from the OSCE²⁸, the UK and France.
- The dynamic of the event was such that it received international recognition in the New York Times. The Minister of State was also interviewed on a number of Irish radio stations, including Newstalk, ‘The Last Word’ on Today FM, and RTE Radio 1’s ‘Today with Pat Kenny’. The event was also featured in many of the national newspapers.

16.4 *Gender Equality Division: Women on State Boards*

- Since the 1990s, the Government has monitored the percentage of women appointed to State Boards with a view to achieving a minimum representation of 40 per cent for women.
- The Programme for the Government 2011-2016 commits to take steps to ensure that all State Boards have at least 40 per cent of each gender.
- In April 2011, a proposal brought to Government by the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, was approved to allow that future vacancies on State Boards be advertised on the website of the relevant Government Department. The public advertisements inviting applications contain the following line:

In considering applications due regard will be given to Government policy on gender balance on State Boards.

²⁸ The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe.

- At the end of 2010, there were 3,216 persons serving on 265 State Boards. Of these Board Members, 1,115 were women, giving a female representation rate of 34.67 per cent (compared with the target of 40 per cent) a very slight increase on the 2009 figure of 33.95 per cent.
- The total number of female chairpersons of State Boards in 2010 was 52, representing just under 20 per cent of the overall figure, an increase of just over 2 percentage points on the 2009 figures. Only 12 out of 56 newly appointed chairpersons were women in 2010, representing 21.43 per cent of appointments, far below the previous year.
- Where Ministers were responsible for the nomination to the Boards, the female representation rate for 2010 was 34 per cent, compared with 39 per cent in 2009 and 33.7 per cent in 2008. Of the nominations made by external nominating bodies, 36 per cent were women, compared with 35 per cent the previous year.
- Women represented just 37.44 per cent of all appointments made to State Boards during 2010, a slight decrease on the figure of 38 per cent for the previous year.
- In December 2011, the Government reaffirmed its commitment to increase female participation in decision-making towards the internationally recognised target of 40 per cent and agreed that the new measures to seek applications from the public for appointment to State Boards would incorporate a strong message encouraging applications from female candidates.
- At the end of 2011, there were 3,162 persons serving on 272 State Boards. Of these Board Members, 1,073 were women, giving a female representation rate of 33.9 per cent, a slight decrease on the 2010 figure and significantly short of the 40 per cent target set some eighteen years ago.
- The total number of female chairpersons of State Boards in 2011 was 55, representing 21 per cent of the overall figure, an increase of 1 percentage point on the 2010 figure. Only 13 out of 70 newly appointed chairpersons in 2011 were women, representing 18.6 per cent, significantly below the previous year's figure of 21.43 per cent.
- Where Ministers were responsible for the nomination to Boards, the female representation rate for 2011 was 33.9 per cent. Of the nominations made by external nominating bodies, 34.1 per cent were women compared with 36 per cent the previous year.
- Women represented 34.5 per cent of all appointments made to State Boards during 2011, a significant decrease on the previous year's figure of 37.44 per cent.
- In December 2012, in reviewing the State Board figures for 2011, the Government agreed that as part of the annual return on State Boards' composition, Government Departments would in future be required to submit material on the steps that they and the Agencies under their aegis are taking to achieve the 40 per cent target.

16.5 *Department of Finance: Women in the Civil Service*

- The Department of Finance notes that the delivery of the Civil and Public Sector actions in the National Women's Strategy is being considered in light of the economic downturn, the consequent moratorium on recruitment and promotion in the public service and the redeployment of staff within the public sector in particular.
- The percentage of female Assistant Principals (AP) at December 2011 was 39 per cent, compared with the target of 33.3 per cent. This further slight improvement on the 2010 figure may be related to the significant number of officials who took the early retirement option and also the non replacement of staff that retired on normal age grounds. These were more usually male officials. By the end of 2012, the figure for female APs had risen to 42 per cent.

- The percentage of female Principal Officers at December 2011 was 31 per cent, compared with the target of 27 per cent. The comments in relation to APs above also apply here. By the end of 2012, the figure for female POs had risen to 34 per cent.

16.6 *Equality Authority*

- With funding from the Equality Authority, in 2012, Women for Election supported women active in community organisations to participate in its' INSPIRE programmes in Limerick on 6 October 2012 and in Dublin on 24 November 2012. The INSPIRE programme is designed to support more women into politics by providing an introduction to political life, focusing on campaigns, communications and confidence.

Objective 15

To increase the number of women involved in the arts in Ireland

CONTEXT

17. This objective relates to the engagement of women in decision making positions in the Arts, promotion of awareness of equality in the Arts and the involvement of women as audiences for the Arts.
18. Table 23 below examines Arts Council' grants during 2010 and is based on data in the CSO publication '*Women and Men in Ireland 2011*'. The table shows that the Arts Council awarded 680 grants to artists in 2010 of whom 48.8 per cent were women. Despite this near gender parity in the number of women and men receiving grants in 2010, the table also highlights significant variation in the average allocation of grants and in the participation of women and men in the various art forms. In 2010, the average grant awarded by the Arts Council to men was €9,684, compared with an average grant allocation for women of €8,530. Just over a quarter (25.9 per cent) of the grants to men and three out of ten grants to women were in the field of visual arts, however, the average grant allocation of grants awarded to men in the field of visual arts was €10,058, compared with €8,897 for women. Men received over three quarters of all grants awarded in the field of traditional arts while women received 82 per cent of grants relating to dance.

TABLE 23
ARTS COUNCIL GRANTS TO ARTISTS BY ARTFORM, 2010

| Art form | Recipients | | Average Allocation (€) | |
|---------------------------|------------|-------|------------------------|--------|
| | Men | Women | Men | Women |
| Arts participation | 4 | 10 | 10,330 | 5,178 |
| Dance | 9 | 42 | 12,678 | 9,582 |
| Film | 22 | 15 | 12,446 | 10,872 |
| Literature | 72 | 51 | 12,451 | 9,414 |
| Music | 70 | 41 | 9,821 | 6,335 |
| Opera | 9 | 4 | 7,664 | 8,500 |
| Theatre | 31 | 39 | 5,515 | 9,042 |
| Traditional Arts | 29 | 9 | 5,955 | 7,350 |
| Visual Arts | 90 | 100 | 10,058 | 8,897 |
| Young people and children | 5 | 10 | 2,418 | 4,588 |
| Other | 7 | 11 | 3,864 | 7,848 |
| Total | 348 | 332 | 9,684 | 8,530 |

19. However, while the data calculated in the previous paragraph were arithmetic means, Table 24 overleaf, also taken from the CSO's '*Women and Men in Ireland 2011*', shows that almost half (46 per cent) of the grants awarded to women in 2010 were less than €5,000 in value, compared with just over a third of men (34.5 per cent). At the top end of the scale, over a third of men (34.2 per cent) received grants of €15,000 or over, compared with less than a quarter of women (23.5 per cent).

