

# RSE Ireland 2019

And a New Global Vision for Education

## Introduction

Over the last few months it has come to the attention of many Irish parents that after 20 years the Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) curriculum is to be updated for Primary and Post-Primary Schools. Obviously, parents want to know what changes might take place and they have set out to investigate.

Before examining the data gathered, it is worth outlining that there are 2 parts to the proposed changes which are running concurrently:

### 1. Provision of Objective Sex Education Bill 2018

[Provision of Objective Sex Education Bill 2018](#) is currently before Dáil Éireann, and it is in its 3<sup>rd</sup> stage. *'Bill entitled an Act to guarantee the right of students to receive factual and objective relationships and sexuality education without regard to the characteristic spirit of the school.'* The bill is sponsored by Paul Murphy, Ruth Coppinger, and Mick Barry.

### 2. The NCCA

The [NCCA](#) (National Council for Curriculum and Assessment) is an advisory body for the Minister of Education and Skills. It is tasked with reviewing the RSE curriculum and its findings are due out in Summer 2019.

*'A paper prepared by **Dr Seline Keating, Professor Mark Morgan and Dr Bernie Collins** for the NCCA says that, internationally, best practice is moving towards a 'holistic sex education' (HSE) approach, which addresses the realities of young people's lives, the diversity of sexuality and gender identities that have emerged and continue to emerge, and the challenges young people face in navigating relationships in a positive, healthy way.'*

Irish Independent 6/2/2019.

[This Research Paper](#), dated November 2018, requested by the NCCA is called *'Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) in Primary and Post-Primary Irish Schools'* (see below page 3). On page 40 it states, *'With the publication of **Standards in Sexuality Education and Developing Sexual Health Programmes: A Framework for Action from the WHO in 2010**, and **International Technical Guidance on Sexual Education from UNESCO in 2018**, countries now have more support in developing national programmes based on international best practice.'*

## Provision of Objective Sex Education Bill 2018



*Paul Murphy, Ruth Coppinger, Mick Barry*

“(1A) When prescribing the curriculum for relationships and sexuality education the Minister shall ensure—

- (a) the curriculum is factual and objective, age appropriate, and not gender normative,
- (b) the curriculum includes the following areas in a factual and objective manner:
  - (i) consent to sexual activity;
  - (ii) the different types of sexuality;
  - (iii) the different types of gender;
  - (iv) methods of contraception, and

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- (v) the termination of pregnancy,
- (c) the curriculum is delivered in a factual and objective manner in all schools regardless of the characteristic spirit of the school, and
- (d) the rights of students to access factual and objective education on reproductive healthcare is guaranteed, protected and upheld in all schools.”.

*Excerpt from pages 3 & 4 of the 2018 bill*

### [Paul Murphy TD](#)

*Party:* Solidarity-People Before Profit and is now in a new political group called RISE

*Constituency:* Dublin South-West

*Contact details:* (01) 6183071 & [paul.murphy@oireachtas.ie](mailto:paul.murphy@oireachtas.ie)

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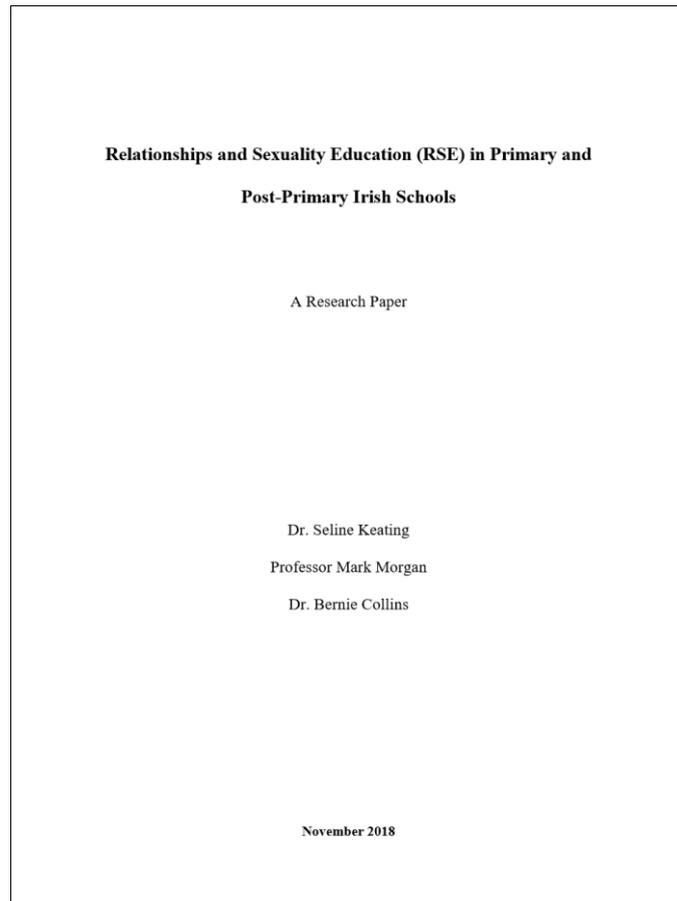
### [Mick Barry TD](#)

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## The NCCA



*Cover page of the November 2018 Research Paper for NCCA*

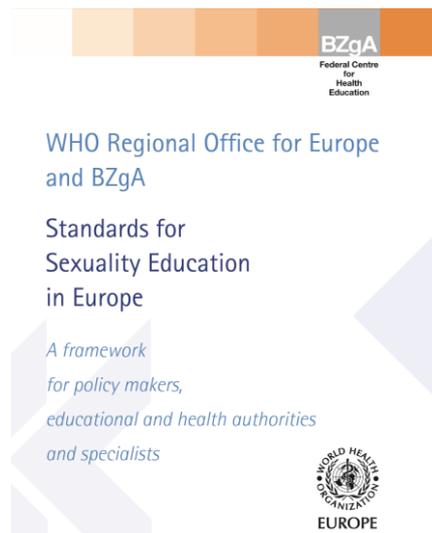
*'The HSE [holistic sex education] approach is characterised by its proponents as a wider programme which has as its primary focus "sexuality as a positive human potential and a source of satisfaction and pleasure" ...' (page 23)*

*'The WHO's Standards for Sexuality Education in Europe, provide a clear framework for HSE from birth to 18 years based on key principles...a human rights approach...gender equality, self-determination, and acceptance of diversity...a life-long process from birth...' (page 24)*

*'With the publication of [Standards in Sexuality Education and Developing Sexual Health Programmes: A Framework for Action](#) from the World Health Organisation [WHO] in 2010, and [International technical guidance on sexuality education](#) from UNESCO in 2018, countries now have more support in developing national programmes based on international best practice.'* (page 40)

*'The ['All Together Now'](#) programme is focused on addressing anti LGBTI+ bullying in Primary Schools in Ireland... All Together Now was commissioned by **BeLong To** youth services with funding from the Department of Education and Skills. The research took place from **2015-2016** and was led by a team from St Patrick's College, DCU: **Dr Bernie Collins; Dr Seline Keating & Prof Mark Morgan.**'*

*See below a sample of these 2 reports from WHO and UNESCO (2 agencies of the United Nation)*



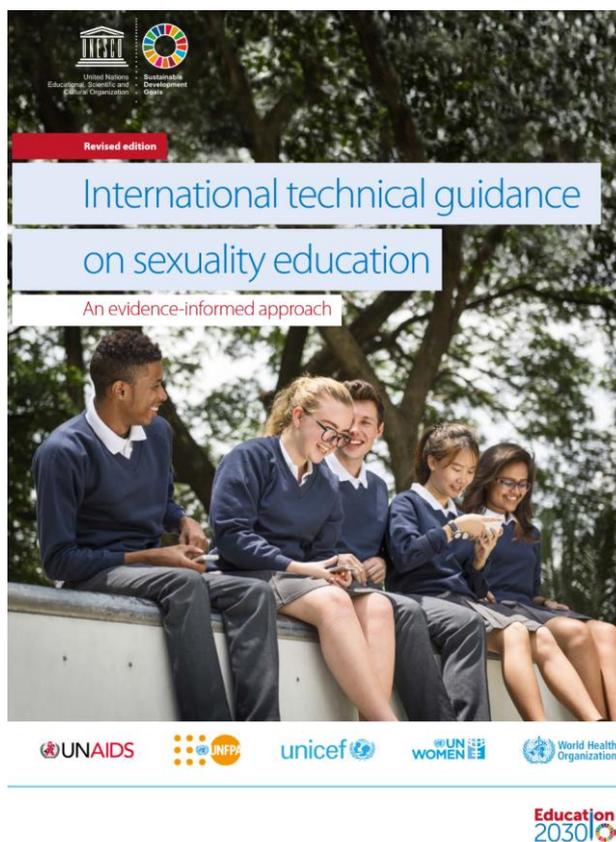
Cover page of report

0-4	Information Give information about	Skills Enable children to	Attitudes Help children to develop
The human body and human development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ all body parts and their functions</li> <li>■ different bodies and different sexes</li> <li>■ body hygiene</li> <li>● the difference between oneself and others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ name the body parts</li> <li>■ practise hygiene (wash every part of the body)</li> <li>■ recognize body differences</li> <li>■ express needs and wishes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ a positive body-image and self-image: self-esteem</li> <li>■ respect for differences</li> <li>■ an appreciation of their own body</li> <li>● an appreciation for the sense of well-being, closeness and trust created by body experience and experience of bonding</li> <li>● respect for gender equality</li> </ul>
Fertility and reproduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ pregnancy, birth and babies</li> <li>■ basics of human reproduction (where babies come from)</li> <li>● different ways to become part of a family (e.g. adoption)</li> <li>● the fact that some people have babies and some do not</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ talk about these issues by providing them with the correct vocabulary</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● acceptance of different ways of becoming a child of a family</li> </ul>
Sexuality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ enjoyment and pleasure when touching one's own body, early childhood masturbation</li> <li>■ discovery of own body and own genitals</li> <li>■ the fact that enjoyment of physical closeness is a normal part of everyone's life</li> <li>■ tenderness and physical closeness as an expression of love and affection</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ gain an awareness of gender identity</li> <li>■ talk about (un)pleasurable feelings in one's own body</li> <li>■ express own needs, wishes and boundaries, for example in the context of "playing doctor"</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ a positive attitude towards one's body with all its functions = positive body-image</li> <li>■ respect for others</li> <li>● curiosity regarding own and others' bodies</li> </ul>

Excerpt from Page 38 of report

**This report has 2 authors:**

1. The United Nations' authority responsible for public health is called The World Health Organisation (WHO). The WHO has 6 regional offices around the world. The **WHO Regional Office for Europe** is one of these 6 offices and its headquarters is in Copenhagen, Denmark.
  
2. **BZgA** (Bundeszentrale für gesundheitliche Aufklärung), The Federal Centre for Health Education, is a **WHO Collaborative Centre (WHO CC)** based in Cologne, Germany.



Cover page of report

### Learning objectives (5-8 years)

**Key idea:** It is important to understand the difference between biological sex and gender

Learners will be able to:

- ▶ define gender and biological sex and describe how they are different (knowledge);
- ▶ reflect on how they feel about their biological sex and gender (skill).

**Key idea:** Families, individuals, peers and communities are sources of information about sex and gender

Learners will be able to:

- ▶ identify sources of information about sex and gender (knowledge);
- ▶ acknowledge that perceptions about sex and gender are influenced by many different sources (attitudinal).

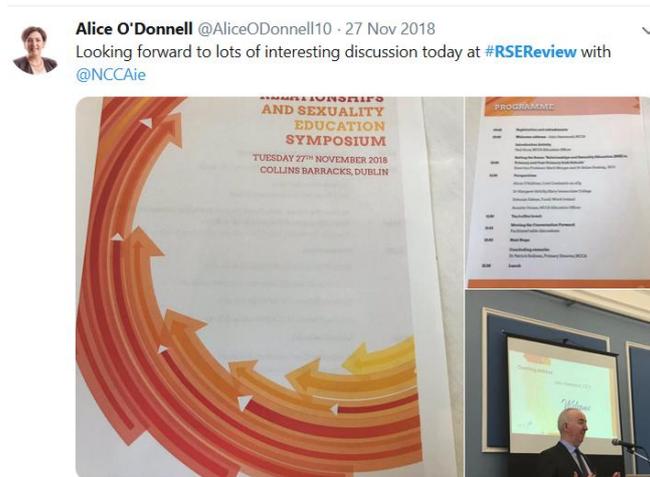
Excerpt from Page 50 of report

## NCCA RSE Symposium 27/11/2018

### 'Minister McHugh welcomes consultation symposium on Relationship and Sexuality Education'

'The Minister for Education and Skills, Joe McHugh, T.D. today (Tuesday 27th November 2018) welcomed the convening of a consultation symposium on Relationships and Sexuality Education. The symposium, which is taking place today in Collins Barracks, Dublin, is being held as part of the consultation underway by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) as a key element of a review of Relationship and Sexuality Education in schools.' (Source: merrionstreet.ie)

Here is a selection of tweets:



 **Sandra Irwin-Gowran** @IrwinGowran · 27 Nov 2018  
Really important and long overdue work being done to bring our RSE programmes into the 21st Century #RSEreview @NCCAie Looking forward to bringing recommendations to .@EducateTogether schools for consultation.

 **TENI** @TENI\_Tweets · 27 Nov 2018  
Today Catherine & Gordon are attending @NCCAie's Relationships & Sexuality Education Symposium. Lots of positive discussion about reviewing the current RSE curriculum, esp. regarding the inclusion of trans and LGBT+ experiences.  
#RSEreview

 **Sandra Irwin-Gowran** @IrwinGowran · 27 Nov 2018  
.@DCU\_JoE research paper on RSE in Irish schools being presented at #RSEreview - outlines 3 approaches to RSE - 1. Abstinence model 2. Comprehensive Model & 3. Holistic Sexuality Education @NCCAie



**NCCA** @NCCAie · 27 Nov 2018

Prof Mark Morgan and Dr Seline Keating from @DublinCityUni presenting on their research paper on RSE in primary and post-primary schools 🌞  
You can download the paper and submit your views on RSE @ [tinyurl.com/yd96733z](https://tinyurl.com/yd96733z)  
[#RSEReview](#)



**Youth Work Ireland**  
@ywirl

Follow

Looking forward to some interesting discussions on the future of RSE @NCCAie  
[#rsereview](#)

2:13 AM - 27 Nov 2018 from Dublin City, Ireland



**Foróige**  
@Foroige

Follow

Delighted to have contributed to the Relationships & Sexuality Education Symposium. More details about Foróige's holistic, evidence based REAL U programme are available on our website. [#RSEReview](#)  
[#REALU](#) [foroige.ie/our-work/relat ...](http://foroige.ie/our-work/relat...)

**Sarah Haslam** @Sarahhaz

Lots of questions about the @Foroige holistic, evidenced based programme- REAL U. For more info visit our website or email [training@foroige.ie](mailto:training@foroige.ie) [foroige.ie/start-club/you...](http://foroige.ie/start-club/you...)  
[#rsereview](#)

2:33 AM - 28 Nov 2018



**PDST HealthWellbeing** @PDST\_Hwellbeing · 28 Nov 2018

It was great to catch up with our esteemed colleague @Paul\_Knox1985 at the @NCCAie RSE Symposium! Paul is now an NCCA Education Officer and is leading out the [#RSEReview](#) - make sure you contribute your opinion at [ncca.ie/en/updates-and...](http://ncca.ie/en/updates-and...)



**SPHE Network** @SPHENetwork · 27 Nov 2018

Prof. Mark Morgan and Dr. Seline Keating @KeatingSeline presented an excellent overview of their research paper written with Dr. Bernie Collins at the RSE Symposium today. A great context to support the RSE review and development @NCCAie @DCU\_IoE

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**SPHE Network** @SPHENetwork · 27 Nov 2018

A really thought provoking and insightful symposium on the review of RSE hosted by @NCCAie today. Great to meet many network colleagues in attendance. Thank you for having us @PSullivan28 @Paul\_Knox1985

In the above tweet SPHE Network (Social Personal and Health Education Network) thank Patrick Sullivan and Paul Knox from the NCCA for having them at the Symposium. According to another tweet above by Professional Development Services for Teachers Health and Wellbeing team, Paul Knox is an NCCA Education Officer and 'is leading out' the RSE review.

On the 19/6/2018 Paul Knox retweets a tweet from the [Irish Family Planning Association](#) (see below). This tweet gives a link to a page on the [International Planned Parenthood Federation website](#).



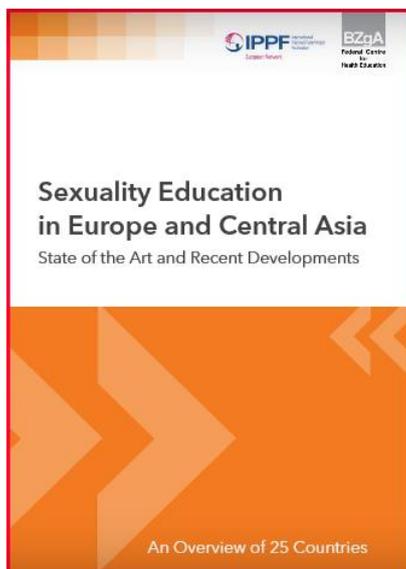
The [link](#) in the above tweet brings you to a page entitled 'Sexuality education: where it stands across Europe and Central Asia' which provides links to **two BZgA/IPPF reports** (see below page 9) which have information on 'Sexuality Education' in Ireland.

Here are 4 details from this page:

WE LOOKED AT  
**SEX ED**-PROGRAMMES  
 IN 25 COUNTRIES ACROSS EUROPE & CENTRAL ASIA  
 AND FOUND THAT:

- 1 **PROGRESS** is underway, with 21 countries supporting sex ed through laws, policies or strategies
- 2 In 11 countries it is **MANDATORY** in schools
- 3 In 10 countries sex ed is **COMPREHENSIVE**
- 4 In 12 countries there is still strong **OPPOSITION**
- 5 Educators need more **TRAINING** to provide sex ed

IPPF  
 www.IPPFEN.ORG



- In the majority of countries in the European Region there is a clear need to train teachers to teach sexuality education, and there is a great need to develop the appropriate educational materials for that purpose. Only in a handful of countries throughout the region has the training of future teachers on sexuality education been included in the training curricula of teacher training colleges and universities. The same should now be done in all other countries where sexuality education is mandatory or optional. The WHO/BZgA *Standards for Sexuality Education in Europe* (2010) and the publication *Training Matters: A Framework for Core Competencies of Sexuality Educators* (BZgA, 2017) can be useful for this purpose.

An overview of the current status of sexuality education in 25 countries of the WHO European Region by the IPPF and BZgA. Ireland's overview is on page 104.

The excerpt (rhs) is taken from page 185 – [Training Matters: A Framework for Core Competencies of Sexuality Educators](#) (BZgA & WHO Regional Office for Europe 2017) is recommended here.

**Paul Knox (NCCA) retweets:**



**Selection of tweets from Educate & Celebrate:**





**Educate&Celebrate** @EducateCelebrat · Jul 16

Are you prepared for compulsory #RSE? We empower & support you to embed #gender, #genderidentity #sexualorientation into the fabric of your school. Join our well established #PRIDE in #Inclusion Award 2019-20 for a Sept start! [educateandcelebrate.org/award/](http://educateandcelebrate.org/award/) ❤️



**Pride in Inclusion Award \* Educate & Celebrate**

Is your curriculum LGBT+ inclusive? Need help with RSE provision, teacher training and resources? We deliver a relaxed, fun and interactive day that... [educateandcelebrate.org](http://educateandcelebrate.org)

↳ Educate&Celebrate Retweeted



**Educate&Celebrate** @EducateCelebrat · Jul 3

Why we need #lgbtplus inclusive teaching...from nursery @SadiqKhan @CityHallLabour #pride #Pride2019 See @elly\_barnes @prideyouthnetw1 on The World Stage 5pm @PrideInLondon talking #pupilvoice #intersectionality 🌈🌟



**Josina Calliste** @Jo\_zinaC

A happy tale of growing up. So tonight at the London Mayor's Pride Reception, I bumped into one of my music teachers from secondary school. I knew @elly\_barnes had been doing great things since I left Stokey, with ...

Show this thread

💬 7 ❤️ 20

↳ Educate&Celebrate Retweeted



**Pride Youth Network** @prideyouthnetw1 · Jul 4

#activism #campaigning #lgbtplus #intersex #nonbinary #intersectionality #gender #genderidentity #GenderNeutralschools #trans #pride2019 🌈🦋



**Educate&Celebrate** @EducateCelebrat · May 21

Learning how to #breakthebinary in our lessons @followDECTC great discussions with staff on how to represent #intersex #RSE and move towards a #genderneutral school #birmingham #gender eliminating #heteronormativity 🌈🦋🌟💜🦋 excellent session @prideyouthnetw1 too! #inclusion 🌟

Educate&Celebrate Retweeted



**My Kid Is Gay** @MyKidsGay · Jul 30

Talking to young kids about gender and gender identity can seem complicated, but @queerkidsstuff's @lindzamer is here to help! [buff.ly/2LMZ8it](https://buff.ly/2LMZ8it)



New Yorker [Lindsay Amer](#) of [Queer Kid Stuff](#) (LGBTQ+ vids for kids) is recommended in the above tweet. Here is her linked article:

### ***'Here's How to Explain Gender Identity and Expression to Kids***

Just because gender seems complicated to us grown-ups doesn't mean that it has to be complicated for kids. We have had many years of the gender binary and stereotypical gender presentations burned into our brains, but kids haven't! So really, it doesn't have to be a big complex conversation.

Here, we're talking about the difference between gender identity and gender expression. The first thing I would do is define those two ideas independently.

Gender identity is internal. It's about how you feel about your gender. That has to do with what pronouns you use—i.e. the words that stand in for your name based on your gender. Some people use “she” pronouns (she/her/hers), some use “he” pronouns (he/him/his), some use “they” pronouns (they/them/theirs), and some use other gender-neutral pronouns (e.g. xe/hir/hirs). By contrast, gender expression is external. It's how you present your gender to other people through your clothes, hair, makeup, lack of makeup, etc.

That's how you talk about these ideas separately. Now that you've got that sorted out, then you can talk about how they relate to each other! You've already given the perfect explanation in your question: you can't tell what someone's pronouns are just by looking at them. That's exactly the lesson you should teach your kids. It's simple and straightforward. Teach them that you can have short hair and use “she” pronouns and you can wear dresses and use “he” pronouns. Instead of assuming someone's gender or pronouns from their appearance, you can teach your kids to ask for someone's pronouns first. So far, so simple.

What can be difficult about this (for us grown-ups) is explaining different facets of gender expression. I've found that it's difficult to explain exactly what feminine, masculine, and androgynous mean without using gendered language. So, what I recommend is using examples. Take a look at the people in your life and look up a couple of queer public figures online. Do you know people who present feminine? How about anyone who is androgynous? Now how about masculine? Make sure you include non-binary and trans people in your examples. Don't forget people of color too! Show your kids the pictures you've found and talk about their pronouns and how that compares to how they present themselves. Show them that you can't know someone's pronouns just by looks alone with a diverse representation of presentation and pronoun combinations.

You can continue instilling this lesson for as long as you need. Encourage your kids to get in the habit of asking people's pronouns when they meet someone new, and be sure to lead by example in your own life. It's respectful and polite and ensures that they don't misgender someone. Allow them to experiment with their own pronouns and presentation as well. Now is the time for them to play dress up and pretend play with different genders. Don't just teach them about other people's identities and expressions, show them that these lessons apply to them as well.'



LGBTQ+ KINGS & QUEENS (ft. Ms.Ter) - Drag: QUEER KID STUFF #21

165,230 views · Jun 21, 2017

LIKE DISLIKE SHARE

A Queer Kid Stuff [YouTube](#) video talking about Pride Month and Drag. Lindsay Amer (rhs).



**Lindsay Amer** @lindzamer · Feb 16

New Yorkers! What are you doing tomorrow??? Come out to the Children's Museum of Manhattan for a QKS LIVE performance! 2pm & 3pm!



**Queer Kid Stuff** @queerkidstuff

WHOA THERE WAIT A MINUTE!!! What are you doing Sunday? Maybe after brunch, you wanna go to the @cmomNYC and sing some songs and listen to some stories?? YA??? WOOOOOOHOOO!! [buff.ly/2Gw2S5s](http://buff.ly/2Gw2S5s)

1 6



**Lindsay Amer** @lindzamer · Feb 14

Title for my memoir: How To Brainwash Children and Change The World

1 1 4



**Lindsay Amer** @lindzamer · Jun 3, 2018

I love very few things more than educators telling me they use @queerkidstuff videos in their curriculum 😊🏳️‍🌈

1 1 16

In one of the above tweets Lindsay Amer writes, 'Title for my memoir: How to Brainwash Children and Change The World'.

This echoes a post on Instagram by an Irish adult entertainment collective called [Glitter HOLE](#). In early 2019 Glitter Hole were involved in a controversy around Drag Story Time in Dublin's Deansgrange library. [Gript Media](#) reported on the controversy:

 **Gript**  
April 12 · 🌐

DRAG queens 'Glitter Hole' to read to 3 years olds in Deansgrange Library. Parents have expressed concern at a decision by Deansgrange Library to host three drag queens, from a collective named Glitter Hole, to read to 3-7 year olds in the library.

"This seems wildly inappropriate. Since when did taxpayer-funded libraries think drag queens with sexually suggestive names are a good fit for 3 year-old children?" one parent told Gript Media. "Our kids are getting saturated with these messages, but you don't expect it to be part of a visit to the library."

"Most parents are inclined to keep the kids away from this stuff but there's a group who are pushing this and my worry is that these performances will be in schools next and they wouldn't be shy about telling you that you are bigoted for not wanting your child to watch a act from a group called "glitter hole". I feel people need to wake up. The government is talking about regulating harmful and sexualised online content, but at the same time they're putting this content on for our children in the local library. It's very upsetting".

What do YOU think? Let us know in the comments below.  
[#GriptNews](#)

*Gript Media*

**Instagram** [Log in](#) | [Sign up](#)



85 likes

glitter\_hole Come to Party in the Park and we can indoctrinate your kids with our gay stories 🙄

MAY 19, 2018

**When the Deansgrange Library controversy erupted, this Instagram picture was immediately removed from the Glitter Hole Instagram account. This is the first time this Instagram picture has been published since then.**



[Lady Grew at Glitter Hole](#)

This is a sample of a Glitter Hole adult entertainment show. The performer wearing the Santa Claus hat is an entertainer from New York called Kate McGrew aka Lady Grew.



In this [2019 twitter thread](#) there is discussion as to the suitability of allowing an adult entertainment group like Glitter Hole read to 3 year olds in the library.

**Drag Queen Story Hour (DQSH) has over 30 chapters in the US with several international ones.**

In June 2019 there was a Health Promotion Conference in the [Health Promotion Research Centre \(HPRC\)](#) in NUI Galway, 'Building a Healthy Ireland: Promoting Health and Wellbeing in Educational Settings', in collaboration with 'the Department of Health, Health Service Executive, Association of Health Promotion Ireland and the Department of Education and Skills.'

Like the **BZgA** in Germany, **NUIG's Health Promotion Research Centre (HPRC) is a World Health Organisation Collaborative Centre (WHO CC)**. [Fiona Forman](#) was a speaker at NUIG's HPRC WHO CC's conference in June 2019 and here is a selection of her tweets:



**Fiona Forman** @FionaWellBeing · Jun 13

Great to get the opportunity to deliver a presentation on the Weaving Well-Being programme in NUIG this morning at the Health Promotion Conference. Really enjoyed the other presentations & getting the chance to hear international perspectives on well-being in schools #HPRC2019



**Fiona Forman** @FionaWellBeing · Jun 30

Amazing that over 250 teachers have signed up to our face to face summer courses around the country starting tomorrow! Shout out to our fantastic new facilitators including @MissWardsClass @rixonstephen @WorkWellbeing4u! So thrilled to have you on the team! #weavingwellbeing



**Fiona Forman** @FionaWellBeing · Jun 29

Woke up to the great news from Australia that Weaving Well-Being is already a best-seller from @HawkerBrownlow! What an incredible start to its journey Down Under! #DreamsDoComeTrue

Pinned Tweet



**Fiona Forman** @FionaWellBeing · Feb 6

If you're interested in school, parent, or student talks on well-being check out my details below! #Wellbeing

**Well-being in Schools Facilitator**

**Well-Being**  
THE MORE YOU WEAVE...  
THE BETTER YOU FEEL!

 I am a primary school teacher, well-being in schools facilitator/trainer and co-author of the **Weaving Well-Being Programme**.  
[www.orb.ie/wwwb](http://www.orb.ie/wwwb)

I hold an M. Sc in Applied Positive Psychology, which is the science of well-being. I am passionate about placing well-being at the heart of school life and empowering teachers, parents and children to understand and enhance their own mental health.

I have designed and delivered many courses and sessions on the subject of well-being and I am available to deliver talks, workshops and training to teachers, pupils and parents.

**Talks/Workshops include:**

**For Teachers:**

- Nurturing Teacher Well-Being through Positive Psychology
- Enhancing Children's Well-Being – Approaches from Positive Psychology
- Developing a Whole School Approach to Well-Being
- Building Resilient Children
- An Overview of Positive Psychology and the Weaving Well-Being Programme

**For Parents:**

- Raising Resilient Children
- An Overview of Positive Psychology and the Weaving Well-Being Programme

**For Children:**

- The Power of Positivity



**Fiona Forman** @FionaWellBeing · Jun 17

Aw thanks so much for your kind words @ImtaBrendan! I feel so lucky to have a background in Positive Psychology as it provides me with so many fantastic skills and strategies that I love to share! Thanks again for all of your encouragement!

**Dr Brendan O'Sullivan** @ImtaBrendan

Replying to @MrM\_Hughes @morris9\_emily

I think that @FionaWellBeing is one of the best voices in Ireland on personal development.



**Fiona Forman** @FionaWellBeing · Jun 4



**Supporting LGBTQ Students in Elementary School**

Three strategies elementary school teachers can use to foster a sense of inclusion for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer students.

[edutopia.org](http://edutopia.org)

4/6/19 Fiona Forman tweets this article published in May 2019 by an American educator called Paul France in a magazine called Edutopia:

### ‘Supporting LGBTQ Students in Elementary School

**Three strategies elementary school teachers can use to foster a sense of inclusion for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer students.**

“Paul, do you have a girlfriend?” Parker asked me.

“I don’t,” I replied succinctly, hoping to avoid the topic altogether.

“Why?” she queried.

“Because I don’t want one,” I said.

“Why?” she asked again, smiling up at me.

It was clear I wasn’t getting out of this one. This first grader had questions—and would demand answers.

“Because I have a boyfriend,” I finally exhaled.

“Oh, that’s weird,” she said.

“I understand. Sometimes when things are different, they seem a little weird,” I replied. “Why do you think it’s weird?”

“Well, I just don’t like when people make fun of you. I feel bad for you.”

In these few minutes, it seemed as though my heart was broken and put back together all at once.

We adults often think of sexuality and gender as things that are out of reach for students—especially our youngest ones. We project our discomfort on them, assuming that discussing sexuality, biological sex, or gender is inappropriate for young students. But it’s clear from conversations like the one I had with Parker that children come into our classrooms with a wealth of knowledge.

One of our jobs as educators is to welcome students' perspectives into the classroom. But we can also dismantle ways of thinking that reinforce the gender dichotomy and heteronormativity, and we must create safe spaces for children to explore their identities and empathize with those who are different from them.

In 2017, the CDC estimated that 8 percent of high school students identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer (LGBTQ). Kevin Jennings, founder of the Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network, estimates that one in 10 educators in the United States identifies as LGBTQ. These data provide the moral imperative for showing pride in the classroom—for finding ways to include the LGBTQ community in our curriculum. The problem is that most teachers don't know where to start, even in spaces where the LGBTQ community is already welcomed and visible.

### 3 Ways to Create an LGBTQ-Inclusive Classroom

1. Include LGBTQ children's literature in your class library: As educators, we should provide both windows and mirrors in our curriculum, ensuring that our book selection represents a diverse array of people and identities. This includes the LGBTQ community. While you may not know it yet—especially if you teach young children—there are students who will identify as LGBTQ at some point in their lives. Our job is to provide a safe space and role models for them as they age.

This also means that we must represent the intersectionality that exists in the LGBTQ community, sharing stories of different genders, ethnicities, races, religions, and classes.

Here are a few of my book recommendations, which are mostly for grades K to 5:

- *All Are Welcome* by Alexandra Penfold and Suzanne Kaufman
- *Julián Is a Mermaid* by Jessica Love
- *Pride: The Story of Harvey Milk and the Rainbow Flag* by Rob Sanders
- *Queer Heroes: Meet 52 LGBTQ Heroes From the Past and Present* by Arabelle Sicardi
- *Pink Is for Boys* by Robb Pearlman
- *A Family Is a Family Is a Family* by Sara O'Leary
- *George* by Alex Gino
- *The Boy and the Bindi* by Vivek Shraya

2. Rethink practices that reinforce the gender dichotomy: Gender is constructed through intergenerational experiences and social norms. Once we're aware of this, we can deconstruct the gender dichotomy and rebuild it as a fluid spectrum.

There are some simple ways to do this. Start saying, "Good morning, everyone!" instead of, "Good morning, boys and girls!" Have critical conversations with your kids about the many assumptions we make based on gender, providing counterexamples, like boys who like to sing or girls who play sports.

I've even written gender out of the stories I write with my class. In one instance, I was writing a fairy tale adaptation of Cinderella, modeling for my class.

"Is it a boy or a girl?" one student queried.

"Maybe we don't need to assign our character a gender," I replied, using the pronoun *their* deliberately throughout.

3. Capitalize on teachable moments: My experience with Parker didn't happen because I planned it. It happened because Parker wanted to know me better—she wanted to find out about a part of my personal life. Over the course of her rather short life, Parker had learned that lots of adults have special people in their lives, and when those people aren't husbands or wives, they are often boyfriends or girlfriends. To her, it seemed only natural to ask.

I could have shied away from the conversation, as I intended to do at the outset. In hindsight, I'm glad I took the teachable moment by the horns.

If you're an LGBTQ educator like me, embracing these moments allows us to share a piece of ourselves that can provide either a window or a mirror into a whole set of stories to which most of our children have not been exposed. If you're not, such moments provide you an opportunity to demonstrate how to be an ally for the LGBTQ community.

It's scary, I know. For so many of us, this is uncharted territory. But to ignore these moments would be to operate in opposition to justice. To quiet students' voices would mean crushing autonomy, courage, and vulnerability. And as educators, we cannot and must not do that.

We have a responsibility, you see. And as we enter into Pride Month, I hope it's one that you don't take lightly.'

### Paul Knox (NCCA) retweets:



Some of the books that feature in the above tweet appear in a [Questioning LGBT Education](#) ('British parent deeply concerned that LGBT in schools has gone way beyond "a book with 2 mums" and into indoctrination. Doing the useless media's job for them.')

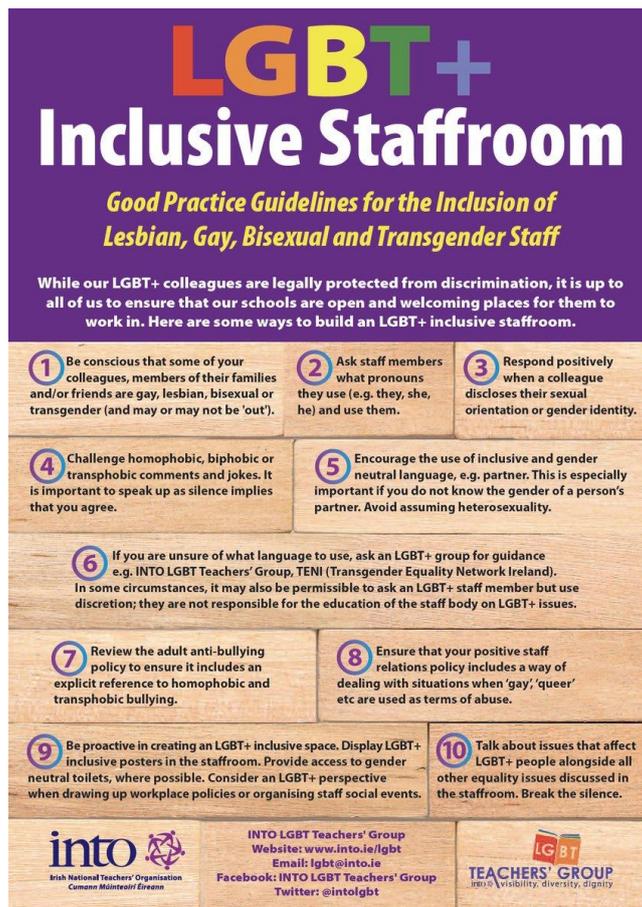


In the Questioning LGBT Education YouTube video, an analysis is done of the book 'King & King'; CBC's video diary of [Leo](#), a 13 year old child on hormone blockers attending the [Tavistock Centre](#); [Andrew Moffat](#), a Personal Social Health Education (PSHE) teacher from Parkfield Community School in Birmingham, who is in the middle of an LGBT teaching row; [Drag Queen Story Time UK](#) (DQST) etc.



In September 2019 [The Teaching Council](#) of Ireland held their annual event [Feilte](#), this year in NUI Galway. The [INTO LGBT+ Teachers Group](#) had a stand. Many of the books from Paul Knox's retweet were featured at the stand. [Cecilia Gavigan](#) of Balbriggan Educate Together National School said that the stand was about proactive measures for LGBT inclusion in classrooms as a preventative strategy for the anti-bullying guidelines from 2013. She also said that they were asked to do this work because in the SPHE curriculum 'it asks us to look at the diversity of families. So, these [pointing to table display] are supporting teachers to achieve the objectives already in the SPHE curriculum.' She said that from Junior Infants up to 6<sup>th</sup> class the objective is that children become aware of the diversity of families in society.

Cecilia Gavigan also spoke about the [INTO LGBT+ Inclusive Staffroom](#) poster saying it's an adult-based resource:



Patrick Sullivan (NCCA) tweets:



The [INTO LGBT+ Different Families, Same Love competition](#), 'We are calling on teachers to take action in their classrooms to celebrate the diversity of people and families in Ireland and to address homophobic and transphobic bullying in schools.'

## NCCA July 2019

### 'Draft Report on the Review of Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) in primary and post-primary schools'

#### Summary of the draft Report on the Review of RSE



NCCA @NCCAie - Jul 9

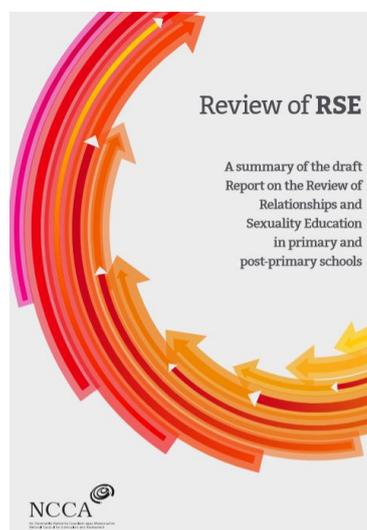
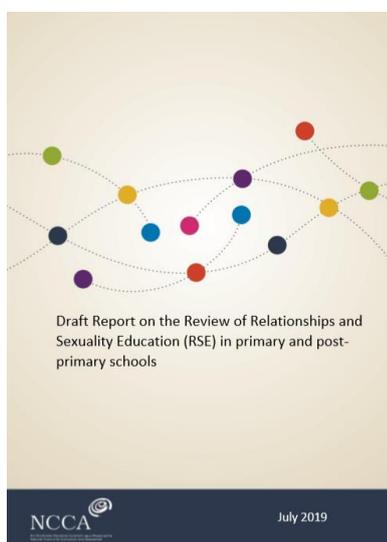
Find out what students, teachers, school leaders, parents, and other stakeholders said about their experience of Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) in our schools. Read our draft advice and tell us what is needed to enhance the provision of RSE:



#### **Relationship Sexuality Education; RSE**

The NCCA have been asked to undertake a major review of RSE by former Minister for Education and Skills Richard Bruton TD.

ncca.ie



#### **Review of RSE**

A summary of the draft Report on the Review of Relationships and Sexuality Education in primary and post-primary schools

*'Many stakeholders suggested that the RSE curriculum should meet best international standards as set down by the **WHO in its Standards for Sexuality Education in Europe (2010)** and by **UNESCO's International Technical Guidance on Sexuality Education (2018)**.'* (page 58, Draft Report)

*'RSE should adopt a **holistic approach**...Across all **stakeholders** there was strong agreement that RSE needs to be more than information about biological aspects of growing up and sexual activity. It needs a **holistic approach** that balances discussion about the risks and dangers associated with relationships and sexual activity with discussion about the **positive, healthy and enjoyable aspects of relationships**.'* (page 11, Summary)

*'Approaches to RSE should be grounded in the **rights and needs of young people**...The foundation for agreeing an approach to RSE must be grounded in the rights and needs of children and young people. These have been set out in numerous **international human rights treaties and instruments that refer to the right to education and the highest standard of health**. Many students expressed frustration that their right to RSE was not guaranteed and was far too dependent on what school they were in or what teacher they happened to have.'* (page 11, Summary)

**Submissions to the NCCA should be made using the NCCA template or filling out the online survey before the deadline of Friday 25<sup>th</sup> October 2019**

# NCCA Symposium on the Review of Relationships and Sexuality Education

- 10<sup>th</sup> September 2019 The Hibernia Conference Centre, Dublin Castle -

 **NCCA**  
@NCCAie Follow

Chairperson Prof. Mary O'Sullivan welcoming over 120 delegates to The Symposium on the Review of Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE)  
An exciting day ahead 🌞🌞🌞  
[#RSEreview](#)



2:20 AM - 10 Sep 2019

1 Retweet 13 Likes

 **Foróige** @Foroige · Sep 10

Delighted to be with the @nccae today to consider the draft report and findings from their extensive consultation of Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) in schools. [#RSEreview](#)



1 4

 **Sarah Haslam** @Sarahhaz · Sep 10

.@ComhairleNaNog1 member Caoifhlinn highlighting what young people named as important for RSE: holistic, consistent, relevant, inclusive provided by adults who are open, confident, comfortable and trained in a high quality curriculum [#rsereview](#)



## Ireland and the United Nations

Ireland has been a member of the United Nations since 1955. Here are the Irish-signed international UN treaties that pledges children's access to education, and to sexual and reproductive health information.

1990 – The UN Convention on the Rights of The Child which includes the right to education. A child is defined in the UN Convention as a person under the age of 18 years.

1994 – The International Conference on Population and Development's Programme of Action.

2015 – The Incheon Declaration, The Education 2030 Framework for Action\*

2015 – 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development – 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)\*

2018 - UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

**\*See pages 69+ for Timeline for United Nations Sustainable Development and Ireland**

You are in: > DONEGALDEMOCRAT > HOME

NEWS

### Minister McHugh takes to social media over claims about sex education

"ALL SCHOOLS SHOULD TEACH CHILDREN RELATIONSHIP AND SEXUALITY EDUCATION"



by **Connie Duffy** 25 Sept 2019  
Email: [connie.duffy@donegaldemocrat.ie](mailto:connie.duffy@donegaldemocrat.ie)

share 0 comments



'[Minister for Education and Skills, Joe McHugh](#), has taken to social media to what he described as "correct some claims out there about sex education" particularly a spurious suggestion that young children would be taught about inappropriately.

"I want to be 100% clear on this. All schools should teach children relationship and sexuality education. This education and how it is delivered is vitally important for our young people. It is currently under review by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment and whatever sex education is taught, it will be appropriate to a child's age and their development

"The review has been transparent since the start. Anyone could have done a quick check to see what the NCCA is doing, anyone could have made their views known at: <https://www.ncca.ie/.../review-of-relationships-and-sexuality> "

He added that part of the review looked at international research and reports.

"This is a diligent and professional approach and it is what we should expect. We should also expect that people would not jump to conclusions, spread misinformation or peddle wild claims that something wholly inappropriate is going to be included in a curriculum for young children.

"Our entire focus is on preparing young people for adult life, on emphasising the importance of respect for yourself and each other and helping young people to develop and mature in a positive light," he said.' **25/9/19**

# Positive Sexual Health Conference & Youth Summit

## Young People Empowered and Informed

*The Round Room, Mansion House, Dublin Friday November 1st, 2019 10am - 4pm*

### About this Event

This event will highlight and discuss the issue of sexual health and the rights of young people to inclusive, holistic and accurate sex education and information. The event will feature key note speakers, interactive workshops, panel discussion and arts based sessions and will provide a space for young people to have their voices heard on sexual health rights. The conference and youth summit will open and build on a national dialogue to share learning between young people and decision makers on the issue of sexual health and the rights of young people.

This event is being led by Youth Work Ireland's '**Sex Talk Team**' who are a group of passionate and active young people who have one clear aim - *to make sex education for young people, by young people and to young people!*

### [DOWNLOAD BROCHURE>>](#)

### Target Audience:

This conference is for young people aged 14+, youth workers, youth educators, policy makers and anyone interested in learning more about how to support young people around issues of sexual health.

### Speakers & Contributors

Riyadh Khalaf - Blogger, Author & Broadcaster

Roe McDermott - Journalist

Anna Keogh aka 'bananas sex ed' - Sex Educator

Louise Bruton - [leglessindublin.com](http://leglessindublin.com)

Robbie Lawlor - Doctoral Scholar in Sexuality Studies, DCU & Co-Founder of Access to Medicines Ireland

Annette Honan - NCCA

John Gilmore - Sr. Lecturer at [Canterbury University](http://Canterbury University)

Sue Redmond - Mindfulness & Leadership Education Consultant

Senator Ivana Bacik

Daniel Airey - Disability Blogger '[Dan & Darragh Do Ability](http://Dan & Darragh Do Ability)' & First Dates Ireland

*more speakers and contributors to be announced...*

### Topical Workshops

The event will feature interactive workshops for both workers and young people on issues relating to sexual health, including consent, pornography, healthy relationships, body images, self esteem, identity and more.

