

**Joint Women's Committee Seminar**  
**"Building on the legacy of 1913 – Facing up to modern challenges"**  
**Friday 8<sup>th</sup> March 2013**  
**Liberty Hall, Dublin**

**Guest Speakers**  
**Biographical Notes**



**Máire Mulcahy, Assistant General Secretary, ASTI**

Máire Mulcahy, Assistant General Secretary, ASTI has worked with trade unions since 1979 in the field of industrial relations and equality at a later date.

She has represented the ASTI on the ICTU Women's Committee and is currently chair.

She is interested in the increased participation of women within the trade union movement and wants to assist in the protection of their hard-won benefits and facilities.



**Theresa Devenney, Regional Officer, ATL**

A Regional Official for the Association of Teachers & Lecturers (ATL), Theresa Devenney combines casework along with driving innovative student Recruitment Programmes and Partnership Projects with a range of stakeholders. She plays a key role in industrial relations within the ATL. Theresa is currently the Chair of NIC/ICTU Women's Committee.

Her career has involved working within the private, public and voluntary sectors. Her work with the ATL, The Prince's Trust, North Belfast Partnership (NBP) – which was part of four cross-community partnerships set up to help re-generation within greater Belfast; and the successful establishment and rollout of Ufi/**learndirect** e-learning

centres across some of the most economically deprived areas of NI have given her an insight into the dynamics of the employment relationship in the world of education and the teaching profession.



### **Eugene McGlone, President, Congress**

Eugene works has worked for Unite the Union (formerly Amalgamated Transport and General Workers Union (ATGWU) since 1988, and is a senior official working mostly out of the Belfast Regional Office.

He has served as Chair to the Northern Ireland Committee, Irish Congress Trade Unions (NIC/ICTU) on 2 separate occasions. Currently he is President of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions.

He has represented the movement on a number of bodies serving on boards such as the Labour Relations Agency, Criminal Injuries Compensation Appeal Panel, a number of industrial training boards, Wage Councils and as a panellist on the Industrial Tribunal.

Currently Eugene represents Congress on a Department of Learning and Employment Working Group and the Labour Relations Agency Roundtable dealing with individual employment rights.

His interests include Politics, History, Music, Literature, fishing and hurling.



### **Dr Micheál Collins, Senior Research Officer, NERI**

Dr Micheál Collins is Senior Research Officer at the Nevin Economic Research Institute (NERI). His research interests are in the areas of income distribution, minimum incomes, taxation, economic evaluation and public policy. Prior to joining the NERI he was Assistant Professor of Economics at Trinity College Dublin. He is vice-chairman of the Irish Social Policy Association (ISPA) and a former chairman of the Regional Studies Association (RSA) of Ireland. He was a member of the Commission on Taxation (2008–2009) and served as chairman of the Commission subgroup on Tax Expenditures/Tax Breaks. In 2011 he was appointed a member of the Government Advisory Group on Tax and Social Welfare (AGTSW). He is a graduate of NUI Galway, UCC and

the University of Dublin, Trinity College and a fellow of the International Regional Studies Association (FRSA).



### **Sally Anne Kinahan, Assistant General Secretary, Congress**

Sally Anne Kinahan is currently the Assistant General Secretary of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions, the confederation body of the trade union movement in Ireland/Northern Ireland. Congress is the largest civil society organisation on the island of Ireland, representing and campaigning on behalf of more than 50 affiliated unions and some 820,000 working people.

Within her role at Congress, Ms. Kinahan leads the policy, communications and campaigning functions and has responsibility for general organisation and a number of designated priority projects. She has worked with Congress in this role since 2003.

Ms Kinahan is a member of the National Economic and Social Council (NESC) as a trade union nominee, and the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC). She is a non-executive director of TASC, an independent think-tank dedicated to combating Ireland's high level of economic inequality and ensuring that public policy has equality at its core. She is also a non-executive director of a number of not-for-profit social organisations.

Prior to joining Congress, Sally Anne was Marketing Director with Ireland's largest development NGO, Concern Worldwide, for five years. She has also worked as director of development with Stewarts Hospital, Dublin, and as Head of Oxfam in Ireland.



### **Orla O'Connor, Director, National Women's Council**

A native of Dublin, Orla O'Connor holds a Masters degree in European Social Policy from NUIM and a degree in Social Science from UCD. She has worked in senior management in non-governmental organisations in Ireland for over 15 years. She has led campaigns on a wide range of issues, including social welfare reform, pension reform and for the introduction of quality and affordable childcare. She represented the National Women's Council on the National, Economic and Social

Council. Former Head of Policy, she was appointed Director of the National Women's Council of Ireland in September 2012.



**Ann Louise Gilligan, Vice Chair, Congress Women's Committee**

Ann Louise Gilligan took early retirement from her position as a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Education, St Patrick's College where she lectured in the areas of philosophy of education, modern philosophy and gender studies over 33 years. She established and directed its Centre in Educational Disadvantage. She also established and chaired the National Education Welfare Board, upon appointment by the Minister for Education. Most recently, in 2013 she was appointed by the Minister for Education to the Board of the Quality and Qualifications Ireland.

Her areas of interest are post-modern philosophy, the theory and practice of education, creativity in teaching and learning, educational disadvantage and executive and academic coaching.

She has published research in philosophies of imagination, gender equality and education and post-modern philosophy, including *Beyond Educational Disadvantage* (Dublin: IPA, 2007) which she co-edited with Dr. Paul Downes. She has a PhD (Boston College), MA (Paris, France) and has completed a Coaching Certification with Henley College, UK.