**TABLE 24
ARTS COUNCIL GRANTS TO ARTISTS BY SIZE OF GRANT, 2010**

| Size of grant | Recipients | | Average allocation (€) | |
|-------------------|------------|-------|------------------------|--------|
| | Men | Women | Men | Women |
| Less than €5,000 | 120 | 153 | 1,801 | 1,723 |
| €5,000 - €9,999 | 69 | 63 | 6,762 | 6,653 |
| €10,000 - €14,999 | 40 | 38 | 11,529 | 11,226 |
| €15,000 and over | 119 | 78 | 18,707 | 22,084 |
| Total | 348 | 332 | 9,684 | 8,530 |

ACTIONS 2011/2012

20. The following actions were reported by the Arts Council during 2011 and 2012.
- The Arts Council reports that it has an Equal Opportunities policy in place. It notes that in 2012, there was a focus on the Arts and Disability. The Arts Council developed an Arts and Disability Policy, which provides the sector with a clear account of the Arts Council's approach to the provision of equal opportunities to artists and audiences with disabilities.
 - The Arts Council is currently engaged in Arts Audiences, a partnership project with Temple Bar Cultural Trust, an initiative which aims to improve the state of knowledge about audiences for the arts and to build capacity within arts organisations to increase engagement. While the initiative does not take gender as a leading focus, Arts Audiences publishes an annual report on "Arts Attendance in Ireland" drawn from Target Group Index data. These reports build on information to give a demographic picture of arts attendance by artform and give a detailed picture of attendance and engagement, inter alia, by gender. The 2012 report points out significant variations in attendance at artforms by gender; all artforms have a higher percentage of female attenders than male, except folk concerts. Ballet has the highest female attendance of all artforms. Women account for 51% of the population, but 71% of regular ballet attenders. In other artforms, gender differences are less marked. 58% of regular attenders at plays are female, and attendance at plays and performances is the single largest category.
 - The reports give a rich demographic picture of audience attendance and provide an evidentiary base from which to build policy, and inform arts marketing. The full 2012 report can be found here <http://artsaudiences.ie/2012/11/arts-attendance-in-ireland-2012-5/>.
 - In 2008, while women held 22 out of the 34 local authority Arts Officer positions, it was noted that their senior managers were generally men. While the ratio of female to male Arts Officers did not change significantly during 2009 (23 women to 11 men) there was a discernible positive shift in the number of women at senior level to whom the Arts Officers report. While numbers were not quantified previously, the figures for 2010 (14 female line managers to 20 line managers) represented a definite improvement in female representation. Figures for 2012 are not currently available but they will be updated later in 2013.

Objective 16
To use media proactively to support gender equality and the advancement of women.

CONTEXT

21. The persistence of gender stereotypes is widely considered to have a detrimental effect on the achievement of de facto gender equality. This was a focus of the Slovenian EU Presidency in 2008 and was reviewed again at the Ministerial Conference 'New ways to Overcome Gender Stereotypes' under the Czech Presidency in Prague in May 2009.
22. Much work has been done in the Department of Education and Science to overcome stereotypes in the Irish education system. However, in the wider society, much needs to be done in this area. This

objective aims to address the role which the media can play in relation to the advancement of the role of women through the portrayal of positive role models and the avoidance of excessive stereotypical roles.

23. As a societal issue, responsibility for overcoming stereotypes does not rest exclusively with any single Department or Agency but is an issue which should be highlighted regularly to prompt debate and awareness of the negative impact of stereotypes.
24. The appropriate portrayal of various groups, including women, and the avoidance of discrimination against such groups in the broadcast media is covered in the Broadcasting Commission of Ireland's "Code of Programme Standards" and the "General Advertising Code".
25. This issue is also covered voluntarily by the advertising sector through the Advertising Standards Authority of Ireland (ASAI). Its updated "Manual of Advertising Self-Regulation with the Code of Standards for Advertising, Promotional and Direct Marketing in Ireland" came into force in 2007. Specifically, the Code includes, inter alia, the following provisions:

Marketing communications should respect the dignity of all persons and should avoid causing offence on grounds of gender, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race or membership of the traveller community.

Marketing communications should respect the principle of the equality of men and women. They should avoid sex stereotyping and any exploitation or demeaning of men and women. Where appropriate, marketing communications should use generic terms that include both the masculine and feminine gender; for example, the term 'business executive' covers both men and women.

26. In addition the ASAI also includes a code of practice in relation to the marketing of health and beauty products and slimming products which are likely to positively impact on women as consumers.

ACTIONS 2011/2012

27. No new material on this matter.

Objective 17 - A

To foster the achievement of the UN Millennium Development Goals through Irish Aid.

CONTEXT

28. The following updates relate to gender equality objectives in Ireland's overseas aid programme, implemented by Irish Aid and other Sections within the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade including the Conflict Resolution Unit and the Human Rights Unit.
29. In 2011, a review was conducted by the OECD of progress in implementing recommendations from the 2009 OECD Peer Review of Ireland's development co-operation programme. This review concludes that:

"In 2009, the peer review gave due recognition to Ireland's achievements in mainstreaming gender, HIV/AIDS, environment and climate change and governance issues across its programmes, while encouraging the country to improve reporting on these cross-cutting areas of development co-operation. The work on mainstreaming has been strengthened in several ways since 2009, including:

- *the introduction of training modules for mainstreaming gender, HIV and AIDS,*

- *governance and environment/climate change;*
- *increased gender specific interventions;*
- *gender reporting, and guidance notes on gender mainstreaming...*

Ireland's approach to mainstreaming continues to be very good practice that others can learn from.