### Discussions

In Conversations with.... interactive discussion on issues relating to sexual health and the rights of young people to sex education and information.

### Showcase

Showcase of best practice initiatives on sexual health, information and education that are happening in Ireland.

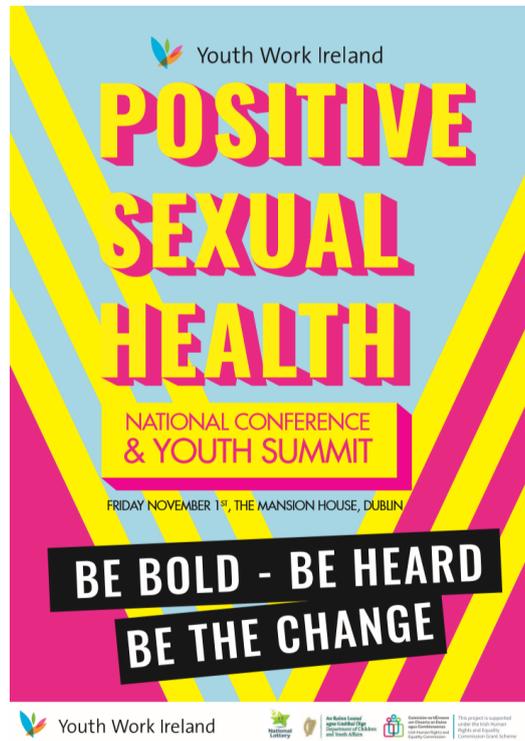
### Fun and Creative Activities

Interactive and arts based space for delegates to explore their rights to sexual health information and education.

### The YES Project Launch

The YES Project (Youth Empowerment in SRE) is a new programme aimed at supporting youth workers educate young people on sexual health. The programme focuses on sexual identity, consent & decision making.

- 'This conference is for young people **14+...**'
- [Anna Keogh](#), one of the speakers, is a youth officer with [Feroige](#) - Feroige liaises with NUIG's [UNESCO Child and Family Research Centre](#) (see page 45). In 2014 [Feroige's REAL U programme](#) (Relationships & Sexuality programme) underwent an extensive evaluation by the UNESCO Child and Family Research Centre in NUIG.
- [Dr Sue Redmond](#), a PhD graduate of NUIG, is one of the speakers. She also worked with [Feroige](#) and was a consultant with [UNESCO](#).
- [John Gilmore](#)'s twitter tagline is 'Uni Lecturer-Nurse-Activist-Killjoy Sexuality-Intersectionality-Inequalities-Delirium-Ethics.'
- 'The event will also feature an arts-based creative fair exploring the [SDGs](#) and how these relate to young people's right to sexual health education' – SDGs refers to the [United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development that Ireland signed up to in 2015](#). There are **17 SDGs** (Sustainable Development Goals).
- [Annette Honan](#) from the [NCCA](#) will be a speaker.
- '[The Sex Talk Team](#) - This event is being planned, hosted and delivered by The Sex Talk Team, a self-named group of passionate and active young people who have a clear ambition - to change how we as a nation talk and learn about sexual health! The group was **formed in January 2019** and their work so far has included a media campaign to **highlight the need to revise and improve sex education in schools** and the delivery of workshops to other young people on the issue of consent. Members of the group have also appeared on Ireland AM, Lunchtime Live with Ciara Kelly, Today FM's The Last Word and **have met with [Minister for Education Joe McHugh T.D.](#)**'



# BE BOLD BE HEARD

## POSITIVE SEXUAL HEALTH

Youth Work Ireland's Positive Sexual Health Conference and Youth Summit will focus on the issue of sexual health and the rights of all young people to inclusive, holistic and accurate sex education. The event will feature dynamic speakers, interactive workshops, panel discussions and arts-based sessions. It will provide a safe space for young people to have their voices heard on sexual health rights and education and will build on a national dialogue to share learning between young people and decision makers on the issue of sexual health.

**The day will feature:**

- Resources and training for practitioners and professionals.
- Expert speakers on sexual health.
- A safe space for young people to have fun and be heard.
- Workshops on topical issues in sexual health.
- Networking, dialogue and exchange of ideas.
- Entertainment and fun activities.

## SPEAKERS AND CONTRIBUTORS

**Riyadh Khalaf:** Blogger, Author and Broadcaster  
**Anna Keogh aka 'Bananas\_Sex\_Ed':** Sex Educator and Youth Worker  
**Roe McDermott:** Journalist, Sex Columnist and Fullbright Awardee.  
**Louise Bruton:** Disability Activist and Journalist  
**Robbie Lawlor:** HIV Awareness Activist and Sexual Health Educator  
**Annette Honan:** National Council for Curriculum and Assessment  
**John Gilmore:** Senior Lecturer at Canterbury University  
**Dr. Sue Redmond:** Mindfulness and Leadership Education Consultant  
**Senator Ivana Bacik:** Senator and Barrister  
**Daniel Airey:** Disability Blogger and First Dates Ireland Contestant  
**Caroline Stott:** Bounce Consulting  
**Louise Monaghan:** National Youth Health Programme  
**Kiki Martire:** SpunOut

## WORKSHOPS & CREATIVE ACTIVITIES

The event will feature interactive workshops for both practitioners and young people on issues relating to sexual health including; consent, pornography, healthy relationships, body image, identity, self-esteem and more. The event will also feature an arts-based creative fair exploring the SDGs and how these relate to young people's right to sexual health education.

**RIYADH KHALAF**

**ANNA KEOGH – BANANAS\_SEX\_ED**

**ROBBIE LAWLOR**

**ROE McDERMOTT**

**SENATOR IVANA BACIK**

**JOHN GILMORE**

**DANIEL AIREY**



## MORNING SESSION

### Welcome by the Sex Talk Team

Members of the Sex Talk Team will kick off the event, providing background to the Positive Sexual Health campaign and outlining the programme for the day.

### Keynote Addresses

Our expert speakers will speak about their experiences of sexual health education and what things they feel need to change in order to ensure young people are empowered and informed to make safe decisions.

### In Conversation With...

An interactive panel discussion with expert speakers, followed by a Q&A session.

### Sexual Health Rights Session

Delegates will share their views and consider the rights of young people to sexual health education that includes the needs of all young people in an interactive and fun roundtable session.

## AFTERNOON SESSION

### Workshops

Delegates will be offered a number of workshop choices relating to sexual health issues, such as consent, healthy relationships, identity, pornography, and self-esteem.

### #campaignforchange2020

Together we will discuss and choose the topic we will campaign on in 2020 - what will it be? Have your say!

### The Yes Project Launch & Professional Training

This new European-wide Erasmus+ funded education programme will support youth workers and educators in their practice with young people around issues of sexual health. The YES Project focuses on three key areas: (i) Consent (ii) Healthy Relationships & Sexual Identity and (iii) The Impact of Wider Influences on Decision Making.



\*draft programme - subject to change

# BE BOLD - BE HEARD BE THE CHANGE

## THE SEX TALK TEAM

This event is being planned, hosted and delivered by The Sex Talk Team, a self-named group of passionate and active young people who have a clear ambition - to change how we as a nation talk and learn about sexual health! The group was formed in January 2019 and their work so far has included a media campaign to highlight the need to revise and improve sex education in schools and the delivery of workshops to other young people on the issue of consent. Members of the group have also appeared on Ireland AM, Lunchtime Live with Ciara Kelly, Today FM's The Last Word and have met with Minister for Education Joe McHugh T.D.

## WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

This conference is open to all **young people** (post primary upwards), **youth workers**, **educators**, **policy makers**, **volunteers** and anyone interested in learning how to support young people around issues of sexual health.

## WHEN AND WHERE

**DATE:** Friday November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019  
**VENUE:** The Round Room, Mansion House, Dawson Street, Dublin 2  
**TIME:** 10am - 4pm

## HOW TO REGISTER

Find out more about this event and how you can register at:  
[www.youthworkireland.ie/conference](http://www.youthworkireland.ie/conference)  
 or contact [ghalpin@youthworkireland.ie](mailto:ghalpin@youthworkireland.ie) / 01 8584512

## Prominent advocates for RSE change in Ireland

### Kate Dawson

- January 2019 it came to our attention that an academic named Kate Dawson from National University of Ireland Galway (NUIG) had appeared on a TV programme 'This Morning' on ITV. Kate Dawson did her masters with **NUIG's Health Promotion Research Centre (HPRC) which is also a World Health Organisation Collaborative Centre (WHO CC)**, and according to newspaper [The Irish Catholic](#) is currently a researcher with **NUIG's UNESCO Child and Family Research Centre**. On this show she discussed her belief that it would be good for younger children to learn about their bodies. On 18/1/2019 the Mirror UK reported on this interview with the title ["Sex expert sparks disgust after saying 8-year-olds should be taught about masturbation"](#). The article states that, speaking to Eamonn Holmes and Ruth Langsford, she said: 'When we work in primary schools, I think it's very important to talk about exploring your bodies in a private place.' She says it can 'feel nice'. She said that young girls can be 'disgusted' by their genitalia, and states that during a class activity she brings in realistic illustrations of the vulva and of the penis. She said this can generate a 'big laugh'. In the article there is a short video-clip of the interview.
- 14/1/19 The Sun UK newspaper wrote an article about Kate Dawson and her research (see tweet below dated 17/1/19 where Kate Dawson **thinks** the newspaper for the review). The title is ["Rutting, Writhing and Arithmetic! Kids "should analyse porn videos at school to prepare them for real-life sex"."](#) The newspaper states that Kate Dawson has led the 'National University of Ireland study'. The author writes, 'Psychologists want youngsters to get lessons in how to "critically examine" X-rated movies the way they would books...Experts believe watching all sorts of genitalia would help kids "reduce the shame" and ease worries about their own privates...Other subjects for "porn literacy education" could include talks on bondage.' The journalist, Shaun Wooller, suggests that 3 possible DVDs for the curriculum could be:
  - 'Deep Throat - Medical drama about struggling to get an orgasm. Great for written biology tests, but avoid oral examination.'
  - 'Debbie does Dallas - Cheerleader Debbie and pals grapple with dilemmas of sexual politics and female empowerment- in between loads of explicit humping.'
  - 'Confessions of A Window Cleaner - Teaches school leavers practical skills in how to give housewives a good servicing – and how to clean the window.'

See below a selection of Kate Dawson's public tweets:



Kate Dawson Retweeted

**Mary Mitchell O'Connor** @mitchelloconnor · Jan 11

Delighted to announce €1,250,000 philanthropic investment from #LifesTooGood for #DrPadraigMcNeela & his team collaboration of #Psychology & #DramaStudies @nuigalway to develop research & online toolkit for #ActiveConsent #HigherEducationInstitutions @Education\_Ire #StudentsNo1



2 18 44

**Kate Dawson** @kateDawson6 · Jan 17

Thanks @shaungw for reviewing our article and raising awareness about the importance of #porn #literacy. Talking about porn gives us the opportunity to talk about the most important aspects of sex, #consent, and #pleasure. @PMacneela @SaoirseNG @nuigPsychology @NUIGalwayPress

**Shaun Wooller** @shaungw

EXCL: Children should be taught to analyse #porn videos at school to prepare them for real-life sex, a study says. Psychologists want youngsters to get lessons in how to "critically examine" X-rated #movies the way they would #books. thesun.co.uk/news/8194741/p...

1 1 3

**Kate Dawson** @kateDawson6 · Jan 17

Was totally unaware that @TheSun wrote this article about our research and teaching #porn #literacy in schools! Thanks @HatHamiltonITV for the heads up!



**Kids 'should analyse porn videos at school to prepare them for real-li...**

CHILDREN should be taught to analyse porn videos at school to prepare them for real-life sex, a study says. Psychologists want youngsters to get... thesun.co.uk

2 1 1

**Kate Dawson** @kateDawson6 · Jan 18

Thank you to @EamonnHolmes and @ruthlangford for facilitating an honest and open conversation about some tricky topics. It was a pleasure meeting you both. Thanks @ITV @thismorning for having me!

**This Morning** @thismorning

Do we need to be talking more to children and teenagers about masturbation, pleasure and pornography? @kateDawson6 says yes, and here's why... itv.com/thismorning/ho...

5 6 54

**Kate Dawson** @kateDawson6 · Jan 18

I'll be on @thismorning at 10.30 today talking about why we need to talk to kids and teenagers about #masturbation, #pleasure and #porn. Send good vibes! Feel a teeny bit nervous!

35 2 46

**Kate Dawson** @kateDawson6 · Jan 26

Yes! We need need more of this!

**Sarah Sproule** @thetalkdotie

What convos have you had about consent in your family? @CarolineWest\_IE and I talk to @NewstalkFM #consent #sexeducation #parenting #parentingtips twitter.com/NewstalkFM/sta...

5

**Kate Dawson** @kateDawson6 · Jan 28

This is us! School-based and online workshops will facilitate exploration of [#consent](#) and [#porn](#). Heres to better [#SexEd!](#)

**Padraig MacNeela** @PMacneela  
Transition year students to have access to sexual consent workshops  
[irishtimes.com/news/education...](http://irishtimes.com/news/education...) via @IrishTimes

2 15

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**Kate Dawson** @kateDawson6 · Jan 27

Some of you may have noticed I've been [#trolled](#) a lot since my segment on [#ITV](#) [#ThisMorning](#). This one is defo my fave and I 100% take it as a compliment! <3

**lynn robertson** @lynnrob94466... · 2h

Replying to @kateDawson6 and @thismorning

Kate ... you are one of the many many reasons women should be at home. A total fucking embarrassment.

9 1 19

**Kate Dawson** @kateDawson6 · Jan 29

If we only talk about the risks we continue to pass on shame and embarrassment about sexual exploration and pleasure. Youth need information about porn but also about the realities of sex so that they can make these distinctions for themselves. [#sexedbill](#) [#Ireland](#) @IrishTimesPol

**Irish Times Politics** @IrishTimesPol  
New sex ed curriculum should cover negative effects of porn - report  
[irishtimes.com/news/politics/...](http://irishtimes.com/news/politics/...) via @IrishTimesPol

4 11

**Kate Dawson** @kateDawson6 · Feb 14

Tune in to @RadioRayRTE today at 3pm! I'll be talking to Ray about my PhD research and the need for [#PornLiteracy](#) in [#Ireland](#). [#SexEdBill](#) [#ActiveConsent](#) @PMacneela @SaoirseNG @NUIGalwayPress @nuigPsychology

1 2 11



**Kate Dawson** @kateDawson6 · Feb 8

Probably the scariest thing I've ever done but I am SO happy to have participated in such an enjoyable event. Thank you @lostinskylines for putting me up for this! #TedxGalway #TEDx #TEDtalks



**TEDxGalway** @TEDxGalway

Introducing our second speaker of the night @kateDawson6 ! Kate is explaining the importance of sex education #TedXGalway

2 replies 6 retweets 30 likes



**Kate Dawson** @kateDawson6 · Feb 7

Thanks @PatKennyNT for having me!

**Pat Kenny Newstalk** @PatKennyNT

LISTEN BACK: We spoke to @nuigalway @kateDawson6 about introducing porn literacy to sex education. #PKNT [newstalk.com/podcasts/The\\_P...](http://newstalk.com/podcasts/The_P...)

1 retweet 7 likes



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**Taryn De Vere** @TarynDeVere

Porn is not inherently bad. There is plenty of porn showing intimacy, consent & mutual pleasure. There is feminist porn, there's all kinds! If people received a good sexual education then they would understand "real life" sex & the importance of consent.

11:18 AM · Apr 7, 2019 · [Twitter for Android](#)

14 Retweets 105 Likes



**Taryn De Vere** @TarynDeVere · Apr 7

Replying to @TarynDeVere

Yes there is horrible & abusive porn but that doesn't mean all porn is bad, nor does it mean all porn is made without the consent of all



**Kate Dawson** @kateDawson6 · Mar 1

I spoke to @TarynDeVere at @HerFamilydotie about our research and the development of evidence-based porn literacy interventions as part of the #ActiveConsent programme. We really need to talk about #porn in #SexEducation. @Herdotie @NUIGalwayPress @Lifes2goodIRL @PMacneela

**Taryn De Vere** @TarynDeVere

"Discussions about porn tend to be negative, and this idea can stop children from seeking help or support if they have an upsetting experience from watching porn".

herfamily.ie/news/nuig-rese...

Show this thread



3

8



Search Twitter



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**Taryn De Vere** @TarynDeVere · Apr 7

Replying to @TarynDeVere

Yes there is horrible & abusive porn but that doesn't mean all porn is bad, nor does it mean all porn is made without the consent of all parties. The important thing if you have kids is to tell them that they might see frightening things online & to come talk to you about it.

1

1

25



**Taryn De Vere** @TarynDeVere · Apr 7

If your kids know sex is meant to be pleasurable and consensual then they'll know they've seen something wrong. As opposed to porn providing their sex ed & violent porn becoming what they think is normal. This is why porn literacy education is important.

1

1

48



Search Twitter



Log in

Sign up



**Kate Dawson** @kateDawson6 · Apr 7

Word



**Taryn De Vere** @TarynDeVere · Apr 7

Porn is not inherently bad. There is plenty of porn showing intimacy, consent & mutual pleasure. There is feminist porn, there's all kinds!

If people received a good sexual educatio...

Show this thread

1

1

2



**Kate Dawson** @kateDawson6 · Apr 7

Thanks @Ciara\_Gunning!



**Ciara Gunning** @Ciara\_Gunni... · Apr 7

Let's talk about sex baby... 🎵🤔

Check out our #G050 superstar @kateDawson6 @TEDxGalway explaining why it's so important to have those ...



3



*The tweet (bottom rhs) with Kate Dawson's comment "Word" was removed.*

Dr. Kate Dawson Retweeted



**Brook** @BrookCharity · Jun 27

#Pleasure is the most important part of sex, so why aren't we teaching young people (especially young people with vaginas) about it? we spoke to @HuffPostUK about this issue last year, an important reminder this #RSEday @RSE\_day



### Schools Must Start Teaching Girls About Sexual Pleasure

During sex education, young people will learn about erections, ejaculation and wet dreams. Yet it is extremely rare that teachers will talk about the...

[huffingtonpost.co.uk](http://huffingtonpost.co.uk)

Dr. Kate Dawson Retweeted



**NUI Galway LGBT+ Staff Network** @NUIGLGBT · Jun 28

Next week we will celebrate @LGBTSTEMDay at @nuigalway! Please come along to support all the brilliant trans, lesbian, bi, pan, gay & queer scientists in Galway & around the world 🏳️‍🌈 We'll be having coffee together in Zinc in from 10am - all are welcome to come & have a chat! 🏳️‍🌈



John Breslin, Dublin LGBTQ Pride, Gay Community News and 7 others



**Dr. Kate Dawson**  
@kateDawson6

Follow

My article on the need for #PornLiteracy is now available on @RTEBrainstorm. I provide a brief overview of some research and also some information to support parents in talking to their children about porn.

[@NUIGalwayPress](https://twitter.com/RTEBrainstorm/)  
[twitter.com/RTEBrainstorm/...](https://twitter.com/RTEBrainstorm/)

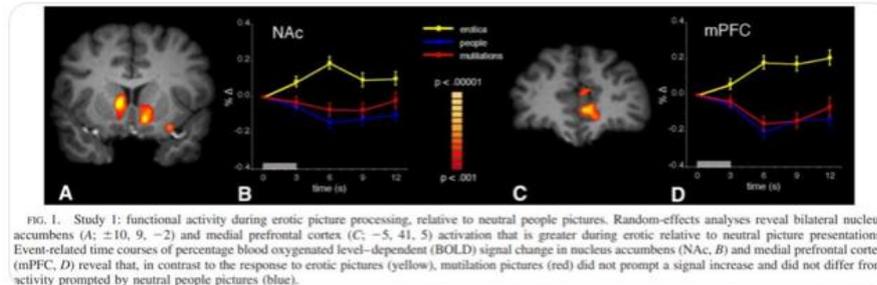
Dr. Kate Dawson Retweeted



**Real Your Brain on Porn** @BrainOnPorn · Aug 17

While there is no "sex" area per se in the brain, pornography is uniquely pleasurable. This landmark study showed pornography specifically activates brain areas associated with pleasure, not only emotional activation!

[physiology.org/doi/full/10.1111/psyp.12441](https://doi.org/10.1111/psyp.12441)



**Dr. Kate Dawson** @kateDawson6 · Aug 24

Findings from our recent longitudinal study on #porn and sexual aggressiveness among teenage boys are discussed in this @irishexaminer piece.

**Noel Baker** @noelbaker1

Insightful new study led by @kateDawson6 looking at possible links between pornography and sexual aggressiveness @nuigalway #consent twitter.com/irishexaminer/...



**Dr. Kate Dawson** @kateDawson6 · Aug 24

Findings in a nutshell show that porn use is associated with sexual aggression over time ONLY when people report a pre-disposition to aggression. In isolation porn use does not lead to sexual aggression. @IrishTimes @Independent\_ie



**Dr. Kate Dawson** @kateDawson6 · Aug 27

Lovely talking to @karenkoster this morning on @IrelandAMVMTV about #SmartConsent workshops in secondary schools. @consentisomfg @NUIGalwayPress

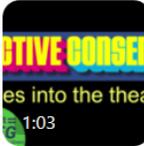


1 3 29



**Dr. Kate Dawson** @kateDawson6 · Aug 28  
 SO excited to see this #ActiveConsent play!!  
 @NUIGDrama @consentisomfg





**Consent Is OMFG** @consentisomfg

Here it is- your first look at the Active Consent programme's original play, The Kinds of Sex You Might Have At College- touring to select Irish universities this autumn.

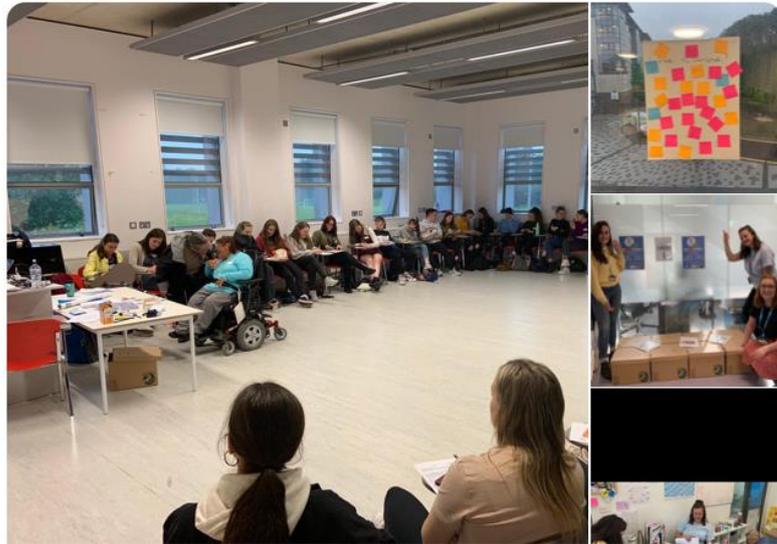
Show this thread

See twitter [@consentisomfg](https://twitter.com/consentisomfg) for details on the play & future dates.

Dr. Kate Dawson Retweeted



**Aisling Fagan** @aislingfagan\_ · Oct 6  
 Over 550 first year @DublinCityUni students completed Smart Consent workshops this week! 23 workshops over 2 campuses across four days could not have been possible without the incredible work from the consent team; @sineadmcrath6, @ruth\_lynam & @Katie\_Fay ie. the dream team! 🙌



**Dr. Kate Dawson** @kateDawson6 · Oct 8  
 Delighted to receive the 2019 #JSexResearch editors choice award for our paper 'Toward a model of porn literacy' @SaoirseNG @PMacneela! Thank you @cygraham\_graham! 🥳🥳🥳





**The Journal of Sex Research**

The Journal of Sex Research Biegel Award Winner, Editor's Choice & Top Trending Articles Beigel Award Winners The Hugo G. Beigel Award for the best paper

[think.taylorandfrancis.com](http://think.taylorandfrancis.com)

# “Consent classes for post primary students to be launched following university success”

Irish Examiner Monday, August 26, 2019

‘Consent classes are to be rolled out to secondary schools and sports clubs across the country.

Last year, the number of students attending the Smart Consent workshops on college campuses skyrocketed by more than 600%, due in part to a number of high-profile rape cases.

Following that success, it will now be introduced in secondary schools.

**Pádraig MacNeela** and **Siobhán O’Higgins**, from NUIG’s School of Psychology, part of a team that developed the workshops, said the programme has been adapted to suit the age profile of school students.

“We’ve started to redevelop workshops and test them out in schools, working with parents being on board and being the allies you want them to be,” said Mr MacNeela.

“It’ll be the same type of [conversation] approach that has been happening in colleges, except there is a full redesign of materials to speak to school age, so far it seems to be a good fit.”

The **programme will be launched in schools in early 2020**. However, **several schools have already had the workshop**.

We’ve worked with five or six schools so far, **piloting the programme**, where we have gone in to talk about consent,” said Ms O’Higgins.

“It’s allowed us to see if this format, the workshop type programme, will work.

“We’ve been to schools in Limerick, Dublin, and Galway. We worked with parents first, it was actually the parents who wanted this in the schools and then the schools said they wanted it too.”

Sex education in schools is currently taught under the relationships and sexuality education (RSE) programme, however it varies widely from school to school. A spokesperson from the **Department of Education and Skills explained that each school can implement learning based on their own ethos**.

Some students have said that, as a result of this rule, they received very little sex education, and if they did it was very scientific and failed to touch on issues such as consent. Ms O’Higgins said that, on this basis, they will have to be strategic about what schools receive the new workshop in 2020. O’Higgins said the area of consent is also very **confusing for parents**.

**“Parents are afraid to talk to their children,”** she said. “It’s very difficult now to be a parent. I do a bit of a workshop on consent with parents and we ask: ‘Was it consent?’ ‘Yes?’ ‘No?’ Sometimes it’s not always clear.”

So far, more than 4,000 college students have taken the voluntary workshop since it was launched in 2015.

All sexual orientations and gender identities are included, as is the role of alcohol and drugs in consent.

The organisers say they now plan to work with various networks and groups to reach young people aged between 16 and 24 years old through third level, second level and sports clubs too.

**Caroline West**, a lecturer and researcher in sexuality studies at **DCU**, had facilitated these workshops at third level and welcomes the news that they will be rolled out to even younger ages.

“As someone who’s facilitated this class at third level I sometimes feel it’s too late,” she said. “We need to talk to a younger age. People are already having sex before they come to university and assaults have already occurred. If we have the **conversation** earlier, then consent is normalised.”

She said consent does not just relate to sex but how we treat others, and if we do so with respect. West also emphasised the importance of making the conversation age-appropriate.

A review of relationships and sexuality education is underway. A draft report has been completed and it is open for public consultation until October 2019.’



## Taryn De Vere

@TarynDeVere

Joy Bringer, sex-positive parent, \*possibly\* the Most Colourful Woman in Ireland, Writer @Herdotie opinions mine Shout me a coffee: [ko-fi.com/taryndevere](http://ko-fi.com/taryndevere)



[taryndevere.com](http://taryndevere.com)

Joined July 2016



## NUIG researcher says porn literacy is an essential component of sex education for teenagers

71 Shares     



TARYN DE VERE

**Kate Dawson, a NUI Galway doctoral researcher, is helping to develop a programme that promotes porn literacy among Irish teenagers.**

Kate and her team are hoping to change the way Irish people talk about sex with Kate chatting to HerFamily about how porn literacy can help improve sex education in schools.

*Taryn De Vere is a writer who wrote about Kate Dawson's [research](#).*

- 14/2/2019 Kate Dawson was a guest on the Ray D'Arcy RTE 1 radio show – 'Should porn literacy be included in sex education for children'. It is approximately 20 minutes long. She states that she works for the Wiser sex education resource in Galway – [www.bewiser.ie](http://www.bewiser.ie) (supported by the Health Service Executive), its remit being in Connaught. She stated that she was bringing sex education programmes to primary school students, to transition year students, and would also roll them out to 2<sup>nd</sup> year students (*incidentally on 28/9/2018 she was on the front page of the Connacht Tribune talking about the importance of porn literacy education and 'the great work being done at Aids West to deliver comprehensive sex education in schools', [Wiser is the education department of Aids West], and in the article it states 'The Wiser team has developed a pornography workshop to help young people in thinking critically about how pornography relates to real-world experiences. It has been rolled out in Galway secondary schools on a pilot basis.'*).

She goes on to tell Ray D'Arcy that the students would have weekly 1 ½ hour sessions for about 5/6 weeks. She said the children would give her anonymous questions, that the parents would know in advance, and they would know how she was going to answer. Subjects covered would be **sex, porn, masturbation**. She said it is important that children are **porn literate**. She said that they meet girls around the ages of 11-13 years of age who can be 'really disgusted' by their genitals and bodies, that girls don't talk about their genitals. She said it was 'really really sad' that this is the case, that this really has to change, and that this is 'not good enough'. Ray D'Arcy asked, 'How did we let that happen as a society?' Kate Dawson says that we don't have the 'opportunity to see other people's genitals'. She said, 'it's not good enough' that people are having 'disappointing 1<sup>st</sup> time experiences'. She says that watching porn can be useful as it has 'very detailed imagery' that can show 'where things go' and 'different positions and stuff', something that sex education itself cannot provide. Regarding porn, Ray D'Arcy says we should 'arm' the children 'with the tools' to manage it.

She then went on to speak of the Active Consent Programme/Smart Consent which is organised by a team in NUIG, she herself being part of the team. She said that they had received funding from the Lifes2good Foundation (the amount given is 1 million euros, with 250,000 euros from the Galway University Foundation [www.guf.ie](http://www.guf.ie) - see above tweets dated 11/1/19) - **'Over the next four years, they will establish partnerships across schools and sports settings, as well as at third-level; the first they have in place for second-level schools is with the Wiser Programme (Aids West), delivered across approximately 50 primary and secondary schools in the west of Ireland.'** – Irish Independent 6/2/2019.



Kate Dawson explains to Ray D'Arcy that as part of this Active Consent Programme they would create an **online porn literacy workshop for 'in-class' and 'online' 'interventions'**, and that they would first roll it out to **15-16 years old children**. As time goes on the plan would be to adapt it for **younger children**. It will be a support to teachers and principals. Because it is online it would also be accessible to students where a **school won't allow** 'comprehensive sex education' (CSE), **so everybody would have access**. Ray believes it is unfair that only some schools are getting this type of education, and Ms Dawson agrees that this 'shouldn't be the case.' She is hopeful though. **She says that when the new RSE guidelines are updated, this will support teachers and principals in 'actually saying' that this is what 'the country' wants.**

She goes on to say that NUIG's **Padraig MacNeela**, the 'head of the Active Consent Programme', is 'working really closely with the Department of Education' on developing active consent programmes. She hopes then that the Department of Education will also use this information they have gathered on student experience around what they think about porn. She says that emphasising only the risk is 'not good enough.' Parents can no longer 'bury' their 'heads in the sand'. She understands it will be **'embarrassing' for parents and they may get 'intimidated', but parents must show 'courage'**. For example, parents could use the content of this interview to kickstart a conversation with their children about porn. She believes a 3-pronged approach could be the most effective way to deliver this education on sex and porn literacy. Firstly, the teachers would deliver part of the programme. Secondly, external agencies would deliver other topics of the programme. Thirdly, support would be given to the parents on having these conversations with their children. She believes then that **'real changes'** could happen 'in this country', and that young people could be **'healthy and happy'**. She believes that external agencies are best placed to deliver these programmes to schools. For example, **it might be difficult for the teacher to be giving a geography lesson to then have to switch to the topic of masturbation**. Also, with the external agencies the students feel they can say 'whatever they want' and are more comfortable in 'opening up', as 'it's not going to get back'.

Ray D'Arcy mentions that he had talked to **Richie Sadlier** and her colleague **Elaine Byrnes** (see below), and that they said that as external teachers they get 'a better reaction' from the pupils. Ray D'Arcy reads out a listener's question – *with primary school children, do Kate Dawson and her colleagues deviate far from the current Department of Education RSE guidelines?* She says they 'wouldn't shy away from





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1 Retweet 12 Likes



**melissa mannion** @lostinskylines · 23h

Replying to @kateDawson6

J - haven't heard that since I was 16, I reckon 😂



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**melissa mannion** @lostinskylines · 20h

Replying to @kateDawson6

J - haven't heard that since I was 16, I reckon 😂

1



**Kate Dawson** @kateDawson6 · 20h

God, I didn't even see that!!



1



**Beth Wallace** @LadyBethWallace · 22h

Replying to @kateDawson6

Out of curiosity, Kate, what was the age group here?

1



**Kate Dawson** @kateDawson6 · 22h

Hi Beth, most were 16

1



**Beth Wallace** @LadyBethWallace · 22h

Interesting, thanks



In an effort to understand who *is* responsible for these types of ‘lessons’, the parent then spoke to a senior civil servant in the Department of Education and Skills, more precisely the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Unit (CAP). They asked the senior civil servant if Dr Pdraig MacNeela and/or his team in NUIG was advising the Department of Education and Skills re the RSE etc. They told the civil servant about the Ray D’Arcy interview and Kate Dawson’s statement that Dr Pdraig MacNeela was ‘working really closely with the Department of Education’, and the senior civil servant said ***no such relationship exists between the department and Dr Pdraig MacNeela and his team*** etc. (see below NUIG’s HPRC WHO CC). The civil servant said that all schools are autonomous, and that the department has no control on external agents coming into the school.



***Pdraig MacNeela*** and Minister of State ***Mary Mitchell O’Connor*** at the launch of the ***Smart Consent Report 2018*** in Dept Of Education & Skills, ***August 2018***, as tweeted by ***Deirdre Barry*** an academic from NUIG.



5/4/2019 Minister of State ***Mary Mitchell O’Connor*** namechecks ***Pdraig MacNeela*** as being part of her Expert Advisory Group, ***tweet dated 5/4/2019***.

On 1/5/2018 at the Joint Committee on Education and Skills debate re RSE in primary and post-primary schools an Assistant Principal Officer from CAP, Rita Sexton, states, 'I want to mention briefly outside facilitators who come into the schools. The content of what they deliver is not vetted. Obviously, Garda vetting for the individual is required. They are not required to have any particular qualifications. I would say that the decision to bring in external facilitators is made by the whole school.' In [Breakingnews.ie](http://Breakingnews.ie) on 1/5/2018, reporting on this debate, it is written that 'external organisations' are not inspected by the Department of Education and Skills, and 'the content of any lessons is not scrutinised.'

The Department of Education and Skills works closely with the Department of Health and the HSE regarding Health and Wellbeing in Schools. In a short [video-clip](#) dated 8/6/2018, 'Rita Sexton – A partnership approach to health and wellbeing in schools', Rita Sexton outlines that the Department of Education and Skills 'works closely with the Department of Health, with the HSE...', as '...we can't do it on our own.' Now as previously outlined, the HSE supports WISER; it supports Galway's Healthy Cities Programme who in turn supports Smart Consent (see below); the HSE supports the NUIG's UNESCO Child and Family Research Centre (see below). And as part of The National Implementation Plan to deliver the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), these two departments are working together in delivering some of the UN's 17 Sustainable Development Goals regarding education. The contention that the Department of Education and Skills has no knowledge, control or responsibility over sexuality education external agencies does not seem tenable, as it is now 'partnered' with the Department of Health/HSE which supports a lot of these external agencies. Surely it is inappropriate, even irresponsible, to lend support to external agencies without 'scrutinising' the actual content of their lessons. And surely it would have been appropriate that the office of the Minister of State of Higher Education at least inform senior civil servants like Rita Sexton in CAP that the Minister was being counselled by this outside Expert Advisory Group on sexuality education of which Dr Padraig MacNeela was/is a member.

### 3 x relevant reports co-authored by Kate Dawson

#### 1. [Smart Consent Report 2018](#)

Smart Consent has trained more than 250 facilitators. In the Smart Consent Report 2018 **Ruth Coppinger** TD, Hildegard Naughton TD, and **Mary Mitchell O'Connor TD Minister of State of Education and Skills** are thanked. **Padraig MacNeela, Siobhan O'Higgins**, Charlotte McIvor, Chiara Seery, **Kate Dawson**, and Neil Delaney, School of Psychology, Institute for Lifecourse and Society (ILAS), O'Donoghue Centre for Drama Theatre & Performance, and NUIG are authors/supporters of the report. On 7/8/2018 [The Journal.ie](http://TheJournal.ie) reported that the Smart Consent Report was launched by the Minister of State for Higher Education Mary Mitchell O'Connor in the Department of Education & Skills building. That same morning the Minister also launched the Porn Report 2018. The Minister said she would be working in conjunction with Education Minister Richard Bruton in relation to the review currently underway into the relationships and sex education programmes in Irish schools....'Government needs to ensure that the programmes are fit for purpose....so we have a lot of work to do'. Elsewhere in the article Kate Dawson states, 'conversation about pornography needs to be included in the national policy for sex education in Ireland....we can start from a really young age with talking about sexual media....it's not good enough to just say that "porn is bad" because it is not.'

On the 22/8/18 [Hot Press Magazine](#) interviewed Kate Dawson. In this interview she spoke about her findings on porn usage in the 'recent Smart Consent Survey...Kate was focused on the porn side of the survey. We spoke about her findings, as well as sex education, masturbation and squirting, in a fascinating, hour-long interview.'

On the 5/4/19 the framework on sexual consent was launched by Minister of State Mary Mitchell O' Connor, and Padraig MacNeela tweets on the day that it looks 'impressive' and that it had been a great honour for him 'to contribute to this policy on behalf of Smart Consent NUIG.' The Minister tweets, 'Thank you to my Expert Advisory Group. You did it! ... and thank you to Ms Sabina Higgins for lending your support today to such an essential piece of work.' – One of the named advisors is Dr Padraig MacNeela. To date these reports have received comprehensive local and national press, as well as comprehensive national radio and tv interviews, and of course press and tv coverage in the UK.



*Minister of State Mary Mitchell O'Connor launching both Smart Consent Report 2018 and The Porn Report 2018*

## 2. [The Porn Report 2018](#)

The Porn Report 2018 (researchers: **Kate Dawson** of Dept of Psychology, **Professor Saoirse Nic Gabhainn** of School of Health Promotion, and **Dr Padraig MacNeela** of Dept of Psychology) proposes that 'it's healthy and okay to watch the porn you want', and this idea could be used for group discussion.

## 3. [Towards a Model of Porn Literacy: Core Concepts, Rationales, and Approaches](#)

The Journal of Sex: Towards a Model of Porn Literacy: Core Concepts, Rationales, and Approaches- **Kate Dawson, Saoirse Nic Gabhainn** and **Padraig MacNeela** (published online 9/1/19). Many topics are explored, e.g. it is stated that, 'In the instance of bondage, dominance, submission, and sadomasochism (BDSM), this could involve recognition that, in isolation, individual BDSM practises such as whipping or slapping could be defined as violent. Yet when integrated with the person's sexual identity and relationships, BDSM practises can contribute to fulfilling and enjoyable experiences. (Hebert & Weaver, 2015). Discussing the portrayal of BDSM scenes provides opportunities for people to explore sexual communication and consent, responsibility and respect, and the differentiation between nonconsensual and consensual aggression. In considering a holistic approach to sexual well-being, which is underpinned by the 15 domains identified for the multidisciplinary framework for healthy sexual development (McKee et al., 2010) and the World Health Organisation (2006) definition of sexual health, there are likely to be other sexual behaviours, attitudes, and beliefs which also have personal meaning and can be interpreted subjectively and which warrant exploration.' Elsewhere in this paper it states that, 'Data were collected at the university in the West of Ireland and at an LGBT+ youth organisation.' In the paper details are given as to how this data-collecting class work was structured and carried out. Flip-chart paper was provided. Also in the paper it states, 'Interventions with many topics may be cognitively demanding for young children; therefore, porn literacy interventions for younger age groups may be more effective by covering fewer topics'. A section entitled, 'Reduce Shame and Increase Acceptability' [pornography engagement]... 'Many believed that encouraging open communication could challenge the negative effects and highlight positive outcomes.'

*For more information on **Saoirse Nic Gabhainn**, see page 54 - NUIG Health Promotion Research (WHO CC)*

## Anna Keogh

Anna Keogh is a freelance sex educator, and a youth officer with **Foroige** (Ireland's leading youth organisation which receives research & support from **NUIG's UNESCO's Chair** at ILAS- see below. Foroige is supported by the HSE). Her twitter handle is @bananas\_sex\_ed and her pinned tweet states 'No such thing as TMI'. She has a masters degree in sexuality studies from DCU. She has trained with **NUIG's Smart Consent Programme** to facilitate the programme for third level students. In 2018 she took part in an event in the RDS called Zeminar. Zeminar states that it is a talk series built exclusively for Generation Z (15 to 20 year olds), and their teachers, and their primary care givers. At the **Zeminar** event Anna Keogh spoke about teenage sexuality activity. She talked to the students about topics that 'are missing from sex education that you get in schools.' She said that the legal age of consent in Ireland is 17. She said there are loads of 'other activities' that you 'can get up to' with less risks of pregnancy or STIs. She spoke about relationships and said that some people may like to kiss, hold hands etc. Some may want to do 'a bit more', e.g., 'grinding' or 'dry-humping'. Some may masturbate by themselves or with other people, and this is a 'perfectly normal activity.' Some may want to engage in oral sex. She pointed out there is a risk of STIs/HIV. She said you need to protect yourself e.g., condoms, female condoms or dental dams which she said can be bought in the chemist or online. She said that pleasure and 'having the craic' is nothing to be ashamed of. She said, 'have fun', and 'be safe.' On 15/5/2018 at the **Joint Committee on Education and Skills** debate 'Review of Relationships and Sexuality Education Discussion', Anna Keogh states 'Pleasure needs to be cited as a perfectly healthy, valid reason for people to engage in sexual activity.' She talks of media literacy and pornography. She thinks that every school should have an RSE professional, maybe working in a catchment area for several schools. They would support the school's RSE programme, delivering workshops, undertaking research etc.



Follow

Sending my submission to The Education Committee for the RSE Review #sexedbill @RuthCoppingerTD @solidarityie @ShoutOut IE

 **Ruth Coppinger TD** @RuthCoppingerTD · 20 Apr 2018  
Replying to @bananas\_sex\_ed @solidarityie @ShoutOut\_IE  
Same here. It was frustrating not really having much time to write something more comprehensive.  
1 comment 1 retweet 1 like

 **Anna Keogh** @bananas\_sex\_ed · 20 Apr 2018  
Well you've done a great job so far Ruth and you can only keep pushing 🙌 I hope you gave yourself some time to celebrate getting this far 😊  
1 comment 1 retweet 1 like

 **Anna Keogh** @bananas\_sex\_ed · 2 Jul 2018  
@campaignforleo you need to see that the #SexEdBill is needed in ADDITION to the NCCA review of curriculum because a comprehensive curriculum is useless if school ethos can still manipulate the content  
1 comment 2 retweets 10 likes

 **Anna Keogh** @bananas\_sex\_ed · 10 Dec 2018  
"The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child tells us that young people have a right to education which supports them to stay healthy." THIS INCLUDES SEX EDUCATION! #sexedbill  
[huffingtonpost.co.uk/amp/entry/sexu...](http://huffingtonpost.co.uk/amp/entry/sexu...)  
1 comment 3 retweets 10 likes

 **Anna Keogh** @bananas\_sex\_ed · 10 Dec 2018  
"When we talk about pleasure in RSE we should reinforce that sex is not just about penis in vagina sex but that there are lots of things people can do with their partners, or by themselves, that feel good." #sexedbill  
[huffingtonpost.co.uk/amp/entry/sexu...](http://huffingtonpost.co.uk/amp/entry/sexu...)  
1 comment 1 retweet 1 like

 **Anna Keogh** @bananas\_sex\_ed Follow  
Yes it can! @ebyrnesNUIG you are the business 😍  
 **Can comprehensive sexuality education reduce sexual viol...**  
Think about the first time you had sex. Do you remember feeling ready? Were you sure you were doing something you really wanted to? That the other person was...  
[youtube.com](http://youtube.com)  
2:07 PM - 19 Feb 2019  
1 Like   
1 comment 1 retweet 1 like

## Elaine Byrnes

Elaine Byrnes, Doctoral Researcher at **NUIG's UNESCO Child and Family Research Centre**, co-leads the development of the **Smart Consent workshops**. She also delivers sexual health modules with Transition Year students with Richie Sadlier (a psychotherapist who has appeared on Ray D'Arcy's radio/tv shows, and on Ryan Tubridy's The Late Late Show regarding sexuality education). Like Kate Dawson, Elaine Byrnes has spoken on the TEDx Talks. She too has spoken about her work on the Ray D'Arcy RTE radio 1 show (5/4/2018). Like Anna Keogh, Elaine Byrnes spoke on 15/5/2018 at the Joint Committee RSE debate. She stated that the current RSE needs to be updated. She states, **'As outlined by the World Health Organisation (2006a), the sexual rights of all people must be respected, protected and fulfilled.'** She also states, **'From our experience, the relationship between us as facilitators and students is very different to a teacher-student relationship. WHO Europe and the Federal Centre for Health Education (BZgA) produced a framework for core competencies of sexuality educators that centre around attitudes, skills and knowledge (2017).'** - see page 9. She thinks that consideration should be given to having 'external, trained and experienced facilitators'.

