

## **CAJ's Submission no. S411**

**CAJ's submission to the UN Committee on the Elimination  
of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) on  
the UK's 7th Periodic Report**

**June 2013**

## About CAJ

The Committee on the Administration of Justice (CAJ) was established in 1981 and is an independent non-governmental organisation affiliated to the International Federation of Human Rights. CAJ takes no position on the constitutional status of Northern Ireland and is firmly opposed to the use of violence for political ends. Its membership is drawn from across the community.

The Committee seeks to ensure the highest standards in the administration of justice in Northern Ireland by ensuring that the government complies with its responsibilities in international human rights law. The CAJ works closely with other domestic and international human rights groups such as Amnesty International, Human Rights First (formerly the Lawyers Committee for Human Rights) and Human Rights Watch and makes regular submissions to a number of United Nations and European bodies established to protect human rights.

CAJ's activities include - publishing reports, conducting research, holding conferences, campaigning locally and internationally, individual casework and providing legal advice. Its areas of work are extensive and include policing, emergency laws and the criminal justice system, equality and advocacy for a Bill of Rights in Northern Ireland.

CAJ however would not be in a position to do any of this work, without the financial help of its funders, individual donors and charitable trusts (since CAJ does not take government funding). We would like to take this opportunity to thank Atlantic Philanthropies, Barrow Cadbury Trust, Hilda Mullen Foundation, Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust, Oak Foundation and UNISON.

The organisation has been awarded several international human rights prizes, including the Reebok Human Rights Award and the Council of Europe Human Rights Prize.

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### **Introduction**

CAJ welcomes the 7<sup>th</sup> periodic report from the UK government in conformity with its obligation to submit itself regularly to scrutiny by the CEDAW Committee. We hope that the following material will be of help to the Committee in carrying out a full examination of the extent of the UK's compliance with the Convention inasmuch as it applies to Northern Ireland. CAJ has made formal submissions to the CEDAW Committee in its last two examinations of the UK (May 1999 and Feb 2008).

The following submission will focus on areas where problems exist or where further advances are needed in order to protect the human rights of women in Northern Ireland. The submission is divided into three themes:

1. Women in the criminal justice system (Articles 2,3,5 and 15)
2. Women's full and equal participation in public and political life (Articles 2-4,7)
3. Women's socio economic rights in light of the current welfare reform proposals (Articles 2,3,13)

### **1. Women in the Criminal Justice System**

In this part of the submission CAJ would like to focus on two key areas, firstly the discrimination against women in the re-hiring of past Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) police officers into the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) and secondly the treatment of women prisoners.

#### **Police Service of Northern Ireland rehiring scandal**

The 1998 Belfast/Good Friday Agreement provided for an Independent Commission on Policing for Northern Ireland (the Patten Commission) which delivered its final report in September 1999.<sup>1</sup> The report was to herald "a new beginning to policing" and involved the transformation of the RUC into the PSNI. This included significant compositional change of the make up of the police force with a major severance scheme introduced for existing officers and a new recruitment programme. As CAJ noted at the time, there was a considerable underrepresentation of women in the RUC as well as of (Irish) nationalists/ Catholics and a concurrent

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<sup>1</sup>*A New Beginning: Policing in Northern Ireland: The Report of the Independent Commission on Policing in Northern Ireland*, September 1999 (Patten Report). [Available at: <http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/issues/police/patten/recommend.htm> accessed June 2013].

overrepresentation of male Protestants. At the time Women were only 10.5% of regular officers meaning there was a male-dominated ethos. In order to address the religious differential, change the composition of the force and the internal culture of the organisation Patten proposed a temporary special measure ensuring that the appointment of police officers should be made on a 50:50 Catholic: Protestant/Other basis, drawn from a pool of qualified potential recruits. There was however no similar temporary special measure on grounds of gender.<sup>2</sup> Over the three years of the severance scheme just 4% of the total officers leaving under the scheme were female with 96% being male.<sup>3</sup>