Since the peer review Irish Aid has embedded the four cross-cutting issues within its managing for results framework and has also improved the feedback loop so that the results of monitoring and evaluation an key lessons are informing programme development an practice. There are advisers in gender, governance an HIV/AIDS based in Ireland's embassies in each of its partner countries.

ACTIONS 2011/2012

30. The following actions have been reported by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade during 2011 and 2012:

Mainstreaming gender equality

- Gender equality continues to be mainstreamed across Irish Aid programmes and projects. For example, during 2011 gender equality was mainstreamed in the development of new country strategy papers in Tanzania and Vietnam.
- In 2011, €4 million was provided to the Global Partnership for Education which has a strong focus on girls' education. Continued support to the education sectors in Zambia, Mozambique, Lesotho and Uganda is strongly linked to addressing gender inequality in schools an includes targeted support to ensure that schools are safe for girls and that retention of girls in school is promoted.
- In 2012, gender equality was mainstreamed in the development of the new country strategy paper in Mozambique 2012-2016.

Specific interventions

- As well as mainstreaming, Irish Aid supports specific actions to improve the position and status of women including supporting the capacity development of gender equality/women's affairs ministries working at national and local level in Uganda, South Africa, Zambia, Timor Leste and Ethiopia. For example, in 2012, €240,000 was provided to the Dutch-based global women's fund Mama Cash which supports grass roots women's organisations across the globe.
- Figures for 2012 are not yet available, but in 2011 approximately €7.2 million was spent in support of women's equality organisations, an increase of €2.1 million on the €5.1 million spent in 2010.
- In relation to economic empowerment, in 2011, Irish Aid signed a new 4 year partnership agreement in support of the International Labour Organisation's 'decent work' agenda for €3 million; women's economic empowerment is a component of this programme. This includes support to the ILO's 'Women's Entrepreneurship' programme.
- In a number of our partner countries, Irish Aid has supported the roll-out of new legislation on women's rights including property rights. In 2011, a two year contract with the International Land Coalition (ILC) was signed for €400,000 in support of the ILC's 'Women Land Rights' Initiative.
- Ireland supports the Private Infrastructure Development Group (PIDG) which mobilises private sector investment to assist developing countries in providing infrastructure vital to boosting their economic growth and combating poverty. A study on the '*Impact on Women and Girls of PIDG Supported Projects*' was prepared in 2012 and the Government Council agreed to revisit current project indicators disaggregating data on a gender basis. Irish Aid is strongly supportive of this positive development.

Health and Gender-based Violence

- In 2011, Ireland supported maternal and reproductive health programmes in Ethiopia and Tanzania.
- In relation to women's access to reproductive and other health services, in 2012, €3.1 million was provided to the UN Population Fund (UNFPA).
- Ireland's bilateral in-country health sector support prioritises the health of women and children including women's reproductive health needs. Irish Aid continues to support community-level health care programming through support to a variety of NGOs, national and international, such as Concern and Trócaire and Comprehensive Community Based Rehabilitation in Tanzania (CCBRT).
- Working to combat Gender-based Violence (GBV) is a priority of the programme. Figures for 2012 are not yet available but it is estimated that Ireland spent over €3.6 million on GBV programming in 2010 which includes support to local and national governments, civil society organisations and multi-laterals including an allocation of €275,000 to the United Nations Trust Fund to combat violence against women. In 2011, the figure spent by Ireland on GBV programming increased to over €5.9 million. This included an allocation of €234,650 to the UN Trust Fund.
- Gender is a key component in the new HIV/AIDS Policy and Strategy. Having been influential in their preparation, Ireland now advocates for the implementation of gender plans/strategies such as the "Agenda for Accelerated Country Action for Women"; "Gender Equality and HIV (UNAIDS)"; and the "Global Fund Gender Equality Strategy". Negotiation commenced in 2011 for Irish Aid support for the UNAIDS programme '*Gender Transformative HIV Responses: a pathway to achieve Millennium Development Goals 3, 4, 5 and 6*' in 2012-2013. A two year programme funding agreement worth €758,000 was signed in 2012 to support the implementation of the UNAIDS gender equality strategy. Support is also being provided to the UNAIDS HIV and AIDS Humanitarian Response programme which includes a strong focus on gender equality and responding to GBV. €1.5 million is being provided in the period 2013-2014.
- Irish Aid supported the Red Ribbon Award (UNAIDS) with funding of €75,000 in 2012. This is an innovative way to recognise and support outstanding community leadership in fighting the epidemic. Notable recent winners include the Centre for Domestic Violence Prevention in Uganda (which works at the grassroots, civil society and government levels to build an environment which is supportive of women's rights to safety and equality); Nikat Women's Association in Ethiopia (which aims to improve the living conditions of low income women and commercial sex workers in Addis Ababa in a effort to fight poverty and share information about protecting themselves from HIV and violence through skills building, income generation and other empowerment activities such as functional literacy); and Positive Women's Network in South Africa (which improves the quality of life of HIV positive women by providing strategies for supporting women's rights and fighting domestic abuse and rape).
- Irish Aid supports fortification of staple foods for pregnant and breastfeeding women with HIV in Mozambique (€1.138 million from 2011-2013), and community outreach health services in Niassa Province in Mozambique, where women's access to reproductive and other health services are a core priority.
- Ireland remains one of the world's key advocates for research and development of microbicides. We have maintained funding to the International Partnership for Microbicides at €1 million annually throughout and in spite of current economic difficulties.

Objective 17 - B

To use multi-lateral aid and development policy to promote the role of women and gender equality in developing countries.