Ongoing. just because you agree to one b...  
ther; just because you agree at one time  
!!ENTHUSIA...

Tweets 2,490 Following 997 Followers 1,359 Likes 8,887

**Elaine Byrnes**  
@ebyrnesNUIG

Doctoral Researcher-Psychology, NUI Galway. Sexual Consent, Gender, Hooking Up & Alcohol. Experienced facilitator of Consent Programmes e.byrnes1@nuigalway.ie

Clarinbridge, Co. Galway

Joined March 2010

Tweets Tweets & replies Media

See 1 new Tweet

Pinned Tweet

**Elaine Byrnes** @ebyrnesNUIG · Jan 30

Can comprehensive sexuality education reduce sexual violence? | Elaine B...  
[youtu.be/COH3yhd44hE](https://youtu.be/COH3yhd44hE) via @YouTube #TEDxFulbright #TEDx #TEDTalks #IdeasWorthSpreading #consent #sexed #sexualviolence #sexedbill #MeToo #WhatConsentMeansToMe #girls #boys #activism

Can comprehensive sexuality education reduce se...  
Think about the first time you had sex. Do you remember feeling ready? Were you sure you were doing something you really wanted to? That the other person was...  
youtube.com

Elaine Byrnes Retweeted

**Siona** @AnTaobhRua · Apr 5

Myself and @ebyrnesNUIG will be chatting with @cooper\_m in a couple of minutes on Today FM #TheLastWord about launch of the #Consent framework today by @mitchelloconnor ⚡️👏 A lot of years, of a lot of work. Let's do this.



1 8 30

## Padraig MacNeela

Padraig MacNeela is a Senior Lecturer in the School of Psychology NUIG. He co-authored the above 3 reports with Kate Dawson.



### ***"Pushing out boundaries on school sex education. Abortion and porn among the topics under discussion for RSE, writes Katherine Donnelly"***

Active Consent involves a cross disciplinary team from various areas of expertise within NUI Galway: psychology, sexual health promotion and drama and theatre studies.

One of the team leaders, Dr Pádraig MacNeela, says the approach is "combining Irish research data with proven youth engagement methods and the creative arts to support a full range of sexual consent messaging".

Over the next four years, they will establish partnerships across schools and sports settings, as well as at third-level; the first they have in place for second-level schools is with the WISER Programme (AIDS West), delivered across approximately 50 primary and secondary schools in the west of Ireland.

One of Dr MacNeela's colleagues, Kate Dawson, a fourth year PhD student in child and youth research, will lead the development of an online resource on critical porn literacy for the programme. It will be based on her research with college students to get their input on what is needed for teenagers in terms of porn literacy. Her findings, published in The Journal Of Sex Research, recommend reducing shame around engagement with pornography and, instead, helping adolescents to develop critical thinking skills around porn to allow them to challenge sexual media messages, to expect realistic outcomes from their first sexual experiences and to develop the capacity to have fulfilling sexual relationships.

*Excerpt Irish Independent 6/2/2019*

# Caroline West

Caroline West is a DCU academic and a facilitator of Smart Consent. Here is a selection of her tweets:



**Caroline West**  
@CarolineWest\_IE

DCU PhD candidate researching discourse between feminism & porn. MA in Sexuality Studies. Guest lecturer, media speaker. She/her.

Ireland  
Joined July 2013

Tweets **7,236** Following **3,425** Followers **2,411** Likes **21.6K**

**Tweets** Tweets & replies Media

Pinned Tweet

**Caroline West** @CarolineWest\_IE · 13 Dec 2018  
Thank you so much @siliconrepublic, honoured to be amongs such amazing women in this list of scientists making a change. ❤️ @DublinCityUni @DcuSalis #WomeninResearch

**SiliconRepublic** @siliconrepublic  
#SciTech100 2019: 22 high-flying scientists making the world a better place in 2019 @celoscher @AngelaDSaini @Dr\_Niamh\_Shaw @Bahareh360 @CarolineWest\_IE @drclairemurray @ClionaOfarrelly @girlandkat @jesswade @CSIT\_QUB @SpaceNorah siliconrepublic.com/innovation/sci...

1 2 20

Caroline West Retweeted



**cherub** @honeyprinx · Apr 7

Pleasure led sex education is where we need to head. By putting the focus on pleasure we work towards destigmatising so many sexual practices and even sex itself and allow people to have healthy relationships to sex

3

16

52



**Caroline West** @CarolineWest\_IE · May 19

Had a blast chatting with @PantiBliss today about being a #porn researcher, on a great panel talking about #sex in #Ireland. Full episode out on @RTERadio1 and [pantisocracy.ie](http://pantisocracy.ie) in August



Dr Panti Bliss

2

2

23

## Funding for Smart Consent Programme

Kate Dawson outlined to Ray D'Arcy that the Smart Consent programme had received substantial funding from 2 foundations. The primary foundation, *Lifes2good Foundation*, was set up by [www.lifes2good.com](http://www.lifes2good.com), a company set up in Galway. They donated **1 million euros**. Their website states that they are 'a leading global Nutraceutical business' that aims to 'improve people's lives'. On 24/1/2019 **Maria Murphy**, co-founder of Lifes2good Foundation, stated in [The Advertiser.ie](http://TheAdvertiser.ie) 'it is the start of what we hope will be a national programme taken on by government to impact young people in Ireland for many years to come.'

The secondary foundation, *Galway University Foundation* ([www.guf.ie](http://www.guf.ie)), states that it generates financial support for NUIG's programme and activities. Its tagline being 'Creating A Better World'. It donated **250,000 euros**. In the Galway University Foundation is the Institute for Lifecourse and Society (ILAS – this is involved in the Smart Consent programme), and it aims to support applied research 'that informs policy development and practise to make a positive difference to people's lives.' And the research team at the UNESCO Child and Family Research Centre (UCFRC) is part of ILAS (see below).

## United Nations presence in NUIG



*UNESCO Child and Family Research Centre (UCFRC)*

**UNESCO Child and Family Research Centre (UCFRC) is situated on NUIG's North Campus.** It is supported by the HSE and Atlantic Philanthropies and Professor Pat Dolan is the UNESCO Chair in Children, Youth and Civic Engagement (1 of 6 globally). He has 'an extensive policy experience' and was recently a member in a Government Task Force. Professor Dolan says they have a 'specific remit around youth' and they aim to 'improve people's lives' – they provide research, evaluation and technical support to TUSLA's Development and Mainstreaming Programme for Prevention Partnership and Family Support (PPFS); provide research and support to Foroige (Ireland's leading youth organisation, see Anna Keogh); and provide support to many other bodies. In 2014 **Foroige's REAL U programme** underwent an extensive evaluation by the UNESCO Child and Family Research Centre Galway. Among the key findings from the evaluation were that the programme was effective in engaging young people, responding to their needs and impacting on their knowledge and attitudes in the area of **RSE**.

Professor Dolan co-authored 'Social Innovation Fund Ireland's Education Fund'. In 2017 UNESCO published '[Review of Curricula & Curricular Frameworks](#) (update of the *UNESCO Internal Technical Guidance on Sexuality Education*) – this review promotes 'comprehensive sexuality education' (CSE), and it outlines that children have a right to sexual education and gender identity education. This review is tied in with several of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and is supported in Europe by the WHO Regional Office for Europe & BZgA report named '*Standards for Sexuality Education in Europe*'. UNESCO is the United Nation's educational, scientific and cultural organisation, and **UNESCO's programmes contribute to the achievement of the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of Agenda 2030.**

**13-14th June 2019** UNESCO CFRC held a conference to highlight changes in the nature of family and the experience of family life. Speakers from all around the world were present. Members of TUSLA, Foroige, Department of Children and Youth Affairs, Barnardos, and academics/practitioners attended.

 **UNESCO CFRC** @UNESCO\_CFRC · Jun 14  
"It is good fun. All of us we haven't got in trouble recently. We are in a good path and going to stay that way" Galway Youth Researchers group. @UNESCO\_CFRC @Foroige #changingfamilies #youthasresearchers

 **Catherine O'Donohoe** @CaODonohoe · Jun 13  
Dr Aisling Gillen, @tusla Regional Service Director, West chairing this morning's session at @UNESCO\_CFRC conference #changingfamilies

**8-10<sup>th</sup> May 2019** Professor Pat Dolan of UNESCO CFRC spoke at 'Innovation in Education: Gamechanger Dialogue' in the **Burren College of Art in Co. Clare**, organised by **Social Innovation Fund**. Participants were representatives from the **Department of Education and Skills**, the **NCCA**, board members of **Educate Together**, members of Cork Life Centre and 'education innovators'. Issues discussed included Ireland's obligations 'to provide education – drawing on international treaties, and also highlighting the **Sustainable Development Goals**'.

**See page 93 for another educational event in the Burren College of Art 19-22<sup>nd</sup> September 2018**

 **Teaching Council** @TeachingCouncil · May 9  
Delighted to be here at #GameChanger19. Professor Pat Dolan of @nuigalway talking about the importance of research being emancipatory, advocacy-based and shared in a much more user-friendly way. @effectiveserv @ERC\_irl @EducationTRES

 **NCCA** @NCCAie · May 10  
Bringing it all together in the final hour of the Innovation in Education #Gamechanger19 dialogue. An informative and engaging three days. in the beautiful Burren @burrencollege. @SinnovationIRL



**Cork Life Centre** @CorkLifeCentre · May 9

Cormac, Darcy and Darragh giving their stories of what the Cork Life Centre means to them and the benefits it's had on them. #GameChanger19



Cork Life Centre Retweeted



**Cork Learning City** @corklearning · May 27

Love this wall mural in @CorkLifeCentre #corkloveslearning



Cork Life Centre, UNESCO and UNESCO-UII



**Margaret Flood** @magsflood · May 12

Replying to @rosedolan @ipdalreland @burrencollege

And the process was so reflective and supportive! Brings to mind the importance of creating safe spaces in PLCs where everyone's voice is valued. A great example of facilitatibg PL (& to a diverse range of learners from different educational backgrounds). #gamechanger19 #IPDAire

**Margaret Flood is an Education Officer with the NCCA**

 **Social Innovation Fund Ireland** @SinnovationIRL · May 10  
 Thank you to our Fund Director Martina Von Richter for her courageous vision and tenacity bringing this group together. We look forward to imminent collective action coming from this work [#GameChanger19](#)



**Martina Von Richter (rhs) is on the National Board of Educate Together**



*WHO Collaborative Centre for Health Promotion Research*

The Health Promotion Research Centre (HPRC) at NUIG is situated on University Road, and it has been a WHO Collaborative Centre (**WHO CC**) for Health Promotion Research since 2009 (**another WHO CC is the BZgA in Cologne, Germany who co-authored the Standards for Sexuality Education in Europe**). It ‘produces high quality research of national and international significance that supports the development of best practice and policy in the promotion of health.’

***‘In January 2000, the WHO Executive Board urged Member States [including Ireland] to make full use of WHO CCs as sources of information, services and expertise; and to strengthen their own national capacity for training, research and collaboration for health development. WHO CCs were encouraged to develop working relations with other centres and national institutions recognised by WHO, by creating or joining collaborative networks.’ (Source: who.int)***

A typical function of WHO CCs includes ‘collection, collation and dissemination of information.’ One activity that should not be performed is ‘provision of advice to Member States on policy and legislative matters.’

NUIG’s WHO CC works in partnership with Healthy Cities and Communities. [www.galwayhealthycities.ie](http://www.galwayhealthycities.ie) is a member of the WHO European Healthy Cities Network (based in Copenhagen). The WHO Healthy Cities works with each country’s local and national government. The Galway Healthy City Forum oversees and guides the

Galway Healthy Cities Programme, and it includes representatives from a range of local agencies including NUIG, HSE, SIPTU, Galway City Council, amongst others. Fiona Donovan is the coordinator of Galway Healthy Cities Project/HSE Ireland, and this project is part of the Irish government's national 'Healthy Ireland' initiative which draws on the WHO Health 2020 & European health policy framework. On Fiona Donovan's twitter page (@Wexican7187) she writes as her tagline **'When everything is connected to everything else, for better or worse, everything matters'**, and she has the twitter handles for WHO European Healthy Cities Network & Healthy Ireland & HSE Live underneath her tagline. **Galway Healthy Cities is a supporter of Smart Consent, and it aims to promote the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).**

Margaret Barry, Head of the WHO CC at NUIG and President of IUHPE, says **'we are delighted to continue this important collaboration with WHO Geneva and WHO Europe.'** The WHO CC at NUIG 'will also advance health promotion action in implementing the WHO Europe Child and Adolescent Health Strategy and the **United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.**' 2 of the external members of its International Advisory Board 2018 are Ms Biddy O'Neill of the Department of Health, and Dr Cate Hartigan of the HSE.

**Kate Dawson did her masters in the HPRC. Professor Saoirse Nic Gabhainn is a staff member of the WHO CC HPRC, and she co-authored 'The Porn Report 2018' and 'Towards a Model of Porn Literacy: Core Concepts, Rationales, and Approaches' with Kate Dawson and Dr Pdraig Mac Neela (see above).** She is also the Principal Investigator for Ireland with the international Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (**HBSC**) network, a WHO Collaborative Cross-National Study. **Professor Nic Gabhainn** supervises students at PhD level on a range of subjects e.g., the implementation of Relationships and Sexuality Education.

 **HBSC Ireland** @hbscireland · Jun 1  
Comprehensive Sex Education for all!

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 **Saoirse Nic Gabhainn** @SaoirseNG · Mar 13  
Happy to see us (figuratively) in the Guardian .... @HPRC\_NUIG @hbscireland @NCCAie

**Kate Dawson** @kateDawson6  
Our stats on first porn engagement in Ireland are cited in this article. Nearly 60% of young Irish men said they first saw porn (either intentionally or unintentionally) under the age of 13. @PMacneela @SaoirseNG @consentisomfg twitter.com/guardian/statu...

 Saoirse Nic Gabhainn Retweeted

 **HBSC Ireland** @hbscireland · Mar 12  
@ColetteNUIG of @hbscireland, Director of @HPRC\_NUIG explaining how @HBSCStudy engage with young people at all stages of the research process, learnings for the next European Child and Adolescent Health Stratgy @WHO\_Europe @roinnslaite

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 **Saoirse Nic Gabhainn** @SaoirseNG · Mar 12  
Very interesting opportunities emerging from current initiatives and the restructuring of WHO globally, the future for child and adolescent health promotion looks very positive @AssocHPIreland @HPRC\_NUIG @hbscireland @publichealthie @HealthyIreland

 **HPRC NUIG** @HPRC\_NUIG  
Delighted to be with @ColetteNUIG representing @HPRC\_NUIG at the meeting of the WHO collaborating centres on Child and Adolescent Health @WHO @healthscotland @DCYAPress @NUIGalwayPress ...

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 **Dr. Colette Kelly** @ColetteNUIG · Feb 22  
Planning #participation for European child and adolescent strategy #Copenhagen #UNCity, @WHO @HPRC\_NUIG @SaoirseNG

**13/6/2019** NUIG Health Promotion Conference Committee's Chair, **Professor Saoirse Nic Gabhainn** invited guests to come to a conference, 'Building a Healthy Ireland: Promoting Health and Wellbeing in Educational Settings', in collaboration with **'the Department of Health, Health Service Executive, Association of Health Promotion Ireland and the Department of Education and Skills.'** There were national and international speakers at the conference.

↳ Consent Is OMFG Retweeted



**LIFE CONNECTIONS CLG** @connections\_to · Jun 13

Great intro to Active Sexual Consent @HPRC\_NUIG Health Promotion conference with the @consentisomfg team.  
Mutually Enthusiastically facilitated by both @PMacneela and @DrOhiggi  
#HPRC2019 #HealthyIreland #Consent



**HPRC NUIG** @HPRC\_NUIG · Jun 13

Really excited to hear now from the Department of Education and NEPS on their work on wellbeing education in schools #hprc2019

↳ HPRC NUIG Retweeted



**András Költő** @KoltoAndras · Jun 13

It's started!!! ❤️ Prof @SaoirseNG kicks off @HPRC\_NUIG's 23rd #healthpromotion conference #HPRC2019 w/ @nuigalway President Prof Ciarán Ó hÓgartaigh and @IUHPE President Prof Margaret Barry in a very packed auditorium.



**HPRC NUIG** @HPRC\_NUIG · Jun 13

Our own Prof Barry speaking at #hprc2019 today



**Allison D** @allisonpharma

Congratulations to Professor Margaret Barry from @nuigalway - newly elected president of the IUHPE .  
Talking about strategic priorities for global health #HPRC2019

 **Laura @nursieLT** · Jun 13  
Reducing inequality is key in promoting health. 17 goals to transform our world.  
[@WHO](#) [#HPRC2019](#)



🗨️ 🔄 ❤️ 1

 **Laura @nursieLT** · Jun 13  
Dr. Eileen Scott [@WHO](#) "Action to improve the health & wellbeing of children can have a profound effect into adulthood " [#HPRC2019](#) Action in the educational setting can help meet the goals of education & health. Health determines education & education determines health.

 IUHPE - UIPES Retweeted



**HPRC NUIG @HPRC\_NUIG** · Jun 13

Looking forward to the next [#hprc2019](#) plenary session with Orla McGowan and Deirdre McHugh and finding out about the future directions of HSE schools health promotion team working in the various educational settings  
[@HSEschoolsteam](#) [@Education\\_Ire](#)



**HPRC NUIG @HPRC\_NUIG** · Jun 13

Deirdre McHugh from the National Educational Psychology Services brings us through the threads contributing to wellbeing promotion in Irish Schools  
[@Education\\_Ire](#) [#hprc2019](#)



**Mind Me Mind You @MindMeMindYouIE** · Jun 13

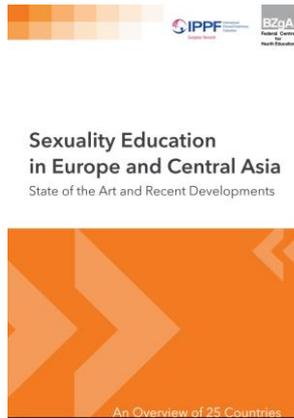
Anette Schulz (Schools for Health Europe Network) urging health and education ministries to work together to enhance health and learning outcomes for children and adolescents [@HPRC\\_NUIG](#) [@HSEschoolsteam](#) [@HSELive](#) [@Education\\_Ire](#)  
[#hprc2019](#)



**Mind Me Mind You @MindMeMindYouIE** · Jun 13

Dr Eileen Scott [@WHO](#) emphasizing the synergies between health, wellbeing and educational attainment [@HPRC\\_NUIG](#) [#hprc2019](#)

An example on NUIG's website of an [International Report containing HBSC data](#) is: Ketting, E. & Ivanova, O. (2018). 'Sexuality education in Europe and Central Asia. State of the art and recent developments: an overview of 25 countries. Cologne: Federal Centre for Health Education BZgA.' *Pages 104-109* gives an overview of RSE in Ireland. – ***This report was mentioned on page 9:***



Cover page of report

In the majority of countries in the European Region there is a clear need to train teachers to teach sexuality education, and there is a great need to develop the appropriate educational materials for that purpose. Only in a handful of countries throughout the region has the training of future teachers on sexuality education been included in the training curricula of teacher training colleges and universities. The same should now be done in all other countries where sexuality education is mandatory or optional. The WHO/BZgA *Standards for Sexuality Education in Europe* (2010) and the publication *Training Matters: A Framework for Core Competencies of Sexuality Educators* (BZgA, 2017) can be useful for this purpose.

Excerpt from Page 185 of report

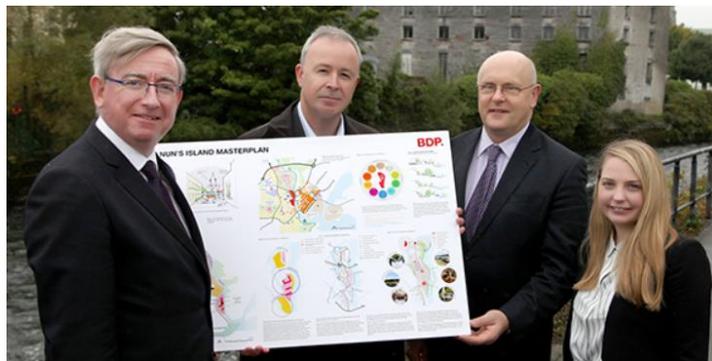
**These 3 United Nations bodies in Galway – UNESCO CFRC, Galway Healthy Cities, NUIG’s HPRC WHO CC - liaise with Irish local and national government/stakeholders, and with their parent bodies in Europe.**

NUIG has been ranked 20th in the world among universities for its contribution to the **United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals** (UN’s 2030 Agenda 17 Sustainable Development Goals) for Good Health and Wellbeing (SDG3) – through teaching, research and knowledge transfer, as well as embodying the goals in internal practices, policies and procedures. NUIG President Ó hÓgartaigh states, ‘From our contribution to **EU-wide physical health and mental health initiatives** to working with the public on activities from sports to mindfulness...We look forward to illustrating our distinctive commitment to these sustainable development goals as we develop our University strategy.’ NUIG is planning to invest about **€200 million** on developing disused sites it owns in the city centre at Nun’s Island. President Ó hÓgartaigh said ‘that this part of the city has the potential to generate a range of community, economic, social, environmental and educational benefits.’

**John Concannon** (*ChangeX, Change Nation, Ashoka Ireland* - see Brendan Dunford/Paul O’Hara/Mark Little further down) former director of the **Strategic Communications Unit** in the Dept of the Taoiseach and known for creating Fáilte Ireland’s Wild Atlantic Way, has recently become **NUIG**’s Vice President of Development, responsible for managing the Fundraising team etc. Until recently Mr Concannon was Director General of **Global Ireland. Dept of Foreign Affairs & Trade-Irish Aid’s ‘Global Ireland is the Irish Government’s strategy [‘all-of-Government’ programme] for doubling the scope and impact of Ireland’s global footprint. It represents the most ambitious renewal and expansion of Ireland’s International presence ever undertaken.’ Global Ireland’s international policy ‘A Better World’ aims to ‘continue to lead and participate in collective global aspirations for a better world, as reflected in the Sustainable Development Goals’ – UN’s 2030 Agenda 17 SDGs.** One of the aims is to win a seat on the UN Security Council. **‘The campaign logo, depicting a dove against a shamrock in the colours of Ireland and the UN, was very visible at the events as one might expect of a campaign conceived by uber marketer John Concannon.’ - Irish Times 3/7/18**



**John Concannon** in the UN 2018



President Ciaran Ó hÓgartaigh (l/hs) with Nun’s Island Plan

## Galway and The Burren

The **United Nations UNESCO** Chair in Children, Youth and Civic Engagement was awarded to Professor Pat Dolan in NUIG in 2008 – [UNESCO Child & Family Research Centre \(UCFRC\)](#).

[NUIG's Health Promotion Research Centre](#) (HPRC) was designated a **United Nations World Health Organization Collaborative Centre (WHO CC)** in 2009.

Galway City has been a member of the **United Nations World Health Organization (WHO) European Healthy Cities Network** since 2006. The main goal of the **WHO** Healthy Cities programme is to put health and wellbeing high on the social, economic and political agenda of all agencies.

[Transition Galway](#) was founded in January 2011. Transition Galway is a local voluntary grassroots environmental organisation and is one of thousands of Transition projects around the world. Our aim is to build strong resilient communities and a vibrant local economy to deal with **sustainability** challenges such as reduced oil supplies and **climate change**.

Since 2014 Galway is permanent **United Nations UNESCO City of Film** and is a member of **United Nations UNESCO Creative Cities Network**.

2015 [The Burren and The Cliffs of Moher Geopark](#) was designated as a **United Nations UNESCO** site.

NUIG is committed to the **United Nations 2030 Agenda's 17 Sustainable Development Goals** (SDGs) as they develop their university strategy. NUIG's new Vice President is **John Concannon**, formerly of **Taoiseach Leo Varadkar's Global Ireland**, and of **ChangeX** (now aligned with **United Nations 2030 Agenda**), and of **Ashoka Ireland** (Ashoka is aligned with **United Nations 2030 Agenda & Otto Scharmer's Presencing Institute** in MIT).

NUIG is a member of the [Coimbra Group](#), and in 2017 NUIG, like many of their Coimbra partners, signed the [Poitiers Declaration](#) with Galway City Council which is an agreement to formalise joint plans for collaboration and development in Galway city.

[Galway City is/was a Member of the Committee of Agenda 21 for Culture](#).

**United Nations UNESCO Artist for Peace** visited the Burren Geopark in 2016 whose website [states](#), '**Marko Pogacnik**, Slovenian artist, healer, prolific author and recently appointed **UNESCO Artist for Peace** is beginning a world workshop tour of Geoparks...Marko will be visiting the Burren in May of this year to lead a workshop in working with the new multidimensionality of the land through special landscapes. The workshop will involve exercises from his **Gaia** Touch series.'

Galway has a unique opportunity to be **at the forefront of world cities**, in leading not only in the fields of arts and culture but in the green transition to a low carbon future. Convergence 2016 opens with the launch of the new [Post Carbon Galway initiative](#), a **recently established cross-sectoral project set up to accelerate local pathways to a low carbon Galway**, aiming to work collaboratively to promote climate action, sustainable living, environmental protection and sustainable development. See [Convergence 2017](#) for more details – Martin Hawkes' colleague **Davie Philip of Cultivate & Cloughjordan Ecovillage is an organiser of Convergence**.

In 2016, Galway City was awarded the designation of [European Green Leaf 2017](#). It is the first Irish city to be awarded this designation. The European Green Leaf is a new competition launched by the European Commission aimed at cities and towns, with between 20,000 and 100,000 inhabitants, that recognizes a commitment to better environmental outcomes.

In 2018 Galway became a [European Region of Gastronomy](#) and was the first region in Ireland to be awarded the honour of this designation. The official award ceremony was held in Aarhus, Central Denmark in 2016 at the IFAMA (International Food and Agribusiness Management Association) conference, with the presentation made by Phil Hogan, European Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development and Dr Diane Dodd, President of IGCAT.

The Burren is on a **tentative list** to become a **United Nations UNESCO World Heritage Site** – 'The Burren is very much a cultural landscape. The **karst topography** elicited a distinctive **cultural response from its people**, as seen in the extensive **winter-based pastoral systems** [this may refer to [Burrenbeo's 'Burren Winterage'](#) now in 2019 officially recognised as part of the **Intangible Cultural Heritage of Ireland**] that prevail to this day and which contribute directly to the rich natural and cultural heritage of the region. It is therefore an excellent example of the ongoing creative utilization of natural resources by an agricultural society over six thousand years and reflects the combined works of nature and of man.'

Galway will be the [European Capital of Culture 2020](#).

In 2021 people in Galway will be asked if they want to vote on a [Directly Elected Mayor](#).

## Overview of the 2 sexuality education reports - WHO and UNESCO

1<sup>st</sup> December 2010:

### Standards for Sexuality Education in Europe start their way to countries of Eastern Europe and Central Asia

 72 12

01-12-2010

Invited by the WHO Regional Office for Europe and the German Federal Centre of Health Education (BZgA) in Cologne, Germany, representatives from Ministries of Health, Ministries of Education and of civil society organizations working in the field of sexual and reproductive health met in Cologne, 25–26 November, for a two -day consultation on the newly published “Standards for Sexuality Education in Europe. A framework for policy-makers, educational and health authorities and specialists” and the possibilities of their implementation, specifically in Eastern European and Central Asian countries.



WHO

The Standards were developed under the guidance of BzGA, WHO Collaborating Center and the WHO Regional Office for Europe and were officially launched in October this year. They provide step-by-step instructions and a detailed matrix to support health and education professionals in their efforts to guarantee children accurate and sensitively presented information about sexuality.

The meeting gave the opportunity to discuss sexual health of adolescents and the state of affairs of sexuality education in the respective countries. Participants analysed challenges in the national implementation of sexuality education and discussed ways to use the jointly developed Standards to improve the situation of sexuality education. All participating countries warmly welcomed the Standards and stressed the fact that they were very much needed for their work.

The countries agreed on a large number of next steps to be taken at national level to promote the Standards ranging from translation and adaption of the Standards to the revision of existing curricula, calling meetings with national stakeholders, identifying possibilities to implement pilot projects and to the development of material based on the Standards.

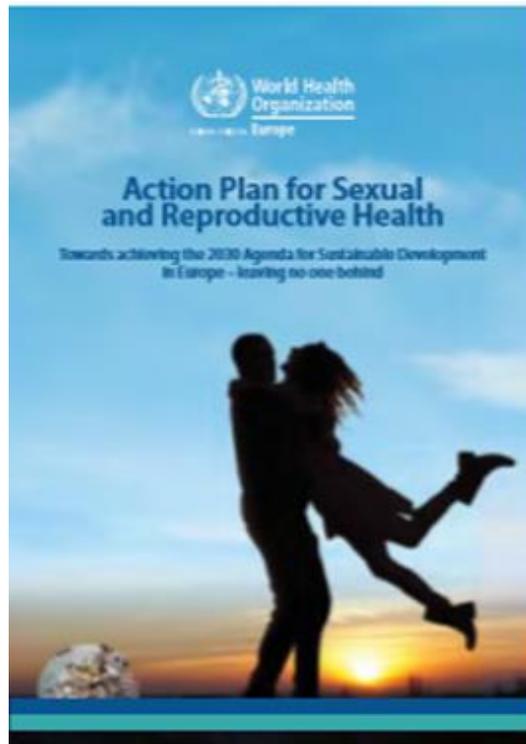
The Federal Centre for Health Education and the WHO Regional Office for Europe assured that they will support the implementation process in various ways, mainly by providing technical support in several ways.

Participants and organizers confirmed the importance of the meeting – the group will continue their cooperation and their fruitful exchange of their ongoing efforts to implement sexuality education on the basis of the Standards in their countries.

2016:

**Action Plan for Sexual and Reproductive Health: towards achieving the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Europe – leaving no one behind (2016)**

'Action plan for sexual and reproductive health and its resolution were adopted by the 66th session of the [WHO Regional Committee for Europe](#) [Ireland is a member of the **WHO Regional Committee for Europe**] in September 2016. This comprehensive framework will support countries to **ensure** that people are achieving **their full potential** for sexual and reproductive health and well-being.'



Description:	Delegates at the 66th session of the WHO Regional Committee for Europe.
Copyright/credit:	WHO
Date Created:	12/09/2016

**Ireland - WHO Regional Committee for Europe 2016**

## 2017:

'The facts sheets on the SDG health targets present key facts and figures, ongoing commitments, guidance on action, and indicators to **monitor** progress – in the context of the WHO European Region. They also provide specific highlights on how **WHO/Europe supports its Member States** in achieving these targets, and cover key SDG aspects such as equity, partnerships and intersectoral collaboration.'



The educational sector is a platform where SRH should be promoted through the delivery of effective sexuality education (13).

- Holistic sexuality education gives children and young people unbiased, scientifically correct information on all aspects of sexuality. At the same time, it helps them to develop the skills to act upon this information. Such education should also incorporate concepts of human rights and gender equality (1).
- Research shows that programmes sharing certain key characteristics can help in promoting safer SRH practices: abstaining from or delaying the start of sexual relations; reducing the frequency of unprotected sexual activity; reducing the number of sexual partners; and increasing the use of protection against unintended pregnancy and STIs during sexual intercourse (14).

*Excerpt page 3*

***This is Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4) 'Quality Education' of the 17 SDGs of the United Nations 2030 Agenda Sustainable Development that Ireland signed up to in 2015. See pages 69+.***

## 15-16 May 2017:

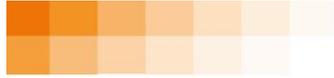
The international conference "***Sexuality Education: Lessons Learned and Future Developments in the WHO European Region***".

The conference was hosted by the **BZgA**. They refer to the ***Action Plan for Sexual and Reproductive Health: towards achieving the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Europe – leaving no one behind (2016)***.

The international conference "Sexuality Education: Lessons Learned and Future Developments in the WHO European Region" hosted by BZgA in Berlin on 15 & 16 May 2017 was attended by over 180 experts on sexual and reproductive health and sexuality education from more than 30 countries throughout the WHO European Region. It gathered representatives of government ministries, international and national nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), research institutions as well as international and intra-national organizations.

More than 10 years after a first joint conference of BZgA and WHO Regional Office for Europe on sexuality education in Europe, this conference offered the opportunity to promote evidence-based comprehensive sexuality education as an integral part of health promotion and as a crucial element supporting the healthy development of children and young people in line with the WHO '*Action plan for sexual and reproductive health: towards achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Europe – leaving no one behind*'.

By means of various conference tracks including keynote speeches, interactive plenary discussions and parallel group sessions, the event set the frame for an extensive exchange on the trends and the situation of sexuality education in the WHO European Region during the past decade and provided room for reflection on challenges and future strategies related to the implementation and improvement of sexuality education.



## Sexuality Education

Lessons Learned and Future Developments in  
the WHO European Region



Conference Report

International conference in Berlin  
Humbolt Carré  
15 & 16 May 2017

Hosted by the Federal Centre for Health Education (BZgA)  
WHO Collaborating Centre for Sexual and Reproductive Health

Co-sponsored by



### Who and what are driving resistance?

Churches and religious groups, conservative and right-wing politicians and parties, as well as anti-choice activists were identified as the main drivers of active opposition to sexuality education, this being exacerbated in societies with strong patriarchal traditions. However, passive resistance by schools was also highlighted, along with faith-based parents' groups. Teachers who feel uncomfortable with sexuality education issues, lack understanding about their roles or fear external interventions into their teaching can be a hindrance to the implementation of sexuality education.

Other no less fundamental drivers of resistance are general ignorance and the lack of meaningful public discourse, allied to stigma, scepticism about human rights, and nationalism. Lacking financial space for governments compounded with inadequate cooperation between responsible governmental authorities were also seen as strong obstacles to effective sexuality education.

Among the arguments raised by individuals and groups who oppose sexuality education is fear about early sexualization of children, sexuality education being seen as a family matter, and the possibility of it 'promoting' homo-

sexual/bisexual lifestyles in a positive light. These kinds of arguments, which are often reinforced by the mainstream media, were perceived as being embedded in ignorance and 'traditional' views on sex outside marriage, virginity and homosexuality. Orthodox churches were seen as being generally opposed to women's rights, including sexual rights, on the grounds that they were not consistent with religious teachings; churches may also adamantly oppose abortion on any grounds.

It was highlighted that some schools become passive resisters due to their unwillingness to challenge religious orthodoxy, although it was noted that competition for space in the school curriculum and lack of resources pose significant challenges to sexuality education in schools. Some politicians were cited as promoting resistance by claiming there was no need for sexuality education in their country as HIV rates were low; others appear to have little interest as they do not see sexuality education as holding much 'voter appeal'.

*Excerpt page 80*

National and international coalition-building, including NGOs, minorities and other stakeholders who may not be primarily focused on sexuality but who nevertheless share areas of common interest (such as those interested in harassment, sexual and reproductive health and gender-based violence), was identified as important, as was continuous building of alliances with governmental representatives and parliamentarians.

The significance of data as a fundamental element of evidence-based strategy development was highlighted – good and reliable data need to be collected and tailored to local contexts, and research and evaluation need to be promoted.

Developing campaigns and educational offers for parents and journalists can be effective, with websites specifically for parents to assist them to support their children. These can be reinforced by high-profile celebrity endorsements and advocacy. Seeking direct dialogue with (liberal) religious leaders paired with their active involvement in learning fora can help gain support from religious groups. Creating demand for sexuality education by empowering and involving young people themselves by means of, for instance, peer educators and multipliers was seen as being equally important.

Above all, the development of international instruments and sharing of factual information and best-practice examples across borders were considered powerful tools to counter opposition.

An interesting example of a successful advocacy initiative was recounted from Belgium, where well-known journalists and TV personalities were invited to ‘hijack’ a school class and talk about sexuality education – this was filmed and broadcast through YouTube and other portals and proved very successful in raising awareness about sexuality education. Another successful example is encouraging people who have previously been resistant to sexuality education but who have, for whatever reason, changed their minds to speak publicly about their experiences and the reasons for their conversion.

### *Excerpt page 81*

## Taking concrete action to reduce resistance

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Reliable data were again highlighted as being crucial to presenting a strong evidence-based counterargument to resistance, with age- and sex-disaggregated data being particularly vital. Using the existing evidence and contributing to the generation of further strong evidence are both necessary.

Policy coherence is important – sexuality education should not be seen as a stand-alone issue, but should influence and be influenced by political activity at country level on issues such as inequalities, teenage pregnancy prevention, mental health, anti-bullying and sexual health: the language used in relation to sexuality education needs to mirror that used for other policy areas. A more cohesive policy landscape would enable practitioners to implement sexuality-education programmes in a more effective manner. Similar approaches might be taken in some countries in ensuring coherence with the SDGs, especially targets 3, 4 and 5.

A smart communications policy that recognizes and integrates the most popular websites and other outlets used by young people is advisable to enable accumulated evidence to be disseminated in appropriate ways. This is something that might be coordinated by the WHO Regional Office for Europe, with an initial focus on counteracting misleading or incorrect content currently available in online media.

It was noted that much resistance to sexuality education is not based on evidence, but on the (mis)use of emotion. In some cases, the powerful tool of emotions can also be

used by proponents of sexuality education. For example, there may be advantages in appealing to people’s emotional desire for their children to do well by linking sexuality education to academic and career achievements, using well-known personalities and young people to spread the message.

Teachers are among the most relevant allies in sexuality education, and this must be recognized as the basis for future developments, including providing support to establish teacher associations for sexuality education. NGOs are also very important. Nationally, steps should be taken to develop leadership capacity to ensure NGOs can continue to build coalitions with parliamentarians and influence governments and policy-makers: at international level, the momentum created by the SDGs should be used to advocate for sexuality education.

Existing networks of practitioners, such as the European Expert Group on Sexuality Education, need to be strengthened to ensure that sustainable strategies for collective action are shared across Europe. Sexuality-education practitioners need to develop ‘legal literacy’ to respond adequately to legal threats and actions by the opposition.

Participatory processes engaging young people are important to assess the needs and wishes of young people. Understanding exactly what adolescents want to know and learn about helps to legitimize the development of CSE curricula and respond to opposition.

### *Excerpt page 82*

## The global online CSE advocacy hub: uniting CSE advocates under one virtual roof

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CSE is very much linked to the SDGs, as it enables young people to protect their health, well-being and dignity, is based on human-rights principles, and advances gender equality and the rights and empowerment of young people. Data from around the world show why it is necessary – for instance, young people account for almost 50 % of new HIV infections, but only 26 % of girls and 33 % of boys fully understand how HIV is transmitted.

Innovation is the key to sustainability and resilience. The CSE advocacy hub is an innovative initiative that was born as an outcome of a high-level technical meeting

in 2014. Young people were at the meeting and asked for something meaningful, accessible and which was targeted at all of them – the hub was formed as a consequence.

The hub has received strong and consistent support from UNFPA, IPPF EN and UNESCO. These organizations recognize that this online space is key to providing information to young people.

The hub is a social media platform, which corresponds with what young people requested. It provides a safe place for young people and experts in the field. Sections include 'Conversational circles', where young

people can create or take part in conversations with fellow members, 'Advocacy stories' from different countries and regions, an overview of CSE with regular updates, and resources. A youth advisory panel with representatives from youth organizations has been created to participate in future developments.

*Excerpt page 69*

*Petar Mladenov is the Coordinator of the global CSE advocacy hub*

### 27-28 September 2017:

#### **Petar Mladenov**

'The 2017 EuroNGOs Conference "Re:Frame. Promoting SRHR in a time of growing populism" will take place in Brussels, Belgium, 27-28 September. This two-day gathering will challenge thinking and stimulate debate around the rise of populism, its impact on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights issues and how to respond to this changing context.

#### CONFERENCE BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

Rising support for populist movements, increasing authoritarian tendencies of political leaders and governments and proliferation of so-called illiberal democracies, echoed through examples such as: Brexit in the UK, rhetoric used in Hungary and Poland, the success of far-right parties from Germany to Greece, and Trump in the USA, are reshaping politics in Europe and beyond. For the SRHR community this **global political shift is particularly worrying** as it rejects progressive values, favours national self-interest over international cooperation and development aid, and poses profound threats to human rights, particularly sexual and reproductive rights. **There is also the risk that this growth in populism will undermine the achievement of SDGs, influence decisions taken at UN level and impact future funding of several UN agencies.**

In this time of unprecedented change, the 2017 conference will provide a high-level platform to highlight and explore how we can promote and protect SRHR in future years, within and beyond UN processes. This year's conference will challenge thinking and stimulate debate around the rise of populism and the impact this has on SRHR, both domestically as in the context of global development. The objectives of the conference are twofold:

Provide a platform for the SRHR community to unravel political and financial implications and **put in place new narratives** in the current political landscape and rise of populism. Share and collect best practices, techniques and approaches to respond to this changing context - **at the global, regional and grassroots level**.

**Taking into account the shifting political landscape, come up with concrete strategies to use the global framework of the Sustainable Development Goals to mitigate this backlash and to put gender, human and sexual and reproductive rights firmly on the agenda of the implementation, follow-up and review of the SDGs.**

On the 28th Sept, Peter Mladenov, CSE Hub Coordinator will be joining the session on #CSE organized by **BZgA** (German Institute for Health Education) where he will be a Panellist presenting the Hub as innovative practice. Follow our FB page and here for live updates.

The conference will be designed as a two-day dialogue, with parallel thematic tracks between which participants can navigate and choose according to interest and priorities.

RE POLITICISE: What is the political impact of the rise of populism on our democratic space and SRHR issues, domestically and internationally, also looking at the political effects of the Global Gag Rule in the 'Global North' and 'South'? How do we re-politicise SRHR, within and beyond UN processes, and **how can we re-frame our messages** in this new political landscape? How to use She Decides and further push our European governments and institutions to counteract the actions of an ultra-conservative administration both in America and elsewhere? Sessions will focus on ways to address this in our **messaging, tactics and strategies, and innovative alliances and techniques** out there to do that.

RE GENERATE: What are the implications of this new political context on ODA and funding for SRHR, and what is the impact of the Global Gag Rule, in particular in the Global South? Where do we now take the She Decides initiative and how can we hold donors to account on their pledges? How do we mobilize donors further and also leverage resources nationally to fill the funding gap, and what can we learn from examples and best-practices in mobilizing and generating funding from different sources - including governments, the private sector and foundations, as well as campaigns with the general public?

RE CONNECT: How do we reconnect with the grassroots and our citizen base? **What can we learn from the rising populist movements, rhetoric and their voters, and the growing Euroscepticism? How do we strengthen the capacity of our SRHR community to publicly mobilise around our issues, become more capable to move beyond facts to emotions, and put pressure on decision-makers?**

RE VIEW: Taking into account the shifting political landscape, how we use Agenda 2030 follow-up and review to mitigate this backlash and highlight the importance of SRHR? What lessons can we learn from the National Voluntary Reviews and High-Level Political Forum in terms of evidence and progress on SRHR under SDGs 3 and 5, how these were reported on, and where do we go from here?

RE PRESENT: What we are doing as a community in promoting and implementing SRHR within the SDGs at implementation and programming level? In times of 'alternative facts', what evidence, good practices and data do we have from our work on the ground, in our own countries and from the global South, and how do we present this as part of the **monitoring and reporting on the SDGs through the different channels?**

The conference programme will be build-up of different types of sessions:

Context hubs: In these sessions the main emphasis is on deep analysis of the context and political debates, including external experts, aimed at **sharing information and intelligence to feed into our strategies and plans**.

Inspiration hubs: These sessions will focus on showcasing experiences, success stories and best practices from in and outside the sector.

Creation hubs: The purpose of these sessions is to share and further develop ideas, and co-create concrete advocacy, campaigns or actions.'

4/7/2018:

[‘Sexuality Education – An essential contribution to young people’s health and well-being’.](#)

EuroHealthNet Magazine article - ‘The WHO Collaborating Centre for Sexual and Reproductive Health, established in 2003 at **BZgA**, has been examining the standards and norms for sexuality education across the WHO European Region. It has published a number of reference documents which define standards for sexuality education, provide guidance for implementation and support the implementation of training programmes for educators. Recent publications include a comparative study of sexuality education in different countries, and a series of policy briefs explaining the benefits of school-based sexuality education...’

**30-31 August 2018:**

‘UNESCO IITE presents new edition of International Technical Guidance on Sexuality Education at the European regional meeting on Sexual and Reproductive Health’:



‘Over 50 policy makers and experts from Europe and Central Asia region and representatives of UN organizations met in Stockholm on August 30-31, 2018 to assess the progress made and **accelerate the implementation of the Action Plan for Sexual and Reproductive health: Towards achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Europe – leaving no one behind.**

The **Action Plan was endorsed by 53 Member States of the WHO European Region in 2016.** It provides a comprehensive framework of actions to ensure that all people are achieving their full potential for sexual and reproductive health and well-being. Among many recommended interventions, the Action Plan underscores the importance of good quality comprehensive sexuality education that provides gender-, age- and development stage-appropriate, scientifically accurate and comprehensive teaching and learning on sexual and reproductive health and relations issues.

**UNESCO IITE** and the German Centre for Health Education (**BZgA**) – WHO Collaborating Centre for Sexual and Reproductive Health in Europe were invited to the meeting to facilitate a special session on sexuality education.

