

NWC – Woman’s model for State Pension

Presentation to Commission on Pensions – 21st April 2021



National Women's Council

About the National Women's Council

- Leading national representative organisation for women and women's groups in Ireland
 - Over 190 member groups from across a diversity of backgrounds, sectors and geographical locations
 - Equality in pensions – core to economic equality and independence for women
-

Gender Issues : Male Breadwinner model

- Full State Contributory Pension - only 1 in 3 recipients women
- 63,603 state pension recipients received top up for a 'Qualified Adult' (2019); 90% QA's are women
- Women workers:
 - 60-65% of Minimum Wage workers are women
 - 80% of part-time workers are women
 - PT workers account for over 50% percent of all Minimum Wage workers

Absence of an care ethic in our pensions system

Persistent inequalities in the sharing of care remain

- 94% of those 'looking after home and family' are women (2019)
- Older women 5 times more likely to leave work for care reasons (2019)
- Total Contributions Approach/Home Caring Periods Scheme do not fully accommodate care

Extending working life

- Impact of extended working lives on those who provide care and workers in low paid or precarious jobs
 - Gender, equality or poverty analysis of increases in age of eligibility for the State Pension
-

Sustainability

- €2.4 billion per annum in private pension tax relief
- 72% of pension tax relief goes to top 20% of earners; 50% to the top 5% (2014)
- Gender and pensions tax relief: men are beneficiaries of two thirds of fiscal support
- Tax take as a percentage of national income is one of the lowest in the OECD

Principles for State Pension

- Economic autonomy
- Facilitating atypical work
- Ethic of care
- Pension equality or pension justice
- Retrospective pensions justice

A universal pension

- Effectively recognising and valuing care
- Individual Rights
- Addresses historical and current inequalities
- Full coverage
- Income adequacy
- Administratively simpler

A Pathway to a Universal Pension

- Individualised access to pensions
- TCA - 30 years for the max pension; remove 20 year cap on caring contributions; allow women born before 1st Sept 1946 to benefit
- Once-off scheme for those effected by marriage bar
- Standard rate pension tax reliefs and monitor as part of the budget
- Explore how employers PRSI can be increased

Gender proof the Commission's work

Crucial that the Commission's proposals and recommendations are assessed for impact on women and results published

Thank you



National Women's Council