ACTIONS 2011/2012

31. The following actions have been reported by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade during 2011 and 2012:

- In Ireland's contribution to the future of European development policy Ireland has emphasised the need to support women farmers particularly in relation to food and nutrition security, and also the need to prioritise maternal mortality.
- As part of the 2011 consultation process for the European Commission's Communication Trade, Growth and Development adopted on 27th January 2012, Ireland raised the need for the EU to further seek to strengthen the role of women in developing countries as economic actors and facilitate their increased participation in trade.
- In May 2012, EU Development Ministers adopted Council Conclusions on the European Commission Communication on EU development policy entitled 'Increasing the impact of EU Development Policy: an Agenda for Change'. Throughout the negotiations Ireland advocated for strengthened focus on gender equality as well as food and nutrition security and policy coherence for development.
- The Conclusions of the EU Foreign Affairs (Trade) Council on the EU's approach to trade, growth and development was adopted on 16 March 2012. Ireland inputted to the development of these Conclusions, stressing that the role of women is fundamental to poverty reduction and development and underlined the importance of women as economic actors and their right to be fully involved in all aspects of the economy as producers, consumers and decision makers.
- Ireland continues to prioritise the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in its dialogue with its UN partners, particularly UNDP, UNICEF and UNFPA, all of whose mandates are central to women's empowerment. Ireland also doubled its funding in 2011 to UN Women to ensure its ability to 'hit the ground' running following its formal establishment on 1 Jan 2011 and has continued to strongly support the development of its normative and operational role. In 2012, Ireland increased its funding to UN Women to €1.5 million, representing the third consecutive increase in funding from Ireland to UN Women. Ireland continues to strongly support its normative and operational role.
- Ireland is currently actively engaging in the development of the post-2015 development framework and will call for a strong focus on gender equality in any new framework.
- Ireland advocated for gender equality to be emphasised in the quadrennial comprehensive policy review (QCPR) of UN operational activities for development. In December 2012, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution on QCPR which placed equality and women's empowerment central to UN operational activities, reaffirmed UN Women's lead role and called for greater accountability for gender equality across the UN development system.
- As mentioned previously, Ireland supported the work of gender equality ministries in Uganda, South Africa, Zambia, Timor Leste and Ethiopia during 2011. Furthermore, Ireland supported the work of gender equality ministries (both national and local government) in Uganda, Zambia and Ethiopia during 2012. Ireland also works with line ministries on gender mainstreaming such as the Ministry of Agriculture in Tanzania and the Ministry of Finance in Uganda.
- In Zambia, Irish Aid supported the Joint Gender Support Programme for strengthening the coordination of gender mainstreaming in the public sector.
- In Ethiopia, Irish Aid is a member of the social development working group within the Productive Safety Nets Programme, which has a strong focus on gender equality.
- In Tanzania, Ireland has chaired the Development Partners' Group on Gender Equality (DPG Gender) from mid-2010 until mid-2013. DPG Gender aims to enhance harmonized and aligned support to the Government of Tanzania's efforts to reduce gender inequalities as stipulated in

national policies and strategies and works closely with the Ministry of Community Development, Gender and Children and three priority sectors of agriculture, justice and health.

Objective 17 – C

To enhance the capacity of Irish Aid and Development Partners to respond effectively to Gender Based Violence in conflict, post-conflict and developing environments.

CONTEXT

32. Gender based violence was discussed at length at the 2008 meeting of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women. France, in its capacity as President of the European Union in Semester 2/2008 also undertook a study on the EU indicators on “Women and Armed Conflict”, leading to “Agreed Conclusions” on the matter at the December 2009 ESPHCA Council. The Council of Europe also completed a recommendation to its Council of Ministers on this topic in mid 2010.

ACTIONS 2011/2012

33. The following actions have been reported by Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Irish Aid during 2011 and 2012:
- Working to combat Gender-based Violence (GBV) is a priority of the Irish Aid programme and it is estimated that Ireland spent over €3.6 million on GBV programming in 2010 which includes support to local and national governments, civil society organisations and multi-laterals, including an allocation of €275,000 to the United Nations Trust Fund to Combat Violence against Women.
 - In 2011, Ireland continued to work with our EU partners on implementation of the EU Guidelines on Violence Against Women and Girls.
 - Ireland has strongly endorsed UN-Women’s Strategic Plan 2011-2013 and in particular the inclusion of preventing violence against women and girls and expanding services for survivors as one of its six goals. Ireland made a further contribution of €270,000 to the UN Trust Fund to Eliminate Violence Against Women.
 - Ireland actively engaged in the work of the Joint Consortium on Gender-based Violence during 2011 and 2012. The Consortium continued to input into the development of Ireland’s National Action Plan on UNSCR 1325 during 2011. A new Strategic Plan 2012-2015 for the Joint Consortium was approved in 2012.
 - Ireland’s National Action Plan (NAP) on UNSCR 1325 was officially launched at the Annual Seminar of the Irish Joint Consortium on Gender Based Violence (JCGBV) on 25 November 2011 by the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade Eamon Gilmore, and former President Mary Robinson. Ireland’s NAP on UNSCR 1325 continued to be implemented during 2012 with the first meeting of the 1325 monitoring group taking place at the end of 2012.
 - The NAP on UNSCR 1325 makes a specific commitment to “*use Ireland’s position as Chair-in-Office of the OSCE in 2012 to promote implementation of UNSCR 1325, including advocating for member countries to develop UNSCR 1325 national action plans.*”
 - Ireland has been an active proponent for the implementation of UNSCR 1325 in the OSCE context, including during Ireland’s tenure as Chair of the Forum for Security Cooperation (FSC) in 2011. The FSC meets weekly to discuss military aspects of security in the OSCE area, in particular confidence- and security-building measures (CSBMs).
 - Ireland also supports UNSCR 1325 through dialogue at the OECD in our position as co-chair of the Development Assistance Committee’s Gender Network.

- Ireland continued its active participation in dedicated groups, including the Brussels-based 'EU Informal 1325 Taskforce' and the New York-based 'Group of Friends of Women, Peace and Security'.
- Ireland promoted implementation of UNSCR 1325 in the context of our Chairmanship-in-Office of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in 2012.
- Ireland's UNSCR 1325 NAP 18 month Progress Report is currently being compiled and is scheduled for completion in May 2013.
- In Timor Leste, up to the end of 2012, Ireland worked closely with the Secretary of State for the Promotion of Equality (SEPI), UN Women and local civil society organisations to promote gender mainstreaming in line ministries and to promote women's political participation. Ireland also supported the government and civil society in addressing GBV and in providing victim support.
- In Liberia, Ireland's support has enabled the IRC to engage with the Liberian Government to advocate for increased attention to women's participation in peace and reconstruction in line with the National Action Plan on GBV. Via the Mísean Cara Scheme, Ireland also supports organisations working in Liberia to advocate for women's participation in elections, providing funding of €19,374 between 2011 and 2012.
- In line with Irish commitments in the 1325 NAP, all military staff in the Irish Defence Forces participating in peacekeeping operations/CSDP missions by virtue of induction training, career courses, pre-deployment training, etc., have received in excess of five hours training specifically in gender equality/women, peace and security, as have all military staff employed by the EU MS.
- Ireland has worked to increase the number of female troops sent on UN peace missions. In 2010, there was no female representation on these missions. In 2012, there were 19 women deployed by the Irish Defence Forces on UN peacekeeping missions. The number of female Heads of Diplomatic Missions also increased from 10 to 13 in the same period.
- Ireland's National Submission in relation to the development of the UN Guidance for Effective Mediation, submitted in February 2012, draws particular attention to the participation of women and the incorporation of gender issues into conflict resolution issues.
- In 2012, Ireland supported a number of resolutions at the UN General Assembly and the Human Rights Council including, inter alia, on eliminating all forms of violence against women, ending obstetric fistula, eliminating female genital mutilation, trafficking in women and girls, maternal morbidity and mortality.
- In 2012, Ireland co-sponsored General Assembly Resolution A/RES/67/144 on the '*Intensification of efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women*'. The Resolution:

Stresses the need for the exclusion of killing and maiming of women and girls, as prohibited under international law, and crimes of sexual violence from amnesty provisions in the context of conflict resolution processes and to address such acts during all stages of the armed-conflict and post-conflict resolution process, while ensuring the full and effective participation of women in such processes.
- It should also be noted that Ireland, while not necessarily referring specifically to amnesty provisions, consistently calls for the ending of impunity for such crimes and, in appropriate cases, for referral to the International Criminal Court (ICC) in all relevant national statements in UN fora.
- Ireland continues to advocate strongly for full implementation of the women, peace and security agenda in a number of international fora, including by making national statements at the UN

Security Council and in the UN General Assembly during the course of 2011 and 2012. The Irish Ambassador to the UN made the following intervention at the Executive Board of UN Women's 2012 Annual Session on 29th May 2012:

Women continue to play an important part in mediation and conflict resolution processes. Ireland's full commitment to this principle was demonstrated by its adoption of a National Action Plan on Security Council Resolution 1325 last year. Systems to afford women's groups the opportunity to consult with national representatives, submit recommendations or send representatives to important decision-making forums are either weak or do not exist. Resolution 65/283 draws particular attention to the 'equal, full and effective participation' of women in mediation efforts.

Funding

- In 2011, Ireland made a contribution of €100,000 to support a rule of law project being led by the Office of the UN Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict. The initiative aims to assist national authorities to strengthen the rule of law with respect to sexual violence in conflict, post-conflict and other situations of particular concern.
- €200,000 was provided from the stability fund to the UN Mediation Support Unit in 2012. The UN's Mediation Support Unit, established in 2006, works closely with the UN's regional divisions to plan and support mediation efforts in the field. Among its functions, MSU provides advisory, financial and logistical support to peace processes; works to strengthen the mediation capacity of regional and sub-regional organisations; and serves as a repository of mediation knowledge, policy and guidance, lessons learned and best practices.
- €100,000 was provided from the stability fund to the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue (CHD) in 2012. CHD is engaged in a wide variety of mediation operations and mediation support programmes around the world. The inclusion of gender perspectives is central to all work undertaken by the CHD. Half of the 2012 funding was earmarked specifically for their 'Women at the Table' initiative which brings together senior women active in the African peace processes.
- Approximately €290,000 of Christian Aids' funding from Irish Aid in 2012 was for delivering on 'Civic space for engagement with power holders is maintained or widened, and effective dialogue between citizens and the state can take place'. In Palestine, one objective was to widen the space for civic engagement with power holders, and specifically to track the level of participation of poorer women in decision-making.

34. **Equality Authority**

- In 2012, with funding from the Equality Authority, Hanna's House (under the National Women's Council of Ireland) produced a film of its all-Ireland conference on *Women Delivering Peace & Security*, formally opened by President Michael D. Higgins on 5 November 2012. The film highlights UN Security Council Resolution 1325, its importance for women, barriers to its implementation and strategies for its implementation across Ireland.

| |
|---|
| <p style="text-align: center;">Objective 17 – D To ensure the integration of gender perspectives into all parts of the United Nations System.</p> |
|---|

CONTEXT

35. Ireland was at the forefront of the United Nations reform process on system wide coherence, including ways to improve coordination of the four UN gender entities in addressing women's development issues. Support to the UN's work on combating gender-based violence is detailed above as well as other support to UN agencies.

ACTIONS 2011/2012

36. The following actions have been reported by Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, including Irish Aid, during 2011 and 2012:

36.1 UN Women

- During 2011, Ireland continued its strong support of UN-Women, increasing its funding from €400,000 in 2010 to €1.2 million in 2011. In 2012, this funding was further increased to €1.5 million.
- Through the United Nations system-wide action plan for gender equality and the empowerment of women, adopted in 2012, UN Women has established a unified accountability framework for the UN's work on gender equality and women's empowerment.
- UN Women also prepared the Secretary-General's biennial report on the improvement in the status of women in the United Nations system, presented to the General Assembly in July 2012.

36.2 Mainstreaming gender within the UN system

- Ireland supported a strong text in the negotiations on the ECOSOC resolution on 'Mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system' which was adopted in July 2011.
- Ireland also took a lead role, negotiating on behalf of the EU in the omnibus General Assembly consensus resolution on gender: 'Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and full implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action' and the outcome of the 23rd special session of the General Assembly, which contained important new elements on mainstreaming gender within the UN system.

CHAPTER 6

IMPLEMENTING THE NATIONAL WOMEN'S STRATEGY

Objective 18
To implement gender mainstreaming
as the principal instrument for the achievement of gender equality in Ireland.

CONTEXT

1. The Gender Equality Division of the Department of Justice and Equality has an advisory role in relation to gender mainstreaming and the National Development Plan and the National Strategic Reform Programme, together with other national policy instruments. Work on the development of gender mainstreaming was started in 2009 and will be a focus for 2013 and beyond.