Tigran Yepoyan, UNESCO Regional HIV and Health Education Advisor, and Christine Winkelmann, Head of HIV and STI Prevention Unit from BZgA, made a joint presentation on the history of sexuality education, its historical and current definitions and standards. They focused on the new revised edition of the **UN International Technical Guidance on Sexuality Education released in 2018** and the **Standards for Sexuality Education in Europe developed by WHO Europe/BZgA back in 2010.**

**Participants’ interviews are available [here](#).**



## SEXUALITY EDUCATION: WHAT IS IT?

This policy brief provides an overview of key issues in sexuality education. It focuses primarily on sexuality education in Europe and Central Asia but is also relevant to countries outside of these regions.

Sexuality education aims to develop and strengthen the ability of children and young people to make conscious, satisfying, healthy and respectful choices

regarding relationships, sexuality and emotional and physical health. Sexuality education does not encourage children and young people to have sex.



Photos: Peter Barker / Panos

## DEFINITION

In the *Standards for Sexuality Education in Europe* the concept of “holistic sexuality education” is defined as follows:

“Learning about the cognitive, emotional, social, interactive and physical aspects of sexuality. Sexuality education starts early in childhood and progresses through adolescence and adulthood. For children and young people, it aims at supporting and protecting sexual development. It gradually equips and empowers children and young people with information, skills and positive values to understand and enjoy their sexuality, have safe and fulfilling relationships and take responsibility for their own and other people’s sexual health and well-being.”<sup>1</sup>

## HISTORY

In Europe, sexuality education as a school curriculum subject has a history of more than half a century. It first began in Sweden in 1955, followed by many more Western European countries in the 1970s and 1980s. The introduction of school-based sexuality education continued into the 1990s and early 2000s, first in France and the United Kingdom and subsequently in Portugal, Spain, Estonia, Ukraine and Armenia. In Ireland, sexuality education became mandatory in primary and secondary schools in 2003.<sup>1-4</sup> The focus of sexuality education has

changed in line with the educational and public health priorities of the time, but most key elements have stayed the same. It started with the prevention of unintended pregnancy (1960s-70s), then moved on to the prevention of HIV (1980s) and awareness about sexual abuse (1990s), finally embracing the prevention of sexism, homophobia and online bullying from 2000 onwards. Today, an analysis of gender norms and reflections on gender inequality are important parts of sexuality education.

Front cover of Policy Brief no. 1

## MYTHS AND FACTS ABOUT SEXUALITY EDUCATION

Good quality sexuality education does not lead to young people having sex earlier than is expected based on the national average. This has been shown in research studies in Europe, including Finland<sup>7</sup> and Estonia<sup>8</sup>, and in research from other countries around the world. Good quality sexuality education can, however, lead to later sexual debut and more responsible sexual behaviour.<sup>5,9</sup>

Sexuality education does not deprive children of their “innocence”. Giving children information on sexuality that is scientifically accurate, non-judgmental, age-appropriate and complete, as part of a carefully phased process from the beginning of formal schooling (including kindergarten and pre-school) is something from which children can benefit.

Sexuality education and an open attitude towards sexuality do not make it easier for paedophiles to abuse children. The opposite is the case: when children learn about equality and respect in relationships, they are in a better position to recognize abusive persons and situations. In the absence of this, children and young people can look

for and receive conflicting and sometimes damaging messages from their peers, the media or other sources.<sup>6</sup>

Sexuality education is not damaging to children or adolescents.<sup>6</sup> Sexuality education encompasses a range of topics that are tailored to the age and developmental level of the child. This is what is called age-appropriateness. A child aged four to six years learns for example about topics such as friendships, emotions and different parts of the body. These topics are also relevant for older children and adolescents but are then taught at a different level. Gradually, other topics such as puberty, family planning and contraception are introduced. For most young adults, sexual relationships are built on principles similar to those of the social relationships learnt in early life. Children are aware of and recognize these relationships long before they act on their sexuality and therefore need the skills to understand their bodies, relationships and feelings from an early age.<sup>6</sup>

## SEXUALITY EDUCATION AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Good quality sexuality education is grounded in internationally accepted human rights, in particular the right to access appropriate health-related information. This right has been confirmed by the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child<sup>(a)</sup>, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women<sup>(b)</sup>, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights<sup>(c)</sup> and also in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities<sup>(d)</sup>. Furthermore, sexuality education is advocated for in the 1994 Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development<sup>(e)</sup>, and its importance has been underscored by the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education in a 2010 report to the United Nations General Assembly devoted exclusively to this topic<sup>(f)</sup> and by the European Court of Human Rights in 2011<sup>(g)</sup>.

*Excerpt from Policy Brief no. 1*

## Timeline for United Nations Sustainable Development



*'The United Nations 2030 Agenda, 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs, sometimes called Global Goals whose predecessors were Millennium Development Goals) and 169 targets, is the blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all. They address the global challenges we face, including those related to poverty, inequality, climate, environmental degradation, prosperity, and peace and justice. The Goals interconnect and in order to leave no one behind, it is important that we achieve each Goal and target by 2030.'* Finalised on 2/8/2015.

**8/9/1990**

**ICLEI** (International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives - Local Governments for Sustainability) was founded by local government leaders adopting the ICLEI Charter at the end of the **"World Congress of Local Governments for a Sustainable Future"** at **the United Nations Headquarters in New York** on 8 September 1990. ICLEI's founding took place under the auspices of the International Union of Local Authorities (IULA) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). The world congress had attracted more than 200 local governments from 43 countries. This was two years before the historic UN Conference on Environment and Development (Earth Summit) in Rio de Janeiro.

'ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability is a **global network** of more than 1,750 local and regional governments **committed to sustainable urban development**. Active in 100+ countries, **we influence sustainability policy** and drive local action for low emission, nature-based, equitable, resilient and circular development. We **bring sustainability to a rapidly developing urban world**.

ICLEI makes sustainability an integral part of urban development and creates systemic change in urban areas through practical, integrated solutions. We help cities, towns and regions anticipate and respond to complex challenges, from rapid urbanization and climate change to ecosystem degradation and inequity.

**The local and regional governments in our network** confront these challenges by incorporating sustainability into day-to-day operations and policy. We invest in the capacity and knowledge needed to design solutions and make decisions informed by data, scientific evidence and local realities and pressures. Our five pathways towards low emission, nature-based, equitable, resilient and circular development are designed to create systemic change.

We work in cities, towns and regions of all sizes, with varying capacities and challenges. Many have set and reached ambitious targets and are at the forefront of sustainability, pioneering new solutions and challenging the

status quo. Others are taking early steps towards transformation, strengthening their systems and capacities to achieve sustainability goals.'

ICLEI is in [Cork](#).

In [2019](#) Cork environmental groups were in favour of a directly-elected mayor as they believe Cork needs more leadership re climate change and sustainable development.

[9/5/2019 Cork Cycling Campaign Press Release](#): 'Local Environmental Groups urge Cork voters to support a directly-elected mayor'.

*'The position of a directly-elected mayor is all about the future of Cork city. And no part of the future is more critical than responding effectively to the urgent environmental challenges of climate change and biodiversity loss. Cities around the world are leading the practical response to climate change and sustainable development. Even when national governments have fallen short, many cities have stepped up to the challenge of acting responsibly to secure a better future. But for this to happen, **cities need strong political leadership.***

*That is why community groups focussing on the environment and sustainability — Cork Environmental Forum, Cork Climate Action, Cork Trees Trust, and Cork Cycling Campaign — are calling on voters to support a directly elected mayor.*

*An elected mayor would bring vision, coherence, accountability, and responsibility. **The mayor would be a leading voice at local and national levels.** He or she could articulate a new vision for the city, demand results from city hall, lead our local councillors, and **be our voice at the national table.** And the mayors could be removed if they failed to deliver.*

*We have many fine policies at local and national levels. What is missing is effective implementation.*

*Cork today is a proud and ambitious city. It's a city of tremendous opportunity, but also of tremendous challenges. We will see huge population growth over the next 20 years. At the same time **our planet** is facing the urgent need for a transition to a sustainable society. **We need a strong mayor** who is responsible and accountable for handling Cork's growing population, for housing everyone in energy efficient buildings, for delivering efficient and attractive transport options, and for providing high quality parks and green spaces for our residents and wildlife. Cork needs a clear and coherent vision to develop a sustainable and liveable city that delivers an exceptional quality of life for everyone.*

*At present, Cork cannot articulate and deliver this vision because no power and funding is devolved to a local level. For example, the city council cannot even put in a pedestrian crossing or shift a bus stop without getting permission and funding from Dublin. Cork needs increased power and funding. The environmental groups believe having a directly elected mayor is the best approach to achieve **greater local control.***

*A **strong mayor** could drive big projects without excessive delays. The Events Centre, Tramore Valley Park, the Marina Park, and the Lee-to-Sea Greenway are all amazing opportunities for Cork. Right now they're stalled because no one is responsible. With an elected mayor, there'll be no doubt about who's in charge.*

***Bernie Connolly of Cork Environmental Forum said, "Cities are seen as the primary vehicle to deliver sustainability and directly elected mayors are very well placed for good urban governance and to deliver on more varied agendas." She pointed to the example of how Jaime Lerner, the Mayor of Curitiba (Brazil), shifted the city's course of development and succeeded in delivering a sustainable transport system, green areas, better social conditions and recycling initiatives\*.***

*Dr Dean Venables of the Cork Cycling Campaign noted "Cycling is an immediate step people can take to reduce their carbon emissions and boost their health at the same time. But it must feel safe. We have seen how City Hall can ignore serious concerns from the community and from councillors, even when it comes to public safety and responsible use of taxpayer money. That must change."*

Rob Hamilton of Cork Climate Action said “Climate Action needs to be Local Action. **City mayors the world over are leading and inspiring the switch to sustainable living. Cork has had inspirational mayors in the past – now it’s important for the office to have real authority as well.**”

In March, Cork’s young people marched in their thousands to demand action on climate change and the environment. The environmental groups urged voters to particularly remember their responsibility to the younger generation and to prioritise environmental issues at the polls.

Cork has a fiercely independent streak. The groups called on the people of Cork city to reflect this proud tradition and vote for a directly-elected mayor.’

**\*Jaime Lerner - According to this book ‘The Local Agenda 21 Planning Guide: An Introduction to Sustainable Development’, Jaime Lerner was on the ICLEI Executive Committee:**

Special thanks is due to current and past members of the **ICLEI** Executive Committee who gave the initial support and impetus to the Local Agenda 21 initiative, specifically, Sir John Chatfield, Dr. Helena Ribeiro Sobral, Dr. Siegfried Brenke, Dr. Noel Brown, Mr. Jakob Eng, Dr. **Jaime Lerner**, Mr. Pekka Jalkanen, and Mr. **Jaime** Valenzuela.

**\*A 2017 tweet by ICLEI Resilient Cities:**



**\*26-28 June 2019 in Bonn, Germany ‘Resilient Cities Congress ICLEI 2019’ took place.**



**\*In 2021 people in Galway will be asked if they want to vote on a Directly-Elected Mayor. See page 58.**

**3-14<sup>th</sup> June 1992**

[United Nations Conference on Environment & Development Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.](#) Ireland attended the [conference](#).



*President Michael D Higgins (Earth Summit attendee) and Brendan Howlin TD*

Brendan Howlin TD:

“From Rio to here”

‘In the early 1980's **“sustainability”** became part of the environmental and political vocabulary. In **1983** the United Nations General Assembly established the world commission on Environment and Development. The U.N. appointed **Gro Harlem Brundtland [now one of ‘[The Elders](#)’ with Mary Robinson]**, a former Minister of Environment of Norway (also it's Prime Minister) as its Chair. The Commission itself soon became known as the **Brundtland Commission**. After three years work including public hearings in a variety of countries the Brundtland Commission published it's impactful report "Our Common Future". In it, the Commission warned the world of the danger of **impending environmental disaster**:

Their response to their own analysis was to call for an international conference to be convened to take action. That conference - the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development - was held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. **At Rio's "Earth Summit", more than 170 nations, including Ireland, agreed to work toward the sustainable development of the planet. A global plan of action called Agenda 21** mapped out an action programme to tackle the ongoing human assault on the environment.

Many countries developed their own local *Agenda 21* proposals and the new accepted definition of sustainability became a measuring stick by which economic activity was judged, which stated that **“sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”**. This definition introduced the idea of social equity between and within generations, and the idea of limitations on the environments ability to meet present and future needs.’

1997: [Ireland’s Local Agenda 21 Partnership Fund](#)

‘The Local Agenda 21 Environmental Partnership Fund (LA21 EPF) which has operated since 1997, promotes sustainable development by assisting small-scale environmental projects at local level.

The projects involve partnership arrangements between local authorities and various local groups including community groups, schools and environmental NGOs.

The Fund encourages involvement of local communities in local action and decision-making and assists them in working towards the goal of sustainable development. The value of the scheme is enhanced by the voluntary effort that it facilitates.

**The LA21 EPF assists sustainable development from the ground-up and facilitates, at local level, the achievement of the objectives of the Agenda 21 action plan on sustainable development which was agreed at the UN Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro, in 1992 (the "Earth Summit").** Renewed political commitment for sustainable development was secured at the Rio +20 Conference in Brazil in June 2012, on the 20th anniversary of the "Earth Summit".

The LA21 EPF is administered by local authorities, while the **Department (DCCAE) maintains a co-ordinating role.** Eligible projects are those which support and complement, at a local level, national environmental policies such as those on Waste, Biodiversity, Climate Change, Air, Water and Sustainable Development. Local authorities are required to provide an equivalent amount of funding to successful projects as the funding provided by the Department. Funding can also be supplemented by other sources, e.g. the private sector, in order to maximise the potential for partnership arrangements.'

## Agenda 21

UNCED, 1992

Agenda 21 is a comprehensive plan of action to be taken globally, nationally and locally by organizations of the United Nations System, Governments, and Major Groups in every area in which human impacts on the environment.

Agenda 21, the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, and the Statement of principles for the Sustainable Management of Forests were adopted by more than 178 Governments at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 3 to 14 June 1992.

The Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) was created in December 1992 to ensure effective follow-up of UNCED, to monitor and report on implementation of the agreements at the local, national, regional and international levels. It was agreed that a five year review of Earth Summit progress would be made in 1997 by the United Nations General Assembly meeting in special session.

The full implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Commitments to the Rio principles, were strongly reaffirmed at the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) held in Johannesburg, South Africa from 26 August to 4 September 2002.



1994

## The Aalborg Charter, Denmark



### The Aalborg Charter

The 'Aalborg Charter' (1994) is an urban sustainability initiative approved by the participants at the first European Conference on Sustainable Cities & Towns in Aalborg, Denmark. It is inspired by the Rio Earth Summit's Local Agenda 21 plan, and was developed to contribute to the European Union's Environmental Action Programme, 'Towards Sustainability'.

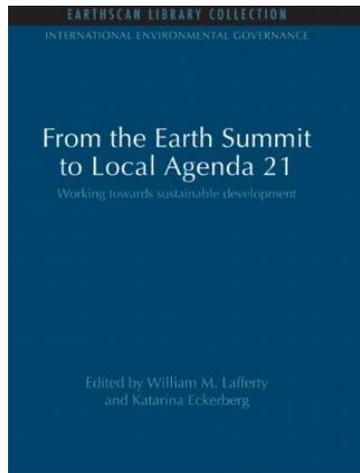
The Charter is based on the consensus of individuals, municipalities, NGOs, national and international organisations, and scientific bodies. More than 3,000 local authorities from more than 40 countries have signed the Charter. This has resulted in the largest European movement of its type and started the European Sustainable Cities and Towns Campaign.

After over 20 years, the spirit of the Aalborg Charter remains. It prepared the ground for a variety of schemes and movements for [local sustainability](#), such as the Aalborg Commitments and eventually the [Sustainable Cities Platform](#).

#### The Aalborg Charter (1994)

[Aalborg Charter - English](#)

[Aalborg Charter - Signatories](#)



'THIS IS ESSENTIAL READING for all those who want to see that what they do, in rising to the challenge of Rio, draws properly on the experience of others and therefore makes their contribution all the more effective.' from the Foreword by JOHN GUMMER MP former secretary of State for the Environment 'An essential guide to how global agreements are being implemented at a local level. Sometimes people question whether global agreements impact on their lives. This book answers with a firm 'YES'.' FELIX DODDS UNED-UK Coordinator Agenda 21 of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development called for the participation and cooperation of local authorities in support of its economic, social and environmental goals. This collection of in-depth case studies emphasizes the diversity and inventiveness of local initiatives since the Rio 'Earth Summit' within different national settings. From the Earth Summit to Local Agenda 21 offers a realistic counterpoint to the official monitoring and assessment procedures of national governments and international bodies. It highlights the problems of assessment and policy evaluation and clearly sets out the policy stages necessary for more effective realization of Local Agenda 21 objectives. WILLIAM M LAFFERTY is professor of political science at the University of Oslo, Norway, and director of the Program for Research and Documentation for a Sustainable Society (ProSus) within the Research Council of Norway. KATARINA ECKERBERG is associate professor in international relations at the Department of Political Science, Umea University, Sweden.' **Published in 1998**

International networks which relate directly to LA21 include the Aalborg Charter and the Climate Alliance. Whereas the signatories of the Aalborg Charter seem to predominate among the Nordic group (especially in Finland), the Climate Alliance has been most influential in the Netherlands, Germany and Austria. In the latter two countries, the membership in the Alliance has indeed been referred to by the respective governments as an LA21 indicator, that is, they have reported efforts within the Climate Alliance as equivalent to LA21 status. Though this is probably stretching the ICLEI criteria, it is clear that the goals and prescriptions of the Aalborg Charter and Climate Alliance are in many ways similar to LA21. For example, participatory methods for developing renewable energy and reducing transport emissions are essential to local sustainable development and well in line with LA21.

In Germany, the focal point for LA21 co-ordination has been located within the established environmental organisation. The German Association of Cities has promoted LA21 by developing a guideline in 1995 and by urging its 6,400 member cities to implement it. Likewise, the Association of Finnish Local Authorities has established a Section for Sustainable Development in 1997 to co-ordinate municipal activities and recently launched a LA21 project involving 60 municipalities. The Norwegian Association for Local and Regional Authorities (KS) has been even more active in this respect, although LA21 was only officially put on the programme in the Spring of 1996. In a resolution by KS from its annual congress in 1992, it introduced the need to concentrate on reducing the total level of consumption in Norway – an appeal which is still very radical compared to most LA21 initiatives which seldom challenge the roots of high-consumption societies.

The Irish case differs from the other countries in that there are no significant local networks within Irish municipalities. Instead, the NGOs in Ireland, together with local businesses, are the most active in local sustainable-development work, as will be further discussed below. A

general impression from the eight country-studies is that those countries with less developed LA21 processes are comparatively more engaged in other international networks connected to local sustainable development, whereas the pioneer countries in LA21 seem to have concentrated their efforts on national networking and to a somewhat lesser extent become involved in the international initiatives.

#### **Excerpt pages 254 & 255**

Finally, the Irish case shows that the role of the EU structural funds appears to have played a significant role in social innovation. In particular, it has provided a precedent for the participative 'bottom-up' ideal embedded in LA21. New partnerships have been formed at the local level which, in practice, act as both complements and competitors to local government. The problem, as pointed out in the Irish chapter, is that these entities lack the fundamental legitimacy and accountability that would allow for further acceptance within the Irish society. As a result, these partnerships are, for the most part, seen as a threat rather than as a complement to local democracy. Although this situation is particularly expressed in the Irish case, with its extremely weak local-government autonomy, it might become a growing political issue also in the other countries if and when the power and influence of local partnerships takes hold.

Irish NGOs have been little active in promoting LA21 thus far, but have nonetheless contributed to spreading ideas about sustainable development. At the national level, the Network of Irish Environment and Development Organisations was formed already at the time of Rio, and An Taisce (the National Trust for Ireland) has brought together local authorities, business, environmental organisations and academics to discuss strategies for sustainable development from 1994 on. With the upcoming local government reform in Ireland, the role of partnerships and NGO involvement may well become a significant force for change in the future.

#### **Excerpt page 256**

### **\*23/9/09 'Agenda 21 must form the core of programme for government say Irish environment groups'**

**(Source: [environmentalpillar.ie](http://environmentalpillar.ie) – supports United Nations 2030 Agenda 17 SDGs)**

Coherent implementation of Agenda 21 must form the core of the new programme for government in order to provide the radical change needed to ensure a sustainable future for Irish society Irish environment groups warned in Dublin today.

Agenda 21 is a UN supported roadmap to sustainability. The Environmental Pillar, the representative body for twenty eight of Ireland's national environmental groups, published their 'Programme for Government proposals' document today. Charles Stanley-Smith, chairman of An Taisce said "The new programme for government must adopt Agenda 21 as an underlying principle for all aspects of its decision-making."

The Pillar propose that as a first step towards implementation, the government publish a National Sustainable Development Strategy by January 2010, and then ensure its application at all levels of governance.

### **\*29/9/2011 '[Local Agenda 21 funding for local environmental projects announced](#)'. This article appeared on the website of Cork Environmental Forum. Here is an extract from the website:**

An Introduction to Cork Environmental Forum...

Cork Environmental Forum (CEF) came into being in 1995 to the backdrop of the burgeoning Celtic Tiger, when it was founded by Cork County Council as an instrument for applying the principles of Local Agenda 21, as agreed by the United Nations Global Conference on environment and development in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. CEF's initial brief was to bring various stakeholders together at a local level throughout Cork city and county who would not ordinarily have occasion to meet to discuss local sustainability and environmental issues and agree on an appropriate action plan.

**20-22 June 2012**

**United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development Rio+20** was held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Member States decided to launch a process to develop a set of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which would build upon the Millennium Goals (MDGs) and converge with the post 2015 development agenda. People came from all over the world and they declared *'this is the future we want'*. They made a 3-year plan to have the SDGs part of a UN agenda by the end of 2015. For the first time in the UN's history non-governmental representatives were given access to negotiate and set the agenda along with Nation States. **Patrick Paul Walsh, Professor of International Development Studies at UCD**, legally represented thousands of universities in the formation of these goals as a member of the UN Major Group for Science and Technology. Here is a [TEDxFulbrightDublin](#) talk, dated 26/2/2016, where Professor Walsh talks about the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda as an agenda of the people, with the responsibility for implementation by the people, using their influence on *'Livelihoods, Civil Society, and Governance'*, to induce successful *stakeholder partnership at local, national, regional and global levels*. He says that 2030 Agenda is *'a moral compass for the world for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.'* He says that currently he is a Senior Adviser at the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network.



*Professor Patrick Paul Walsh of University College Dublin*

**19-22 May 2015**

**The Incheon Declaration: SDG4** – 'UNESCO together with UNICEF, the World Bank, UNFPA, UNDP, UN Women and UNHCR organised the **World Education Forum 2015 in Incheon, Republic of Korea**, hosted by the Republic of Korea. Over 1600 participants from 160 countries, including over 120 Ministers, heads and members of delegations, heads of agencies and officials of multilateral and bilateral organisations, and representatives of civil society, the teaching profession, youth and the private sector, adopted the **Incheon Declaration for Education 2030**, which sets out a *new vision for education* for the next fifteen years. **'SDG4 Education 2030 Framework for Action aims to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all... We further entrust UNESCO, as the United Nations' specialised agency for education to continue its mandated role to lead and coordinate the Education 2030 agenda.'**



*UNESCO Director-General Irina Bokova (second right) and United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon (to her right) at the Incheon Declaration 2015.*

**Ireland** signed up to the Incheon Declaration. Through the Incheon Declaration adopted at the World Education Forum in May 2015, UNESCO, as the United Nations' specialised agency for education, was entrusted to lead the Education 2030 agenda with its partners. The roadmap to achieve the 10 targets of the education goal is the Education 2030 Framework for Action, adopted in November 2015, which provides guidance to governments and partners on how to turn commitments into action. **The name of the action plan is: '[Education 2030 Incheon Declaration and Framework for Action for the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 4 - Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.](#)'\*** On page 62 of the report it states, 'All of UNESCO, including its field offices, institutes, networks and relevant platforms, will work towards implementation of SDG4-Education 2030...To **ensure strong global coordination**, UNESCO will convene a multi-stakeholder SDG-Education 2030 Steering Committee (*SDG-Education2030SC*), working within the wider 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development architecture. The SDG-Education 2030 SC **will support Member States and partners** in achieving SDG4-Education 2030. To this end, it will, among other activities, **provide strategic guidance, review progress** drawing on the **Gem Report [see below]**, and make **recommendations** to the education community on key priorities and **catalytic actions** to achieve the new agenda; **monitor and advocate** for adequate financing; and **encourage harmonization and coordination of partner activities**, The SDG-Education 2030 SC will meet at least once a year.' Elsewhere in the report it states that the Global Education 2030 Agenda '**underlines the importance of citizen education in a plural and interdependent world...UNESCO contributes to the measuring of progress towards [Target 4.7 of Sustainable Development Goal 4 on Education](#)\* which focuses on [Global Citizenship Education \(GCED\)](#) and [Education for Sustainable Development \(ESD\)](#).'**

### **\*Target 4.7** (extracts from Incheon action plan, pages 48-50)

'Target 4.7: By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development.'

'In a globalized world with unresolved social, political, economic and environmental challenges, education that helps build peaceful and sustainable societies is essential. Education systems seldom fully integrate such transformative approaches, however. It is vital therefore to give a central place in SDG4-Education 2030 to strengthening education's contribution to the fulfilment of human rights, peace and responsible citizenship from local to global levels, gender equality, sustainable development and health.'

'The content of such education must be relevant, with a focus on both cognitive and non-cognitive aspects of learning. The knowledge, skills, values and attitudes required by citizens to lead productive lives, make informed decisions and assume active roles locally and globally in facing and resolving global challenges can be acquired through **education for sustainable development (ESD)**<sup>12</sup> and **global citizenship education (GCED)**,<sup>13</sup> which includes peace and human rights education as well as intercultural education and education for international understanding. While considerable progress has been made in recent years, only 50% of UNESCO's Member States indicate that they have, for example, integrated ESD into relevant policies[xxxiv].' - **Contd page 78**

**UNESCO** has published the **[Beijing Consensus on Artificial Intelligence \(AI\) and Education](#)**, the first ever document to offer guidance and recommendations on how best to harness AI technologies for achieving the **Education 2030 Agenda**. It was adopted during the **[International Conference on Artificial Intelligence and Education](#)**, held in Beijing from 16 – 18 May 2019, by over 50 government ministers, international representatives from over 105 Member States and almost 100 representatives from UN agencies, academic institutions, civil society and the private sector.

12 ESD empowers learners to take informed decisions and responsible actions for environmental integrity, economic viability and a just society, for present and future generations, while respecting cultural diversity. It is about lifelong learning, and is an integral part of quality education. ESD is holistic and transformational education which addresses learning content and outcomes, pedagogy and the learning environment. It achieves its purpose by transforming society. (UNESCO. 2014. Roadmap for Implementing the Global Action Programme on Education for Sustainable Development. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0023/002305/230514e.pdf>.)

13 GCED aims to equip learners with the following core competencies: a) A deep knowledge of global issues and universal values such as justice, equality, dignity and respect; b) cognitive skills to think critically, systemically and creatively, including adopting a multi-perspective approach that recognizes different dimension, perspectives and angles of issues; c) non-cognitive skills including social skills such as empathy and conflict resolution, and communicative skills and aptitudes for networking and interacting with people of different backgrounds, origins, cultures and perspectives; and d) behavioural capacities to act collaboratively and responsibly, and to strive for collective good. (UNESCO. 2013. Outcome document of the Technical Consultation on Global Citizenship Education: Global Citizenship Education – An Emerging Perspective. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002241/224115E.pdf>.)

‘Develop policies and programmes to promote **ESD** and **GCED** [see above for explanation] and bring them into the mainstream of formal, non-formal and informal education through system-wide interventions, teacher-training, curricular reform and pedagogical support. This includes implementing the Global Action Programme on ESD and addressing themes such as human rights, gender equality, health, **comprehensive sexuality education**, **climate change**, sustainable livelihoods and responsible and engaged citizenship, based on national experiences and capabilities.’ On page 65 it states, ‘The EFA Global Monitoring Report will be continued in the form of the Global Education Monitoring Report (GEM) Report. It will be prepared by an independent team and hosted and published by **UNESCO**. The Director of the team is appointed by the Director-General of UNESCO. Attention will be made to geographical balance in its advisory board. **The GEM Report will be the mechanism for monitoring and reporting on SDG4 and on education in the other SDGs** with due regard to the **global mechanism** to be established to monitor and review the implementation of the **2030 Agenda for a Sustainable Development**. It will also **report on** the implementation of national and international strategies to help **hold all relevant partners to account** for their commitments as part of the overall SDG follow-up and review.’

**UNESCO** talk of **Social and Emotional Learning (SEL)** – the **key for Global Citizenship**. In the **video-clip** (approx. 16 minutes) Dr Nandini Chaterjee Singh (neuroscientist) talks of SDG target **4.7**, of transforming education for humanity using a ‘whole-brain’ approach (critical inquiry, compassion, mindfulness, empathy), and of **neuro-circuitry**, **neuroplasticity** etc.

In response to SDG 4.7 MGIEP has created Libre – Curriculum for ‘whole’ brain learning

Each constituent of Libre is rooted in a specific neural circuit

‘Whole brain’ learning

Thinking brain  
Prefrontal cortex

Emotional brain  
Limbic system

[ProFuturo](#), endorsed by **UNESCO**, is an education programme launched in 2016 by Telefónica Foundation and “La Caixa” Foundation, whose mission is to narrow the education gap in the world by providing quality digital education for children in vulnerable environments in Latin America, Sub-Saharan Africa and Asia. **In line with Goal 4 of the United Nations’ 2030 sustainable development agenda** on access to equitable and inclusive quality education for all, ProFuturo aspires to become a world reference for transformation and innovation in education, improving the education of millions of children through technology. ‘Special mention should be given to [Julio Rimoldi](#). From the beginning, he has been a key figure in the ideation and founding of this initiative, as well as promoter of the **strategic alliance and a link** to his **Holiness and the Vatican**. He currently holds the position of strategic advisor.’

Julio Rimoldi is a Director of Channel 21 which was working with **Vatican Television Centre**.

# Policy Paper **39**

June 2019

## Facing the facts: the case for comprehensive sexuality education



June 2019 **UNESCO and GEM Report** (see above) started its campaign for its policy paper called **Comprehensive Sexuality Education Facethefacts**. **This policy paper seeks to dispel social and political resistance to sexuality education**. Its tagline is, ‘**School-based learning about sex, sexuality, sexual and reproductive health, and healthy relationships empower students.**’ The policy states that **resistance** may be met. It recommends ‘**to accelerate efforts**’.

On page 4, ‘**Resistance may be fuelled by misconceptions about the purpose and scope of comprehensive sexuality education. These misconceptions commonly include concerns that such education is inappropriate for young children, goes against local cultural or religious values, encourages early sexual initiation or causes “gender confusion” and may be used to recruit young people into “alternative lifestyles” or non-conforming sexual orientation or gender identity.**’ It calls for a commitment for ‘**Strong Political Leadership**’. On page 12, ‘Comprehensive sexuality education needs to be part of education and health ministries’ core business, and must be backed up by **supportive laws**, coherent policies and dedicated budgets. To **overcome** social opposition and operational constraints, **government leadership must have a clear mandate and justification to help it carry out the actions necessary to successfully provide comprehensive sexuality education...[see page 39, paragraph 4 of the interview between Ray D’Arcy and Kate Dawson]**.

A wealth of technical and operational guidance is available to support country efforts to deliver comprehensive sexuality education effectively. **It includes the International Technical Guidance on Sexuality Education for system-wide delivery; first published in 2009, it was revised in 2018 (UNESCO et al., 2018).**’

Here is a selection of GEM Report tweets, June 2019...



**Hilligje van't Land** @VantlandH · Jun 13

The #GEM (Global Education Monitoring) Report Advisory Board meets at #Unesco to review work on the 2019 Gender Report + 2019 Migration, displacement and education Report #EducationOnTheMove #FacetheFacts + prepare for #sdg4 review at #HLPF 2019, NY, July @IAU\_AIU takes part.



**UN Education Report** @GEMReport · Jun 19

Developing a robust system and providing relevant training is important to make sure education systems have the capacity to consistently monitor and ensure the quality of comprehensive sexuality education programmes #FacetheFacts [Bit.ly/csefacethefacts](https://bit.ly/csefacethefacts)



**UN Education Report** @GEMReport · Jun 11

Education systems are increasingly also working to facilitate conversations about sexuality education between children and their parents #FacetheFacts [Bit.ly/csefacethefacts](https://bit.ly/csefacethefacts)



**UN Education Report** @GEMReport · Jun 18

Even children at the age of five need to understand basic facts about their body, think about family and social relationships and recognize inappropriate behaviour and identify abuse #FacetheFacts



UN Education Report Retweeted



**Ireland OECD&UNESCO** @IRLOECDUNESCO · Jun 13

Today @UNESCO delighted to announce an upcoming event "Beyond Commitments: Country perspectives on #SDG4 implementation" organised by @Irish\_Aid + @GEMReport happening on 15 July. #WatchthisSpace



**UN Education Report** @GEMReport · Jun 11

Studies have highlighted the importance of active involvement of youth-focused groups and civil society organizations willing to promote comprehensive sexuality education even in the face of strong opposition #FacetheFacts



**UN Education Report** @GEMReport · Jun 8

A wealth of technical and operational guidance is available to support country efforts to deliver comprehensive sexuality education effectively #FacetheFacts



**UN Education Report** @GEMReport · Jun 7

As an integral part of an education of good quality and its delivery, comprehensive sexuality education should be mandatory #FacetheFacts



## *Irish Aid, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade*

**Carol Hannon**, Policy Unit Development Cooperation Directorate at Ireland Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade-Irish Aid, is a member of the ***GEM Report Advisory Board***.



Carol Hannon (2<sup>nd</sup> from the left. Source: dfa.ie)

**Funders of the GEM Report are:** Australian Department of Foreign Affairs, French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), Global Affairs Canada, ***Irish Department of Foreign Affairs- Irish Aid***, William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, Malala Fund, Mastercard Foundation, Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, ***Open Society Foundations (founded by George Soros)***, Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID), UNESCO, UNICEF.

**Aaron Benavot**, Professor of Global Education Policy and previously the Director of the Global Education Monitoring report (***Gem Report***) said of **4.7**, 'Typically, when I would present it, I would say to people: when you look at it, and you compare it to educational policies in the past, this is actually a ***revolutionary target***. And no previous global educational policy regime, has there been any goal or target that speaks as it were to the ***humanistic, moral, social purposes of education***...There're ***some countries that don't even want to use the term global citizenship because they find it really an anathema to their -you know, education should promote loyalty, patriotism, national identity, a sense of belonging to a country***. We did a study that looked at textbooks, you know, there's a vast majority of textbooks, let's say, that do history make no mention, or very little mention of countries outside of the borders of the country in question. So, which is one of the reasons, for example, that the ***OECD*** when they thought about measuring something like this have used a different term, which is global competence, and not global citizenship, because they know, there's probably less political contestation, or, let's say, antagonism or antipathy toward, let's say, the notion of global competence relative to the notion of global citizenship.'

### [Irish Aid's Annual Report 2017](#)



‘Development education is a core component of Ireland’s aid programme. We believe that understanding the causes and consequences of global poverty, hunger and inequality is vital. Broadening this understanding in Ireland is being achieved through our development education programme, guided by the **Irish Aid Development Education Strategy 2017-2023**. **Sustainable Development Goal Target 4.7** challenges us to ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development by 2030 and **our development education programme advances the achievement of this target**. Ireland’s aid programme **works closely with a number of strategic partners** to promote development education in primary, post-primary and third level settings. It also worked with 30 organisations funded through the 2017 annual grants scheme - mainly in the youth and adult and community education areas. Support was also provided for development education activities carried out by five NGOs in receipt of Programme Grant funding for long-term development programmes - Concern, Trócaire, Gorta-Self Help Africa, Plan International and Children in Crossfire. Irish aid provided a total of €4.3 million to the development education programme in 2017, including just over €820,000 to our Programme Grant partners for their development education work.’ Page 51

#### **Irish Times 4/3/2019:**

‘A ban on the use of **Irish government aid money to fund abortion services in developing countries** is likely to be set aside **as a consequence of the changes to the legalisation on abortion in Ireland**.

The Department of Foreign Affairs-Irish Aid says it will launch a new initiative on “**sexual and reproductive health and rights**” in the developing world as part of the work of **Irish Aid**, the development aid programme of the government...Last week, Taoiseach Leo Varadkar and Minister for Foreign Affairs Simon Coveney launched **A Better World** – a crucial element of **Global Ireland 2025** of which John Concannon is the Director General - a new policy on development aid which will guide the work of **Irish Aid** for the next decade.’



**‘A Better World** is a whole of government policy. It provides the framework for Ireland’s expanding development cooperation programme, in line with the **Government’s commitment to reaching the UN target of allocating 0.7% of our GNI to official development assistance by 2030**.

*Why are we developing a new International Development Policy?*

The global context has evolved significantly over the past five years. A series of new international policy frameworks under the ***Sustainable Development Goals provide a comprehensive framework for international cooperation and global policy making for development and humanitarian action.***

Our ambition in the new policy will be to ***continue to lead and participate in collective global aspirations*** for a better world, as reflected in the ***Sustainable Development Goals. Our vision of this world is anchored in our foreign policy values***, working towards a world that is more equal, peaceful and sustainable.’

(Source: Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade website).

### **“Ireland has no right to push abortion on Africa, says distinguished Missionary”**

18th June 2019, Iona Institute



*Sr Dr Miriam Duggan and President Michael D Higgins*

‘Ireland does not have the right to interfere with the values of African countries that oppose abortion.

That’s according to Franciscan Missionary sister, Miriam Duggan, who is also a medical doctor in Obstetrics and Gynaecology with over fifty years experience working in Uganda. During that time she pioneered the country’s successful response to the AIDS crisis that garnered her worldwide recognition and multiple awards including a ***Presidential Distinguished Service Award*** here in Ireland in 2015.

She pioneered a system based on abstinence or fidelity and the HIV/Aids rate among young people dropped from 28% to 6%.

In February, ***the Government announced a new initiative promoting ‘sexual and reproductive health and rights’ as part of Ireland’s foreign aid.*** The Irish Times reported that the new policy would ‘likely’ result in the lifting of a ban on funding abortions.

Sr Miriam told Spirit Radio she hoped this would never involve promoting abortion.

“Africa has its own values of life. They look upon children as their wealth, their treasures,” she said, adding: ***“I don’t think we have the right to interfere in their values”.***’

***SRHR (Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights) are spread across SDG3/SDG4/SDG5***

## 'Global Ireland - Ireland's Global Footprint to 2025' -

### Press Release January 2019:

*'Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Mr. Simon Coveney, T.D., today outlined the Government's 'Global Ireland' 2019 plans, the 'all-of-Government' programme which aims to double Irelands impact in the world by 2025... We will aim to double our impact by 2025, while also taking our responsibilities as a global citizen very seriously, building our development aid programme, promoting our unique Irish culture and our values, proactively connecting with our 70m diaspora, and continuing to be a world leader in UN Peacekeeping.'*

Here is an **extract** from the Press Release for Global Ireland:

### **Building Citizen Engagement**

Engaging Irish citizens in the wider debate around Ireland's place in the world is an important component of 'Global Ireland'. In 2019, two specific initiatives will be undertaken to enable debate, discussion, and analysis of Ireland's international role; 'Global Schools' and 'Global Ireland 100'.

#### **1. Global Schools**

The new 'Global Schools' programme will see Irish diplomats and peacekeepers visiting every secondary school in the country to engage students about the Global Ireland programme and the work of Ireland overseas. As part of the programme, each school will be presented with a UN flag and a copy of the preamble of the UN Charter. The Global Schools programme will allow for a greater understanding of how UN membership has played a significant role in Ireland's foreign policy and actions - including our contributions to peacekeeping, international development, human rights and disarmament - and how we will continue to do so in the future.

#### **1. Global Ireland 100**

2019 will also mark the 100th anniversary of Irelands foreign service, where we 'took our place among the nations of the world.' To mark this milestone, a specially curated "Global Ireland 100" programme will be announced in early 2019 which will see a series of cultural and academic events will take place in Ireland and across our international network.

*Following is a selection of pages from **A Better World...***

## Foreword

by An Taoiseach, Leo Varadkar TD

Reach the Furthest Behind First: the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set out an ambitious view of the world we want to live in, in 2030. Ireland, and the European Union, have placed the SDGs at the heart of our approach to international development.

This new policy, *A Better World*, grounds our international development policy in terms of what Ireland can, and must do, to achieve the SDGs. We must play our part.

The Government has reaffirmed its commitment to the United Nations target of allocating 0.7 percent of Gross National Income (GNI) to Official Development Assistance (ODA) by 2030. This significant investment requires focused and effective new policy choices and initiatives. *A Better World* is a real step-change in how the Government approaches international development.

Building on our history as a good citizen of the world, this new policy will intensify our work on Women, Peace and Security and on gender-based violence. It will also help better fight the epidemics of HIV, TB and malaria and develop new initiatives on sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), as well as exploring innovative global solutions to climate action and climate impact. It will also enable us to better deal with humanitarian crises so we can provide rapid responses to sudden-onset crises, while at the same time developing a more comprehensive Irish response to peace and security challenges.

Ireland has built a distinguished track record of responding to global development challenges like poverty, hunger and insecurity. Today, our ODA programme is widely regarded as one of the highest quality development programmes in the world. Through their support for international development, Irish citizens have been instrumental in helping some of the poorest and most vulnerable people in the world to find new hope, and to build better lives for themselves and their families.

In good times and in bad, we have succeeded in maintaining and growing our Official Development Assistance. Our bilateral partnerships, and our work through the EU, the United Nations and other multilateral organisations, have allowed Ireland to direct vital aid to people living in some of the most challenging and insecure environments on the planet.



I have seen the impact of Ireland's work in Africa. While we have made great strides forward, our task is not complete. It is intensifying. We must move quickly to take decisive action on issues like climate change, poverty and hunger.

The next decade may well define the world we live in for the rest of the century. The multilateral system is under strain at a time when it is needed more than ever. The Irish Government is committed to supporting and strengthening the multilateral system, through our support for international accords such as the Paris Agreement, the Global Compact on Migration and the Sustainable Development Goals. Our ongoing contribution to peacekeeping and international development, and our determined efforts to participate on and shape the work of the UN Security Council also demonstrate our commitment to multilateralism.

Ireland's approach to international development resonates with our own history and experiences. It is both in our DNA, and in our national interest, to contribute to the building of a better world. In so doing, Ireland can help shape the international response to the defining challenges of this generation, for the benefit of generations to come.

An Taoiseach,  
Leo Varadkar TD

# Executive Summary

We are a global people, connected with the world.

The breadth and depth of our connections give Ireland strength. Our connections give us shelter in hard times and give us the opportunity to build towards better futures. We know the benefits which flow from our interactions with others, as collective stakeholders of our planet.

Global Ireland<sup>1</sup>, the Government's strategy for doubling the scope and impact of Ireland's global footprint and influence by 2025, recognises that international development cooperation amplifies and sustains Ireland's place in an interconnected world. It is at the heart of Ireland's contribution to a more equal, peaceful and sustainable world.

*A Better World* is Ireland's new policy for international development.

It builds on strong foundations, including the legacy of our missionaries, our volunteers, and our NGOs.

Through our international development programme, Ireland makes a difference in around 130 countries each year, changing people's lives for the better. Our contribution to reducing global poverty is regularly found to be amongst the best in the world, something the Irish people can take pride in.

**In 2018 the Government reaffirmed its commitment to the United Nations target of allocating 0.7 percent of Gross National Income (GNI) to Official Development Assistance by 2030. This will be a significant investment in overseas development assistance, which will require focused and effective new policy choices and initiatives.** This follows an increase in funding by 32% since 2014.

Informing these decisions, Ireland is committed to contributing to the Sustainable Development Goals and in particular the rallying call to reach those furthest behind. In order to reach those furthest behind, we will make a step change and focus our efforts on:

-  Prioritising gender equality
-  Reducing humanitarian need
-  Climate action
-  Strengthening governance

In addition to these priorities we will channel our energies to interventions focusing on:

-  Protection
-  Food
-  People

Through the implementation of this new approach, our aim is to help transform many people's lives.

Ireland's own national story, our history and our experience of development, modernisation and globalisation, informs *A Better World*. We have known poverty and hunger. We have also seen our country transformed over the past fifty years, through our own efforts and also with the assistance of others, not least through our membership of the European Union.

Building on our national experience, we will work better to harness the collective experience of our public sector to deliver a more effective international development programme, building deeper links between policies at home and abroad.

The road to 2030 is complex. Our world is volatile. On our own we will not have sufficient impact. *A Better World* recognises that we need to work with others to address global problems. We will work in partnerships with countries. We will maximise the potential of our membership of the European Union. We will work as a member of the United Nations to address the global challenges such as climate change which can and will impact upon us at home.

To deliver on these ambitions we will have to build our capacity to evolve, innovate and adapt. The ambition of the SDGs, the changing nature of global challenges, and the complex interactions between domestic and international policies and processes all demand that we do things differently.

*A Better World* builds on what we have learned and done well, with public support, for more than four decades, confident that the people of our global island take seriously their responsibilities as citizens of the world we all share.

## Ireland Makes a Difference

### Ireland works to end hunger.

In Viet Nam, 67% of newborns in 7 provinces receive early essential care with Ireland's support.

50% of therapeutic food given to help restore undernourished children in Sierra Leone is funded by Ireland.

