



The Future of the Irish Social Welfare System

Online event hosted by NESC

30th April 2021, 10.00-15.00 Irish Standard Time (GMT+1)

09.55	Registration
10.00	Welcome and Introduction
	<p>Larry O'Connell, Director, NESC</p> <p>Ms Heather Humphreys, T.D., Minister for Social Protection, Community and Rural Development and the Islands</p>
10.15	Session 1: Strategic Overview
	<p>Marcelo Abi-Ramia Caetano, Secretary-General of the International Social Security Association (ISSA)</p> <p>Anne-Marie McGauran, Policy Analyst, NESC</p> <p>Mary Daly, Professor of Sociology and Social Policy, University of Oxford</p> <p>Q&A</p>
11.15	Comfort Break
11.30	Session 2: Panel Discussion
	<p>Chair: Helen Johnston, Senior Policy Analyst, NESC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Brid O'Brien, Head of Policy and Media, INOU• Ian Talbot, CEO, Chambers Ireland• Laura Bambrick, Head of Social Policy, ICTU• Seán O Riain, Professor of Sociology, Maynooth University• Rónán Hession, Assistant Secretary, Department of Social Protection <p>Q&A</p>
12.30	Lunch
13.30	Session 3: Thematic Sessions (Concurrent)
	<p>1. Adequacy</p> <p>Tricia Keilthy, Head of Social Justice and Policy, Saint Vincent de Paul</p> <p>Chair: Helen Johnston, NESC</p> <p>2. Participation</p> <p>Mary Murphy, Professor of Sociology, Maynooth University</p> <p>Chair: Damian Thomas, NESC</p> <p>3. Financing</p> <p>Barra Roantree, Economist, ESRI</p> <p>Chair: Anne-Marie McGauran, NESC</p>
14.30	Session 4: Summary/Wrap-up
	<p>Key points from the day:</p> <p>Tony McCashin, School of Social Policy and Social Work, TCD</p>
15.00	Closing remarks:
	<p>Liz Canavan, Assistant Secretary, Department of the Taoiseach and Deputy Chair NESC Council</p>

Biographies

Marcelo Abi-Ramia Caetano: is the Secretary General of the International Social Security Association (ISSA). Elected in December 2018, Mr Caetano heads an extensive programme of activities and member services focused on promoting excellence in social security administration, including the ISSA's professional guidelines and Centre for Excellence, innovative solutions to address key social security challenges, unique data on social security around the world as well as regional and global events.

Dr Helen Johnston: joined NESC as Senior Social Policy Analyst in July 2007. Since then she has worked on issues of well-being and social reporting, social regulation and standards, the social consequences of the crisis, as well as undertaking work for the OECD on social disadvantage. Helen was previously Director of the Combat Poverty Agency. A native of Northern Ireland, Helen has previous experience working in the Northern Ireland civil service. She is currently Chair of the Centre for Cross Border Studies. Helen has qualifications in Environmental Science and Town and Country Planning, a Masters in Business Administration, and a Doctorate in Governance, where she examined the implementation of mental health policy in Ireland.

Dr Anne-Marie McGauran: has a PhD in Gender and Women's Studies from Trinity College Dublin. Her thesis compared the impact of government policies on women's employment in France and Ireland. She previously worked as Head of the NDP Gender Equality Unit in the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform and as a researcher on the governance of state agencies in the Institute of Public Administration. She was also a post-doctoral research fellow in the University of Queensland, Australia. Anne-Marie worked as a Policy Analyst in the NESF from 2005 to 2010, before moving to NESC.

Prof Mary Daly: Mary's research interests and expertise are international in scope, focused on the analysis of social policy with a particular interest in family, gender, care/social care and poverty. Most of her work is comparative, in a European and international context. Her research has been supported by a wide range of funders, including the Economic and Social Research Council, the EU, Council of Europe, the ILO, UN, UN Women and UNICEF. Mary has a wide range of research interests for example: family policy, gender differences and inequalities, care systems, poverty and welfare, comparative social policy development and EU social policy.

Brid O'Brien: Brid is the Head of Policy and Media with the INOU and plays a key role in formulating and developing INOU policy on unemployment, social welfare and the development of an inclusive and equitable labour market. Brid works with colleagues in the community and voluntary sector on issues of socio-economic justice and is one of the Community and Voluntary pillar representatives on the National Economic and Social Council.