ACTIONS 2011/2012

2. The following actions have been reported by Gender Equality Division during 2011 and 2012:
 - The Gender Equality Division provides an oversight role in relation to the mainstreaming of gender equality as a horizontal principle in accordance with the regulations government EU (ERDF and ESF) funding provided under the Operational Programmes of the National Strategic Reform Programme. .
 - The Division also reviews the reports submitted on the implementation of all parts of the Operational Programmes each year and reports on the extent to which gender is adequately mainstreamed at each of the Monitoring Committees.
 - The Division carries out a similar role for the ESF supported Human Capital Investment Operational Programme which includes labour market activation and training as its key elements.
3. **Equality Authority**
 - With funding from the Equality Authority, in 2012, the Limerick branch of the National Collective of Community Based Women's Networks delivered a training programme to disadvantaged women in Limerick on human rights and equality. The training focused on equality and human rights arising from national and international obligations and on how those could be used to the benefit of people's lives.
 - Also in 2012, and with funding from the Equality Authority, the National Women's Council of Ireland organised a seminar on 8 October 2012, in association with TASC, entitled *Bearing the Brunt? Women and the Recession* which highlighted the effects of the recession on women using national and international evidence.

Objective 19
To provide financial support to implement the National Women's Strategy.

CONTEXT

4. The work to implement the objectives contained in the National Women's Strategy falls within the remit of a large number of Government Departments and their Agencies. Accordingly the funding for the Strategy flows through the funding voted by the Exchequer for each relevant Government Department. At this stage, gender budgeting is not undertaken in Ireland and it is not therefore possible

to measure that part of the annual Exchequer funding which is allocated specifically to women or to actions and initiatives directly linked to the National Women's Strategy.

5. The Human Capital Investment Operational Programme 2007 - 2013 makes an allocation of European Social Funds available to the Department of Justice and Equality²⁹ to support positive actions under the Equality for Women Measure.

ACTIONS 2011/2012

6. The following actions have been reported by Government Departments and Agencies during 2011 and 2012:

6.1 Gender Equality Division - *Equality for Women Measure*

- Mention has been made previously in the relevant chapters of the impact of the ESF supported Equality for Women Measure on different parts of the Strategy. The text which follows is a more detailed report on the implementation of the Measure to date.
- The purpose of the Equality for Women Measure is to make funding available to foster the engagement and advancement of women and gender equality in a number of economic sectors by focusing on three main Strands:

**TABLE 25
THREE STRANDS OF THE EQUALITY FOR WOMEN MEASURE**

| STRAND | TARGET GROUP |
|---|---|
| 1. Access to Employment | Women, largely experiencing disadvantage and outside the labour market |
| 2. Developing Female Entrepreneurship | Women who are either budding entrepreneurs or early stage entrepreneurs |
| 3. Career Development for Women in Employment | Women in employment who might want to advance their careers |

- The Measure is supported by European Social Funding under the Human Capital Investment Operational Programme (HCIOP) 2007-2013. The Measure is administered by Pobal Ltd. on behalf of the Department of Justice and Equality.
- The EWM remains a very important initiative in the context of the Programme for Government, which includes commitments to enable the full participation of women in society, including in employment. Moreover, the EWM complies with the European Commission's Strategy for Equality between Women and Men 2010-2015 and the Europe 2020 Strategy, in particular the need to encourage the economic engagement of women through increasing their labour market participation and thereby boosting economic growth.
- A new phase of the EWM was advertised and launched in mid 2010. A total of 200 project proposals were received from all parts of the country and post evaluation, saw forty-one projects across Ireland receiving funding of up to €50,000 each for the period mid 2010 to mid 2011.
- Projects were offered a roll over of the 2010/2011 grant in Spring 2011 and forty projects availed of this offer of further funding of up to €50,000 each for the period mid 2011 to April 2012. In March 2012, these existing projects were invited to apply for funding of up to €33,333 each to continue projects in line with original proposals. This Year 2 extension phase covered the period from 1st May 2012 to 30th November 2012 and was awarded to 35 projects based on the appraisal of a Project Plan, Budget and Interim Report. The breakdown of projects by Strand can be seen in Table 26 overleaf:

²⁹ Since the General Election in February 2011, the Equality brief now falls under the remit of the Department of Justice and Equality.

**TABLE 26
BREAKDOWN OF EWM PROJECTS BY STRAND**

| STRAND | No of projects selected 2010/2011 | Grants 2010/2011 | No. of projects selected 2011/2012 | Grants 2011/2012 | No. of projects selected May-Nov 2012 | Grants May-Nov 2012 |
|---|--|-------------------------|---|-------------------------|--|----------------------------|
| 1. Access to Employment | 31 | €1,352,354 | 29 | €1,298,761 | 25 | €746,359 |
| 2. Developing Female Entrepreneurship | 9 | €367,756 | 10 | €393,756 | 9 | €252,580 |
| 3. Career Development for Women in Employment | 1 | €44,500 | 1 | €48,804 | 1 | €32,519 |
| Total | 41 | €1,764,610 | 40 | €1,741,321 | 35 | €1,031,458 |

- Activities provided by projects include accredited and non-accredited skills-based training and one-to-one mentoring, together with a range of other support interventions relevant to the target client base. This may include personal development, CV and interview skills preparation, work placements, career guidance, and life coaching for labour market activities under Strand 1 and business development, marketing, and financial management for budding entrepreneurs under Strand 2. In relation to Strand 2, the project focused on strategies to dismantle the glass ceiling by providing supports and mentoring to improve the promotion prospects in academic and research careers for individual women.
- Since the Measure was launched in 2009, over 11,350 women from diverse backgrounds have benefited from training, mentoring and self-development courses. In 2011, a total of 3,299 women participated on the programme, with a further 3,173 women participating during 2012.
- By the end of 2012, it is reported that 2,428 previous participants had moved into employment or into further mainstream training or educational courses. Moreover, in 2011, 891 women availed of training under the Entrepreneurship Strand, with a further 1,069 women receiving entrepreneurship training in 2012, bringing the cumulative total for the period to 2,070. This is significant, taking into account the current economic climate and limited employment opportunities.
- In 2011, approximately 776 of the participants were early school leavers (had not completed upper cycle in secondary school). In 2012, 746 of the participants were early school leavers. The Measure also attracted a total of 395 older participants (aged 55 plus).
- As Table 27 below indicates, many of the projects targeted women experiencing multiple disadvantages, for example, social exclusion combined with low educational attainment and economic deprivation. The largest intake of participants related to Strand 1 which focused on providing practical labour market supports, in order to strengthen the employment potential of disadvantaged women from a broad range of geographical areas.