### Ireland works to protect.

Ireland supports social protection schemes in Ethiopia, Malawi, Mozambique and Uganda to improve lives. Women in the Malawian district of Balaka say the schemes "have allowed us to reduce hunger and this is keeping us in good health...the transfers are also encouraging our children to attend school..."

### Ireland works to improve health.

In Ethiopia, Ireland works to ensure that women have access to care during pregnancy. Over the course of 2015, Ireland worked to ensure a 50% increase in the number of births attended by qualified personnel.

### Ireland works to ensure girls access to education.

In Sierra Leone, Ireland has supported 8,410 teenage girls to return to mainstream schooling after childbirth.

Ireland provided 800 scholarships to girls in rural Zambia to enable them to attend secondary school.

### Ireland works to prepare young people for the future.

In Kenya and Tanzania, Ireland has introduced the Young Scientist initiative, modelled on, and linked with, the Irish BT Young Scientist. The initiative is inspiring young people to pursue science, technology, engineering and maths, and teachers to improve the quality of science in secondary schools.

Young Scientists in Africa is a unique partnership between Ireland's development cooperation and private sector sponsorship.

### Ireland works to promote democracy and governance.

In Zimbabwe, Ireland has supported civil society organisations to address 22,500 cases of human rights abuses. In Tanzania, Ireland has supported independent media to produce 298 programmes and articles on issues of relevance to citizens.

Ireland has pledged to contribute €250 million between 2019 and 2024 to improve global education.

Irish funding to Palestine has almost doubled since 2017, enabling Ireland to help address education, energy and humanitarian needs.

Ireland has pledged to increase its contribution to the Global Fund to fight AIDS, TB and Malaria by at least 50%. The Global Fund has saved millions of lives and provided services to hundreds of millions of people.

*Ireland is the most efficient donor in targeting extreme poverty*

Overseas Development Institute, 2018<sup>1</sup>

*Ireland's development cooperation is the outstanding aid programme among other international donors*

Brookings Institute, 2014<sup>2</sup>



**Lisa Doherty**

@Lisa\_Doh

Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of Ireland in Kenya

📍 Nairobi, Kenya

🌐 [dfa.ie](http://dfa.ie)

📅 Joined August 2013



**Darren Gillen**

@dazzjgillen

Living and doing Business in East Africa, Chair of Business Ireland Kenya and a Board Member of Young Scientists Kenya. All views own and RT not endorsement

📍 Nairobi, Kenya

🔄 Young Scientists KE Retweeted



**Darren Gillen** @dazzjgillen · Jun 22

@YSTKenya I'm sure this year's exhibition and indeed last year's projects could benefit from the wonderful talent that Young Scientists Kenya offers

[@IrlEmbKenya](#) [@ystanzaia](#)

**The Star, Kenya** @TheStarKenya

Why Koreans love Kenyan innovators [the-star.co.ke/business/2019-...](http://the-star.co.ke/business/2019-...)

Lisa Doherty, Darren Gillen, Dr Vincent O'Neill (Ireland's Ambassador to Kenya) are on the Board of [Young Scientists Kenya](#)

Lisa Doherty Retweeted



**Embassy of Ireland** @IriEmbKenya · May 11

Young Scientists of Turkana out in huge numbers from schools across the county at fantastic @YSTKenya outreach event today in Lodwar sponsored by @trocaire with proud partners @IriEmbKenya and @BLAZEKenya Hoping to see many Turkana students at the National Exhibition in August!



Embassy of Ireland, Lisa Doherty, Walter Maina and 7 others

Young Scientists KE Retweeted



**Governor Lee Kinyanjui** @GovLeeKinyanjui · 8h

A report done by Business Ireland Kenya, through the support of Ireland embassy has rated Nakuru as one of the best counties to invest in especially in areas of agriculture, waste management and logistics (SGR). I met with Irish ambassador to Kenya H.E Fiounnuala Quinlan today..



**Joseph Clowry**

@JosephClowry

Co-Founder/Director of Young Scientist Tanzania,  
#ScienceForDevelopmentWorks,  
Development Education for Equality is essential @ystanzania

Ireland/Tanzania

[youngscientists.co.tz](http://youngscientists.co.tz)

Joined February 2014



**YS Tanzania**

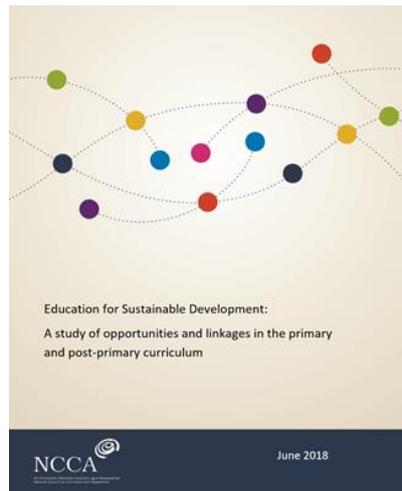
@ystanzania

YST is a Science Outreach Programme leading to an annual National Exhibition for secondary schools.  
#ScienceForDevelopmentWorks  
info@youngscientists.co.tz

Tanzania

[youngscientists.co.tz](http://youngscientists.co.tz)

Joined November 2011



Although the Education for Sustainable Development strategy predates Agenda 2030, it articulates a series of recommendations which can help to empower learners to take informed decisions and responsible actions for environmental integrity, economic viability and a just society for present and future generations. Additionally, the important role of Education for Sustainable Development is acknowledged in Goal 4 (Quality Education), target 4.7 of Agenda 2030:

*By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development (United Nations, 2015).*

Education for Sustainable Development is therefore recognised at an international level, as being an essential contributor to all efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

## 1.2 National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development

Ireland's National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development (2014-2020) aims to ensure that our education system contributes to sustainable development by:

*...equipping learners with the relevant knowledge (the 'what'), the key dispositions and skills (the 'how') and the values (the 'why') that will motivate and empower them throughout their lives to become informed active citizens who take action for a more sustainable future (DES, 2014: 3).*

This aim reflects the long-standing tradition and aims of Development Education (DE) in Ireland, and indeed of other relevant 'adjectival' educations, such as global citizenship education, human rights education, intercultural education. DE and ESD are very similar in terms of content, methodology, ideology and commitment to action for positive change, and these synergies create a situation where stakeholders from a variety of backgrounds and with a variety of agendas can work together towards realisation of the recommendations outlined in the strategy document (Hogan & Tormey, 2008).

The National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development was published by the Department of Education and Skills towards the conclusion of the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014). The document draws on consultation with stakeholders and key policy documents, including its parent strategy, *Our Sustainable Future: A framework for sustainable development for Ireland*.



‘With the adoption at the UN in September 2015 of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the world renewed its commitment to eradicating global poverty, hunger and inequality. **SDG Target 4.7** calls on States to provide education to ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development. Development education strengthens understanding of the global justice dimension of each of the Goals, inspiring and enabling people to take action at local, national and global levels. It is critical to achieving the promise of transformative change that defines the SDGs.’

‘The Sustainable Development Goals create a context for Ireland to provide quality education on global citizenship. Development education is an essential component in delivering Ireland’s commitment under Target **4.7** as well as raising awareness of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. Development education strengthens public understanding of the interconnectedness of global and national poverty and inequality, supporting the Irish public to acquire the necessary knowledge, values and analytical skills to understand the global justice focus of each of the Goals and the underlying values and dispositions. Development education is therefore integral to the successful delivery of the Sustainable Development Goals, inspiring and enabling people to take action to deliver the Goals at local, national and global levels.’

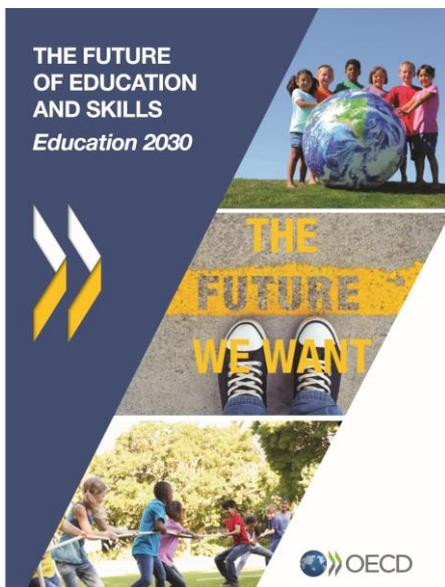
A review of Irish Aid’s support to development education was undertaken in 2011, which resulted in the publication of the 2011 Synthesis Report. In response to the Synthesis Report, we adopted a more strategic and results-based approach with an increased focus on specific priority areas such as pursuing policy and curriculum opportunities, building the capacity of educators, the sharing and promotion of good practice and the dissemination and accessibility of development education resources. To ensure a more coherent long-term approach to its support for development education, we increased our strategic partnership programmes to five, specifically:

- **Irish Development Education Association (IDEA)** for capacity building of development education practitioners
- **The DICE (Development Education and Intercultural Education) Project** which supports the integration of development education into primary initial teacher education
- **Irish Aid WorldWide Global Schools Programme (WWGS Programme)** which supports post-primary schools students and teachers to engage in development education
- **SUAS** which supports third level students in the non-formal sphere of higher education institutions to engage in development education
- **Developmenteducation.ie** for the online dissemination of development education resources

## OECD

**Suzanne Dillon**, Assistant Chief Inspector at Department of Education and Skills Ireland, was the **Chair** of OECD's ***The Future of Education and Skills Education 2030***. **She is now on the Advisory Group**. 'The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) is an international organisation that works to build better policies for better lives. Our goal is to shape policies that foster prosperity, equality, opportunity and well-being for all. We draw on almost 60 years of experience and insights to better prepare the world of tomorrow. Together with governments, policy makers and citizens, we work on establishing international norms and finding evidence-based solutions to a range of social, economic and environmental challenges. From improving economic performance and creating jobs to fostering strong education and fighting international tax evasion, we provide a unique forum and knowledge hub for data and analysis, exchange of experiences, best-practice sharing, and advice on public policies and global standard-setting.' (Source: *oecd.org*).

**\*OECD is an official UN General Assembly 'Observer'.**



OECD is an official UN General Assembly Observer



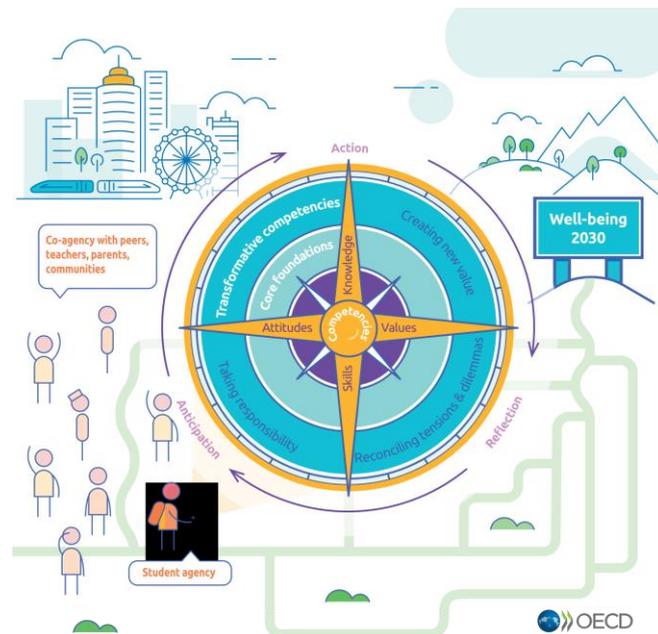
Suzanne Dillon (Source: *whodoeswhat.gov.ie*)

'To meet the challenges of the 21st century, **students need to feel that they can help shape a world where well-being and sustainability – for themselves, for others, and for the planet – is achievable**. The **OECD Learning Compass 2030** identifies three **“transformative competencies”** that students need in order to contribute to our world and shape a better future: creating new value, reconciling tensions and dilemmas, and taking responsibility.'

**'The Learning Compass 2030 defines the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that learners need to fulfil their potential** and contribute to the well-being of their communities and the planet...' - **contd page 92**

### **Ireland's DCU Institute of Education**

The National **Anti-Bullying Research and Resource Centre** (ABC) is a university designated research centre located in DCU Institute of Education and is the host for the **UNESCO Chair on Tackling Bullying in Schools and Cyberspace**. The objectives of the Centre are aligned to support the **United Nation's** overarching goal to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all by **2030 (SDG4)** and the implementation of the Government of Ireland's Action Plan on Bullying (2013).



‘We are facing **unprecedented challenges – social, economic and environmental** – driven by **accelerating globalisation** and a **faster rate of technological developments**. At the same time, **those forces** are providing us with myriad new opportunities for human advancement. The future is uncertain, and we cannot predict it; but we need to be open and ready for it. The **children** entering education in 2018 will be **young adults in 2030**. Schools can prepare them for jobs that have not yet been created, for technologies that have not yet been invented, to solve problems that have not yet been anticipated. It will be a shared responsibility to seize opportunities and find solutions. **To navigate through such uncertainty**, students will need to develop **curiosity, imagination, resilience** and **self-regulation**; they will need to respect and appreciate the ideas, perspectives and values of others; and they will need to cope with failure and rejection, and **to move forward in the face of adversity**. Their motivation will be more than getting a good job and a high income; they **will also need to care about the well-being of their friends and families, their communities and the planet.**’

‘Next steps: This paper summarises a **global effort for education change**. You are invited to add your voice and your support to its visions and ideas by joining the Working Group of the OECD Education 2030 project. The group is collecting ideas and examples of good practice for making the learning framework actionable. They call on:

- National, regional and local governments to share their policy design and curriculum design experiences related to the learning framework
- Students, teachers, school leaders, and parents to share practices and experiences as concrete examples of using the OECD Learning Compass 2030
  - Experts and researchers to help strengthen the links between evidence-based policy and practice, especially on the constructs of the framework
- Local communities, professional associations and industries, including representatives of teachers' unions and the business sector, to share practices of supporting student learning and creating appropriate learning environments
- International communities and organisations to contribute to the OECD Education 2030 dialogue in support of the **UN Sustainable Development Goal 4.7** and other relevant initiatives.’ (Source: *OECD The Future of Education and Skills Education 2030*)

**1/5/2018 Suzanne Dillon**, along with her colleague **Rita Sexton** (see page 43), spoke at the **Joint Committee on Education and Skills** regarding the **Relationships and Sexuality Bill**.

## Burren College of Art – Creative Education Symposium

19<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup> September 2018 **Suzanne Dillon** attended The Burren College of Art's (see [page 51](#), another educational event 8-10<sup>th</sup> May 2019 where NUIG UNESCO Chair Professor Pat Dolan spoke) [Creative Education Symposium](#) in the college's **Centre for Universal Creativity** called '**Towards a More Creative Future**'.

It was proposed at the Symposium that the education system in Ireland is in a '**disruptive moment**', and '**the OECD's recent Learning Framework for 2030** draws attention to a world that is increasingly volatile [The Burren of Art's website gives the link to the above OECD 'The Future of Education and Skills 2030', of which Burren attendee Dept of Education & Skills' Suzanne Dillon is Advisor - See above **SDG 4.7** which promotes Global Citizenship Education and Education for Sustainable Development, addressing themes such as human rights, gender equality, health, comprehensive sexuality education, climate change, sustainable livelihoods and responsible and engaged citizenship, based on national experiences and capabilities]...Meanwhile Irish society continues to value and takes a huge interest in the education of its children...Seasoned observers assert "it is a good moment in education". The capacity of the system to **reset** is powerful. Of course old structures, old mind-sets and old habits die hard particularly when confronted with the inevitability of change as the educational ground shifts beneath our feet...How do we create the collective will and allow understanding that will allow us transition from the familiar through the **chaos of change** to the **envisioned future**?...So while we know and can sense the direction of travel that is needed, how do we accommodate the challenge of disruptive change in a system as inherently conservative and complex as education.'



*Martin Hayes was part of the Creative Education Symposium's Facilitation's Team. Martin Hayes is the renowned Irish fiddler from Co. Clare and member of the Irish American supergroup The Gloaming. 2018 Martin Hayes became an Honorary Doctor of Music at National University of Ireland Galway (NUIG)'s winter conferring. 2019 Martin Hayes was announced as [one of five new Cultural Ambassadors as part of the Irish Government's Global Ireland 2025 initiative](#) of which John Concannon was Director General: its international policy's ambition is 'to continue to lead and participate in collective global aspirations for a better world, as reflected in the Sustainable Development Goals' – **United Nation's 2030 Agenda 17 SDGs**. In August 2019 Martin Hayes will be a [Programme Host of the Burren Executive Leadership Retreat in The Burren College of Art](#). Martin Hawkes will also be one of the Burren College of Art Hosts at the Retreat. Martin Hayes and poet David Whyte are team members in the Centre for Universal Creativity.*

*Some of the attendees at the Creative Education Symposium were NUIG, TCD, NCAD, GAA, UCD, UL, COGG, NAPD, BH Associates, CPD Art, Glenstal Abbey, The Ark Theatre, Teaching Council of Ireland, Creative Ireland, Social Innovation Fund Ireland, INTO, Burrenbeo, National Parents Council Primary, ASTI, Department of Education and Skills, Tomar Trust, Educate Together, and Brendan Dunford (Burren Programme, Burrenbeo, ChangeX, Ashoka Fellow...) etc.*

**Mary Hawkes-Greene** of the Burren College of Art said, ‘We took the very **audacious move of convening the entire education system**, teachers and principals, parents and students, teachers’ unions and representative bodies, and we brought the whole group together for a **conversation**.’

In 2019, talking of the Symposium, **Mary Hawkes-Greene said**, ‘So, we have actually, most recently, eh, our boldest, probably **one of our boldest**, em, efforts to date, **we’ve taken on**, not taken on, we’ve tried, we’re trying to help **the Irish education system** move in a more creative direction because it too, while it’s very good academically and we’ve got a very well educated, em [‘count?’], you know, race, em, the, we have a final exam at the end of high school that dictates basically what everybody is doing and absolutely, eh, has, does not reward creative thinking or problem solving or any of the outcomes that are required for an educated person now. So, we have actually as a, em, an expansion, I suppose, of what happens with students, what happens with, you know, **Creative Difference**, we have **taken on a system** and **brought all the representatives of the system here**, of the Irish education system from policy-makers, through all of the different 3rd level university levels, high school, primary school, teachers, and most importantly students, and brought them together in a creative way, eh, mediated by music, poetry, em, creative activity and again **the goal being to try and have people get out of a fixed way of thinking** and imagine what a creative education might be like and then subsequently taking actions to, eh, to actually move to that people-centred, eh, model as opposed to a system outcomes-led model that we have at the moment.’



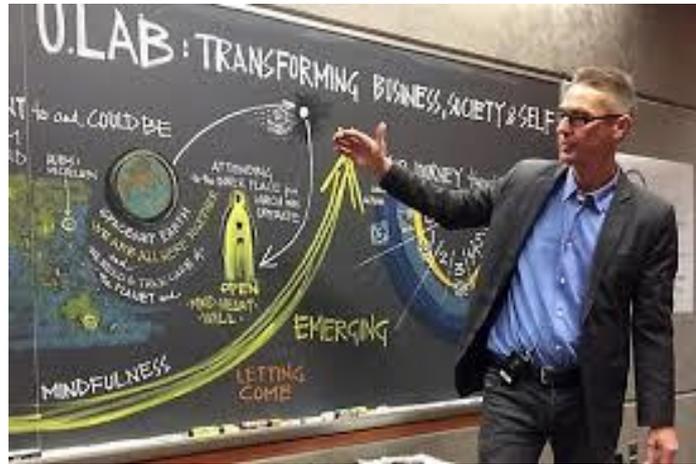
**Voices from the Field**  
**‘From co-dependent to co-creative’**

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1

Front cover of 46-page [document](#) – collation of other voices in the Irish education system



Otto Scharmer addressed the Symposium

[Otto Scharmer](#) gave the opening address to the Creative Education Symposium by [video link](#). He talks about **awareness-based system change**. He says that **our eco-system is in a profound crisis because of the way we organise our economy and our democracies etc**. He talks of **'profound societal and civilizational renewal.'** In order to change the system people must know themselves first. To change a system people **must transform consciousness**, and you cannot transform consciousness unless you activate an embodied way of knowing. He refers to transforming **Ireland's education system**. He spoke of **U Lab Scotland** and developing a **global systems platform** that is meant to support this transformation in business, public governance and education that is **needed for today**, and it will have a 2-month learning journey with **Global U Lab Platform** live sessions that the **attendees can avail of**.

In the Burren College of Art website section 'Design and Outline Programme' it states the Symposium's participants were invited to **'leave representational affiliations at the door'** and to **'enter into a common creative endeavour** to discern the contours of the way ahead'. Further on it states that **'the design of the process draws on Theory U'** which is a **'technology of social change for complex multi-stakeholder systems**, developed by Dr Otto Scharmer at MIT.' It goes on to say that Theory U 'recognizes that change in these circumstances calls for a deeper level of engagement than is possible in our traditional ways of working', and that 'working at this level is **facilitated by being in a welcoming place in the ancient Burren landscape**, hosted by the creative presence of an art college.' Participants are **'safe from fear of attack'**, and 'have the **freedom to think and test out fresh ideas.'**

In the section called 'Themes from the Concluding Circle' there are some ideas brought forward by the group:

to **park religious and other hang-ups** to place wellbeing centre stage; to listen to the **voice of the system** and the teacher and keep humanity at the centre of the work; we are here to **witness** the beauty of the **universe**; there is the making of **something big**. The group needs to reconvene; we are beautiful people. I **implore** everyone to be a community of doers; **we are the system**. We need to listen to ourselves and **the system**; give **courage** to decision-makers; **a Citizen Assembly for Educational Reform; 50% of the Citizen Assembly should be children; could a Citizen Assembly meet in this space to be nourished by the Burren and the Burren College**; I'm **pledging** myself as a **foot-soldier** of the Citizen Assembly for Educational Reform; I won't remember what you said but I will **carry with me** how you made me **feel**; thanks for giving me the opportunity of being in this **inspiring circle**.

**Chris Chapman of [Change Exploratory](#) helped facilitate the Creative Education Symposium:**

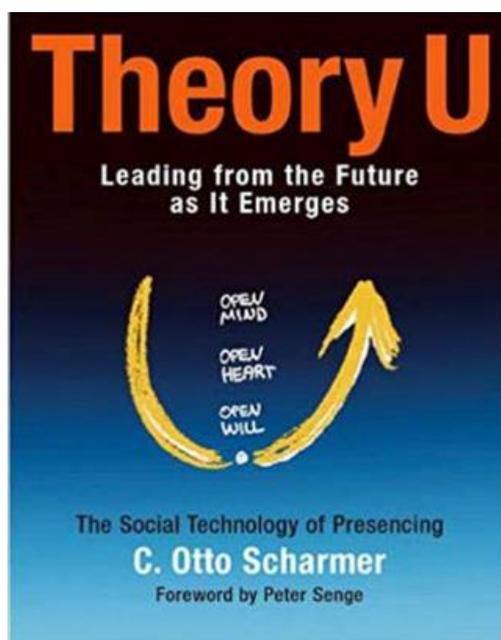
'My [Chris Chapman] latest **deep dive** has been with Martin, Mary and others at the Burren College of Art. (working alongside Esther, Joan, Paul and Valerie too and with Martin Hayes also on the team – yes that Martin Hayes!). Last week, we gathered 60 people or so from across the system **to look at what it would take to shift**

*Education in Ireland* towards a more creative place. It was a remarkable experience with ***an important and challenging agenda that will produce remarkable results.***

‘Since 2012, I [Chris Chapman] have been working with the Burren College of Art in the beautiful west of Ireland in the development of the Burren as a world leading venue for ***breakthrough conversations*** and the ***development of the leaders that the world needs in these times***. I have been helping to bring together an amazing combination of ***breath-taking landscape*** (one that ‘blows your heart open’ according to the poet Seamus Heaney), the creativity of an amazing art college and the hospitality of a wonderful welcoming community to create a unique super special container ***for work that is needed in the world.***’

‘My reputation is particularly strong in enabling people to ***dive deep, safely, to get to places where transformation becomes possible***, whilst holding it all in a light way that eases the work.’

‘I have supported a variety of ***Theory U*** based gatherings with Barry Walsh, Nadine McCarthy, Jimmy Darcy and ***Davie Philip*** amongst others. I worked with Grattan Donnelly and Lydia Kiernan with what became known as ‘Leaders on a Boat’ (we met on a boat and the name stuck). I have put in loads of hours with Mary Hawkes Greene, Martin Hawkes and Barry Walsh at the ***Burren College of Art*** helping it to emerge as a ‘***Universal Centre for Creativity***’ and a ‘***Centre for Creative Leadership***’. All of this and more, looking to fill a gap to find a something ***missing in the system***. Always happy to talk to anyone about anything (and even more happy to listen!). The first conversation is always free.’



***‘We have entered an age of disruption.*** Financial collapse, climate change, resource depletion, and a growing gap between rich and poor are but a few of the signs. Otto Scharmer and Katrin Kaufer ask, why do we collectively create results nobody wants? Meeting the challenges of this century requires updating our economic logic and operating system from an obsolete ***“ego-system”*** focused entirely on the well-being of oneself to an ***eco-system*** awareness that emphasizes the well-being of the whole. Filled with real-world examples, this thought-provoking guide presents proven practices for building a new economy that is more resilient, intentional, inclusive, and aware.’ *Otto Scharmer*

[‘Otto Scharmer](#) is a Senior Lecturer in the MIT Management Sloan School and founder of the [Presencing Institute](#). He chairs the MIT IDEAS program for sustainability and cross-sector innovation. Scharmer introduced the concept of “presencing”—learning from the emerging future—in his bestselling books *Theory U* and *Presence* (the latter co-authored with Peter Senge, Joseph Jaworski, and Betty Sue Flowers). He is co-author of *Leading from the Emerging Future*, which outlines eight acupuncture points for *transforming capitalism*. His new book, *The Essentials of Theory U* (2018), outlines an updated summary of the core principles and applications for leading *profound systems change*.

In 2015, Otto co-founded the [MITx u.lab](#), a massive open online course (*MOOC*) for leading profound change, which has since activated a global eco-system of societal and personal renewal involving more than 125,000 users from 185 countries. In 2019, he co-founded the Societal Transformation Lab (u.lab-S), involving 350 place-based teams focusing on reinventing education, governance, and our economies in the context of their eco-system.

Otto earned his diploma and PhD in economics from Witten/Herdecke University in Germany. He received the Jamieson Prize for Excellence in Teaching at MIT (2015) and the European Leonardo Corporate Learning Award (2016). ***In 2018, the United Nations Deputy Secretary-General appointed him to the UN Learning Advisory Council for the 2030 Agenda.\****

For 2019 he is ranked #3 of the world's top 30 education professionals by *Global Gurus*.’

(Source: [ottoscharmer.org](#))

[Valerie Jackman](#) who ‘works with *Dr Otto Scharmer* from Massachusetts Institute for Technology (MIT)’ was a facilitator at the Symposium. ‘She is a Core Team member of *U Lab Scotland*.’ She ***also facilitated at the Burren College of Art’s event in May 2019*** ‘Innovation in Education: Gamechanger Dialogue.’

***\*The United Nations Deputy Secretary-General is Amina J Mohammed. She is also on the UN ‘High-Level Panel of eminent persons’.***

***\*Amina Mohammed met with ChangeX in Dublin in early September 2018 - see 9/9/18 Irish Times article page 142.***



## Amina J. Mohammed

### Deputy Secretary-General

#### Executive Office of the Secretary-General (EOSG)

Ms. Amina J. Mohammed was Minister of Environment of the Federal Republic of Nigeria from November 2015 to December 2016, where she steered the country's efforts on climate action, protecting the natural environment and conserving resources for sustainable development.

Prior to this, she served as Special Adviser to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon on Post-2015 Development Planning, where she was instrumental in bringing about the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including the Sustainable Development Goals.

Before joining the UN, Ms. Mohammed worked for three successive administrations in Nigeria, serving as Special Advisor on the Millennium Development Goals, providing advice on issues including poverty, public sector reform and sustainable development, and coordinating programmes worth \$1 billion annually for MDG-related interventions.

She is also an Adjunct Professor in Development Practice at Columbia University, and served on numerous international advisory boards and panels, including the UN Secretary-General's High-level Panel on Post-2015 Development Agenda, the Independent Expert Advisory Group on the Data Revolution for Sustainable Development, the Global Development Program of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the African Women's Millennium Initiative, Girl Effect, 2016 African Union Reform and the ActionAid International Right to Education Project.

Ms. Mohammed began her 35-year career in the private sector with architects and engineers responsible for the project management of health, education and public sector buildings.

Here are 2 extracts of a United Nations document referring to the 'Learning Advisory Council for the 2030 Agenda'...

United Nations

E/2019/62\*



## Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General  
18 April 2019

Original: English

#### 2019 session

26 July 2018–24 July 2019

Agenda item 7 (a)

**Operational activities of the United Nations for international development cooperation: follow-up to policy recommendations of the General Assembly and the Council**

#### Development Coordination Office

#### Report of the Chair of the United Nations Sustainable Development Group

##### Summary

In its landmark resolution 72/279, the General Assembly decided to fundamentally transform the development coordination system of the United Nations to better respond to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, with a reinvigorated, empowered and independent resident coordinator system at its helm. The resident coordinator function, which has been delinked from the United Nations Development Programme, is now fully dedicated to coordinating development activities on the ground.

In the resolution, the General Assembly also requested the Chair of the United Nations Sustainable Development Group to present a comprehensive report on an annual basis, including on the operational, administrative and financing aspects of the activities of the newly established Development Coordination Office, to the Economic and Social Council at its operational activities for development segment. The present report is the first such report. It should be seen as a transitional update, coming only a few months after the establishment of a reinvigorated resident coordinator system on 1 January 2019 and the related transformation of the Development Operations Coordination Office into the Development Coordination Office, a stand-alone coordination office within the Secretariat.

A strengthened Development Coordination Office is critical to the success of the new resident coordinator system. Headed by an Assistant Secretary-General, who reports directly to the Deputy Secretary-General and Chair of the United Nations Sustainable Development Group, the Development Coordination Office assumed managerial and oversight functions of the new resident coordinator system in January 2019, in addition to responsibility for responding to the heightened needs and demands of the United Nations country teams and the United Nations Sustainable Development

30. In late 2018, the United Nations Learning Advisory Council for the 2030 Agenda was established. The Council supports the alignment of resident coordinator system capabilities with the new demands arising from the repositioning of the United Nations development system. The Council brings together the heads of 15 United Nations learning and training institutions, including UNDP, the United Nations System Staff College, the United Nations Institute for Training and Research, the training centre of the International Labour Organization, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, the United Nations Global Compact, the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development, the Executive Office of the Secretary-General and the World Bank. The establishment of the Council reflects a coordinated effort to draw on knowledge, learning and expertise from within and outside the United Nations system. It will bring together the knowledge spread across the learning and training institutions to create a more powerful and coherent narrative across the Sustainable Development Goals.

31. The Chair of the Group requested the United Nations Learning Advisory Council for the 2030 Agenda to develop a primer on the Goals – a system-wide knowledge certification module that will ensure that resident coordinators and their offices have a strong and shared knowledge base on the 2030 Agenda. The primer will be used to inform the action of all United Nations entities, as well as their engagement with their partners in government and civil society. It will be a resource for national actors seeking inspiration and guidance for their own sustainable development efforts. It will emphasize the importance of systems thinking, and the collaborative and transformational leadership capabilities and skills that the Goals demand, while establishing baseline guidance on how the United Nations is approaching the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

### [United Nations High-Level Panel of eminent persons:](#)



United Nations  
Secretary-General

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STATEMENT

## The Secretary-General's High-Level Panel of eminent persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda

In July 2012, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon announced the 27 members of a High-level Panel to advise on the global development framework beyond 2015, the target date for the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

The Panel was co-chaired by President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono of Indonesia, President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf of Liberia, and Prime Minister David Cameron of the United Kingdom, and it includes leaders from civil society, private sector and government.

The Panel was part of the Secretary-General's post-2015 initiative mandated by the 2010 MDG Summit. UN Member States have called for open, inclusive consultations involving civil society, the private sector, academia and research institutions from all regions, in addition to the UN system, to advance the development framework beyond 2015.

The work of the Panel reflected new development challenges while also drawing on experience gained in implementing the MDGs, both in terms of results achieved and areas for improvement.

The Panel's work was closely coordinated with that of the intergovernmental working group tasked to design Sustainable Development Goals, as agreed at the Rio +20 conference.

**\*David Cameron, Paul Polman (ex-Unilever), John Podesta are some of the members on this panel with Amina J Mohammed.**

13/9/18 Otto Scharmer tweets:



\*Here is the [link](#) to the UNDP (United Nations Development Programme) YouTube of the above meeting with Otto Scharmer.

\*Benjamin Kumpf – Former Innovation Facility Lead in UNDP, and since February 2019 Head of Innovation at UK’s Department for International Development (DFID/UK AID) – is more than likely the man on the rhs of the above photo.



**Benjamin Kumpf**

@bkumpf

Temporarily retired social activist, working as Head of Innovation at @DFID\_UK. Passionate about this changing-the-status-quo thing. Tweets are mine.

London, England

Joined July 2011



\*18/2/19: Benjamin Kumpf tweets his article '[Moonshots and missions...](#)'. It seems to be another version of the article published by UNDP 6/9/18, '[Moon Shots and Puddle Jumps - Innovation for Sustainable Development Goals](#)'.

## 1/8/2018: 'UNDP joins Tech Giants in Partnership on AI'

Here is an extract:

'NEW YORK, August 1 – UNDP joins the Partnership on Artificial Intelligence (AI), a consortium of companies, academics, and NGOs working to ensure that AI is developed in a safe, ethical, and transparent manner. Founded in 2016 by the tech giants - Amazon, DeepMind/Google, Facebook, IBM, and Microsoft - It has since been joined by industry leaders such as Accenture, Intel, Oxford Internet Institute - University of Oxford, eBay, as well as non-profit organizations such as UNICEF and Human Rights Watch and many more.

Through the partnership, UNDP's Innovation Facility will work with partners and communities to responsibly test and scale ***the use of AI to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals***. By harnessing the power of data, we can inform risk, policy and program evaluation, we also can utilize ***robotics and Internet of Things (IoT) to collect data and reach the previously deemed unreachable - to leave no one behind***.

UNDP's AI portfolio is growing rapidly. Drones and remote sensing are used to improve data collection and inform decisions: in the Maldives for disaster preparedness, and in Uganda to engage refugee and host communities in jointly developing infrastructures. ***We partnered with IBM to automate UNDP's Rapid Integrated Assessment, aligning national development plans and sectoral strategies with the 169 Sustainable Development Goals' targets***; and with the UNEP, UNDP has launched the UN Biodiversity Lab, powered by MapX. *The spatial data platform will help countries support conservation efforts and accelerate delivery of the 2030 Agenda.*

*In line with UNDP's Strategic Plan 2018-2021, innovation plays a central role in fulfilling the organization's mission and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Benjamin Kumpf, UNDP's Innovation Facility Lead states, "advances in robotics and AI have the potential to radically redefine human development pathways. The path to such redefinitions entails concrete AI experiments to increase the effectiveness of our work as well as norm-setting: we have to think beyond guidelines for ethical AI to designing accountability frameworks."*

The Partnership on AI aims to advance public understanding of AI, formulate best practices, and serve as an open platform for discussion and engagement about AI and its influences on people and society.

About UNDP Innovation

UNDP works in over 170 countries and territories, helping to achieve the eradication of poverty, and the reduction of inequalities and exclusion. In 2014, UNDP established the ***Innovation Facility*** to foster innovation for development, with the support of the Government of Denmark. The Innovation Facility provides technical support and funding to UNDP teams around the world to test frontier tech and apply new approaches to deliver better results.

For more information about UNDP Innovation Facility visit <http://www.undp.org/innovation> and follow [@UNDP\\_Innovation](#)

About The PAI

The Partnership on AI is a consortium of companies, academics, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and nonprofits dedicated to ensuring that artificial intelligence (AI) – the capacity for computer programs to learn, decide, and mimic other intelligent human behavior – is developed in a safe, ethical, and transparent manner. Tech giants Amazon, DeepMind/Google, Facebook, IBM, and Microsoft founded the non-profit organization to advance public understanding of AI, formulate best practices, and serve as an open platform for discussion and engagement about AI and its influences on people and society.

Full list of partners:

Amazon, Apple, Deepmind, Facebook, Google, IBM, Microsoft, Aaai, ACLU, Accenture, Affectiva, Ai Forum New Zealand, Ai Now Institute, The Allen Institute For Artificial Intelligence (Ai2), Amnesty International, Article 19, Association For Computing Machinery, Center For Democracy & Technology (Cdt), Center For Human-compatible Artificial Intelligence, Center For Information Technology Policy Princeton University, Centre For Internet And Society, India (Cis), Leverhulme Centre For The Future of Intelligence (Cfi), Cogitai, Data & Society Research Institute, Digital Asia Hub, Doteveryone, Ebay, Element Ai, Electronic Frontier Foundation (Eff), Fraunhofer Iao, The Future of Humanity, Future of Life Institute, The Future of Privacy Forum, The Hastings Center, Hong Kong University of Science And Technology Department Of Electronic & Computer Engineering, Human Rights Watch, Intel, Markkula Center For Applied Ethics Santa Clara University, Mckinsey & Company, Nvidia, Omidyar Network Openai, Oxford Internet Institute - University of Oxford, Salesforce, SAP, Sony, Tufts University Hri Lab, UCL Engineering, UNDP, UNICEF, University of Washington Tech Policy Lab, Upturn, Xprize, Zalando.'

**\*UNDP Strategic Plan 2018-2021**

**\*Useful link on UNDP and SDG Accelerator**

18/9/2018: [Otto Scharmer](#) writes:

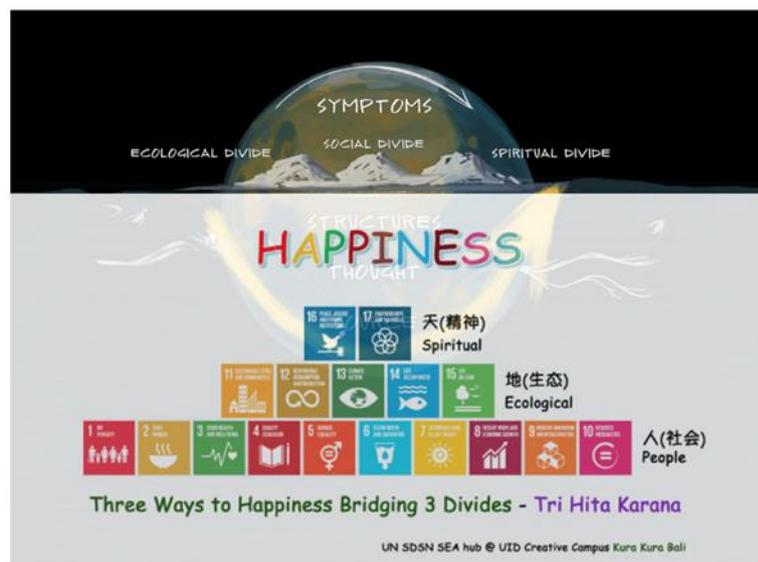


Figure 4: The Three Divides, 17 Sustainable Development Goals

The implementation of the 17 SDGs by 2030 requires more than just another wave of strategic programs and initiatives. It requires a systemic approach to addressing the underlying root causes of the divides. It requires not only innovation *within* the system, but also transformation *of* the system. To use an analogy that most readers will relate to, it will not be enough to just get a new *app*. What's needed is a profound update of the whole *operating system* (OS).

**Extract**

\*26/11/18: Otto Scharmer's Presencing Institute [writes](#) 'Supporting the United Nations in Achieving the SDGs'.

19/12/2018: Otto Scharmer writes an [article](#) about 'living inside the axial shift'

'Something has shifted over the past few weeks and months. Not just since the recent US midterm elections or the climate deal in Katowice last week. There's some real change in the air. In fact, it's been there for a while. But we might not have noticed it...

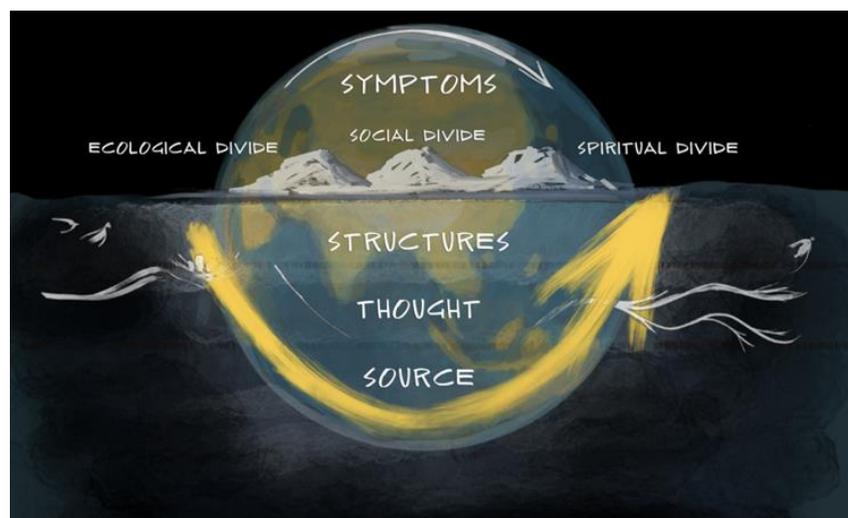
...due to that other series of events. Brexit. Trump. Bolsonaro. Orban. Salvini. Erdogan. Duterte. The list goes on. It's like standing in the boxing ring, encountering punches left and right. We're still absorbing one blow as the next is already being launched. That's how the past two-plus years have felt to me — and I assume to many. But now, as 2018 draws to a close, for the first time in a while I feel that we're getting back on our feet; we're beginning to shift our mode of operating from reactive to generative.'

'UN SDG Leadership Labs -

Over the past few months, my colleagues and I at the Presencing Institute have begun collaborating with the United Nations Development Operations Coordinating Office (UN DOCO) to accelerate the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in several countries. Our first two prototype projects, in Cambodia and Uganda, use the same set of methods and tools for systems leadership as outlined above and are off to a promising start. With these and other collaborative initiatives to be launched on a significantly larger scale next year, we hope to build a collective capacity for change at the level of the whole eco-system. The capacity for activating generative social fields among complex and often conflicting multi-stakeholder groups is at the core of all advanced leadership work today...

From u.lab to Societal Transformation Lab

One of the most inspiring projects that I have been engaged with for the past four years is MITx u.lab, which began as an online class via MITx and the edX platform. It has activated a worldwide eco-system of change makers who are using the tools of awareness-based systems change to bring about transformation in their own organizations around the world.'



*Awareness-based Systems Change*

'The Societal Transformation Lab will offer a multi-local innovation journey for teams that want to link up with a global movement of change makers that use the methods of awareness-based systems change. It will focus on societal transformation in specific areas: farm & food, finance, business, learning & leadership, health & well-being, cities, and democracy. The STL is free of charge, but teams must apply and be accepted. We had intended to launch the STL with 100 teams. But based on the 350 applications we have received to date we now anticipate

accepting up to 250 teams. Each one is place-based. Many are part of well-established organizations. Others are grassroots groups that will bring their fresh ideas and collective energy to the Lab.

The Social Transformation Lab’s core group of co-convening organizations includes Ashoka, the BMW Foundation, the Dutch Board of Water Management, Impact Hubs, the League of Intrapreneurs, Policy Link, RSF Finance, Shambala, Teach for All, Triodos, several UN organizations, United In Diversity (UID), and WeAll. In February this global network of organizations and change makers will be fully activated in terms of a vibrant web of peer coaching and collaborative cross-team relationships, aiming to prototype new ways of pooling and leveraging shared resources and ways of operating across institutional boundaries. As always, the pathway and goal of this community will be to shift the mindset of people and organizations from silo to systems view — that is, from ego-system awareness to an eco-system awareness that is grounded in a shared intention of the future we want to create.’

### ‘Living Inside the Axial Shifts

What is needed today? And what are the axial coordinates that we need to shift from their old mode (20th century) to an emerging new one (21st century)? What does it mean to live inside these axial shifts? As described in an earlier blog article, I see three shifts that reshape and move the societal coordinates of our political, economic, and cultural actions:

1. A shift of political thinking from left-right to open-closed (or from ego to eco);
2. A shift of economic thinking from Keynesianism vs. neoliberal economics to GDP growth vs. well-being for all (post-growth);
3. A shift of educational thinking from focusing on memorizing facts and figures toward whole-person, whole-systems learning (integrating head, heart and hand).’



Figure 8: Axial Shift in Politics — Figure 9: Axial Shift in Economics — Figure 10: Axial Shift in Education and Learning — images by Kelvy Bird

‘The bottom line of these three axial shifts is the same: while the old discourse (left vs. right, government vs. markets, etc.) has been a question of difference in ideology, the new discourse appears to be a question of difference in consciousness; that is, of ego-system awareness on the one hand and eco-system awareness on the other hand. In a practical way, the developmental need in all western and non-western societies that I have been working in over the years (including China) can be summarized as: the need to build collective capacity for vertical development across all relevant societal institutions — i.e. the capacity to move from the lower two to the upper two quadrants in the above depictions of the axial shifts.’

‘The shift that has happened concerns the collective, the movement from me to we, from ego to eco. And maybe that’s why, in spite of all the challenges, I feel we are ending the year on a hopeful note. We are not alone. “Where there is danger,” the German poet Hölderlin reminds us, “the saving power also grows.” That power is always available to us. We just need to learn how to access it more consciously, intentionally, and collectively. The Societal Transformation Lab aims to be a global practice field for this.’