Ian Talbot: Ian is Chief Executive of Chambers Ireland – Ireland's largest business network with 40 Affiliated Chambers nationwide. Prior to joining Chambers Ireland, Ian held positions as a Director of Citigroup and JP Morgan Chase in Ireland. He qualified as a Chartered Accountant with Price Waterhouse where he spent several years working in their Dublin and Luxembourg offices. Ian holds MA and BBS degrees from Trinity College, Dublin.

Dr Laura Bambrick: Laura is Head of Social Policy with the Irish Congress of Trade Unions – the umbrella body for 44 unions and the largest civil society organisation on the island of Ireland. She is responsible for advocating for a strong social safety net for workers and their families. Laura previously worked in policy advisory roles in the Office of the Tánaiste and Minister for Social Protection, the Office of the United Nations Assistant Secretary General, and in the Social Justice Unit of the Society of Vincent de Paul. She holds a PhD and MS in social policy from Oxford University and a BA in social policy from Trinity College Dublin. Her PhD traces the development of the Irish Welfare State and the treatment of married women in tax, welfare and employment policy.

Prof Seán O Riain: Seán is Professor of Sociology at the University of Maynooth. His research interests are in the sociology of work and employment, comparative political economy, inequality and social change, and the global information economy. Seán is the author of a number of publications including *The Politics of High Tech Growth: Developmental Network States in the Global Economy* (Cambridge, 2004); *The Rise and Fall of Ireland's Celtic Tiger: Liberalism, Boom and Bust* (Cambridge, 2014) and co-editor of *The Changing Worlds and Workplaces of Capitalism* (Palgrave, 2015). He was a member of the National Economic and Social Council from 2011 to 2017.

Rónán Hession: Rónán is the Assistant Secretary who leads policy across a diverse range of areas in the Department of Social Protection. Rónán has worked in four government departments and has previously held senior positions on Brexit, international taxation, corporation tax and financial regulation. Rónán was a member of the Civil Service Renewal Task Force and was the Irish representative to the OECD Committee on Fiscal Affairs and the EU Code of Conduct Group on Business Taxation. Rónán holds an MEd Science in Policy Analysis.

Dr Tricia Keilthy: Tricia is Head of Social Justice and Policy with the Society of St Vincent de Paul (SVP). She coordinates the policy and advocacy work of SVP which focuses on poverty issues related to social protection, education, housing, employment and energy policy. She has worked in a variety of research roles in organisations such as the Combat Poverty Agency, One Family, the Institute of Public Health in Ireland, TCD and UCD. Tricia holds a PhD in Social Policy from UCD and a Masters in Applied Social Research from TCD and is currently an Adjunct Assistant Professor at the School of Social Policy, Social Work and Social Justice in UCD.

Prof Mary Murphy: Mary lectures in the Department of Sociology in Maynooth University. Her research interests include welfare policy, labour market, social security and housing, power and civil society, eco-social states and gender. She has published widely in key international journals. Recent books include the co-edited *Irish Welfare State in the 21st Century* (with F Dukelow Palgrave 2016), and *Policy Analysis in Ireland* (with John Hogan Policy Press, 2021). A contributor to national policy debate, she was a member of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (2013-2017) and in 2019 was appointed by President M.D. Higgins to the Council of State.

Dr Barra Roantree: Barra is an economist at the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) whose work is focused on inequality, taxation, welfare and pensions. He has a PhD in economics from University College London and previously worked at the Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS) in London.

Dr Anthony McCashin: Tony is currently a visiting Research Fellow in the School of Social Work and Social Policy, Trinity College Dublin where he worked as a lecturer from 1992 to 2016. Tony graduated with a B. Soc. Sc. from UCD in 1971 and completed a Post Graduate Diploma in Statistics, Trinity College Dublin, 1972. Between 1971-1973 he was a Research Assistant in the Economic and Social Research Institute, Dublin. He completed an MA in Sociology at the University of Essex in 1974, and was awarded a Ph. D from Trinity College Dublin in 2015. Tony has worked as a Research Officer with the National Combat Poverty Committee (1975-1979), the Institute of Public Administration (1979-1980) and the Commission on Social Welfare (1984-1986). Between 1986 and 1992 he worked with NESF as a Social Policy Analyst. Tony also worked as a lecturer in Social Policy in University College Cork (1980-1984). His most recent publication is *Continuity and Change in the Welfare State: Social Security in the Republic of Ireland* (Palgrave, 2019)