**TABLE 27
EWM PARTICIPANTS FROM VULNERABLE GROUPS**

| | No. 2011 | No. 2012 |
|--|-----------------|-----------------|
| Minorities: (Member of the Travelling Community) | 101 | 112 |
| Migrants | 500 | 372 |
| Women with a disability | 81 | 95 |
| Other disadvantaged people: (Lone Parents) ³⁰ | 923 | 1076 |
| Total number of participants | 1,605 | 1,655 |

- The Measure also attracted over 1,000 older participants (aged 55 plus) between 2011 and 2012. This links with the EU target of encouraging older men and women to re-engage with the labour market.

³⁰ Disadvantaged women including lone parents, women with substance misuse, domestic violence, mental health difficulties, LGBT community, offenders and ex-offenders.

- The following resources were produced in 2011 and in 2012 as part of the Equality for Women Measure:
 - EWM Programme Guidelines for Funded Groups were developed by the EWM Team in Pobal and issued to all projects. The Guidelines outline the finance, development and information and publicity requirements.
 - A Directory of Projects was developed by Pobal to facilitate informal networking and exchange of practice. The Directory was issued to all projects.
 - In order to profile the EWM in terms of its impact on addressing barriers to women’s participation and progression in employment, Pobal carried out research on the issues and difficulties arising for project participants and their strategies to address them. The following issues were identified:
 - Lack of confidence/Poor self-esteem/Fear of failure;
 - Caring responsibilities – women carry an unequal share of care work;
 - Financial barriers – cost of childcare, social welfare trap, transport; and
 - External impact of the economic downturn.
 - Following on from this research, the Thematic Report ‘*Addressing Gender Barriers to the Labour Market – overcoming lack of confidence, low self-esteem and fear of failure as barriers to participation in EWM projects*’ was produced early in 2012.

6.2 Department of Finance

- With regard to gender budgeting, the necessary focus in recent years has been on reducing the deficit and returning sustainability to the public finances. The Government has been conscious to spread the burden of the adjustments made in as fair and equitable a manner as possible, while also seeking to minimise their negative impact on economic growth.
- While there was no specific focus on gender budgeting in Budget 2013, the Programme for Government 2011-2016 does contain a clear commitment requiring all public bodies to take due note of equality and human rights when carrying out their functions. Furthermore, Cabinet procedures require that proposals put to Government indicate clearly whether there is any impact of the proposal on, amongst other things, gender equality.

6.3 Equality Authority

- With funding from the Equality Authority, in 2012, the Irish Feminist Network produced an information booklet entitled *Equality Budgeting in Ireland*. The booklet provides an accessible overview of equality budgeting, including the rationale for equality budgeting in an Irish context, a definition of equality budgeting, information on the international context, and a summary of the Equality Budgeting Campaign’s proposals for realising equality budgeting in Ireland.

Objective 20

To ensure that the National Women’s Strategy is fully implemented

CONTEXT

7. This report covers progress made in the implementation of the Strategy during 2011 and 2012.

ACTIONS 2011/2012

8. The following actions have been reported by Government Departments and Agencies during 2011 and 2012:

- The National Women's Strategy Monitoring Committee is tasked with overseeing the implementation of the National Women's Strategy 2007-2016. The Monitoring Committee met in June 2011. At this meeting the Monitoring Committee discussed the Progress Report on the implementation of the Strategy during 2010 and received an update on the work of the Monitoring Committee's 'Sub-Committee on Women in Decision-Making'. The Monitoring Committee held a further meeting in July 2012 where the draft report of the Sub-Committee on Women in Decision-Making, entitled '*Towards Gender Parity in Decision-Making in Ireland*', was discussed.
- The second progress report on the implementation of the Strategy, entitled '***Implementing the National Women's Strategy 2007-2016, Progress 2010***', was submitted to Government in December 2011 and was subsequently published on the Department of Justice and Equality website (www.justice.ie).
- This Joint 2011/2012 Progress Report on Implementing the National Women's Strategy details the progress made under the 20 Key Objectives contained in the Strategy and will be submitted to Government in 2013.
- As reported earlier, a Sub-Committee of the Monitoring Committee established to address the issue of women and decision-making has completed its initial brief under the Terms of Reference by preparing a draft report for consideration by the Monitoring Committee in 2012. The draft report has been approved by the Monitoring Committee and it is anticipated that the report will be brought to Government in 2013.
- Work on a periodic review of the Strategy has also commenced and will be completed during 2013.

Appendix I

Programme for Government Government for National Recovery 2011-2016

EXTRACTS WHICH HAVE A FOCUS ON GENDER EQUALITY OR ON WOMEN

Constitutional Reform

Amending the clause on women in the home and encourage greater participation of women in public life.

Political Reform

We recognise that there needs to be a substantial increase in the number of women in politics. We will ask the Constitutional Convention, which is examining electoral reform, to make recommendations as to how the number of women in politics can be increased.

Public funding for political parties will be tied to the level of participation by women as candidates those parties achieve.

Fairness – other health priorities

We will introduce a cervical cancer vaccination catch-up programme for all girls in secondary school. We will also extend BreastCheck to 65-69 year old women.

We will develop a National Carers Strategy to support carers and to address issues of concern.

We will legislate to clarify the law surrounding assisted human reproduction including the law relating to parental relationships arising from assisted human reproduction.

We acknowledge the recent ruling of the European Court of Human Rights subsequent to the established ruling of the Irish Supreme Court on the X-case. We will establish an expert group to address this issue, drawing on appropriate medical and legal expertise with a view to making recommendations to Government on how this matter should be properly addressed.

Education

Early Childhood Care and Education:

We will maintain the free pre-school year in Early Childhood Care and Education to promote the best outcomes for children and families. We will improve the quality of the pre-school year by implementing standards and reviewing training options.

As resources allow, this Government will invest in a targeted early childhood education programme for disadvantaged children, building on existing targeted pre-school supports for families most in need of assistance such as the young Ballymun project.

Improving Outcome:

Maths and science teaching at second level will be reformed, including making science a compulsory Junior Cert subject by 2014. Professional development for maths and science teachers will be prioritised

A bonus points system for maths, which is linked to specific maths or science courses, will be introduced to encourage greater participation in courses where skills shortages currently exist.