[\\*27/3/2019: Otto Scharmer's article: 'Jacinda Arden faced tragedy with action and empathy. We should all learn from her.'](#)

[\\*6/6/2019: Otto Scharmer's article: 'As Systems Collapse, People Rise: Seven Faces of an Emerging Global Movement \(extract\)'](#)



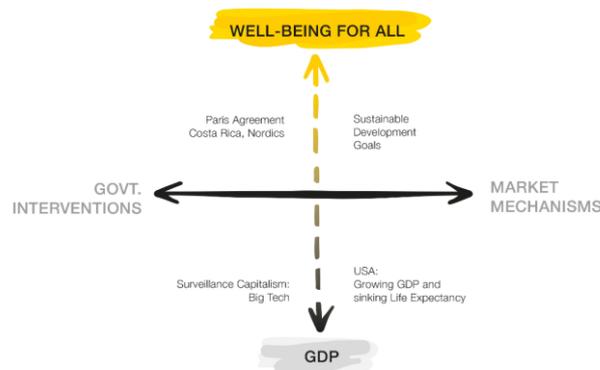
clockwise, from top left: Extinction Rebellion, Greta Thunberg, Fridays for Future, Sunrise movement

'There is a new **global movement awakening across the planet**. The **Fridays For Future (FFF)** movement inspired by Swedish teenager Greta Thunberg has brought millions of high school students to the streets this year. The grassroots **Extinction Rebellion (XR)** founded in the UK last year aims to mobilize non-violent climate action worldwide. And in the United States, Sunrise, a youth-led movement that advocates political action on climate change, teamed up with U.S. Representative **Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez** (aka AOC) and effectively changed the conversation by proposing the **Green New Deal**. With the partial exception of Sunrise, most of these movements and their events have largely been ignored by the U.S. media. More important, hardly any of the reporting explicitly acknowledges these movements as expressions of a larger **shift in consciousness globally, in particular among young people...**'

### Axial Shift in Politics



### Axial Shift in Economics





**The Burren College of Art's Creative Education Symposium was supported by the [Tomar Trust](#). [Emma Lane-Spollen](#) is the CEO of the Tomar Trust and she attended the symposium. [Emma Lane-Spollen](#) is on the National Board of [Educate Together](#).**

There was representation from secondary school students and Comhairle na nÓg at the **Creative Education Symposium**. [Comhairle na nÓg](#) are child and youth councils in the **31 Local Authority areas of the country**. They were set up to give children and young people (under the voting age of 18) a **voice in the development of local services and policies**. All Local Authorities have regular meetings of Comhairle na nÓg, which link with adult decision-making bodies. Comhairle na nÓg were established under the National Children's Strategy (2000), which is based on the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)**.

**Dáil na nÓg** is the national parliament for young people aged 12-18 years. The **Department of Children and Youth Affairs** funds and oversees Dáil na nÓg, which is hosted every second year by the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs. Delegates are elected to Dáil na nÓg by the 31 Comhairle na nÓg.

**October 2019** Minister for Children and Youth Affairs [Dr Katherine Zappone](#) launched a campaign called **#TeachMeAsMe** with Comhairle na nÓg to highlight the **importance of individuality in schools**.

Pinned Tweet

 **ComhairleNaNog** @ComhairleNaNog1 · Oct 7

Everyone has their own story. What's yours?  
[#TeachMeAsMe](#) is here to highlight the importance of individuality in schools.

If you are 12-18, submit a video telling us about when your school championed your individuality and you could win a one4all voucher worth up to €250.

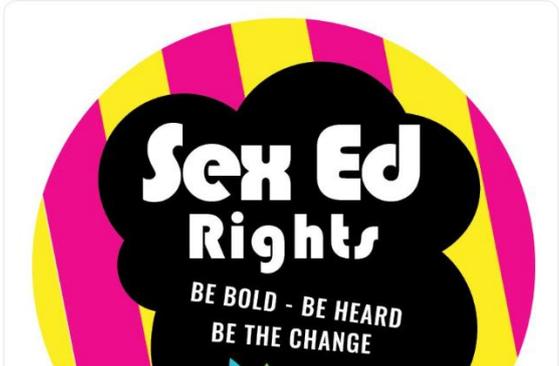


0:23 1,374 views

ComhairleNaNog Retweeted

 **Youth Work Ireland** @ywirl · Oct 11

POSTER COMPETITION 🗳️ Design a poster based on the theme - SEX ED - IT'S A HUMAN RIGHT & u could win a €100 One4All voucher? 🏆 Posters will be displayed at #PositiveSexualHealth event Nove 1st 📺 [bit.ly/2p9a53Y](#)  
[#sexedisahumanright](#) [#ihrecsupported](#) @IHREC



*Fintan O'Toole in Co. Clare (lhs). Other man is unknown.*

The Irish Times journalist **Fintan O'Toole** and **NUIG's Dean of Arts Dr Cathal O'Donoghue** are 2 of the members of the Advisory Council of The Burren College of Art in Ballyvaughan, Co. Clare.

## Burren College of Art

[Burren College of Art](#) and the [Burren Law School](#) ('aims to recreate the tradition of legal learning associated with the Brehon Law Schools') were [established](#) in 1994 in Newtown Castle, Ballyvaughan, Co. Clare by local-man **Michael Greene** (1957-2001), his wife **Mary Hawkes-Greene**, and his brother-in-law **Martin Hawkes**.

Over the years the Burren College of Art established itself as a vibrant, global artistic educational centre with international affiliations and accreditations whose courses are now accredited by **NUIG**.

Michael Greene founded the annual Burren archaeological conference and, 'The first gathering in 1991 provided the initial heated debate on what became the **Mullaghmore controversy**'.

At a Burren College of Art 2013 event, [Burren Climate Gathering](#), **Patrick McCormack** (farmer; poet; actor in "The Silver Branch"; patron of Burrenbeo Trust), one of the members of the Burren Action Group (BAG), spoke about the Mullaghmore controversy (see short [video](#)):

'1992, the state had a plan to develop our valley, the **Mullaghmore Valley**, into a tourist mecca. And they'd applied for planning permission to, they didn't, all government bodies in Ireland were exempt from planning permission, whether it was the ESB, the people who bring the electricity, or whatever they wanted to build, all government bodies were exempt from **planning permission**, and because this, we felt this area was such an incredible area so rich and so wonderful that we felt it was above and beyond any type, of any type of financial prosperity, or any type of financial you know, it was an area that should not be weighed in the market scale, and of course that time in Ireland in the late 80s and 90s the pot was empty, so what you had was, I'm not saying a word about civil servants, you had civil servants that really, em, that really ok.

What it was, what the Mullaghmore Plan was, it was about careers of top civil servants that were afraid that the, our tax payers couldn't finance their financial wages so they had to pick places like Mullaghmore, like Luggala and so forth to build interpretive centres to bring in 100s of 1000s of people to finance their own circus, that's basically it though. They'll say it was about education and conservation, it had nothing to do with it. But **we fought a battle for 15 years, a bunch of us, we were 7 plaintiffs that brought, we went to the High Court**. I was never in a court in my life and spent 32 days in the High Court in Dublin, and we first of all, we said all government bodies should be forced into the same planning laws as ordinary citizens, and we also said it wasn't the OPW, it was their plans, the Office of Public Works whose responsibility it was for maintaining [a park?] and maintaining courthouses and barracks and so forth. We also said it wasn't in their portfolios to build buildings of this extent, of this calibre, this was a development.

And we won it on 2 accounts, and even though they appealed it, we still won it like you know and, em, it took us, it went on for 12 years, I mean some of the members [**Burren Action Group**], John O'Donohue was one of the plaintiffs, the famous **John O'Donohue** who was the writer and so forth like, and, em like, it it it, the problem was that the voice of **70% 80% of the locals wanted it**, thought it was a good idea, thought it was a good thing for jobs and that, like you know. But I think, like, I often felt, like you know, **we were chosen for it in a way**, that some force out there, you know, there are forces at play unknown to ourselves, that are chosen for these things, like you know but, without going too far into it, I can tell story after story, but but we became very, we became political elements...'.

Before his death in 2001, **Michael Greene** had been the Chairman of **Ballyvaughan Development Community Group** and they had just put together a 25-year plan for the development of Ballyvaughan. Seemingly in 1997 Padraig Cleary, a Limerick-based management consultant, was asked by '35 people' in the Ballyvaughan community to conduct a series of workshops to help Ballyvaughan preserve 'the quality of its visitor appeal', and to avoid the way 'of other resorts with sprawling holiday home developments'.

In 1998 the Ballyvaughan Development Community Group had, with the help of **VOICE** (Voice of Irish Concern for the Environment – founded in 1997 following the closure of Greenpeace Ireland, and part-funded by DCCAE Local Agenda 21 Partnership Fund), **opposed a plan** for a £4 million hotel complex and 10 houses in Ballyvaughan.

19/2/1998 the Irish Examiner states, 'The group, which claims that it has the support of the vast majority of the people of Ballyvaughan, added that the area of the proposed development is at present unspoilt, containing many specimens of **Burren flora and fauna**, and is the last remaining "**limestone pavement in Ballyvaughan**".' They also opposed a plan, in 1998, to develop a £6 million housing development in Ballyvaughan.

In 1999 the **Burren Code** was launched in Michael Greene's Newtown Castle in the Burren College of Art. According to the Irish Examiner, 4/10/1999, 'An increasing number of visitors to the Burren are engaging in miniature dolmen building on the famous limestone pavements of the site, **An Taisce** warned last night. In a bid to halt damage being done to the Burren landscape by tourists, the Burren Code was launched yesterday at Newtown Castle...'

The **Burren Leadership Forum** was set up circa 2005 in the Burren College of Art, Newtown Castle, Ballyvaughan, Co. Clare. It was set up by 'senior business leaders committed to leadership development'. Over the years speakers included [John O'Donohue](#) (author of *Anam Cara*), [Benjamin Zander](#) (Conductor of the Boston Philharmonic Orchestra, award-winning speaker on leadership), [Dr Dan Siegel](#) (clinical professor of psychiatry at the UCLA School of Medicine), [Professor David Daniels](#) (clinical professor of psychiatry and behavioural sciences at Stanford Medical School and member of the Narrative *Enneagram*), [Ginger Lapid-Bogda](#), PhD (OD consultant and coach and founder of The *Enneagram* in Business).



*John O'Donohue (author of *Anam Cara*, lhs) & David Daniels MD (*enneagram* expert, centre)*

Martin Hawkes is an enneagram teacher and a member of **Enneagram Ireland**. He is Chairman of [Burrenbeo Trust](#) which works closely with [UNESCO Burren Geopark](#), [Burren Eco-Tourism Network](#), [Burren LIFE Programme](#), [Burren Community Charter Project](#), Burren Irish Farmers Association, the [Burren ChangeX Project](#). He is also a host of the [Burren Executive Leadership Retreat](#).

Circa 2009 Martin Hawkes and some of his colleagues associated with the Burren College of Art started to study [Otto Scharmer's Theory U](#). In 2017 Martin Hawkes, Mary Hawkes-Greene, and Chris Chapman had a pop-up "U Lab Hub" on the 'Future of Learning and Creativity', being run by Otto Scharmer's MIT [Presencing Institute](#).

In 2012 Martin Hawkes, Mary Hawkes-Greene, Chris Chapman, Mary Stacey ([Context Consulting](#), Canada) and others set up the **Burren Call** – 'The Burren Call, with its injunction 'to blow your heart open', had its genesis in the **climate change crisis** and the conviction that the Burren's limestone landscape on Ireland's Atlantic seaboard was a **special 'power' place** where **transformational conversations could take place**. A group assembled at the Burren College of Art in August 2012 and affirmed the correctness of this **intuition**. In an age of discontinuity this place offered profound presence, a centre for creative learning and the **leading-edge methodologies** that would allow the hosting of break-through conversations not just on climate change but also on the **accumulating daunting challenges confronting humanity, globally and locally, at this time.**'

## Breakthrough Conversations

The Burren – A Place for Breakthrough Conversations

The Challenge of this Time

We live at a unique moment in recent human history, a moment pregnant equally with risk of break-down and the potential of break-through to a new level of human possibility. It is a time when the global economic and financial systems by which our material well-being is governed are in danger of collapse from their own excesses. More seriously, the dominant economic paradigm of our time is threatening to undermine the ecosystem upon which our survival as a species depends.

These presenting problems are all too apparent. And yes, there have been attempts to tinker with reform and/or repair of the economic and ecological systems at a surface or symptomatic level. What has been less obvious is any serious attempt to deal with issues at their systemic root level. Could it be that the split between the material and the spiritual, between mind and matter and between man and nature that has characterised human thought and human institutions for the last three centuries is finally reaching its natural conclusion?

The story of human progress is not one of smooth evolution. Rather it is a story punctuated by step changes such as characterised the Renaissance and the Enlightenment, the start of the modern era. Current circumstances call for such a step change. We have a choice to continue reacting mindlessly to emerging crises or to move to a more mindful way of regulating our affairs. Now is a time for creative renewal both local and global, for no one is absolved from the challenges before us. It is a time for audacious conversations and the Burren is a natural host place for such conversations.

Burrenbeo's ([www.burrenbeo.com](http://www.burrenbeo.com)) launch of its 'Learning Landscapes' symposium last August 2012 and its first inspired Winterage Festival are the green shoots of invitations to us to open our eyes and our senses to a reconnection to ourselves and the natural world.

Whether your question is to do with spirituality in the workplace, peace in our time, the path to creative resilience for rural communities, renewing country through language revival, a holistic role for tourism in the world or the future we will leave our children, or something you find is in great need of new breakthrough conversations, the Burren is a place where a transformational journey can begin. A community is already forming to host these conversations. The first of a series of climate gatherings will convene in February 2013 and its effects will hopefully ripple out to influence the greater debates that are now in prospect.

The Burren is calling!

Circa 2012 Mary Hawkes-Greene became a director of [Green Foundation Ireland](#) (GFI is a member of Environmental Pillar which supports the **United Nations 2030 Agenda** 17 SDGs), an independent **think tank** for green cultural change affiliated to the [Green European Foundation](#) (GEF). Through the GEF it is allied with other European Green Foundations, such as Grüne Bildungswerkstatt (Austria); Oikos Foundation (Belgium); Heinrich Böll Foundation (Germany); Alexander Langer Foundation (Italy); Cogito Foundation (Sweden).

'Green Foundation Ireland (GFI) is an independent organisation orientated towards an ecological and sustainable vision of society. GFI will communicate this new cultural vision through engagement with scientists, artists, writers, business-people and academics. Through educational and research projects as well as seminars and events, the GFI seek to develop practical solutions to a wide range of issues including energy, food chain complexities, waste and climate change resilience.'



*Climate Gathering 2013 at the Burren College of Art*

**Brendan Dunford** talking to attendees

**Chris Chapman, Sandy Dunlop & Brendan Dunford**

Green Foundation Ireland's [The Climate Gathering](#) in the *Burren College of Art in February 2013* 'was the seedbed of a **new cultural vision** that, in the breakdown of economic and environmental systems, sees the need for a new vision that will transform our current ways of living and working in practical and sustainable ways.' Some **60 participants from the United States and Europe descended on the Burren village** to discuss ways of rousing society to action on climate change. In a sometimes jargon-heavy three days they explored ways of bringing about a "transformational leap" in the wider perception of global warming. International experts, such as **Daniel Schrag, science and technology adviser to Barack Obama**; John Ashton, former climate change representative to the **British government**; and Regine Günther from **WWF Germany**, were in attendance.'

Green Foundation Ireland then ran a series of [Climate Conversations](#) in 2015 at which **Martin Hawkes** and **Chris Chapman** were the hosts. [Eamon Ryan](#) of the Green Party, [Cara Augustenborg](#) (environmental scientist), [Duncan Stewart](#) (environmentalist, and Board Director of GFI) were among the speakers.



2017: [Davie Philip](#) of [Cultivate](#) & [Cloughjordan Ecovillage](#)

In 2017 Green Foundation Ireland ran a series of [lectures](#) on **Education for Sustainable Development (ESD)**. They spoke of the **United Nations 2030 Agenda** 17 SGDs, 'NGOs, educational institutions, trade unions, government and civil society groups share existing best practice in education for sustainable development.'

Another Green Foundation Ireland board member is **Sandy Dunlop** - Owner of [Alexander Dunlop](#) 'Where Global Brands meet Global Stories'; [Burren College of Art's Climate Gathering 2013](#) advisory board member; Co-ordinator of Dublin's Terenure Energy Group/Terenure Initiative of which **Martin Hawkes** is a team member - see FG Minister Eoghan Murphy's [website](#); co-founder of the [Bard Summer School on Clare Island/Bard Mythologies](#).



Sandy Dunlop 2014

### In 2014 at a GFI seminar Sandy Dunlop says,

‘What I do want to do is, just for a second, talk a little bit about the kind of politics, and there’s an area that I’m very interested in which is **mythology and storytelling**, and in this country, or this country rather has an absolutely unique body of literature. It is more extensive than any other part of the western world and it’s available. And it’s the Irish myth legend tradition. Hardly anyone seems to look at it, em, which is a huge pity because it contains within it a worldview, a way of thinking that’s quite different from the hierarchical Greco-Roman logical, you know, it all ends up in Brussels-thinking. And the guy who is the great political thinker, sorry it’s the other way isn’t it [refers to screen], is a guy the **Fir Bolgs**. Anyone heard of them? Yeah, well these guys, they’re the ordinary bagmen, they carry bags, they’re humble working people, but they’re actually **brilliant political thinkers**, they’re the first great political thinker, and they’re absolutely up there with Karl Marx and Edmund Burke and all those. ‘Cos their basic idea is **PUSH THINGS DOWN TO THE TRIBE**. So it’s all about **political decentralisation** and in terms of the unity, it’s not some great hierarchy where some anonymous bureaucrat in Brussels who I don’t know and don’t like when I do see him, em, is running my world in some way. It’s PUSH IT DOWN. What you do have then is cultural unity, but it’s not consolidation, it’s not “the bosses”. It’s **cultural community provided by the bardic class**, and so this is what the Fir Bolgs’ basic idea is, it’s decentralised political thinking with **self-organising tribes with each with their special gift**, and the **idea of the Sacred Centre – Uisneach, Tara, and Emain Mucha**. And this ideology is fundamentally different from the Greco-Roman Christian, em, abstracted ideologically hierarchical way of thinking. What I would say is that it’s worth looking at. It’s very special. This unique way of thinking which, by the way, the only other place you’ll find it is out east, in India...’.

### In 2016 at a GFI seminar Sandy Dunlop talks about European migration:

‘...What is the creation myth of the Irish...’...‘This is the creation myth of the Irish people [points to screen], “Lebor Gabala Erenn”, and as this man just said [an attendee], what is it, it is the **“Book of Invasions”**...’...‘Ireland doesn’t even know its creation myth. **What is the Irish creation myth?** It is the “Book of Invasions”, in other words, the **foundation myth of Ireland is a book dealing with migration**. The Irish didn’t come because God created them, except the monks put it in there, and it didn’t come out of chaos. **The Irish are the people who came from somewhere else. The Irish are migrants**. And by the way having come here, they then exiled. **So, the Irish are the people who came from somewhere else and went to somewhere else**. So, potentially in this country’s foundation mythology there is a brilliantly articulate, and by the way, what is the myth? A myth is the communally sanctioned stories of the people, not God, not a great author, the people. The sanctioned stories of the Irish people is a creation myth of “Lebor Gabala”, the “Book of Invasions”.

And that should make every migrant feel [?]. I’m a migrant, I grew up in India, my parents were Scottish, my Dad was working class, my mother was upper-middleclass, in Calcutta, sent back to be civilised in an English public school. I wasn’t that impressed with the civilising process, so I was searching around looking for something and I have to say 2 years ago the Minister for Justice Frances Fitzgerald right in the corner welcomed me as an Irish citizen and about 2000 others. I’m a migrant, a recent blow-in, but one of a nation of migrants and I felt at home there. **You, every Irish person here is a migrant**. By the way, from a **DNA point of view you are a migrant**.

Now potentially with all the migrants and exiling there’s a wonderful mythology here that might be, if anyone paid attention, not least the Irish people, to their own mythology, there’s a **wonderful myth that might be a basis of moving forward** and addressing some of the issues that we’re faced with in this. So, the Book of Invasions is the foundation text [points to screen], the Irish foundation myth is a myth of migration [refers to screen]. And who is the 1<sup>st</sup> person to come to Ireland. Has anyone heard of this lady [points to screen – “CEASAIR”]. This is the 1<sup>st</sup> woman to come to Ireland. This is the 1<sup>st</sup> person to come to Ireland. She arrives in Ireland with 50 women and 3 men which sets in place a very **foundationally feminine quality to Ireland**. Not that very masculine thing of

Yahweh, of the Greek and the Judaic tradition, a feminine tradition. Her journey begins in North Africa in the Sudan. Has anyone heard of Meroe? An amazing civilisation on northern Sudan which one of our friends here earlier on talked about. A wealthy metropolis. Look at those buildings. This is 800 BCE, this was the centre of civilisation in northern Sudan. This is where Ceasair's story starts. She obviously would've heard African mythology. She goes up to Egypt, she goes to Babylon and Syria, she's heard all that wonderful cradle of civilisation that's now in a sorry state. This is the Syrians, the centre of civilisation. The Babylonian-Assyrian Empire with all these wonderful monuments that ISIS are doing a damn good job trying to blow up.

She [Ceasair] then picks up Hebrew mythology, Greek mythology, Roman mythology, German mythology, Celtic, well, not Celtic actually, the mythology of Brittany, before she arrives, yes, sorry, she did pick up Celtic, she arrives, the 1<sup>st</sup> person who arrives in Ireland, Ceasair, with her 50 women and 3 men. Wow! It makes the odyssey, the great foundation myth of western mythology look like a trip round a duck pond. All Odysseus did is travel round that [points to a portion of the map on screen]. This woman! And who did she bring? The mothers of the world, the mothers of the world is what she brought to Ireland. Isn't that an extraordinary story? Why does nobody know it? ***Because in Ireland the foundation myth is the mothers of the world, not Zeus and the Titans and Uranus and big political battles, the mothers of the world. So, you've got a Goddess culture and her mate, Fintan MacBochra, a shamanic culture, very different from the warrior masculine energy. That is the foundation myth of Ireland.***

And, by the way, we've other migrants, Parthalon, Nemed, the Fir Bolgs, and what did they bring? Migrants bring things, these people set in place businesses, all the great businesses of Ireland that we have today, the exemplar was the parthalonians, the infrastructure here [points to "Nemed"], and a brilliant political system here, the Fir Bolgs – they were the bagmen, the humble bagmen of Europe who by the way had exiled, had to leave Greece because of oppression, isn't, it's not a new story this Syrian stuff...'

'...They had to leave, and they came to Ireland escaping oppression. They all fought off invaders. The Formorians, and then we had the Tuatha De Danann, the people of the Goddess, a Goddess culture. Tuatha = people. Danu = Goddess. ***A feminine energy, that's what's the foundation myth of Ireland...***

...Migrants bring gifts. There's one reframing, not migrants steal my lunch and my job. Migrants bring gifts. They bring other cultures. So, the Irish people are migrants. ***Their myth is a migrant people.*** And then, by the way, they go somewhere else. Bran, you've heard of Bran? You've heard of the ***Children of Lir***? And by the way, every migrant, every exile is a migrant somewhere else. My son is in Sydney, he's a migrant. I came from Calcutta, I'm a migrant. ***We're all migrants*** and maybe what this offers is a mythology that's not a mythology about power over, a masculine one, or, oh I'm getting in dangerous territory if I comment on the religious ones, but it is frightening, the Yahweh scaring the bejusus out of people. The Irish myth of the encounter with ***Manannán mac Lir***, he didn't give them tablets of stone, of things they should do, he gave them a way of seeing, ***Silver Branch Perception***, that seems, to me, useful and not frightening. So, the Irish story is a myth of migration and exile, this country knows everything about migration. So, instead of it being a frightening thing of swarms of Syrians and Babylonians and ISIS coming in to blow up our coffee shops and our pubs. We could frame it as the myth of this country.

And we need to look at this [points to picture of the Formorians]. Who are the ***Formorians***? These imagined communities. Who is Balor of the Evil Eye. Let's name it. And there's two other myths in the Irish tradition that might be about extending a Cead Mile Failte – Dagda. When we worked on ***Guinness***, they felt Guinness was the ***Dagda archetype*** with its cauldron that never empties. Isn't that a wonderful image of abundance? Is our attitude that it's a scarce cake, and by God, if a migrant comes in, he's gonna get my share of it, my [?]. Or are we working off Dagda's cauldron, this big-hearted generous soul? Or are we going to work with the ***Brigid archetype***? I'd prefer Brigid the Goddess, mind you Brigid the saint isn't very saintly in some of the things she did, did. She actually was one of the 1<sup>st</sup> abortionists, eh, that some of the people in the far-right Christian mightn't like, eh, for someone who got pregnant inappropriately, and so, but she has a cloak of welcome.

So, in a sense the choice for Ireland is, does it live, oh yeah sorry I'm not gonna go into that, ***does Ireland live out of the Cu Chulainn 'keep 'em out' or does it extend a more Brigid or Dagda welcome?*** And that essentially is a

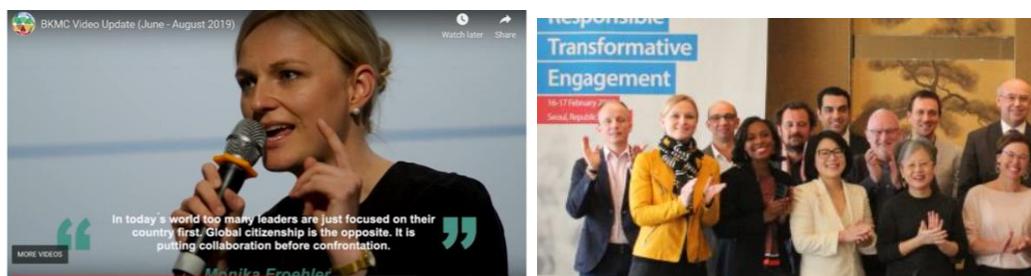
foundational choice for this people. What I would say is the myth they're living by is unconscious, nobody is talking about it, the politicians know it, 'cos they're as smart as hell at reading what's not said, nobody's naming it, the Justice Department are quietly dealing with it, keeping people out as much as they can...

...And finally, the wonderful idea of the *Fir Bolg* of Ireland, the "*Fifth Province*". What does cuige mean? Five, but it's also the Irish name for province. You've got the four provinces, Munster, Leinster, Connaught and Ulster. And it has the "Fifth Province", Tara and Uisneach. **A sacred place**, the Irish, medieval Irish did not believe in hierarchy centralising logic, they believed in **distributed power**, shared power, and contained power. So, in this mythology there's an alternate to the hierarchical, linear, centralising Greco-Roman neoplatonic models that are collapsing under their own weight as Yeats called it, 'The centre cannot hold, mere anarchy is loosed upon the world'. Europe's falling apart, it has no unifying myth. What can we do about it? Get on with it in Ireland with Ireland's own mythology which is very different from the foundation myths of Greco-Roman Uranus and Zeus and big powerful men having a big fight as to who's in power. Let's get back to this **feminine shamanic**, by the way, don't think they're soft, these Irish Goddesses, they're as tough as old boots, and very sexy at the same time. There's no problem in the Irish myth tradition between femininity and power. If you're powerful you don't have to be a bitch. You can be powerful and feminine at the same time. As the Indonesian culture knows with their wonderful queen stories, and probably, eh, Nigeria too.'



**Barry Ahern** (standing), enneagram teacher and colleague of **Martin Hawkes** in [Enneagram Ireland](#), and Barry Ahern's wife **Nuala Ahern** (standing - psychologist, former MEP of the [Green Party](#), founder of [Mythic Links Mythology Group](#)) & of [Earthlight](#) who is a colleague of **Mary Hawkes-Greene** in [Green Foundation Ireland](#). Both speaking with **Sandy Dunlop** at the 2016 Green Foundation Ireland seminar.

The **former Secretary-General of the United Nations Ban-Ki Moon** founded in 2017 the [Ban-Ki Moon Centre for Global Citizens](#) in Vienna, Austria. The centre wants to assist in the implementation of the **United Nations 2030 Agenda** 17 SDGs particularly focusing on women and the youth. **Monika Froehler** is the Chief Executive Officer.



In **July 2019** in Hanoi, Vietnam, Monika Froehler said, '**In today's world too many leaders are just focused on their country first. Global citizenship is the opposite. It is putting collaboration before confrontation.**' The conference discussed SDG Target **4.7**, and for effective teaching and learning UNESCO stressed that all three learning dimensions need to be developed: Cognitive, Social and Emotional and Behavioural. In **February 2019** in Seoul, South Korea the Ban-Ki Moon Centre organised the 'Experts' Meeting on Teaching and Learning Responsible Transformative Engagement'. **NUIG's Professor Pat Dolan** (photo, **6<sup>th</sup> to the right of Monika Froehler**), **UNESCO Child and Family Research Centre**, attended the event with **Monika Froehler** etc.



Abbot Mark Patrick Hederman of [Glenstal Abbey](#) speaking at the [2015 Climate Conversations in the Abbey Theatre](#) – a Green Foundation Ireland event of which [Sandy Dunlop](#) is on the Board & [Nuala Ahern](#) on the management team. Abbot Hederman is an attendee at the [Burren College of Art](#) and was a great friend of Burren College of Art speaker, the author [John O'Donohue](#) who Hederman called a 'poet' and a 'prophet'. Abbot Hederman spoke at the 2014 [Trailblazery](#) 'We need to talk about Ireland' lectures with Burrenbeo Patron, the poet/farmer [Patrick McCormack](#).

## “Ireland can manage without the church, but can it do without myths?”

*Unthinkable: Mark Patrick Hederman makes the case for promoting 'mythic intelligence'*

*The Irish Times Jul 4, 2019*

'In an era of fake news and state-sponsored disinformation campaigns, and when the very notion of truth is attacked by fascist and authoritarian forces, it's not immediately obvious that Ireland should position itself as a **“conservatory of mythology”**.

But that is exactly what Mark Patrick Hederman is advocating. The former abbot of Glenstal Abbey in Co Limerick believes western civilization needs **“mythic intelligence”** now more than ever.

Ireland, along with Greece and the Scandinavian countries which all have “vast mythological archives”, he says, could **provide a haven for this part of ourselves** . . . We could provide for Europe, and for the world, an oasis in the desert of unilateral thinking.

By mythology, Hederman means “a third way of truth between fiction and fact”. It tries to answer questions about life's meaning and human purpose that are beyond the capacity of pure science, Hederman argues in his latest book *Living the Mystery: What lies between Science and Religion* (Columba Books). It's not a matter of pitting reason against folklore, says Hederman – this week's *Unthinkable* guest. Both have their place in enabling us to learn and flourish. Or, as he puts it: Mythic intelligence is not something childish to be discarded as we grow up; it is an essential part of human understanding.

You argue that a mythological outlook is necessary. Why so?

Mark Patrick Hederman: Every culture, **every tribe produces a myth**. It's not everything but it's a way of explaining what's the meaning of the fact that we are here. I think every person needs to provide themselves and their children with an explanation for that. That's the function of most religions, in a way.

Every human civilization builds a temple of some kind which explains to the neighbouring [CIVILIZATION] or even ourselves what we regard as the function or the purpose of our being here.

It's always a myth. A satisfying story does people.

And we have had such satisfying stories, many of which have lost credence with scientific progress. Can you go back to inhabit myths once they have been discredited?

The point there is the Catholic church as present is trying to do that. And so are many other conservative people, saying, '**Look we are not going to leave the nineteenth century, we are going to stay there.'... and you are perfectly entitled to live that mythology; why not?**

**But most people in the twenty-first century are not satisfied with that and realize that anyone who is on that side of the divide, living in the nineteenth century, are going to become an irrelevant minority with no purchase or no influence on what happens to the world as we progress.**

I think everyone is entitled to live their own mythology. I'm mean, we are living our own mythology in Glenstal Abbey as monks... It's all organized according to a view of life based on the rule of St Benedict which was written in 1428. And people all over the world do that, and they are perfectly entitled to do it. Everybody else thinks they're eejits but that's fine.

How do you decide what myths to keep? Is the measure of a good myth its therapeutic benefit rather than its scientific truth?

Here's the point. We've only discovered recently the whole phenomenon of the **unconscious** and we have no access to it but we must try to get in touch with it. **The 20th century was a workshop and a kind of example of what happens when people who are not in touch with their unconscious are in charge.** The big poster boys for that were **Stalin and Hitler**. But they have all kinds of mini-examples of themselves in people who are involved in schools or borstals or institutions of one kind or another, and every one of us is Hitler or Stalin in miniature.

So, **we have to get in touch with that massive undertow which is the unconscious** and the way we do that is through our dreams. That's one way. **Art is another way.** But what dreams are to an individual, myths are to a whole people or culture.

In other words, that whole mythology is the dream time of the particular tribe or culture you belong to, and nobody suggests you take everything from it literally or that any part of it are dogma, or definite. You delve into it and find whatever part of it is helpful to yourself. So, it's a completely different system to a catechism or a prescriptive handbook.

Dreamtime and mythology are an endless wardrobe of possibility and each person has to find their own combinations and own particular choice of dress.

How do you gain knowledge through mythology?

Just as you have all these other types of intelligence – mathematical, musical, interpersonal, sporting intelligence – you have a mythological intelligence and it has a specific portion of the brain. Our brains, we have discovered, have three storeys to them, as it were. You have the **serpentine brain** which is at the very bottom which we share with reptiles. And that is a kind of little bump that developed into a brain after 50 million years. Our brains, we have discovered, have three storeys to them, as it were. And that is a kind of little bump that developed into a brain after 50 million years. On top of that you have the **limbic brain** and that apparently developed when we began to produce children as opposed to laying eggs, which the serpents did. And the serpent who lays his egg has no interest in his offspring – he just lays the eggs – whereas the limbic brain is an emotional development on top of the serpentine brain which comes from caring for our offspring, or finding ourselves emotionally involved with other people.

Then on top of that again is the **neo-cortex**, which is the third storey and the largest one, and the newest one – neo meaning new – but that doesn't make it the only one.

So, between the neo-cortex and the serpentine brain **this limbic brain is where poetry and mythology are understood** and they have their own particular language and we have completely neglected that. We have almost wiped it off the desktop, especially of younger people who now from the age of four are given a diet of completely neo-cortex intelligence.

My great advantage in life was never to have been in school until I was nine.

Is religion a myth?

If you say myth means lies – which is what we’ve been told – then if you say religion is a myth then you’re saying it doesn’t mean anything; it’s not true. But what I’m trying to show in this book is that it is a reality, an epistemology, a part of our brain, and that it’s between fact and fiction. I know many of the priests in Ireland and elsewhere have been silenced by the Vatican for telling people the Bible and what’s recorded in it is ‘only a myth’. And what I’m saying is it’s not only a myth. It’s specifically a myth. And it’s a form of truth which is called the gospel truth. It is not a lie and it’s not a falsehood.

What makes Ireland so special that it might become, as you recommend, a conservatory of mythology?

Ireland is really a very interesting little tiny island and the smallness of it and the geography of it are amazing because if you go from the Skelligs to the Giant’s Causeway, everything about the land has a **mythological surface** to it. And I’m saying why not use that? I’m just thinking of all the lighthouses we’re not using could be used as interpretive centres . . . The Cliffs of Moher, for God’s sake, the first tectonic plates which moved us away from Nova Scotia on the other side of the world.

So, **this whole island could become a most marvellous exemplar of what nature does**. In other words, nature becomes another kind of scriptural reading. That from a tourist and economic point of view – we haven’t much else to offer – is what Ireland could become. It could develop imagination as its major suit.

I mean, people go to psychoanalysis to get in touch with their unconscious. I’m saying that should be done at a geographical and a tribal level as well, and we have the perfect landscape and toolbox for achieving that.’

#### In 2014 Mary Hawkes-Greene says of the Burren College of Art:

‘We are all born with creative potential that often becomes dormant or totally eroded by rigid education and societal categorisation. **Burren College of Art’s goal for the next 20 years is to be a catalyst for unleashing that universal creativity. A new suite of creative leadership programmes invites political and business leaders, students from other disciplines, the Burren community, anyone who is interested - an opportunity to rid themselves of immobilising scepticism, to broaden their lens and to utilise intuition, dreams and fantasies in addition to brain power.** Core to the experience is a return to **source**, metaphorically facing a blank canvas, finding one’s true passion, making that first mark and moving confidently from there. Embracing ambiguity is central- understanding that there are no definite predictable outcomes, just a steady north star that sustains one to fail, fail and fail better as Beckett says. This is what artists do- this is the process that generates new ideas and knowledge and leads to unexpected outcomes. **New thinking that subverts the status quo is required to tackle the complex issues facing humanity at present since, to quote Albert Einstein – “problems cannot be solved from the same level of consciousness that created them.” As our next 20 years dawns, Burren College of Art audaciously aims to be a catalyst for profound global change.** The **Burren** was and continues to be our **powerful source** - its ancient, learning landscape teaches us if we are open to listening and seeing. John O’Donohue, Anne Madden, Seamus Heaney listened; Burrenbeo, farmers and custodians of the Burren listen; Michael Greene listened. His vision was deeply rooted in ten generations of Burren forebears, in a love and respect for its rocks, its history, stories, music and culture. It flowed from an undiluted wellspring of creativity activated through the art of wall building. Michael Greene died suddenly in July 2001, playing football for his local team. His dream lives on. The “greatest little art school” continues to build.’

#### In 2019 Mary Hawkes-Greene says of the Burren College of Art:

‘Ireland, as you no doubt know, was the **Island of Saints and Scholars** and, you know, they say that we saved civilisation. So, em, way back, eh you know, between the 6<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> century **the Burren was recognised as this special place that enabled reflection, that enabled deep thinking, and, and I suppose, the acquisition of wisdom,**

and so at that time you, you had the poets who were the the, em, bards, the bardic scholars, they were considered, they were in the **highest echelons of society** at that point in Ireland because artists and **their ability to, I suppose, sense into what the future had in store**, they were valued for that wisdom, but in order to gain that wisdom they had to take themselves away in many ways from normal society, and em, be in that place of reflection and wisdom. So, the Burren had a famous **bardic school**, a poet school was located, the O'Dalaigh Bardic School was one of those schools, where poets and bards came to learn their craft. Equally, way back then, lawyers were considered to be people of the utmost integrity and wisdom, and eh, yeah well that was then and maybe 'twill happen again sometime, but em, they also similarly to, eh, the poets and actually to those with religious calling, they were required to take themselves away to a place of reflection and deep study, and for six or seven years they also had to convene in the **brehon law schools** and one of those was just close by where we now have the college, and the Brehon Laws were old Irish system, legal system that was in operation before we were forced to take on the British legal system which we have inherited and still use. **And the brehon system was, I would think, a lot more suited to the Irish psyche.** It was all about restorative justice, not punitive justice. So, you basically had to make up for, make good whatever wrongdoing you had caused. So, brehon lawyers who had to adjudicate on these, had to be exceedingly knowledgeable, they had to know the value basically of everything, and then had to attribute a corresponding, em, punishment, well not punishment, but how, how can you make up. So, if you take, there was a, famously, they were so wise, I mean, they had, **they understood for example how important bees were, honey bees were to the planet**, and eh, if somebody stole somebody else's bees or swarm of bees, you know, they had to make good that by giving them back so much honey, and so on and so forth, that's just one example. Well there are 100s and 1000s of laws because every single misdemeanour was looked at individually...So, again the brehon law school was close by where we now have the college, and again it was in the round, it was a stone building where people met in the round and where they studied for a long time.'

**'And I have being particularly, I have a particular interest in the intersection between the arts and leadership and I suppose how leaders, how artists intuitively know, get to that state of wisdom where they know when it's right to make the mark, they know when to strike the note, they know, you know, when they have found their voice.** And, you know, taking that and applying it, eh, more broadly, em, in the world, I think is what is currently, em, of interest to me because I know that we have a set of circumstances here that are fairly unique, in the Burren, there's the Burren itself which is the most important one, which is the inspirational place that as you mentioned is also so grounding and so earthing and takes you back, kind of, to a **source place**, a kind of a **place of birth** again. So, you've got the location and then we have **a particular set of processes**, I think that we have developed fairly uniquely over our 25 years that, that some are taken from the research methods, you know, in our graduate programmes and so on. And they can be applied, you know, not just to artists, but they can be applied more generally. So, we've taken aspects of the creative process that are transferrable and, eh, combined with immersion in place with and combined with radical hospitality, we, we have together, I suppose, developed whole new suite of offerings that, and and capacities and capabilities that I am very excited about because I can see, A) **The increasing need for this work in the world at the moment, this, you know, the world that's so volatile and uncertain and complex and ambiguous [VUCA - Martin Hawkes also refers to this] and all of those and to try and lead, leaders who are trying to lead in this environment need more than they're gonna get from a Harvard business school, you know, the the, you know, you can have lots of, em, capacity building and techniques and what you can learn, but you also have to develop you own innate creative capacity.'**

Mary Hawkes-Greene talks about the Burren College of Art's **"Centre for Universal Creativity"**, 'I suppose it comes from **Joseph Beuys**, eh, his belief that, you know, everyone is an artist which of course, you know, means that everybody has the capacity to be creative in everything they do, it doesn't mean we're all born to be Picassos, em, but we firmly believe that everybody has the capacity to be creative, that this is a capacity that is required **at this moment in time**, more than ever, to try and come to grips, you know, to grips with the **calamitous things that are happening in the world and that sadly our education system to date has very often not alone, not alone, not enhanced this capacity, but has actively, maybe unintentionally, but has actively managed to dampen it.** So we, seeing what the transformation that happens, even to artists who are, you know, who are self, you know, proclaimed creative people, how their capacity for creativity can be enhanced in certain

circumstances and some of which we have witnessed here, we have actually decided to take these and through a kind of an umbrella of the Centre for Universal Creativity, taken this concept and applied it to in other contexts, maybe with people who don't necessarily consider themselves creative.'

**25-28 August 2019** the [Burren Executive Leadership Retreat](#) took place in the Burren College of Art – 'The Burren Executive Leadership Retreat is a by-invitation gathering of senior global leaders.' 'This first-of-its-kind gathering of accomplished leaders and renowned artists will open new leadership territory, allowing conversation and personal insight to emerge from a more expansive mind than our everyday work allows.' Martin Hawkes, Mary Hawkes-Greene were Burren College of Art Hosts for the Event. There are 5 advisors for this Retreat:

**John Abele** is a co-founder and director of Boston Scientific Corporation. He is the Founder Chairman of [The Argosy Foundation](#), a private family foundation that gives grants to STEM, Environmental, Robotics, Youth Education, Health programmes, and it also supports [ICLEI USA](#). John Abele is also the Chairman of [FIRST Foundation](#) which runs programmes in robotics for young people etc – 'we are raising a generation of young people who will go on to make our businesses healthier, our global economy stronger, and our society more resilient.'

**Carol Becker** is Dean of Columbia University School of the Arts, on the committee of [Global Thought](#) at Columbia University. She is also on the [Global Agenda Council](#) for the World Economic Forum. [13/6/2019](#) 'The World Economic Forum and the United Nations signed today a Strategic Partnership Framework outlining areas of cooperation **to deepen institutional engagement and jointly accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**. The framework was drafted based on a mapping of existing collaboration between the two institutions and will enable a more strategic and coordinated approach towards delivering impact.'

**Andrew Hoffman** is the Holcim (US) [Professor of Sustainable Enterprise](#) at the University of Michigan. His work contributes directly toward solving the **United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**.

**Brendan Dunford** (Burrenbeo, Burren Programme, ChangeX, ChangeX Burren, Ashoka Fellow, Burren Law School speaker) is an environmental consultant. In 2018 he was awarded an Honorary Doctorate by National University Ireland Galway (**NUIG**) for his work in championing **biodiversity**.

**Marie Legault** Ph.D. believes that in today's complex environment of rapid growth and change, ethical leadership is essential in order to find creative solutions to organizational challenges and achieve **sustainability**.



Abbot Mark Patrick Hederman of [Glenstal Abbey](#) (lhs photo, blue jumper). [Eamon Ryan](#) of Green Party (rhs photo)-2018 BELR

\*Mary Hawkes-Greene and Mary Stacey of Context Consulting are the founders of the BELR. [Context Consulting](#) uses Otto Scharmer's Theory U. Mary Stacey [writes](#) about John Abele's [Kingbridge Conference Centre](#) in Canada. Two years ago Kingbridge's [Kingbridge Institute](#), 'using the latest mind-brain science to create the ultimate learning environment', introduced The Communicator 360 & The Connector 360.

**Sandy Dunlop**'s wife [Ellen O'Malley Dunlop](#), FG General Election Candidate, Chairperson of National Women's Council of Ireland ([NWCI – United Nations 2030 Agenda SDG Champion](#)), was the Director of [Burren Law School](#) in 2018 – 'Law and the Art of the Possible: The Fifth Province?'

## Law and the Art of the Possible: The Fifth Province?

2018

Directed by: Ellen O'Malley-Dunlop

### A contemporary and Brehon perspective

Friday, 4th May – Sunday, 6th May 2018

Director: Ellen O'Malley-Dunlop

**\*THE LAW SOCIETY OF IRELAND HAS APPROVED 4.5 GENERAL CPD HOURS AND 1 PRACTICE MANAGEMENT AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SKILLS HOUR FOR THIS CONFERENCE**

Burren Law School 2018 - 25th Anniversary

An exploration of law in its political and social context, the fifth province theme provides a creative focus for discussions around legal theory, justice and governance issues.