**Ethel Buckley, National Campaigns & Equality Officer & Head of the Policy Research Unit, SIPTU**

Ethel Buckley is National Campaigns and Equality Organiser and Head of the Policy, Research Unit in SIPTU. She joined the movement in the mid-1990's while undertaking postgraduate work at NUI Cork. She was an union activist and shop steward for a number of years before choosing to work full-time for SIPTU. She has worked in a variety of roles for the union including collective bargaining and individual grievance handling, research, strategic organising and campaigning.



**Carol Baxter, Head of Development, Equality Authority**

Carol Baxter has been Head of Development at the Equality Authority since October 2006. She has worked with trades unions and employer

networks to develop equality skills within workplaces. She has also developed equality partnerships with public sector organisations to promote good practice on equality. She has supported projects by community and voluntary sector organisations to highlight equality issues. She was Policy Manager of the National Women's Council of Ireland from 2000 to 2002, working on the issues of women, employment and caring work.



**Mary McSorley, Communications & Promotion Manager, Equality Commission for Northern Ireland**

Mary has worked for the Equality Commission since April 2000 when she joined as an equality officer specialising in gender issues. After a number of years as an information and advice manager, she is currently a manager in the Communications & Promotion division.

Before joining the Commission, she was Project Manager for Women Into Trades and Non-Traditional Occupations, a European funded project which aimed to encourage more girls and women to take up non-traditional training and employment in Northern Ireland. Prior to this she held various PR and marketing posts in the voluntary sector and in further and higher education.



**Patricia McKeown, Regional Secretary, UNISON**

Patricia McKeown is Regional Secretary of the public service union UNISON. She is lead negotiator and represents both UNISON and ICTU on a wide range of public policy forums. Patricia is a feminist and lifelong campaigner for equality and human rights – with a primary focus on women's rights. She has been both Secretary and Chairperson of the ICTU Women's Committee and chaired the inaugural Congress Women's Conference. As ICTU nominee, Patricia was Deputy Chairperson of the Equal Opportunities Commission (NI). She represented Congress in the Bill of Rights Forum and convened its Working Group on Socio-Economic Rights. She is currently Co-convenor of the Equality Coalition alongside the human rights organisation, CAJ,

Patricia was Chair of the ICTU Northern Committee (2004–2006) and President of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions (2007–2009). She currently represents ICTU on the cross border body InterTrade Ireland.



### **Gloria Amparo Suárez, Colombian Human Rights Defender**

Gloria Amparo Suarez is a Colombian human rights defender and activist. She has a degree in social sciences with emphasis on democracy and technology. Gloria has been working for the Popular Women's Organization (OFP–Organización Femenina Popular) for over 24 years as an activist and defending women's human rights. Currently she is the legal representative of the OFP and coordinator in the region of Magdalena Medio. She is a mother of two children.

The OFP was founded in 1972 and has been working to promote women's human rights in the Magdalena Medio region, including Barrancabermeja, Santander Department. Since 2000 the OFP has also been working in the cities of Bogotá and Neiva. The OFP is a feminist organisation specialising in the defence of the right to truth, justice, reparation and working with women from marginalised communities. The OFP is very active within the Colombian women's movement against the war.

In addition to their activism to advocate women's rights, at a local level the OFP undertake peacebuilding and capacity building projects such as:

- Supporting community engagement and civil society organizing.
- Legal advice and support for disadvantaged communities to denounce human rights violations.
- Training and education in gender, health and sexual reproductive rights, economic autonomy and social economy.

Members of the OFP have been victims of several threats and attacks. Of the almost 140 attacks against members of the OFP most remain in impunity because of the authorities' failure to investigate these incidents as part of a systematic pattern of attacks against the organisation.



### **Esther Lynch, Legislation & Social Affairs Officer, Congress**

Esther Lynch is Legislation and Social Affairs Officer with the Irish Congress of Trade Unions. Esther has been with the ICTU since 1993 and is a senior official with responsibility for advising the Congress Executive on matters relating to corporate governance, labour law, and since 2008, safety, health and welfare. Esther is a Board Member of the Health and Safety Authority and she is an active participant on Ireland's Company Law Reform Group. At EU level she is a member of the European Trade Union Confederation labour law experts group (NELEX) and the TUAC Advisory Committee to the OECD on company law and corporate governance issues. Esther will outline the Congress campaign priorities for healthy and safe workplaces.



### **Sarah King, Advisor, ETUC**

Sarah King has been an Advisor at the European Trade Union Confederation, since September 2011. She advises on gender equality, employment and labour market policies and assists with co-ordinating relations between the ETUC and the European Trade Union Federations and the European Parliament. Before joining the ETUC she worked for the GMB, a UK national trade union for 6 years, initially working on equality and discrimination matters in the UK before moving to Brussels as European Research and Policy Officer in the GMB European Office.



### **Emer Costello, MEP**

Emer is currently an MEP in the Socialist & Democrat group within the Parliament and represents the Dublin constituency in Ireland.

Previously she has been involved in politics in Ireland and served as Lord Mayor in 2009–2010 and Deputy Lord Mayor of Dublin in 2008–2009.

Emer was formerly a Programme Manager with Leargas, the Irish National Agency for European and bi-lateral Programmes in Education, Youth and Vocational Training, and served as Manager of the Dún Laoghaire Heritage and Genealogical Centre and Assistant Manager with the Finglas Heritage Project.

She has served on a number of local and national boards in Ireland on a variety of issues covering community involvement, education, health, tourism and justice.