In autumn 2012 it came to light that the PSNI had filled gaps in staffing by re-hiring personnel, many of whom were former RUC police officers through a recruitment agency to work in the PSNI as 'civilian' staff, although roles often involved police skills. Over the last 10 years some 2740 temporary workers have been employed within the PSNI of which 39% were former police officers who had retired under the severance scheme.<sup>4</sup> The Northern Ireland Public Service Alliance (NIPSA, the trade union that covers the PSNI civilian staff), states that:

The posts were not subject to a sufficient job evaluation to ensure the posts were correctly graded or that there was an appropriate amount of work required constituting a full time role.<sup>5</sup>

Another complaint from the NIPSA trade union members was that it seemed coming from a 'police family' was enough to secure an agency job in the PSNI yet other union members had been through rigorous application and interview stages, the above damaged morale within the organisation.<sup>6</sup>

The PSNI workforce composition figures for August 2012 show 64% of civilian police staff is female compared to 27% of police officers.<sup>7</sup> Had these posts been made available on internal trawl to the existing civilian staff or been advertised publicly, rather than rehiring former RUC officers who were overwhelmingly male, then there would have been much greater opportunities for women to obtain them. The practice has therefore impacted on career progression for women within the PSNI and has had a retrogressive effect on addressing the gender deficits within the force. The policy of rehiring former officers in this way was conducted outside the terms of legal

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<sup>2</sup> CAJ 'The Policing You Don't See' Covert policing and the accountability gap:

Five years on from the transfer of 'national security' primacy to MI5' (Nov 2012), page 27.

<sup>3</sup> PSNI Equality Impact Assessment on the voluntary severance scheme, page 11-13 [available at: [http://www.psnipolice.uk/voluntary\\_severance\\_eqia\\_report.pdf](http://www.psnipolice.uk/voluntary_severance_eqia_report.pdf) accessed June 2013].

<sup>4</sup> Northern Ireland Audit Office 'The Police Service of Northern Ireland: Use of Agency Staff' (Oct 2012), paragraph 13 (Audit Office Report) [available at: [http://www.niauditoffice.gov.uk/index/publications/report\\_archive\\_home/2012/psni\\_final\\_report.pdf](http://www.niauditoffice.gov.uk/index/publications/report_archive_home/2012/psni_final_report.pdf) accessed June 2013].

<sup>5</sup> NIPSA response to the Northern Ireland Public Accounts Committee, paragraph 2.

<sup>6</sup> NIPSA response to the Northern Ireland Public Accounts Committee, paragraph 10.

<sup>7</sup> Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland 'Finding the Balance: matching the human resources with the priorities in the PSNI' (May 2013), page 28 [available at <http://www.cjini.org/TheInspections/Inspection-Reports/Latest-Publications.aspx?did=2482> accessed June 2013].

obligations brought in following the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement to equality-proof policies on grounds such as gender.<sup>8</sup>

**The CEDAW Committee may wish to ask the UK to evaluate the impact of the PSNI re-hiring scandal on the gender composition of the workforce and take remedial action.**

## **The treatment of women prisoners**

The previous Concluding Observations of the CEDAW Committee in 2008 urged the UK to:

...address the situation of women in prison through the development of comprehensive gender-sensitive policies, strategies and programmes. The Committee calls upon the State party to ensure that young female offenders are not held in adult prisons, to take further measures to increase and enhance educational, rehabilitative and resettlement programmes for women in prison and to ensure the provision of adequate health facilities and services, including mental health services, for women in prison. **It also calls upon the State party to take further steps towards the establishment of small custodial units and community establishments, as well as separate women's facilities, in particular in Northern Ireland.**<sup>9</sup>

In relation to women and a purpose-built custodial facility, this is a topic that has been discussed for many years. An overarching review of the Northern Ireland Prison Service was reported on in October 2011. This review had its origins in the 2010 Hillsborough Agreement between the two main political parties and among its tasks was the 'consideration of a women's prison which is fit for purpose and meets international obligations and best practice.'<sup>10</sup>

The Review recommended;

A new small custodial facility for women should be built, staffed and run around a therapeutic model. It should be supported by an acute mental health facility and draw on a network of staff, services and support in the community.<sup>11</sup>

The Minister for Justice has subsequently announced he has approved the development of a new, separate secure custodial facility for a small number of

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<sup>8</sup> Namely the Equality Impact Assessment process under s75 (1) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998; see Audit Office report, Paragraph 4.6.