21st Century Schools:

This Government will end the treatment of ICT in education as a stand-alone issue, but will integrate it across education policy. This will begin with merging the National Centre for Technology in Education with the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment. A new plan to develop ICT in teaching, learning and assessment will be developed. This plan will incorporate the integration of ICT policy across other agencies,

such as the Professional Development Services for Teachers, the State Examinations Commission, and Project Maths.

Justice and Law Reform

Criminal Law Reform:

We will establish a DNA Database to assist the Gardaí in the investigation of serious crime, such as homicides and sexual offences.

We will enact legislation to prohibit the practice of Female Genital Mutilation for the protection of girls and women.

Sentencing and Penal Reform:

Violent and sexual offenders may only earn remission based on good behaviour, participation in education and training, and completion of addiction treatment programmes and, where appropriate, sex offender programmes.

Law Reform, Courts and Judiciary:

We will create an enforcement mechanism for District Court maintenance orders in family cases.

We will reform and modernise aspects of family law.

We will introduce consolidated and reformed domestic violence legislation to address all aspects of domestic violence, threatened violence and intimidation in a manner that provides protection to victims.

Equality and Social Protection

The Commission on Taxation and Social Welfare will examine and make recommendations on the interaction between taxation and the welfare system to ensure that work is worthwhile. In particular, it will examine family and child income supports, and a means by which self-employed people can be insured against unemployment and sickness.

Eliminating poverty traps:

- activating people on a reduced week who refuse extra day(s) employment.
- over time, One Parent Family Payment will be replaced with a parental allowance

Getting better value for money

We will raise the issue of payment of Child Benefit in respect of non-resident children at EU level, and seek to have the entitlement modified to reflect the cost of living where a child is resident. We will examine all possible flexibility within European legislation to reduce the cost of this payment.

Equality:

Equality is at the heart of what it means to be a citizen in our democracy. This Government believes that everyone has the right to be free from discrimination and that we all benefit from living in a more equal society

We are committed to ensuring that the rights of women and men to equality of treatment and to participate fully in society are upheld.

We will take steps to ensure that all State boards have at least 40% of each gender.

We will encourage schools to develop anti-bullying policies and in particular, strategies to combat homophobic bullying.

We will require all public bodies to take due note of equality and human rights in carrying out their functions.

Ireland in Europe

We are fully committed to the EU2020 strategy and its creation of employment and smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.

Appendix II

European Pact for Gender Equality (2011-2020)

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION acknowledges that equality between women and men is a fundamental value of the European Union and that gender equality policies are vital to economic growth, prosperity and competitiveness. Five years after the adoption of the first European Pact for Gender Equality, a new impetus is needed, particularly in order to reaffirm and support the close link between the Commission's Strategy for equality between women and men 2010-2015 and "Europe 2020: the European Union's Strategy for jobs and smart, sustainable and inclusive growth". THE COUNCIL therefore reaffirms its commitment to fulfil EU ambitions on gender equality as mentioned in the Treaty and in particular to:

1. close the gender gaps in employment and social protection, including the gender pay gap, with a view to meeting the objectives of the Europe 2020 Strategy, especially in three areas of great relevance to gender equality, namely employment, education and promoting social inclusion in particular through the reduction of poverty, thus contributing to the growth potential of the European labour force;
2. promote better work-life balance for women and men throughout the life-course, so as to enhance gender equality, increase women's participation in the labour market and contribute to meeting the demographic challenges; and
3. combat all forms of violence against women in order to ensure the full enjoyment by women of their human rights and to achieve gender equality, including with a view to inclusive growth.

THE COUNCIL urges action at Member State and, as appropriate, Union level in the following fields:

Measures to close gender gaps and combat gender segregation in the labour market:

- a) promote women's employment in all age brackets and close gender gaps in employment, including by combating all forms of discrimination;
- b) eliminate gender stereotypes and promote gender equality at all levels of education and training, as well as in working life, in order to reduce gender segregation in the labour market;
- c) ensure equal pay for equal work and work of equal value;
- d) promote women's empowerment in political and economic life and advance women's entrepreneurship;
- e) encourage the social partners and enterprises to develop and effectively implement initiatives in favour of gender equality and promote gender equality plans at the workplace; and
- f) promote the equal participation of women and men in decision-making at all levels and in all fields, in order to make full use of all talents.

Measures to promote better work-life balance for women and men:

- a) improve the supply of adequate, affordable, high-quality childcare services for children under the mandatory school age with a view to achieving the objectives set at the European Council in Barcelona in March 2002³¹, taking into account the demand for childcare services and in line with national patterns of childcare provision;
- b) improve the provision of care facilities for other dependants; and
- c) promote flexible working arrangements and various forms of leave for both women and men.

Measures to tackle all forms of violence against women:

³¹ CZ: scrutiny reservation.

- a) adopt, implement and monitor strategies at national and Union level with a view to eliminating violence against women;
- b) strengthen the prevention of violence against women and the protection of victims and potential victims, including women from all disadvantaged groups; and
- c) emphasise the role and responsibility of men and boys in the process of eradicating violence against women.

Governance, implementation and monitoring:

The relevant aspects of this Pact, and of the Commission's annual reports on "Equality between Women and Men", should be taken into account in the mechanisms of the Europe 2020 Strategy as appropriate.

THE COUNCIL reaffirms its commitment to reinforce governance through gender mainstreaming by integrating the gender perspective into all policy areas including external EU actions, also taking into account the critical role of men and boys in the promotion of gender equality, and by ensuring that gender equality effects are taken into account in impact assessments of new EU policies.

THE COUNCIL encourages the Member States and the Commission, in particular through Eurostat, to further develop existing statistics and indicators disaggregated by sex and to fully utilise the capacities of the European Institute for Gender Equality.

When developing and implementing their National Reform Programmes, the Member States are encouraged to apply a gender equality perspective and to promote gender equality policies, especially concerning the Employment Guidelines, and invited to make appropriate use of agreed gender equality indicators developed within the Joint Assessment Framework and within the follow-up of the Beijing Platform for Action in all relevant policy areas and processes.

The Commission and the Council are also invited to incorporate a gender equality perspective into the Annual Growth Survey, the Country Opinions and the Country Specific Recommendations. The progress made on the implementation of the European Pact for Gender Equality should be discussed by ministers annually, at the Council level."