The old Irish term for Province is Cúige, meaning 'a fifth'; but Ireland has four geographical provinces on this island - so where is the fifth?

Ancient legend tells us that Ireland was divided into four quarters and a 'middle' or 'Fifth' Province. Tara in Co. Meath was the political centre of Ireland and Uisneach, the place of this Fifth Province. Its role was that of 'a second centre' - a necessary balance. (The symbol for Uisneach is the kidneys, which is the balancing function in the body).

In President Mary Robinson's inaugural speech in 1990 she equated the Fifth Province as 'an emerging Ireland of tolerance and empathy'.

Over the weekend of this year's 25th Anniversary of the Burren Law School participants will weave between the ancient and the contemporary worlds of our legal systems, engaging with presentations from speakers who will stimulate, challenge and energise our thinking on their chosen subjects in a time of great uncertainty in today's world. We can explore and ask questions to include whether The Citizen's Assembly or The Policing Authority, to name but two recent initiatives, could be viewed as a 21st century Fifth Province.

Join us in the Uisneach that is Newtown Castle, Ballyvaughan in the pulsating heart of The Burren, when we will have discourse on 'a necessary balance' for 'an emerging Ireland of tolerance and empathy'.

'When the German conceptual artist, **Joseph Beuys**, said "everyone is an artist" he meant that all human beings have the potential to be creative in every walk of life, and that all human endeavour has the potential to rise to the level of art. Following his vision and leadership, Burren College of Art's new courses introduce people who do not see themselves as artists to new potential through the creative process. Almost everyone is an artist as a child, though few continue in adulthood as a result of the socialization process of schooling. Our courses bring the wisdom of childhood i.e. the spirit of enquiry, play and openness to possibility, to bear on your problems and unfulfilled potential.' **Source: Burren College of Art website.**

Joseph Beuys was the **co-founder of West Germany's Green Party**. Beuys hoped to create a model for artists to enact **social and political transformation** and to develop a "real alternative to the existing systems in the West and in the East". In 1982, **Beuys planted 7000 oak trees at the Hill of Uisneach.**

**16-17 May 2019: Mary Hawkes-Greene, Martin Hawkes, Chris Chapman, Tomas O’Ruairc CEO of The Teaching Council** (Symposium attendee & speaker at Martin Hawkes’ Burrenbeo) brought [BEACONS](#) (Bringing Education Alive for our Communities on a National Scale) to start a conversation in a school in Ennistymon (Principal was another attendee), along with parents and students. They had ‘really important **conversations** about education’. Chris Chapman said that other places in Ireland are going to host BEACONS and that indicates ‘a very substantial proof of concept’ and ‘evidence of benefit’.



**September 2019: Chris Chapman** facilitated [Andy Hargreaves](#) at [The Teaching Council](#)’s annual [Feilte](#), at NUIG. Andy Hargreaves is an international educational leader and leadership expert. He is the member of [Atlantic Rim Collaboratory \(ARC\)](#) – ‘the initial vision of ARC is to establish a global group of educational systems that advances values of equity, excellence, wellbeing, inclusion, democracy and human rights for all students within high-quality, professionally-run systems.’



*Chris Chapman with Minister for Education & Skills Joe McHugh at Feilte 2019*

**Ireland is one of the 9 members of ARC.** Tomas O’Ruairc and **Patrick Sullivan of NCCA** have organised educational conferences with Andy Hargreaves. ARC ‘complements’ the international initiatives of the **OECD** and the **United Nations** – both of these are supporting the **United Nations 2030 Agenda** with its 17 SDGs. **SDG4** is the education goal. In particular, the OECD is supporting target **4.7**.

[Sir Ken Robinson](#) also works with **ARC**. Sir Ken Robinson is the **author** of the [United Nations 2030 Agenda 17 Sustainable Development Goals ‘The World’s Largest Lesson’](#) – see [Trocaire](#) for details. Robinson is on the Advisory Board of the [Blue School in New York City](#) which has built its curriculum around Dr Dan Siegel’s [mindsight](#) approach ([Mindsight Institute](#)) – [Dr Dan Siegel](#) was a speaker in the **Burren**.

**'Blue School**, at its founding, set out to *reimagine education for children in our changing world*. As the world develops at a **greatly accelerated pace**, Blue School's primary purpose is to combine the best educational practices with the most current **innovative approaches** to learning that are steeped in **human development** and **neuroscience**. A guiding question we always consider is, "What is the best way for us, as a school, to prepare our students for an **unknown future**?" In each period of **history**, changes in our environment have shaped what it takes to be **sustainable** and **harmonious** and Blue School strives to achieve this alignment. Building upon the **newest research** about learning, the need for **collaboration** and flexibility in the workplace, and the impact of social and self-intelligence's role in creating a vibrant learning environment to inspire **lifelong learning**, Blue School has developed an approach to education that balances **academic mastery, self and social intelligence** and **creative thinking**. We believe equilibrium among these three domains is needed in education to help children develop to their fullest potential.'

**'Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Social Justice at Blue School**. Our goal is to create and maintain a school culture that welcomes, recognizes, and celebrates diversity in all of its forms, including, but not limited to, diversity of socio-economic background, culture, physical appearance, race, national or ethnic background, gender, **gender identity**, gender expression, **sexual orientation**, family structure, religion, perspective, physical disability, learning style, linguistic difference, and age. We strive to foster trust, **empathy**, and conscientiousness through our pedagogy, operations, and activities, both inside the classroom and in our larger school community. In addition, we continually examine how **bias** and **privilege** affect our perceptions of the world around us and what we can do to challenge and change any biases we might currently hold, no matter how discomfiting they may be to confront. Blue School's commitment to diversity requires the support and participation of our entire community. The daily work of students, staff and parents draws a direct line to our vision of a more **equitable, diverse, harmonious, and inclusive world**.'

**2016** Omega Institute for Holistic Studies [video](#) entitled **Dan Siegel: Me + We = Mwe**:

'Dan Siegel, clinical professor of psychiatry at UCLA, suggests we create a new word, **mwe**, to represent that we are an individual self (me) linked and interconnected to everyone and everything else (we). Watch the full talk, *The Educator's Role in Creating Mindful Kids...*'. Here is the transcription of the video:

**'Living the lie** that the self is separate is a form of impaired integration because the reality is, we are all, yes, differentiated as a **'Me'**, but we're all linked as a **'We'**, only society and science don't tell us that. And so, for me, what I try to do in the **Brainstorm book**, and what I try to do now in my talks is say how do you honour the differences. You do have a personal history and that's a **'Me'**, but you also have an interconnectedness that's a **'We'**, so it isn't getting rid of a **'Me'**, it's combining the 2 into 1. So, you can use the term **'Mwe'**, M W E, and **'Mwe' is what I think our identity should be**, I'm a **'Me'** and **'Mwe'** at the same time.

**But if we can get 'Mwe' into schools, into families, and into literally the way we live, people realise helping others is helping the self, helping the planet is helping the self**. The self is not in your body. The self is a distributed interconnected system, and the **body is just a node**. And the amazing thing is, all the studies of longevity and happiness, you know, they show that when you live a life realising you're interconnected, you're going to be healthier and happier, it's a win-win-win thing, and it's just a lie that's been perpetrated by society and science, that I feel, the **mindfulness movement** is building inner resilience and interconnectivity, and that's empowerment we need to promote.'

\*In **2018** Dr Dan Siegel was in Co. Clare celebrating, along with President Michael D Higgins, the legacy of author John O'Donohue who too had been a Burren College of Art speaker. Dr Siegel says of John O'Donohue, **'John and I were working on a living bridge linking science and mysticism...'**

## "Mwe"

In 2017 **Barry Ahern**, husband of Green Foundation Ireland's **Nuala Ahern** and enneagram teacher and colleague of Martin Hawkes, spoke about **Dr Dan Siegel** and his theory of the "Mwe",

'...I mean for some people, eh, **NLP [Neuro Linguistic Programming]** nowadays, for instance, will give plenty of ideas. There are lots of techniques and that around... And I think we're very **resistant**, eh, this isn't a criticism, but I think as human beings we're very resistant because we're so **hardwired** into dealing with this material which happens in early childhood, and this has nothing got to do with the enneagram per se. This is just the whole of the way our psyches operate, but I think, eh, we are living in an age, and **Dan Siegel** says this, where we are being bombarded by stimuli all over the place, and he would say that when this happens, that, if you like, our brains become over-stimulated and they begin to shut down, you know, and em, because of this, if you like, compactness, our **neuro-system** just becomes so compacted we shut down, and we really become oblivious to what's going around us, but they will also point out, the **neuro-sciences**, that **there is a capacity in the brain for the 'WE'**, this **greater universal self**. You know, you can see this, you know, **we have in Ireland a great sympathy**, if you like, towards people who are suffering in the **third world**, but per head of population, we give very generously to that. And I think this is perhaps from our own experience of, that we've had from your parents, our grandparents who came up in harder times, and we had of course the **memory** of **The Famine**, perhaps that we know what it was like and what has happened to the country, what happens in country when people don't have enough to eat. **And I think this is, this is where we as a race, or as individuals, we can identify that yes, these people are our brothers and our sisters. There is this capacity in the brain, literally that can be identified which is around the 'WE',...**

...Now, and this this development of an identity around the **'ME'** results in us feeling separate from others, you know, that's it's eh, this separateness eh, and because we seem to have lost this connection with the **'WE'**, for instance there's a lot about **climate change** going on at the moment and what it is it results from our sense that we can use the **universe** as a trash-can you know. I can throw things away and use them and I don't have to, you know, there are infinite resources which there aren't, and em, **it's not until we start bringing about any change, that we develop this sense of the 'WE', this globaliser, that we're interdependent and that, you know, our brain's propensity to believe that we are separate is basically a delusion, and eh, the brain will be telling us, well, we're confined to the boundaries of our skin, but in fact this other part of ourselves, if it's developed, is that we are all interdependent and interconnected, and eh, the challenge is to realise that we are all on this planet and we're all, if you like, interdependent and interrelated and all the rest. So, we we, you know, if you like, the Dalai Lama has been saying for years that war is an out-of-date concept and it's the concepts that are running in our minds that are very limiting, that hold us back from this sense of stuff that can embrace the 'WE'...**

**3-5 May 2019 Burren Law School** had a conference '**Democracy in Crisis**' with speakers such as **Eamon Ryan TD**, Chief Justice Frank Clarke, **Brendan Dunford** (Environmental Consultant, Burrenbeo, Burren Programme, ChangeX, Ashoka Fellow). On the **Burren Law School** Committee are Martin Hawkes, **Senator Ivana Bacik** etc.

[Davie Philip](#) of [NGO Cloughjordan Ecovillage](#), a colleague of *Martin Hawkes and Chris Chapman*, wrote an article about the **'ME'** and the **'WE'** in the Irish magazine Positive Life in 2015 - there are more Davie Philip Positive Life articles [here](#).



“Pioneering the principles and practices that help us to **transition from 'ego-system' to 'ecosystem' awareness**, may well be one of the most important undertakings of our time.” *Otto Scharmer*, MIT Senior Lecturer.

In the book he co-authored with Katrin Kaufer, 'Leading from the Emerging Future', Otto Scharmer suggests that we have entered **an era of great disruption** and that we are collectively creating a future nobody wants.

He believes that meeting the challenges of the 21st century will require a **monumental shift of consciousness** – a transition from an out-dated **'egosystem'** awareness, that of being focused on the well-being of oneself, to an **'ecosystem'** awareness that emphasises the health of the whole and including oneself.

To help people individually and collectively make the transformation that is needed, Scharmer has co-created a method for leading profound change called **Theory U**. This framework facilitates deeper thinking; it assists us to open our minds to moments of discovery and **mutual understanding**, and helps us avoid repeating old patterns and assumptions. Unless we transform the quality of the awareness we bring to our actions within systems, we will never transform them.

I'm based in the **Cloughjordan Ecovillage**, a neighbourhood in rural Ireland that is pioneering low-carbon housing, demonstrating sustainability, and exploring how we collectively create a healthy environment to live, work and learn in. The community has many challenges but is fast becoming what *Otto Scharmer* calls, **“a living ecosystem of innovation”**.

With its many educational offerings, a community farm, an award winning bakery, research gardens, a green enterprise centre with co-working space and a FabLab, an eco-hostel and a vibrant community with plans for co-housing, youth leadership projects and more, it really is a brilliant environment in which to learn and **co-create the future**. Being involved has been enriching and incredibly satisfying for me but it's not always easy and I often say it has been the longest and most expensive self-development course I have ever taken.

To make the journey from a **'me'** to a **'we'** perspective, we need to better connect to ourselves, to others and to the whole system. If we are to move beyond a society driven by values of self-interest, status and power towards flourishing communities and thriving local businesses, we will need to relearn the art of cooperation. This is best done through practices of sharing and mutual learning.

Our community in Tipperary is no utopia but it does offer insights into the technologies that we will need to make the transition to a low-carbon society, as well as practical, experienced learnings and prototyping the behavioural and lifestyle changes that will be required. **To accelerate and advance this shift from the 'me' to the 'we' will**

*require more places like Cloughjordan and more change-makers who can co-sense, co-inspire, and co-create the future that wants to emerge. More details on Theory u can be found at [presencing.com](http://presencing.com).*

Davie Philip is a group facilitator and trainer who manages the Community Resilience programme at Cultivate Living and Learning. he is based at the Cloughjordan Ecovillage and is a board member of Grow It Yourself International. Davie is collecting stories of transformational community-led projects; if you know of something in your area send him an email. [davie@cultivate.ie](mailto:davie@cultivate.ie) | [thevillage.ie](http://thevillage.ie)

**Davie Philip and Chris Chapman have run conferences over the years on Otto Scharmer's Theory U.**

Clough Ecovillage Retweeted



**Electric Picnic** @EPfestival · Aug 19

.@GlobalGreenatEp is a colourful pop-up eco-village of green ideas, inspiration and action. Here you will find activists, artists, makers, musicians, and poets hosting transformational ideas, activities and conversations for all generations.



**GLOBAL GREEN ECOVILLAGE AN OASIS OF CREATIVITY & CLIMAT...**  
'Our Climate is Changing - How Will We?'  
[electricpicnic.ie](http://electricpicnic.ie)



**Clough Ecovillage** @CjnEcovillage · Mar 29

Today in #Cloughjordan the #SchoolsStrikeForClimate  
#schoolstrike #schoolstrike4climate #climateaction @CjnEcovillage  
#tipperary #ireland



**Clough Ecovillage** @CjnEcovillage · 20 Sep 2018

Our Community farm has been selected for a @SInnovationIRL Community Resilience award.



**Social Innovation Fund Ireland** @SInnovationIRL

Storm Ali is no match for our Resilient Community Awardees thank you @SeanKyneTD @DeptRCD @tTomarTrust #ploughing2018 #resilientcommunities @giyireland @IrishSheds @ICRROfficial ...

Clough Ecovillage Retweeted



**Davie Philip** @comresie · 19 May 2017

On Sunday @CjnEcovillage- 3pm - Talk by Lenny Antonelli followed by a panel discussion including Duncan Stewart. [cultivate.ie](http://cultivate.ie)



Clough Ecovillage Retweeted



**Cara Augustenborg** @CAugustenborg · 26 Oct 2016

Interesting! Want to Survive Climate Change? You'll Need a Good Community [wired.com/2016/10/klinen...](http://wired.com/2016/10/klinen...) via @WIRED @cjnecovillage @comresie

3 9 10

Clough Ecovillage Retweeted



**Cultivate** @cultivate\_ie · 25 Oct 2016

Peadar Kirby from @CjnEcovillage illustrates 'the community approach' at Sustainable Cities, Wood Quay, Dublin #SDG11

Clough Ecovillage Retweeted



**Peadar Kirby** @KirbyPeadar · 9 Jun 2016

President addresses us about 'collectivity for sustainability' at Áras with #cjnecovillage



Peadar Kirby Retweeted

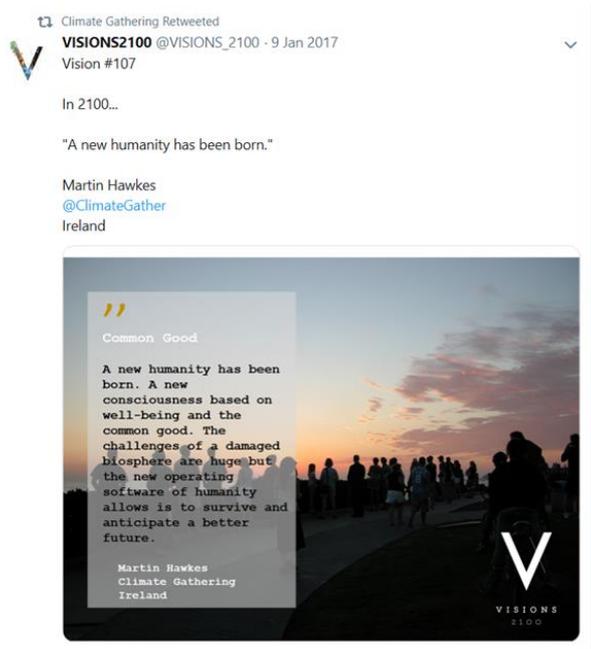


**Brid Kirby** @BridKirby · 25 May 2018

Cloughjordan Eco-village says TÁ #votáil Tá



**\*Here is a selection of tweets/images of Irish citizens concerned by climate change:**



*Martin Hawkes says at the 2018 Creative Education Symposium that ‘education is the most fundamental of all our systems, it’s the one that transmits our values, it’s the one that forms the consciousness of a next generation...There is no bigger lever in society than education.’ In the above tweet he talks of a ‘new operating software of humanity’ and a ‘new consciousness’.*



Source: Twitter page of Donna Cooney - Green Party representative & Dublin’s Bicycle Mayor

**Martin Hawkes (front row, second from left) appears in a photo with ‘The Cherbourg 35’ - 35 climate activists of Stop Climate Chaos - who were detained on way to COP21 Paris Protest in 2015. [Listen](#) to a description of this occurrence at TCD Climate Conversation in 2015 (46:00) – Martin Hawkes & Chris Chapman are in the audience facilitating the conversation.**





Source 3 photos taken at NGO (Non-Governmental Organisation) Cloughjordan Ecovillage in Co. Tipperary in 2012: Instagram account of Graphic Harvester [Eimear McNally](#) (colleague of Martin Hawkes)

1<sup>st</sup> photo, Martin Hawkes (photo top lhs) awaits the arrival of President Michael D Higgins at ‘Convergence 2012 Call to Action’ in Cloughjordan Eco-village., a one-day celebration of sustainable development coinciding with [United Nations Rio+20 Earth Summit](#). President Higgins attended the original [United Nations Earth Summit Agenda 21](#) in 1992. This Convergence 2012 [event](#) took place at Tipperary’s [Cloughjordan Ecovillage](#), an award winning educational charity and international environmental NGO. [Davie Philip](#) of [Cultivate](#) (colleague of Martin Hawkes) is part of Cloughjordan Ecovillage’s team. Another colleague of Martin Hawkes is [Peadar Kirby](#), former Professor at University of Limerick. [Peadar Kirby](#) is a resident of Cloughjordan Ecovillage. In 2012 he held the UNESCO Chair of South-North Studies. Along with Martin Hawkes he is on the board of [Teacht Aniar](#). 5-8<sup>th</sup> September 2013, as part of Burren College of Art’s ‘[A Burren Call](#)’, Teacht Aniar ran an event on creative conservation in the Burren called An Tionól - ‘Creating a New Dynamic for Ireland in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Renewing Country and Language’. In 2015 at Martin Hawkes’ Climate Conversation in TCD, Peadar Kirby [states](#) (43:40) that ‘this is the moment for an [eco-socialism](#)’. Cloughjordan Ecovillage/Cultivate/Davie Philip/Peadar Kirby collaborate with Mary Hawkes-Greene’s [Green Foundation Ireland \(GFI\)](#) e.g., [Sustainable Work in a Circular Economy](#) in 2016, and [A New Climate for Education talks](#) in 2017.

2<sup>nd</sup> photo, [Chris Chapman](#) (colleague of Martin Hawkes and Davie Philip, photo top rhs) shows President Higgins a graphic harvest of Eimear McNally – ‘Collaborating for the Future We Want’.

3<sup>rd</sup> Photo is an extract from the above graphic harvest. NB: ‘[need for emotional education](#)’.

**Circa 2010** the Burren College of Art started a programme called [Creative Difference](#) with NUIG and Martin Hawkes is one of the facilitators. In 2019 Mary Hawkes-Greene explains the programme:



‘So, eh, one of the programmes we have is called “**Creative Difference**”, and it is basically, it includes, eh, a lot of self-awareness work, eh, as well as some, em, you know, methods taken from a research methodology, taken from, eh, you know, creative education, and its goal is **to help free people up** and, eh, to enable them to **recognise the inhibitors**, I suppose, and the **blindspots**, you know, where they’re often the people who are inhibiting their own capacity, their own creative capacity or their own **leadership capacity** and through, eh, an **immersive programme** that we host here in the Burren, eh, **we help them to recognise that** and to try and, you know, overcome that basically, and **become different to their habitual selves**, that’s what Creative Difference is about.

So, you know, we all develop particular personality and maybe a way of being and a way of responding in the world that becomes habitual and doesn’t necessarily, may not always serve us to our best advantage, so it’s good to be able to recognise if there, if that is happening and to identify what the **blockage** is and to try and kind of free that up.

So, we now work, we we we work, this programme, **we have all of the, em, PhD, the doctoral students from the university NUI Galway whom we work closely with** [graduate programmes at the Burren College of Art are accredited by National University of Ireland, Galway; Burren College of Art students can use the NUIG John Hardiman Library; Dr. Cathal O’Donoghue, Dean of Arts NUIG, is on the Advisory Council of the Burren College of Art]. They come, these could be researchers, **they’re international researchers in every field**, medicine, engineering, artificial intelligence, whatever it might be, they’re not necessarily from the humanities or the creative arts, and they come and take, eh, this programme which is taught over two immersive, eh, intensive periods, eh, and they **learn to be more creative in their research** ‘cos very often again they become and again, I suppose, it’s a symptom of specialisation, they become so tunnel-visioned and so necessarily focused on a particular piece of information or research that they **can sometimes fail to see the bigger picture** or how what they’re doing relates to the **bigger picture** and, you know, by doing life drawing, by being in a, you know, getting out of that mindset, **they begin to see things differently** and realise the lens through which they’re seeing things. So, that’s one of the programmes we do, we also have...’

**Timothy Emlyn Jones**, Dean of Possibilities at Burren College of Art and formerly a member of **Joseph Beuys’s Free International University**, is another Creative Difference facilitator. He has a Creative Difference slideshow presentation on NUIG’s [website](#) which covers **Otto Scharmer** and the **Enneagram**.

One of the texts they use is a book by **Sir Ken Robinson**, ‘The Element: How Finding Your Passion Changes Everything’.

## National Stakeholder Forum on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

**31<sup>st</sup> January 2019** in Dublin Castle, **Martin Hawkes**, along with **Chris Chapman**, **Davie Philip** and **Eimear McNally** facilitated the '**National Stakeholder Forum on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**', convened by the Department of Communications, Climate Action and the Environment (**DCCA**E).



**National Stakeholder Forum January 2019 in Dublin Castle**

'Presenters at the National Stakeholder Forum on SDG's (from left to right: Leona De Khors, Assistant Principal Officer, Department of Education and Skills responsible for the National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development in Ireland; Peter Gaynor, Executive Director, Fairtrade Ireland; Joe Gallagher, Assistant Principal Officer – lead on SDG implementation, Sustainable Development, Environment Coordination, and Governance Section, Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment; *Pierre Klein*, National Co-ordinator, All Together in Dignity [see David Donoghue] and Anneleen Malesevic, Communications Officer, Federal Institute for Sustainable Development, Belgium - Voices SDG Champion Programme).

The underlying vision of the **SDG Stakeholder Forum**, convened by the Department of Communications, Climate Action and the Environment (DCCA)E, is to be "a **mechanism for all stakeholders** to discuss national implementation and reporting processes, share examples of best practice in implementing the SDGs, and discuss challenges to achieving the SDGs and to be informed of SDG relevant events and processes taking place internationally".'

Figure 2.1: SDG Stakeholder Forum Sector Representatives



Source: Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment, **Voluntary National Review 2018 to Union Nations**



*Duncan Stewart and others in the Stakeholders Forum in January 2019*



*Duncan Stewart November 2018*

**Duncan Stewart** (Environmentalist) participated in the Stakeholders Forum in Dublin Castle. Also on **Saturday 24 November 2018**, young people from **ECO-UNESCO's 'Youth for Sustainable Development'** programme 'showed their energy and enthusiasm' in participating in a dialogue with policy makers and experts on Ireland's growing waste issue. The experts who were present were **Professor Patrick Paul Walsh** (UCD), Sabrina Decker (DCU), Les Carberry and Joe Gallagher (from the **Sustainable Development Section, DCCAE**), and **Duncan Stewart** (Eco Eye).



# SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



‘This was the **third National Stakeholder Forum** [January 2019], attended by over 200 people from the NGO community, other civil society groups, the private sector, the trade union movement, agricultural sector, youth, education, government departments and local government.’

The **forum was facilitated** by a team led by **Chris Chapman** from The Change Exploratory. Other team members were **Eimear McNally** (graphic harvester with a background in Development Education), **Davie Philip** ([Cultivate](#) and [Cloughjordan Ecovillage](#)), and **Martin Hawkes**.

**Eimear McNally** is an independent **Graphic Harvester** who gives classes in [www.creativityandchange.ie](http://www.creativityandchange.ie) which is supported by **Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade-Irish Aid**. ‘In the Creativity and Change Programme we believe that creative engagement can support **transformative** learning experiences that connect the **head, hand and heart** and nurture competences of **global citizens** that are important for the **sustainable future of our world...**’. In October Creativity and Change will collaborate with [Galway One World Centre](#) for a **Change-Maker Creative Fair** in **NUIG**. ‘The programme targets **change-makers**, educators, activists, artists, community workers, adult educators, youth workers, volunteers and anyone who is interested how creative engagement can nurture **global citizenship** and empathic action around local and global justice themes.’ **Galway One World Centre**, supported by **Department Foreign Affairs and Trade-Irish Aid**, gives **workshops to schools** on various topics e.g., **global citizenship**, human rights, **UN’s Sustainable Development Goals**.

Galway One World Centre is running a **Global Teacher Award training programme** (Level 1 is **free**) – ‘The GTA is a **validated teacher-training programme** currently being **made available across Ireland** and in **3 EU partner-countries**. It aims to raise the profile and quality of development education provision in the European Union through the creation of a **standardised development education** training and award scheme for teachers.’ Topics include **global citizenship** and **sustainable development**.

\*There is also the [INTO Global Citizenship School](#) whose main aim is the [promotion of SDGs](#).

\*There is also the Ashoka Irish Changemaker School (see below).

\*There is also Global Ireland’s ‘Global Schools’ programme starting in 2019 (see above).

\*There is also ‘[WorldWise Global Schools](#)’, Ireland’s Global Citizenship Education programme for post-primary schools.

***\*See page 90 for more information***

**Davie Philip** 'was a founding member of both **FEASTA**: Foundation for the Economics of Sustainability and **Sustainable Projects Ireland Ltd** the company behind the **eco-village** project in **Cloughjordan**, Co. Tipperary. In 2000 he set up the **Sustainable Ireland Cooperative** with Ben Whelan which trades as **Cultivate**. With Cultivate he organises networking and learning events including the annual **Convergence sustainable living festival** and the **Global Green** area of the **Electric Picnic**, Ireland's largest music and culture festival.'



**Davie Philip** @comresie · Jun 17

The government has just launched the Climate Action Plan to tackle the [#ClimateEmergency](#) [dcca.gov.ie/en-ie/climate-...](https://dcca.gov.ie/en-ie/climate-...) [#ExtinctionRebellionIreland](#) [#climatejustice](#) [#FridaysForFuture](#)

Davie Philip Retweeted



**Clough Ecovillage** @CjnEcovillage · Mar 29

Today in [#Cloughjordan](#) the [#SchoolsStrikeForClimate](#) [#schoolstrike](#) [#schoolstrike4climate](#) [#climateaction](#) @CjnEcovillage [#tipperary](#) [#ireland](#)



**Davie Philip** @comresie · Mar 17

President Higgins calls for a deeper [#GlobalGreening](#) [youtu.be/m-ppjChAUys](https://youtu.be/m-ppjChAUys) "...in honour of [#StPatricksDay](#), let us resolve to play our part, however small, in the achieving of a greener world in its truest sense." [#GoGreen4GlobalGoals](#) @Coalition2030IR



**President of Ireland** @PresidentIRL · Jun 23

Is urlabhraithe neamhbhalbha ar son na Spriocanna Forbartha Inbhuanaithe iad an tUachtarán agus Sайдhbhín Uí Uigín le tamall.

President and Sabina Higgins have been outspoken advocates for the [#SustainableDevelopmentGoals](#).



Davie Philip Retweeted



**Cultivate** @cultivate\_ie · Mar 17

Today on [#StPatricksDay](#), join an authentic [#GlobalGreening](#) Use our [#Irish](#) voice to celebrate & promote [#TheGreen17](#) the plan for a greener, fairer & healthier world for all. [#GoGreen4GlobalGoals](#) @Coalition2030IR [#Ireland4SDGs](#) [#Ireland](#) @SDG2030 #SDG @comresie



**Davie Philip** @comresie · Mar 5

Green light from Leo for [#ClimateStrike](#) on [#March15](#) [#FridaysForFuture](#) [#walkout](#) for [#climateaction](#)



**RTÉ Politics** @rtepolitics

WATCH: @campaignforleo says he's "inspired and enthused" at school pupils planning to strike on March 15 on climate change, "putting it up to all of us ...to do more", responding to @paulmurphy\_TD who says pupils should

**Davie Philip** @comresie · Mar 4  
 Join the #GlobalGreening of St Patricks Day. #TheGreen17 - It is day four #SDG4 education for sustainability, human rights, gender equality & promotion of a low carbon society. Change the conversation - Join the countdown  
 #GoGreen4GlobalGoals  
 @Coalition2030IRa  
 #FridaysForFuture

**Davie Philip** @comresie · Mar 2  
 Demand the #GlobalGreening of St Patricks Day #TheGreen17 The seventeen #SDGs provide a common language and transformative roadmap for sustainability and resilience. Change the conversation. Join the countdown - Day 2 #SDG2 #GoGreen4GlobalGoals  
 #FridaysForFuture  
 @Coalition2030IR



National Sustainable Development Goals 4<sup>th</sup> National Stakeholder Forum July 2019. See [video](#).

**Taoiseach Leo Varadkar (lhs), Martin Hawkes (on screen), Chris Chapman (rhs)**

**Cllr. Donna Cooney** @donna\_cooney1 · Jul 30  
 Full day of talks/workshops stakeholders #SDGForum today ahead of UN meeting in September. @UNSDG2030 We've only ten years to achieve these 17 goals. Urgent action and radical changes. See #SDGs as a #manifesto for survival of humanity 🌍 #ClimateJustice #Equality @IrishEnvNet



Davie Philip, SDG Impact Accelerator, The Sustainable Development Goals #SDGs and 7 others

**Davie Philip** standing in front of Joe Gallagher (Deputy Director of the Sustainable Development Section, DCCA)

**Cllr. Donna Cooney, Dublin's Bicycle Mayor**



**Airfield Estate** @AirfieldEstate · Oct 10

Looking forward to this session on 18th October in Dublin Castle where the SDG Stakeholder Forum will be tackling SDG 17- Partnerships for the Goals.  
[#SDGForum](#) [#partnerships](#) [#SDGsIRL](#)



**Dept. Communications, Climate Action & Environment**

The 5th national #SDG Stakeholder Forum is next week! The theme for this forum is #SDG17 - Partnership for the Goals. Register for the forum here [dcae.gov.ie/en-ie/environm...](https://dcae.gov.ie/en-ie/environm...) [#SDGsIRL](#) [#SDGChampions](#)



**Thelma Harris** @thelmarharris · Jul 30

Private funders are continuously becoming more engaged with projects focused on achieving the SDGs and in using them as a way of measuring their impact. Representing [@PhilanthropyIE](#) today at the [#SdgForum](#)



**UNYouthIRL** @UNYouthIRL · Jan 31

Today we are at [@Dept\\_CCAE](#)'s 3rd National SDG Stakeholder Forum. [@RichardbrutonTD](#) remarks on how the #SDGs are challenging Government to address issues locally, nationally and globally with a whole of society approach. [#SDGForum](#)



**Climate Ambassador** @climate\_ambass · Jan 31

Next up is the Dept. of Education on the #ESD strategy [@GreenSchoolsIre](#) [#SDGForum](#)





**developmenteducation.ie** @devedireland · Jan 31

Have you ever wanted to look for #SDGs resources whether in a booklet, a short film, an issue-based activity pack or an NGO report?

Say hello, to the Sustainable Development Goals Explorer #SDGForum #Ireland4SDGs  
[developmenteducation.ie/resources/sdgs/](https://developmenteducation.ie/resources/sdgs/)



**IDEA** @IDEAIreland · Jan 31

Responding to our question @RichardbrutonTD says #SDGForum conclusions will be incorporated in #SDG national implementation. There's no point in having a forum on this if it's not going to be acted on. @Coalition2030IR

3 replies 14 likes



**ConsciousCupCampaign** @CCCampaign\_Irl · Jul 30

"On CSR, Businesses must go beyond compliance and engage not just employees but also the community, customers and suppliers" Minister Pat Breen at the #SDGForum in @dublincastleopw. @Dept\_CCAE @Entirl



**Patrick Paul Walsh** @ppwone · Jul 30

#SDGFORUM In case you missed it, keynote speeches from the National SDG Stakeholder Forum in Dublin Castle today. #sdgs #SDG8



**National Sustainable Development Goals Stakehold...**  
[youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com)

**Burrenbeo Trust** was set up in 2008. 'It was set up to create greater appreciation for the [Burren Landscape](#). Through need and demand it has evolved *to widen that remit to landscapes beyond the Burren.*' It aims to *promote sustainable communities*, working closely with the UNESCO Burren Geopark, the Burren Eco-Tourism Network with its sustainable tourism practices, etc. **Martin Hawkes** is Chairman of the Board. **Brendan Dunford** ([Burren Programme](#), [ChangeX](#), Ashoka Fellow, Advisor at Burren Executive Leadership Retreat, Burren Law School speaker, [ChangeX Burren](#), speaker at [Teagasc National Agri-Environment Conference](#)) is Trust Secretary.

1 of the Trust Patrons of **Burrenbeo Trust** is **Tom Arnold** (In 2018 Arnold was appointed Chair of Task Force Rural Africa which is a joint effort of the EU and the African Union to improve Africa's food production – '**The Global Panel**' looks forward to the executive report in January 2019, with recommendations contributing to the Joint Africa-EU Strategy, the **Agenda 2030** and the Sustainable Development Goals.' He was also the Director-General of Institute of International and European Affairs (**IIEA**), coordinated the **UN's SUN movement**, was a board member of the **Mary Robinson Foundation on Climate Justice**, former **CEO of Concern Worldwide**, a Director of the Irish Times etc).

Some of Burrenbeo Trust's events are supported by **Galway and Clare County Council's Local Agenda 21**, Environment Partnership Fund, Dept. Communications, Climate Action and Environment (**DCCAE**). The **LA21 EPF** assists sustainable development from the ground-up and facilitates, at local level, the achievement of the objectives of the Agenda 21 action plan on sustainable development which was agreed at the UN Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro, in 1992 (**the "Earth Summit"**). Renewed political commitment for sustainable development was secured at the **Rio +20** Conference in Brazil in June 2012, on the 20th anniversary of the "Earth Summit".



**Brendan Dunford, Elaine Williams, Niamh McKenna, Paul O'Hara** at the [launch of ChangeX in the Burren](#) in 2014.

**John Concannon** (lhs), **Paul O'Hara** (check shirt), **Niamh McKenna** (rhs) - ChangeX

## ChangeX

**Brendan Dunford** (colleague of Martin Hawkes, see above) is part of the team of [ChangeX](#), headquartered in Dublin. CEO **Paul O'Hara** states,

'Here at ChangeX, we've been working with local communities and social innovators across Ireland and the US for the last four years to help spread ideas that improve health, **sustainability, education** and inclusion at a **local grassroots level**. More than **7,300 community projects** have been started through the platform, impacting almost 250,000 people. We have partnered with more than 60 social innovators to build thriving communities everywhere by giving everyone access to the tools they need to be a **changemaker** for the people around them: Ideas, knowledge, money and that little bit of encouragement and support that's needed along the way. We believe that citizens in our local communities can achieve great things and we've seen the evidence of this impact again and again. That's why today we're committing to an ambitious goal that will guide all that we do here at ChangeX over the coming years and we believe will provide a meaningful contribution towards the **Global Goals [United Nations 2030 Agenda 17 Sustainable Development Goals or SDGs]**.' 'Achieving the ambitious goal will not be easy and we'll have a lot of work to do over the next 10 years. We need to:

- Curate 1,000 ideas addressing the **17 Goals [United Nations 2030 Agenda]**
- Channel **5 billion euro** of investment towards local community projects
- Activate and support **20 million local projects**

Thankfully, technology creates unprecedented opportunity to enable the spread of ideas at this scale and to **mobilise a global movement of citizen action towards the Global Goals [SDGs]**. While citizens are already taking many problems into their own hands, there remains a lot of untapped potential and one way to unleash this could be to create a better business case for investing in communities.

As the expectations of consumers and employees shift, businesses are looking hard at how they maximise their social impact while minimising their environmental footprint. **Smart corporate leaders such as Unilever are aligning their ambitious CSR and sustainability efforts with the UN Goals.**

But these **companies** also want to make their investments in more **innovative ways**. They want to have real connections with the people and projects they invest in, they want their employees to get involved in meaningful ways and they want to be able to **track their impact in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals.**

By offering a solution to the companies who believe in the power of **local community leaders**, and really focusing on impact, **we hope we can mobilise the funds** needed to unleash more energy in local communities.

**Ireland co-authored these historic goals, led by our advisor David Donoghue.** Now we have an opportunity to **lead the world in implementing them.** From **governments to businesses and communities** – we have **no time to waste.** (Source: changex.org, 2018, Paul O’Hara Founder and CEO)

### ***Niamh McKenna of ChangeX writes in Burrenbeo’s magazine Burren Insight 2014***

‘The mounting **social, economic** and **environmental** challenges we face continue to erode the wellbeing and confidence of our people. The effects of emigration, unemployment, stagnant economies and shrinking public services can be seen and felt in every town, village and community across Ireland. The need to build a strong, inclusive and resilient society that caters for the needs of every individual has perhaps never been so great.

In the Burren, the foundation for a strong and inclusive society rooted in community is very much in place. Our communities are fundamentally strong; a sense of solidarity and social cohesion pervades every aspect of life. However, maintaining this in the face of growing **social, economic and environmental** challenges is difficult and leveraging our sense of community and solidarity to create the type of society we want to see is an opportunity too often neglected.

In 2011, a lengthy community consultation was undertaken by several Burren organisations as part of the **Burren Community Charter initiative**. This work identified a wide range of needs and aspirations within the Burren community which were not, and could not, be met by public authorities alone. **The need to develop local sustainable employment, to increase community involvement in decision-making processes and to engage the community in the sustainable management of the Burren’s landscape and seascape were just some of the needs identified in the Charter.**

Critically, the Charter showed that people in the Burren, if given the opportunity, are very willing to be more actively involved in rebuilding their communities and creating the type of society they want to see: **ChangeX Burren** presents this opportunity.

Launching in summer 2014, the aim of ChangeX Burren is to achieve measurable improvements in the wellbeing of the Burren’s communities by unleashing the latent talent and ability of local communities. By introducing a **suite of exciting social innovations** and empowering local people to manage them, the potential of communities

to improve their collective wellbeing can be unleashed. This can build a new positive and energised community culture, helping to address the challenges that the Burren faces now and into the future.

Across the areas of skills, health, inclusion and sustainability, A number of innovations have been identified based on needs identified in the **Burren Charter**, local demand and proven track record of impact. These include:

**Coderdojo** is an open source, volunteer led global network of free coding clubs for young people where they can learn how to code, build websites, games and apps in a fun and collaborative environment.

**Roots of Empathy** is an evidence-based classroom programme that has shown significant effect in reducing levels of aggression among school children by raising social/emotional competence and increasing empathy.

**Ireland Reaching Out** works parish-by-parish across Ireland seeking to identify and invite home all our diaspora, wherever they may be found across the world. The programme provides an opportunity to local communities to boost tourism and bring economic benefit to the area.

**Playworks** creates inclusive environments for play and physical activity both within and beyond the school day to build empathy, increase learning, and improve behaviour.

**Irish Men's Sheds Association** works towards a future where all men have the opportunity to improve and maintain their health and wellbeing by participating in a community Men's Shed – a friendly and welcoming meeting place where men can come together.

**Siel Bleu** aims to help older people maintain the ability to function independently, retain social connections and promote the recognition of older people's value to society. With an emphasis on prevention, Siel Bleu offers unique exercises and physical training to delay the onset of age-related impairment and disease.

**My Mind** aims to build a network of community based mental health services that are accessible and affordable for every person in Ireland.

**Eden Alternative** works to transform care environments for older people into dignified homes that focus on quality of life for both residents and staff. Using a low-cost training programme to move nursing homes away from an institutional model of care, the Eden Alternative provides a person-centred model focused on allowing residents to continue to lead meaningful lives.

**KaBOOM!** envisions a great place to play within walking distance of every child by creating

playgrounds through the participation and leadership of communities. Fáilte Isteach is a community project with older volunteers welcoming new migrants through conversational English classes. Fáilte Isteach utilises the skills, talents and expertise of older volunteers and harnesses their desire to contribute positively to society.

**GIY** [Grow it Yourself] is an emerging global community of food growers, made up of GIYers and community food-growing groups. By growing some of our own food GIY believes we can make the world a healthier, happier place and by coming together we grow more and better food and have more fun in the process.

**Slow Food** reconnects consumers to the source and quality of their food, as well as to its wider implications in the global food chain. Through a series of events and education initiatives, Slow Food builds profile for producers and informs consumers of alternatives to processed and unseasonal foods.

These exciting innovations have the potential to enhance the supports already on offer through public services and other exciting local projects.

The ultimate aim of ChangeX Burren is to improve the wellbeing of everyone living in the Burren, making it 'the best place to live in Ireland'. In order to measure this in a meaningful way, researchers from **NUI Galway** will assist the community in **collecting and measuring data over a 12 month period**. Over time, we expect a measurable improvement in community wellbeing across the Burren's communities.

***ChangeX Burren is a pilot for the broader initiative, ChangeX, which is envisaged as the solutions platform for the world's Changemakers to build wellbeing. This will, over time, equip millions of local communities across the world with the knowledge and tools they need to organise talent and finance around ideas that will strengthen community wellbeing. The Burren's unique history and heritage combined with the naturally entrepreneurial and resourceful nature of its people, make it the perfect place to begin the ChangeX journey.*** By Niamh McKenna

Niamh McKenna works with ChangeX, based in Dublin. To find out more, or to get involved, contact the ChangeX Burren Community Leader Brendan Dunford ([brendan@changex.io](mailto:brendan@changex.io)) or local coordinator Elaine Williams.'

#### [Burrenbeo's Burren Insight magazine 2010 re the creation of a Burren Charter](#)

'I hear you singing the words of **John Lennon's song Imagine** and the line "They may say that I'm a dreamer..". My riposte is equally quick with "well, I'm not the only one..." and my earnest commitment is that now that we have opened our eyes with a bit of imagination, that with the help of some leadership, the new way of working is only just around the corner. Heaven knows that there have been enough **economic, environmental** and **social** upheavals in Ireland in recent times to suggest we have to do something differently. The Burren can take the lead.'

\***Paul O'Hara**, CEO ChangeX, ex-Director with **Ashoka** in Europe (global network of social entrepreneurs that also supports United **Nations 2030 Agenda**). His ChangeX colleague **Brendan Dunford** is an Ashoka Fellow. **Paul O'Hara's cousin John Concannon** (see above - NUIG & Dept of Foreign Affairs & Trade and Dept of an Taoiseach) is Co-Creator of Ashoka Ireland, and was Non-Executive Director of ChangeX. **Mark Little**, **Storyful** founder & CEO of **Kinzen**, is an investor & adviser at ChangeX.

\***CODERDOJO** is one of ChangeX's innovations – a worldwide movement of free, volunteer-led, community-based coding classes. The website states: '**Coding is New Global Language**'. '**Bring more love to your community**' is a tagline.

\***Changemakerxchange** was co-created by Ashoka.

\***Change Nation** was co-created by Ashoka Ireland's John Concannon and his cousin Paul O'Hara. **John Concannon** was Director General of Global Ireland. A crucial element of Global Ireland is '**A Better World**', the Irish Government's Policy for International Development which is committed to the United Nation's 2030 Agenda's Sustainable Development Goals. (see above for the link to **Department of Foreign Affairs Irish Aid's policy 'A Better World'**). **Mark Little** was an investor in Change Nation.