<sup>9</sup> CEDAW/C/UK/CO/6 Concluding observations on the UK, paragraph 267, emphasis added.

<sup>10</sup> Prison Review Team 'Review of the Northern Ireland Prison Service: Conditions, management and oversight of all prisons' (the 'Owers' Report'), Final Report (Oct 2011), page 6.

<sup>11</sup> 'Owers Report' (Oct 2011), page and recommendation 36.

women which will seemingly be balanced with alternatives to custody.<sup>12</sup> However details and approval of finance appear to be still under discussion.

A further issue which has arisen is the situation of women prisoners in special categories. In Northern Ireland prisoners held in relation to the armed conflict were for most of its duration held in a separate prison regime to other prisoners. Following the 1998 Belfast/Good Friday Agreement prisoners convicted of conflict-related offences who belonged to paramilitary organisations maintaining a ceasefire, were required to serve two more years before being released on licence. At present the Northern Ireland Prison Service implements a system of 'separated' prisoners. Many such prisoners see the 'separate' conditions as a form of political status and wish to be separated from other prisoners. Officially separation takes place for health and safety considerations.

The October 2011 prison review report stated that the main Maghaberry Prison:

Holds around 60 prisoners who are separated from the rest of the population, by their own choice, because they have affiliations to Republican or Loyalist paramilitary groups.<sup>13</sup>

A more recent report indicates there were 189 prisoners held in separated units.<sup>14</sup> Prisoners are either held as they have been charged or convicted of offences which took place after the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement or because their licence has been revoked. A women prisoner wishing to be afforded the separated prisoner regime available to male prisoners can lead to the prisoner being de facto held on their own. At present there appears to be no provision for association between male and female separated prisoners (which would not have to entail shared accommodation) and there have been very few female prisoners in this category. This issue has come to prominence with the high-profile case of Marian McGlinchey (née Price) who was imprisoned on her own in controversial circumstances for two years.<sup>15</sup> At this time Ms McGlinchey was the only female separated prisoner in the system.

**The Committee may wish to ask the UK to commit to implementing separate facilities for women prisoners including addressing the issues of separated women prisoners.**

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<sup>12</sup> Ministerial Statement to the Northern Ireland Assembly, Tuesday 19 March 2013, Northern Ireland Prison Service Estate Strategy, David Ford MLA, Minister for Justice [available at <http://www.dojni.gov.uk/index/ni-prison-service/nips-latest-press-releases/nips-ford-outlines-proposals-for-future-investment-in-prison-estate.htm> accessed June 2013].

<sup>13</sup> 'Owers Report,' Oct 2011, page 6.

<sup>14</sup> Chief Inspector of Criminal Justice in Northern Ireland, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons, the Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority and Education and Training Inspectorate 'Report on an announced inspection of Maghaberry Prison 19 - 23 March 2012' (Dec 2012) page 66.

<sup>15</sup> Holder, Daniel 'The growth of secret 'evidence' and the case of Marian Price, the Detail 13 May 2012 [available at <http://www.thedetail.tv/columns/analysis/the-growth-of-secret-%E2%80%99evidence%E2%80%99-and-the-case-of-marian-price> accessed June 2013].

## 2. Women's Full and Equal Participation in Public and Political life

Despite the Concluding Observations from the CEDAW Committee in 2008 calling for 'the full implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) in Northern Ireland' the issue has yet to be addressed by the UK Government.<sup>16</sup>

Northern Ireland is emerging from 30 years of conflict and there has been much work internationally and in the Northern Ireland women's sector on how women add value to peace processes and peace building. The parties to the 1998 Belfast /Good Friday Agreement affirmed 'the right of women to full and equal political participation and the advancement of women in public life'.<sup>17</sup> The subsequent United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 Women, Peace and Security is an obvious vehicle by which to realise this commitment yet the UK has declined to fully implement it in relation to the Northern Ireland conflict.