\***Ashoka** writes in this [article](#), dated 1/2/19, about 'The New Reality – Living in a Changemaker World Requires a New Framework for Thinking and Acting'. One of the critical changemaking skills is '**Cognitive Empathy**'. This, the foundational skill, which **must be mastered in childhood and continuously developed thereafter**, requires **one's cerebral cortex and one's mirror neurons** ("I feel your pain") learning to work together consciously to understand and **map the world's fast morphing kaleidoscope of people and contexts**. Without this, one will hurt others and disrupt groups — and therefore be pushed aside. (**It is no longer possible to be a good person by diligently following the rules because, as change accelerates, they cover less and less**)...We must redefine what success in growing up requires. Children **must** master cognitive empathy and young people (teens) **must** practice and practice being **changemakers**...The test: What percent of teens know they are changemakers? The future of any community or society will turn increasingly on how they do on this measure. (The same skills are needed over life, which now requires all groups to hire for and help all their people become changemakers.)

There are several **Ashoka 'Changemaker Schools'** in Ireland. Fiona Collins, a Dublin Changemaker School Principal and an Ashoka Changemaker School Advisor, [says](#) her goal is to 'show students how to create change in their own communities so they can become "**leaders**" and "**changemakers**". In 2016 in Killarney there was a [European Changemaker Summit](#). Ross Hall, Ashoka Europe Director of Education said, 'So we know **it's vital that every young person now becomes empowered to live for the common good**, and we know it's going to take very different learning **eco-systems...**'.



In an Irish **Changemaker School**, children talk about **United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Living** and the 17 SDGs. In an Ashoka [vimeo](#) the children say that the earth has enough 'for all of us, the bad news we have some serious problems in our way, and all of this is changing the weather...**the good news is we have a plan**. There's 1 organisation in the world to keep the world peaceful and help us work together, you may have heard it, the United Nations...Make sure that women and girls get the same chances as men and boys...' The children sing 'Co-operation, Co-operation, together we will get the job done...'. Above are 2 images from the vimeo, they appear to be a teaching brochure published by Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade - **Irish Aid**.

Ashoka Ireland Retweeted



**Ashoka Africa** @AshokaAfrica · Jun 7

In 2018, the British Council and Ashoka Africa convened n connected active n aspiring changemakers, young leaders n key ecosystem players to explore opportunities and strategies to build sustainable economies, and address Africa's most pressing societal challenges. #ImpactAfrica



**Ashoka Ireland** @AshokaIreland · Jan 21

Really enjoyed Ashoka's European All Staff meeting in Vienna this past week. Well done to the @AshokaAustria and EU team for organising such a fruitful and positive session. Also, the first event we'd ever been to that involved echolocation lessons!



Ashoka Ireland @AshokaIreland · Mar 1  
 Changemaker School Principals building mighty towers in teams at Ashoka Annual Retreat #socent @ashoka



Ashoka Ireland Retweeted  
 CoderDojo @CoderDojo · Apr 17  
 There were 660 new Dojos in 2018!

Read all about our end-of-year progress for 2018 as we sum up all our new dojos and achievements in our latest quarterly report 🙌

[coderdojo.com/2019/04/16/cod...](https://coderdojo.com/2019/04/16/cod...)



**Ashoka** is part of *The Social Transformation Lab*'s core group in the *Presencing Institute* ('Working for profound societal renewal') founded in 2006 by MIT Sloan School of Management Senior Lecturer *Otto Scharmer* (see *Burren College of Art's Creative Education Symposium*) and colleagues in order to create an action research platform at the intersection of science, consciousness, and profound social and organizational change. 'Over the past two decades, we have developed *Theory U* as a *change framework*, led cross-sector leadership, change and innovation initiatives worldwide, and created an innovation platform called *u.lab*.'



United Nations Deputy Secretary-General **Amina Mohammad** (lhs); ChangeX's **Niamh McKenna**; **Geraldine Byrne Nason** (centre) Irish Ambassador to the United Nations; and ChangeX founder **Paul O'Hara** (rhs).

**Irish Times 9/9/2018:**

'Irish-based **ChangeX teams up with UN for sustainability projects**. Company aims to mobilise **20 million** new projects around **UN's goals for 2015 to 2030**.

Irish-headquartered social entrepreneurship platform **ChangeX has teamed up with the United Nations** to create millions of projects in line with the organisation's sustainability development goals.

The company, which is backed by a number of high-profile investors, is looking to mobilise 20 million new projects around the UN's goals for 2015 to 2030.

"We are hopeful we can create a **grassroots movement towards achieving the goals**," ChangeX founder and CEO Paul O'Hara said.

The commitment has got the backing of UN deputy secretary-general Amina Mohammed, who *visited ChangeX in Dublin*, expressing her support for the commitment.

“We must do much more at all levels everywhere, to protect our planet and ensure prosperity for all. **Governments, businesses and civil society** have a **collective responsibility to achieve the SDGs by 2030**,” Ms Mohammed said. “**We urgently need organisations like ChangeX to mobilise all stakeholders** using innovation for impact in the lives of all people.”

ChangeX offers an **“impact as a service” model to track philanthropic investments in real time**, intended to create more transparency for those funding investment projects.

**ChangeX is hoping to galvanise Irish companies into supporting projects that work towards supporting the UN goals.**

“It’s an easy way for companies to maximise their **corporate social responsibility (CSR)** investment, taking a proven idea,” Mr O’Hara said.

An increasing number of companies are paying closer attention to CSR. But while it can be beneficial if it is done properly, companies that view their commitment as a “box ticking exercise” **risk damaging their reputation.**

“A lot of Irish companies are superficially doing CSR. **If it’s not damaging them directly, it soon will**,” said Mr O’Hara. “The expectations of employees and consumers are much higher. It’s challenging for companies to do it in a meaningful way.”

Mr O’Hara said the previous goals, the millennium goals, had about 30 per cent awareness in Ireland, but engagement rates were much lower as they were aimed more at developing countries.

**“We want to tap into latent energy, into the community, and harness it alongside company resources.”**

ChangeX was launched in Ireland in 2015 and has been backed by investors such as Ben & Jerry’s cofounder Jerry Greenfield, Realex Payments founder Colm Lyon, Draper Esprit’s Brian Caulfield, Andreessen Horowitz partner John O’Farrell and **Storyful founder Mark Little.**

(Source: *Irishtimes.com*)

**17/12/2018: ‘Resolution on “Volunteering for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” formally adopted by UN General Assembly’.** ‘On 17 December 2018, the United Nations General Assembly adopted resolution A/RES/73/140, Volunteering for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, **encouraging the participation and integration of all people** — including youth, older persons, women, migrants, refugees, persons with disabilities, minorities and other marginalized groups — in volunteer activities. **It also encouraged Governments, in partnership with the United Nations, the private sector, civil society and others to integrate volunteerism into national development strategies.** The resolution details arrangements around the integration of volunteerism within intergovernmental process for the 2030 Agenda and enables UNV (United Nations Volunteers) to appropriately support Member States, as well as the UN System, in their preparations leading up to the Global Technical Meeting, which will take place in 2020.’ **Elsewhere it states, ‘It simply is not possible to attain the SDGs without a wide range of people engaged at all stages, at all levels, at all times.** Volunteerism is a powerful means for bringing more people into the fold. Volunteerism and volunteers are already expanding the space in which we achieve the future we want by engaging greater numbers of people in local and national planning and action for achieving the 2030 Agenda...**Many of the SDGs call for long-term attitude and behaviour changes** - for example, in the way we live together or in the way we consume. Volunteers facilitate changes in mind sets by raising awareness or championing those changes and inspiring others.’



**UN Volunteers** @UNVolunteers · Jun 6

"We commend the work of UNV in providing countries with technical & advisory support for development of national #volunteering. We consider volunteering a serious driving force for development & for the achievement of the #2030Agenda." -- #Russia at @UNDP Ex. Board. @mfa\_russia

Comhlámh Retweeted



**DCU Volunteer** @DCUVolunteer · Mar 12

Volunteering & the SDGs - a superb conversation event hosted by @Comhlamh is off to a brilliant start this morning with contributions from @UNVolunteers and @voluntireland. Plenty of innovative solutions & fascinating statistics being shared #SDGs



Comhlámh Retweeted



**Volunteer Ireland** @voluntireland · Mar 12

Delighted to be speaking @Comhlamh's conversation on volunteering and the SDGs this morning. Volunteers have a huge role to play in sustainable development both domestically and internationally.

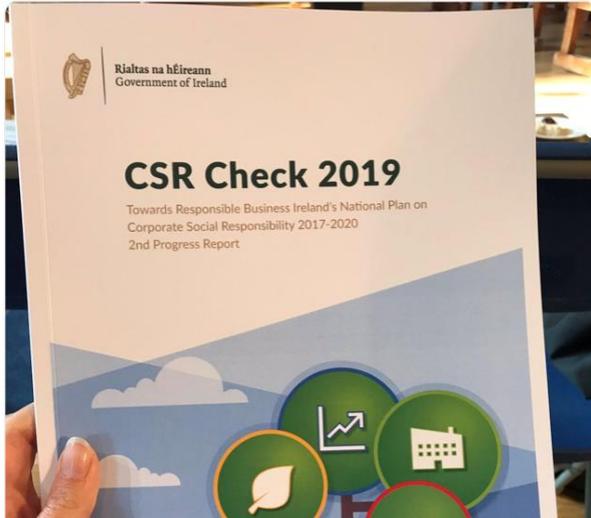
**United Nations Volunteer Programme** representatives were in **Dublin** in March talking about the **UN Resolution on Volunteering for 2030 Agenda SDGs**. They were hosted by **Comhlamh**, a member of Ireland's Coalition2030 for UN's 17 SDGs (see further down for list of members).

**Volunteer Ireland** attended the event. Its Dublin City centre states, '**Volunteering has a key role to play in helping the global community to meet the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.**' **Volunteer Ireland** is the national volunteer development agency and a support body for all local Volunteer Centres and Volunteering Information Services in Ireland. It is supported by Department of Rural and Community Development. They supply management teams and volunteers to Ireland's events and festivals - '**Our corporate team's mission is to connect companies with charitable organisations**'; assisting employee volunteers to undertake short-term community activities which have a positive long-term impact...**The corporate world is becoming more and more curious** about meaningful volunteering that supports worthy causes and has a lasting and positive impact.

**Corporate volunteering** is a great way to engage employees, build teams and meet **corporate social responsibility targets**. As well as supporting the communities they serve, employee volunteering offers companies the opportunity to increase employee retention, improve job satisfaction, motivation, and in turn improve productivity...**Corporate volunteering** can also raise the **community profile** of your company; **enhancing brand awareness** by establishing new relationships, connecting with the community and meeting new people.'



**Volunteer Ireland** @voluntireland · Jun 27  
 This morning we're at the CSR CEO Leader Breakfast @smockalley Looking forward to some insightful panels #CSRforIreland



## Minister Humphreys calls on Business Leaders to drive Corporate Social Responsibility for Ireland

Dublin, Ireland, June 28th - The Minister for Business, Enterprise and Innovation, Ms Heather Humphreys TD, today (Thursday 28th) attended the inaugural CSR CEO/Leaders Breakfast meeting in Iveagh House. The event, hosted by the CSR Stakeholder Forum in conjunction with the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation is an initiative under the rollout of 'Towards Responsible Business: Ireland's National Plan on CSR 2017-2020', and will be held on an annual basis until 2020. The CSR CEO/Leaders Breakfast aims to drive further awareness of the importance of CSR in business today, and to share good practice amongst businesses, large and small. The Breakfast also marked the first year of implementation of 'Towards Responsible Business' with the publication of 'CSR Check 2018', which captures the activities of the CSR Stakeholder Forum and its Working Groups over the past 12 months.

**CSR Check 2019:** Minister Humphreys [stated](#), 'It is the Government's ambition that *Ireland be recognised as a Centre of Excellence for responsible and sustainable business practices*. The Government wants to build a strong economy and deliver a fair society, so that businesses and communities thrive, throughout Ireland and CSR is the way to achieve it.' 'Over 100 leaders from the Government, private and public sector attended the Breakfast and listened to a panel of speakers which included multinationals, indigenous enterprises and the SME community, who shared their own CSR stories and expertise and discussed current issues in CSR including; the circular economy, plastics, diversity and equality, employee wellbeing and the SDGs.' The Minister added, 'In the past year, we have shared our experiences of CSR with other businesses through online and face-to-face interaction; we have examined and documented research and best practice on CSR; and we have worked to support policy alignment, including the *National Implementation Plan for Ireland on the Sustainable Development Goals* - none of this could be done without the voluntary support of the members of the *CSR Stakeholder Forum*, its Working Groups and the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation.' **Mr David Donoghue** (see below), former Irish Ambassador to the UN and keynote speaker for the event, highlighted the importance of business engagement with the *Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)*.

**William Earley** is Chair of **Volunteer Ireland**, and has served on the board of [Common Purpose Ireland](#) as Chair. 'Common Purpose Ireland is a not-for-profit organization that develops leaders who can cross boundaries. This enables them to solve complex problems both in *organizations and in cities*...We deliver a range of leadership programmes for individuals, organizations and universities in Ireland...Common Purpose Ireland is one of a number of international Common Purpose entities that operates under a licence agreement with the Common Purpose Charitable Trust. Common Purpose operates in Dublin and can provide customized programmes in other locations across Ireland.'

### [CSCLeaders](#) is a partnership between Common Purpose and HRH The Duke of Edinburgh's Commonwealth Study Conferences (UK Fund)

'CSCLeaders is the renewal of HRH The Duke of Edinburgh's Commonwealth Study Conferences - first run in 1956 – for the 21st Century, a partnership between international leadership development organisation Common Purpose and HRH The Duke of Edinburgh's Commonwealth Study Conferences (UK Fund).'

**'Every year CSCLeaders assembles exceptional, senior leaders selected from government, businesses and NGOs across the 53 countries of the Commonwealth to tackle Challenges**, build the relationships and develop the Cultural Intelligence needed by the leaders of tomorrow...Participants include board-level executives from global businesses, Chief Executives, Permanent Secretaries of Governments, entrepreneurs, Pro-Vice Chancellors and civil society leaders.'

'CSCLeaders participants: broaden their horizons; develop their Cultural Intelligence; the ability to cross divides and thrive in multiple cultures; increase their ability to **lead beyond their authority**.'

CSCLeaders Retweeted  
**liz mear** @MearLiz · May 17  
 I've just had a fabulous few days with leaders from across the Commonwealth, working on how we make sure our cities and residents can be resilient in times of crisis. Lots of plans being implemented across countries and cities #CSCLeaders



**CSCLeaders** @CSCLeaders · May 17  
 It's the final day of #CSCLeaders 2019 and HRH The Princess Royal has joined us as our groups present their ideas to meet this year's challenge: 'What makes a city resilient?' Our panel have been listening intently and asking some challenging questions! #Leadership #CommonPurpose



'CSCLeaders reinforces that, as the issues facing the world become increasingly complex, leaders will need to lead effectively across different boundaries. Participants on CSCLeaders **tackle a global Challenge** with a diverse peer group of senior leaders. Common Purpose creates a unique environment where participants hear from thought leaders and visit various organizations in the UK to explore the Challenge and different concepts of leadership.' 'CSCLeaders provides participants with a framework for improving their **global leadership skills**, enables them to build relationships globally, develop their Cultural Intelligence and broaden their horizons.' The tagline every year is: 'Developing Global Leaders'.

CSCLeaders: [The Challenge for 2015: What makes a city smart?:](#)

Extract from page 17

**Common-wealth Social Capital**

**Context:** In the Commonwealth, the true 'common-wealth' we all share is the ability to make a positive contribution to our family, our neighbourhood, our community and our city.

**Idea:** The Common-wealth Social Capital is a concept that stimulates socially positive behaviour – a system that rewards what you put into society, not what you take out. The Common-wealth Social Capital (CSC) concept enables an individual, community organisation or business enterprise to earn CSC 'Kudos' by actively participating in society. It's a new social economy that addresses the pyramid of needs to drive local action in response to local issues. The Kudos earned can be translated into real value by reducing tax liability, or reflected on a 'Social CV' that would make a student or low-income earner attractive for future employment or higher education. This idea is already being trialled at a local level. The group members are exploring ways to implement the idea within their workplace, at a local university and, more broadly, in their communities.

**Green Bench**

**Context:** The green bench is a symbol of democracy across the Commonwealth (the colour of the benches in the House of Commons and in many other Commonwealth parliaments). This project derived from the group's belief that smart cities and nations are those that engage their young people in the democratic parliamentary process. In doing so, the young people – our future leaders – are actively engaged in shaping their cities through the democratic parliamentary process.

**Idea:** The long-term goal is to see an elected youth parliament in every Commonwealth country. To facilitate this vision, the Green Bench will be an umbrella organisation; an online community and resource centre that will do two things: provide support to help governments and cities that want to establish youth parliaments or forums to do so and act as an online community for young people across the Commonwealth.

## CSCLeaders: [The Challenge for 2017: What could be the future of energy in Commonwealth cities?](#)

Ideas generated at CSCLeaders 2017: extract from page 15

**CSCLeaders** participants worked together to devise bold and innovative ideas in response to the 2017 Challenge: **'What could be the future of energy in Commonwealth cities?'**

On the final day of **CSCLeaders** in the UK, eight project ideas were presented to HRH The Princess Royal and a panel of judges, including Baroness Scotland, Commonwealth Secretary General, Keith Cochrane, Interim Chief Executive, Carillion and Julia Middleton, Chief Executive, Common Purpose Charitable Trust.

**The Ideas:**

**ComGen** is an incubator model that uses technology and funding opportunities across the Commonwealth to create grassroots business solutions, with founding members drawn from marginalized communities, along with community leaders, and local stakeholders.

**Dumb Ways to Burn a Planet** is a highly-focused digital campaign targeted at 8-15 year-olds. It involves making carbon calculators cool, by using its technology in a digital game that measures an individual's behaviour in terms of the impact it will have on biodiversity.

**Power Up** is an online platform to connect energy-related issues across the world with potential solutions either in terms of knowledge, resources or activities.

**Good Energy Education** is the creation of a Commonwealth-wide energy movement, based on the education of its citizens by making relevant knowledge available, and accessible, to help bring about progressive behavioural changes. It includes practical training related to waste management and energy conservation.

**Transformer** develops local 'pods' that function as a platform for the ideas of different types of energy generation, and liaises with people, including children to help develop and implement those ideas in the local community.

The Transformer Network identifies a shortlist of low-tech, high-impact examples to prove the concept.

**Commonwealth Energy Exchange** is a central repository of information, ideas and best practices in energy management within the Commonwealth.

At its core, the idea is about sharing information on actual, on-the-ground initiatives, taken across sectors among countries within the Commonwealth, in response to their energy challenges.

**LOOP** processes renewable energy from human waste. Added benefits include improvement in sanitation in undeveloped areas, providing power to streetlights and increased safety.

**Commonwealth Innovation Fund** provides funding for innovation initiatives, including projects to support the future of energy provision in cities. Working with the Commonwealth Innovation Hub to support ground-up innovation.

**2013:** 'In conversation with **Jon Williams, former World News Editor, BBC** - CSCLeaders (Part One) 2013, London.' 'In conversation with Jon Williams, former World News Editor, BBC on leadership, the media and cultural identity - CSCLeaders (Part One) 2013, Park Plaza Hotel Westminster, London.' In this Common Purpose [vimeo](#), Jon Williams states it was interesting talking of the 'The Role of Leaders and the Media'. In the vimeo he also says, 'So what's fascinating is that the **Commonwealth is a group of 54 countries, but actually it's a group of more than 200 global cities**. And people belong to a place, they don't belong to an institution or a **nation state**, so I'm from Liverpool, I'm not from the United Kingdom. And, actually it's that sense of belonging that helps promote understanding both within countries, but also between countries.' Currently Jon Williams is Managing Director at **RTE News and Current Affairs**.

**2014:** 'A [video](#) message by HRH The **Prince of Wales** titled Resilient Cities. **Resilient Cities 2014** and **ICLEI** (International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives - Local Governments for Sustainability). HRH The Prince of Wales has recorded a video message titled Resilient Cities, about urban planning. The Prince founded The Prince's Foundation for Building Community and takes a keen interest in the built environment.'

He refers to the negotiations of **2030 Agenda 17 Sustainable Development Goals** which would be concluded in 2015. He also refers to the [United Nations Habitat III Conference](#) on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development to take place in October 2016 where they will agree on the [New Urban Agenda](#), these Habitat III 'meetings will be a once in a generation opportunity to set a course for a more sustainable and humane approach to human settlements.'

CSCLeaders Retweeted



**@MunyakaSharon** @munyakasharon · May 17

#CSCLeaders 'building resilient cities closely tied to the PEOPLE'. Using lessons of resilience to replicate across the commonwealth countries

CSCLeaders Retweeted



**Patricia Scotland QC** @PScotlandCSG · May 17

With High Commissioner of #Rwanda @YKaritanyi in presence of HRH Princess Royal on panel to respond to inspiring presentations by @CSCLeaders from #Commonwealth countries after their week collaborating on challenge 'what makes a city resilient'

#ConnectedCommonwealth



**Yamina Karitanyi**

@YKaritanyi

High Commissioner of the Republic of Rwanda to the U.K. & Non-resident Ambassador to Ireland

London, England

Yamina Karitanyi Retweeted



**Presidency | Rwanda** @UrugwiroVillage · Jun 8

President Kagame visits Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Centre for Africa. Based in Kigali, the center is an international organization working to accelerate progress towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).



Yamina Karitanyi Retweeted



**The Commonwealth** @commonwealthsec · Jun 14

Planet category: The #CommonwealthInnovation Award to achieve the #SDGs winner is @rosettemuhoza from #Rwanda

She co-founded @MyGreenHomeRw ensuring environmental sustainability through #recycling #plastic wastes into construction materials

#CommonwealthAt70





**My Green Home Rwanda** @MyGreenHomeRw · Jun 15

Below are the #CommonwealthInnovation Awardees coming from various countries, including our own @rosettemuhoza before the official ceremony attended by Prince Harry, held at the Commonwealth's headquarters in Marlborough House, London, on June 14.

#CommonwealthAt70  
#Rwanda #RwOT

**The Commonwealth** @commonwealthsec · Jun 25

The #Commonwealth's inaugural Awards for Excellence in SDG Implementation will be held on 26-27 June in #Malta 🇲🇹

Read our latest blog on how the Awards aim to motivate and refresh Commonwealth efforts towards implementation of the #SDGs 📖



**The Commonwealth** @commonwealthsec · Jun 26

At the #Commonwealth awards for excellence in SDG implementation, @PrajaComSec shared the Secretariat's #SDG implementation toolkit which provides guidance on how member countries can effectively plan, track and coordinate #SDGs implementation within their governments

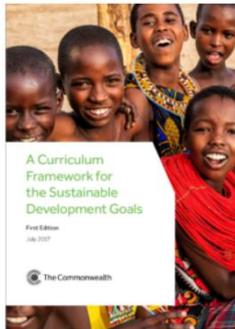


**Blog: SDG Implementation - Has best become the enemy of better?**

[thecommonwealth.org](http://thecommonwealth.org)

## 'Commonwealth Curriculum Framework for the SDGs – SDG4'

### Commonwealth Curriculum Framework for the SDGs



The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development marks a paradigm shift in the global framework for development and presents a unique opportunity to reorient efforts towards a new path for development with sustainability at its core. Education is central to this and to the achievement of all 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Education directly relates to one goal (SDG 4) but cuts across the entire SDG agenda.

Goal 4 of the Sustainable Development Goals seeks to ensure “inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all”. Within the framework, a life course approach is followed, reinforcing the need for lifelong learning and for all citizens to participate in achieving the SDGs.

It is envisioned that the Commonwealth Curriculum Framework for the SDGs will help countries to develop successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens who are resilient and uphold the core values and principles of the Commonwealth, as declared in the Commonwealth Charter, and who strive for sustainable development. The framework aims to ensure that citizens develop the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes to flourish in life, learning and work environments, and to appreciate their place in a diverse world, while building and strengthening pathways to peace and tolerance. The Curriculum Framework for the SDGs allows for a high degree of flexibility through the non-prescriptive nature of its content. It is hoped that this framework will serve as a guide for countries to conceptualise, review or further develop their national curricula and ensure that education is integral to any strategy to create a resilient generation that will advocate for action and the attainment of the SDGs in a holistic, integrated manner. It will provide conceptual support for teacher training, adult learning and community development. It also reaffirms the centrality of education to the multiple dimensions of sustainable development.

## [Commonwealth Digital Identity Initiative SDG 16.9](#)

The Commonwealth Digital Identity Initiative is a two-year program, specifically addressing [SDG 16.9](#) which aims to provide a legal identity for all by 2030. The Australian Government is working with world-leading experts from public and private partners, i.e. the World Bank's [Identification for Development \(ID4D\)](#) program, [GSMA Mobile for Development](#), [Caribou Digital](#) and the UK Government, address issues around identification throughout the Commonwealth.

The program is being implemented in Commonwealth countries across the Pacific, Asia and Africa and includes the following activities...

'You need an ID for almost everything you do. Opening a bank account, enrolling in school, voting in an election, activating a SIM card, applying for a job, registering a business and receiving health care or social benefits. The ability to prove your identity is crucial to fully participate in society and democracy.

However, one billion people worldwide do not have access to an official form of identification and 50% of them live in Commonwealth countries. Women are more likely to lack an ID than men, particularly in low income countries, where over 45% of women do not have an ID compared to 30% of men.

Governments – 161 countries worldwide – are moving away from face to face, paper-based service offering to quick online services using digital technologies. Smart ID cards, ePassport and digitally stored biometrics are some of the features offered by many governments.

Through the Commonwealth Digital Identity Initiative, we aim to gain an improved understanding of the technological, administrative, legal and socio-cultural barriers that might prevent someone from being able to prove who they are. Through research, analysis and country-level engagement, we will explore how these barriers might be experienced differently by vulnerable groups of the population, with a view to improving access to – and use of – identification systems in focus Commonwealth countries.'

### **[19/9/2018: 'Secretary-General launches innovation awards for sustainable development'](#)**:

'Awards selection will be based on the impact or potential of the innovations to advance one or more of the **17 Sustainable Development Goals in Commonwealth countries**. Five thematic categories of the competition include: improving the lives of *people*; boosting *prosperity*; protecting the *planet*, promoting *peace*; and building *partnerships* for development in the Commonwealth.' The **5 Ps** in the 2030 Agenda 17 SDGs (see David Donoghue).

### **[SDG 15: Life On Land - Forest Area \(Percentage of Land Area\)](#)**: Commonwealth

'Sustainable Developmental Goal 15 (SDG 15) aims to protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.

The World Bank defines forest area as land under natural or planted stands of trees of at least 5 metres in situ, whether productive or not, and excludes tree stands in agricultural production systems (for example, in fruit plantations and agroforestry systems) and trees in urban parks and gardens.

In the 2010-2015 period, the average forest area (per cent of land area) has been fairly constant across the Commonwealth countries in various regions of the world – Europe (~11%), Asia (~33%), Africa (~30%), Pacific (~41%) and Caribbean and Americas (~46%). On average, Commonwealth countries in the Caribbean and Americas had the highest forest area (46.12% of land area) in 2015, while member states in Europe had the lowest at 10.93%.'



### 17 Goals to Transform Our World

'In 2015, countries adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its **17 Sustainable Development Goals**, and within them **169 targets**. In 2016, the **Paris Agreement** on climate change entered into force, addressing the need to limit the rise of global temperatures. These goals are called SDGs, though they are known to some as Global Goals. Ireland played a unique and central role in the process to agree the Sustainable Development Goals. In 2014, the President of the UN General Assembly appointed Ireland's UN Ambassador, **David Donoghue**, to facilitate the final intergovernmental negotiations. He shared the role with Kenya's UN Ambassador, **Macharia Kamau**. This appointment placed **Ireland at the centre of intergovernmental negotiations on the Sustainable Development Agenda**. Throughout 2015, Ireland and Kenya brought together all UN member states, civil society, the private sector and others in a series of formal negotiating sessions and informal consultations.'



*Gavelling consensus on the 2030 Agenda in 2015 - Ambassador David Donoghue and Ambassador Macharia Kamau*

**2<sup>nd</sup> August 2015**, agreement was finally reached. In an [historic moment](#), Ambassador Donoghue and Ambassador Kamau informed the gathering of all UN Member States that [agreement](#) had been reached, and presented the final text: [Transforming Our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#). Ambassador Donoghue helped to draft 2030 Agenda, and he personally put **'leaving no one behind'** in the 5<sup>th</sup> and final draft.



*The 2030 Agenda was adopted by world leaders at the United Nations Summit in September 2015. **Pope Francis** spoke before the United Nations General Assembly shortly before member states unanimously adopted the 2030 Agenda. In 2019 the Pope said that the SDGs, "were a great step forward for global dialogue, marking a vitally "new and universal solidarity". In June 2015 Pope Francis had published his encyclical [Laudato Si - On Care For Our Common Home](#).*



IIEA (Institute of International and European Affairs) 2015

David Donoghue (centre), Tom Arnold (rhs, Trust Patron of Burrenbeo)

Some weeks later in Dublin, Ambassador Donoghue stated at a [press conference](#) in the IIEA (Irish think-tank), ‘We emphasise a lot that this is a single collective effort, that the **entire world is moving forward in one step**. We are no longer talking about a North-South slightly patronising distinction where the North is telling the South what it should do, but rather we all are going in the same direction...**a single global effort**. It’s **utopian**, I’ll be the first to admit that...’. He says that sustainable development has 3 dimensions: **social, economic and environmental**. Each goal and target **must** embody these 3 dimensions.

He said that unlike the Earth Summit agreement in Rio in 1992, and the Millennial Development Goals (MDGs), the scale of this new agenda is **vast and universal**. He said that the first page of the declaration is the ‘so-called preamble and it picks out what we call the 5 Ps: People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace and Partnership.’ He said that developing countries were in the majority, and this ‘clearly shows the centre of gravity within the negotiations - they were in a ‘fairly pivotal position in terms of making demands about the final outcome’. The developing countries ‘did not want to change a comma’ in the 17 goals and 169 targets as they were ‘**afraid if you did change a comma you would start pulling at the ball of wool and everything else would unravel**’. This fear was ‘**deep in their psyche...even the slightest change would mean the entire edifice...would collapse**’. He said that Ireland is seen as the ‘**honest broker**’, a ‘**good mediator between the global north and the global south**’ at the UN.

According to Irish Aid, ‘The agreement sets the course for the entire world to deliver a more sustainable, prosperous and peaceful future for all, in harmony with our planet...Ireland’s appointment to this role was a huge honour for the country, and a **great responsibility**. It was testament to Ireland’s standing internationally, particularly to the excellent reputation of our overseas aid programme, Irish Aid; our proud record of promoting human rights; and our long-standing participation in peacekeeping across the world.’ **National governments, the private sector, civil society, local government, academic institutions, charities, youth organisations, unions, non-profits, young and old will have to mobilise around this massive plan which will require ‘a completely new mentality’. All governments will have to bring in new structures to coordinate it across the government systems.**

In 2015 David Donoghue [said](#) that ‘even relatively large administrations in Europe haven’t yet fully grasped this, nor have they brought in **new structures**’ which will be needed to implement the goals.

**2017: [Dochas](#) awarded *David Donoghue* with a Lifetime Achievement Award. ‘Dochas are fully committed to Agenda 2030 and are part of a coalition called [Coalition2030](#) Working Together to Transform the World.’**



‘With 17 Goals and 169 individual targets to be measured, reported on and met, new partnerships are needed – partnerships which bring together citizens and organisations from across the country, from across sectors and from across the various strands of Government. If we are to reach these goals, collective collaboration will be needed, requiring a **whole- of-government and whole-of-society approach**. Coalition2030 is working to form and engage in such creative partnerships. Coalition2030 engages across all SDGs and the 2030 Agenda from monitoring, evaluation, learning, research, education, public engagement, advocacy and communications activities and events.’

### Members of Coalition2030 include:

Age Action Ireland; All Together in Dignity (ATD); ChildFund Ireland; CBM Ireland; Centre for Youth Research and Development, Maynooth University; Christian Aid; Comhlámh; Community Work Ireland; Concern Worldwide; Development Perspectives; Disability Federation of Ireland; Dóchas; EcoUnesco; 80:20 Educating & Acting for a Better World; Environmental Pillar; European Anti-Poverty Network (EAPN); Future Earth Ireland; Global Action Plan; Gorta Self Help Africa; Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU); Irish Development Education Association; Mercy International Association; Misean Cara; National Youth Council of Ireland (NYCI); National Women’s Council of Ireland (NWCI); Oxfam Ireland; Presentation Sisters (PBVM); Services Industrial Professional Technical Union (SIPTU); Social Justice Ireland; Society of St. Vincent de Paul; SpunOut; The Wheel; Trinity International Development Initiative (TIDI); Trocaire; UCD Centre for Sustainable Development Studies; UNICEF; Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO); and World Vision Ireland.



**Coalition 2030 Ireland** @Coalition2030IR · Sep 24

Today, world leaders are gathering in New York for the [#SDGSummit](#) to accelerate progress with the

[#GlobalGoals](#). It is time to make it happen, it is time to prioritise the commitment to [#LeaveNoOneBehind](#)

[#Act4SDGs](#) [#2030Agenda](#) [#StandTogetherNow](#)

[@concordsw](#)

Irish Coalition 2030 Retweeted  
**ATD Ireland** @ATDIreland · May 31  
 Well done @ChambersIreland! Want to mark the #ESDW2019 in Dublin? You can join All Together in Dignity for the #GreatestShow! We will celebrate 5 years of activism for all 17 #GlobalGoals & the #LeaveNoOneBehind promise!  
[facebook.com/events/5586808...](https://facebook.com/events/5586808...) #Ireland4SDGs #SDGs4all @Dept\_CCAE



**Chambers Ireland** @ChambersIreland  
 It's European Sustainable Development Week 2019!  
 #ESDW  
 Chambers Ireland supports the Sustainable Development Goals #SDGs & their integration into achievable strategies

Irish Coalition 2030 @Coalition2030IR · Jun 29  
 Calling all aspiring youth journalists:



**MYWorld360**  
 MY WORLD 360°  
 EMPOWERING THE NEXT GENERATION OF SDG JOURNALISTS

**MYWorld360**  
 Empowering next generation of SDG journalists  
[sdgactioncampaign.org](http://sdgactioncampaign.org)

Misean Cara @miseancara · 16 Jul 2018  
 @miseancara @Coalition2030IR @Dochasnetwork meeting with Minister @DenisNaughten @Dept\_CCAE before Ireland's #VNR on #SDGs at @UN #HLPF2018 #hlpf #Ireland4SDGs #LeaveNoOneBehind @HeydiFoster @AineC



Irish Coalition 2030 Retweeted  
 Irish Aid @Irish\_Aid · May 29  
 "I am inspired by the partnership & collaboration at work here today...you are the best ambassadors for the #GlobalGoals"

Minister @ciarancannon speaks to students at the #SDG Festival in @TheHelixDublin today where they are learning about the goals through song, dance & drama!



Coalition 2030 Ireland Retweeted  
 Concern Active @concernactive · Oct 7  
 We are super excited to be at @zeminarevent for the next few days chatting about @concern's work & how you can become an active citizen!



Coalition 2030 Ireland @Coalition2030IR · 8h  
 Minister of State Sean Canney T.D. talks about Volunteer Strategy, PPN's and the Sustainable Development Goals Champions Programme at The National #SDG Stakeholder Forum. @Dept\_CCAE



## National Implementation Plan 2018 - 2020

The Sustainable Development Goals National Implementation Plan 2018 - 2020 is in direct response to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and provides a whole-of-government approach to implement the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Plan identifies **four strategic priorities to guide implementation**:

- **Awareness:** raise public awareness of the SDGs;
- **Participation:** provide stakeholders opportunities to engage and contribute to follow-up and review processes, and further develop national implementation of the Goals;
- **Support:** encourage and support efforts of communities and organisations to contribute towards meeting the SDGs, and foster public participation; and
- **Policy alignment:** develop alignment of national policy with the SDGs and identify opportunities for policy coherence.

The Minister for Communications, Climate Action and Environment has lead responsibility for promoting and overseeing the coherent implementation of the SDGs on a whole-of-Government basis. All Ministers retain responsibility for implementing the individual SDGs relating to issues under their aegis and have been actively engaged in the preparation of this Plan.

The Plan provides a '**SDG Matrix**' which identifies the responsible Government Departments for each of the 169 targets. It also includes a '**SDG Policy Map**' indicating the relevant national policies for each of the targets.

The Plan also sets out 19 specific Actions to implement over the duration of this first SDG National Implementation Plan.

### Implementation Plan



▶ [View or Download the Plan](#)

### Annex I



▶ [Implementation Plan - Annex I](#)

### Annex II



▶ [Implementation Plan - Annex II](#)

The IISD (International Institute for Sustainable Development) 'is an independent think-tank championing sustainable solutions to 21st century problems. Our mission is to promote human development and environmental sustainability.' They published an article in 2018 on [Ireland's National Implementation Plan](#):

'To ensure policy coherence, the Plan assigns the **Minister for Communications, Climate Action and Environment** with the lead responsibility for promoting and overseeing coherent SDG implementation at a whole-of-government level. An 'SDG Matrix' identifies responsible government departments for each of the 169 targets of the SDG framework. Ireland has assigned every government department with specific responsibilities related to one or more SDGs. Beginning in 2018, government departments are required to include reference, in all new Statements of Strategy, to all SDG targets for which a Department has lead responsibility.

\*Ireland's [SDG Champions](#) will be announced soon, modelled somewhat on [UN SDG Advocates](#).

The Plan also includes an 'SDG Policy Map' that identifies the relevant national policies for each SDG targets, and illustrates Ireland's actions to implement each SDG. The SDG Policy Map will be refined as new policies are adopted.

To support interdepartmental coordination, Ireland has established a Senior Officials Group (SOG) composed of high-level representatives from across all government departments and chaired by the Department of the Taoiseach (head of government), to oversee and monitor SDG progress and report to government. The Plan includes the SOG's terms of reference. An SDG Interdepartmental Working Group, with representatives from all

government departments, will support the SOG, including by coordinating strategic communication on the SDGs and Ireland's implementation, and preparing national SDG progress reports.'

**2/3/18 David Donoghue** believes the **Voluntary National Reviews are vital** (these are held every July in New York at the United Nation's **High-Level Political Forum**). Not only are they a chance to highlight progress, they also shine a very public spotlight on areas where individual countries are failing. 'Do not underestimate the desire to keep up with the neighbours', he says...'The emphasis has been on process up to now,' he says. 'For example, how have states **changed their internal structures** to deliver the SDGs? How have they aligned their own national development plans? However, there comes a point when the rubber has to meet the road in terms of showing tangible progress. It is still very early days in the process, but it is only a 15 year time span so the clock is ticking.' Over sixty countries have completed voluntary reviews of their progress to date. Ireland's review takes place this summer. 'The SDGs are not legally binding, but they are politically and morally binding,' he says. '**Nobody wants to be fingered as the country which isn't willing to do its bit to save the planet and humanity**. If a country is lagging behind it is politically embarrassing for them. There will be pressure from the neighbours to pull their socks up.'



**July 2018:** As part of the campaign to attain a seat on the United Nations Security Council, Taoiseach Leo Varadkar gave a speech to the UN Security Council in New York. As per the cover story of Time Magazine the Taoiseach said 'we see ourselves as **an island at the centre of the world**...in an interdependent world, the challenges of our time do not respect geographic boundaries...**our responsibilities as global citizens**...the Paris Climate Agreement and the **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development** are two examples of the power and potential of multilateral partnerships'. He also states that the UN at its best is '**the conscience of humanity**'.

'Ireland has always engaged with the UN in a serious and substantive way. It is an inherent part of who we are. It informs how we act globally, and it shapes our international outlook – our belief in Empathy, Partnership and Independence. As an island State – a **Global Island** – we are deeply aware that, in an interdependent world, nothing is entirely foreign or wholly domestic. **Problems and challenges do not respect geographic boundaries**. They are challenges for all of us, a shared responsibility. We are living in an era when local, regional and global issues collide with increasing frequency and force. **Today's crises and challenges do not carry passports or recognise international borders**. Unilateral approaches are inadequate. Ireland believes that multilateralism is the key to solving the global challenges that we face. We are stronger together.' ['An Introduction to Ireland's candidature to the United Nations Security Council 2021-2022'](#)

**Former President of Ireland Mary Robinson** was also in New York to help with the bid for the UN Security Council seat. Mary Robinson, who is Chair of **The Elders**, believes that the UN is a necessary and core part of the **global governance system**. The Elders also believe that the UN's 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are universal and apply to developed as well as developing countries.



Taoiseach Leo Varadkar July 2017

17/7/2018: Ireland at UN 2018: 'Reporting on progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals – live!'

**The High-Level Political Forum (HLPF)** is a **UN ministerial group** that **supervises the implementation** of the 17 SDGs at a global level. Every July countries submit their **Voluntary National Review (VNR)**.

 **dcca.gov.ie**   
@Dept\_CCAE 

@DenisNaughten will address the United Nations today where he will present Ireland's progress report on the implementation of the 17 global Sustainable Development Goals [bit.ly/2mk15ps](https://bit.ly/2mk15ps)  
@merriestreet #SDGs #Ireland4SDGs #HLPF2018  
#Coalition2030 @UN #HLPF2018IRL

♥ 18 7:53 AM - Jul 17, 2018



**Denis Naughten**, Minister for Communications, Climate Action and Environment, Ireland



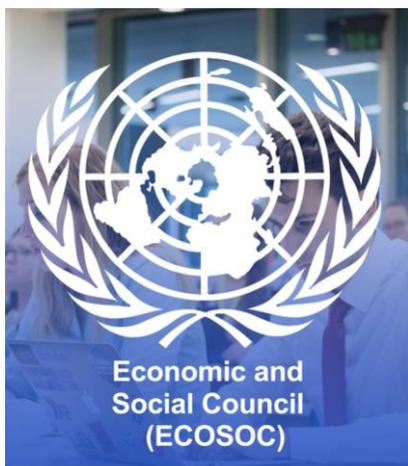
View of the dais during the session

**The High-level Segment/ Ministerial Meeting of HLPF 2018** on Tuesday included three sessions on Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs), where 21 countries presented their reports: Albania, Latvia, Niger, Sudan, Armenia, **Ireland**, Namibia, Jamaica, State of Palestine, Togo, Bhutan, Uruguay, Sri Lanka, Switzerland, Australia, Andorra, Canada, Dominican Republic, Egypt, Lao People's Democratic Republic (PDR), and Senegal. **Emer Herity** (3<sup>rd</sup> from right)

'In July 2018, **Ireland** will appear, for the first time, before the **High-Level Political Forum** (HLPF) on Sustainable Development - the body charged with **monitoring** progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals. Ireland will be called upon to account for what steps it has taken to implement the Goals and its future plans, **both within Ireland and internationally**.

**Held under the auspices of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)**, the HLPF meets for eight days each year and focuses on a number of themes/SDGs which are discussed in broad, global terms. The focus of the 2018 event being "Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies".

As one of the co-facilitators of the negotiations to develop the SDGs, **Ireland holds a particular responsibility** to demonstrate leadership by ensuring that its own Voluntary National Review, which it will present in July 2018 is robust, critically self-reflective and representative of the views of civil society stakeholders.' (ireland2030.org)



**Emer Herity**, Secretary of **ECOSOC** at United Nations in New York, is a Graduate of University College Dublin. She is sitting next to Kenyan **UN Ambassador Macharia Kamau**, who co-facilitated 2030 Agenda with Irish **UN Ambassador David Donoghue**.

See above photo of Emer Herity on the **High-Level Political Forum** dais.

**ECOSOC** (Economic and Social Council) is at the heart of the United Nations system to advance the **three dimensions of sustainable development – economic, social and environmental**. It is the central platform for fostering debate and innovative thinking, forging consensus on ways forward, and coordinating efforts to achieve internationally agreed goals. It is responsible for the follow-up to major UN conferences and summits. **ECOSOC is responsible for the High-Level Political Forums on Sustainable Development**. Member States, Inter-Governmental Organisations (IGOs), United Nation system’s agencies, Major Groups and Stakeholders have to register with this [office](#) before participating in the High-Level Political Forum.

**September 2018:** David Donoghue spoke by [video-link](#) to the first Irish ‘**Leave No One Behind Summit**’ of ‘**All Together in Dignity**’ – ‘working with those affected by chronic poverty’. He is its Patron. He worries that the gap between the poor and the wealthy will widen dramatically if action isn’t taken quickly. He says that real transformation will happen if the 17 goals are implemented by each government **holistically**, and therefore they will have to **re-organise their governmental structures** in order to do so.

**18/2/19:** Mary Robinson said, ‘I would like to see the **sustainable development goals** begin to be part of the curriculum here in Trinity and **in the curriculum in schools** so that we begin to make this part of our life in a lived way that really makes a difference.’ ‘**The important point is the interconnection between the 17 sustainable development goals, that’s their strength**,’ she said. ‘They don’t portray gender equality as somehow separate from climate action or ocean pollution, or ocean pollution separate from consumption and production.’

**24-25 September 2019:** High-level Political Forum (**HLPF**) under the 74th Session of the General Assembly accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Heads of State and Government will gather at the United Nations Headquarters in New York to follow up and comprehensively **review progress in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development** and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The event is the first UN summit on the SDGs since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda in September 2015, and all are present to **renew their promise**.



**Ireland at the United Nations** ✓ @irishmissionun · Sep 26  
Always a pleasure to spend time with #UN Deputy Secretary-General @AminaMohammed.

Ireland remains a committed partner to the @UN.

@PresidentIRL | 📷 @UN\_Photo



MerrionStreet.ie, UN GA President, Irish Foreign Ministry and 3 others