The Associate Party Group on UNSCR 1325 at the UK Parliament initiated an inquiry into the application of UNSCR 1325 to Northern Ireland back in September 2011. The outcomes of this inquiry have yet to come to fruition with much of the delay being due to a wait on a submission from the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and the UK Government Equalities Office (GEO). The UK's position was set out in response to a Parliamentary question put to the then Minister for Women and Equalities, Lynn Featherstone MP by Naomi Long MP:

UNSCR 1325 makes provision for the protection of women in armed conflicts and to encourage their participation in conflict resolution and political and public life. The situation in Northern Ireland has never been considered to be an armed conflict, as defined in international law. Nevertheless, some aspects of UNSCR 1325 such as participation in peace and political processes are relevant to all states and the Government will continue to work towards increasing the representation of women in Northern Ireland in public and political life.<sup>18</sup>

The UK has however given no further information as to which particular initiatives they regard as taking forward women's participation in peace building and political process, as well as increasing representation of women in public life. There is also no need for the UK to seek definition of the conflict as an 'armed conflict' or otherwise. In relation to UNSCR 1325 the Secretary General stated that:

...the present resolution does not seek to make any legal determination as to whether situations that are referred to in the Secretary General's report are or are not armed conflicts within the context of the Geneva Conventions and the

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<sup>16</sup> CEDAW/C/UK/CO/6 Concluding observations on the UK, paragraph, 285.

<sup>17</sup> Belfast/Good Friday Agreement 'Rights, Safeguards and Equality of Opportunity,' paragraph 1.

<sup>18</sup> Official report (Hansard) 13 Mar 2012: Column 205W, Minister for Women and Equalities, Lynn Featherstone MP [available at: <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201212/cmhansrd/cm120313/text/120313w0003.htm#1203141001228> accessed June 2013].

Additional Protocols thereto, nor does it prejudice the legal status of the non-State parties involved in these situations.<sup>19</sup>

The UK see themselves as having a leading role internationally in promoting UNSCR 1325 yet there is no mention of Northern Ireland in their National Action Plan (NAP). CAJ notes the support that the UK give to women in Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Nepal in their NAP however the UK excludes the women of Northern Ireland from the benefits that inclusion in the UK NAP would afford them. In our submission to the Associate Parliamentary Group on UNSCR 1325, CAJ stated that we view the UK position:

As a missed opportunity to advance gender perspectives and gender mainstreaming along with real and meaningful participation for women in public and political life and broader conflict resolution processes. CAJ would like to see the UK applying UNSCR 1325 to Northern Ireland, by incorporation into the UK National Action Plan which is subject to periodic review. It is likely that at a practical level a significant proportion of implementation would be led by the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister (OFMDFM) in Northern Ireland.<sup>20</sup>

It is important to note that the Republic of Ireland as the other state party to the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement released its UNSCR 1325 National Action Plan in November 2011 and included a point on engagement with Women in Northern Ireland.

Among the areas the application of UNSCR 1325 could address are: under-representation of women in key institutions that are relevant to the peace process; the advancement of gender equality; and the mainstreaming of gender perspectives in high level strategies designed to deal with the legacy of the conflict.

There have been some positive steps forward in Northern Ireland since the last reporting round with the setting up of an All Party Group at the Northern Ireland Assembly on UNSCR 1325. There are also ongoing commitments to women's representation in the new community relations strategy for Northern Ireland although again there are no measureable outcomes and it does not say how this will be monitored or achieved.<sup>21</sup> The Department for Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) are addressing the gender differential on internal boards and associated bodies by setting gender targets.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Report of the Secretary General (S/2009/465) of 16 September 2009.

<sup>20</sup> CAJ's submission to the Associate Parliamentary Group Inquiry into UNSCR 1325 (Sept 2011) [available at [http://www.caj.org.uk/files/2011/10/06/S356\\_CAJs\\_submission\\_to\\_the\\_Associate\\_Parliamentary\\_Group\\_inquiry\\_into\\_UNSCR\\_1325\\_response\\_Sept\\_2011%5B1%5D.pdf](http://www.caj.org.uk/files/2011/10/06/S356_CAJs_submission_to_the_Associate_Parliamentary_Group_inquiry_into_UNSCR_1325_response_Sept_2011%5B1%5D.pdf) accessed June 2013].

<sup>21</sup> The new community relations strategy for Northern Ireland 'Together: Building a United Community,' page 17, paragraph 1.27 [available at [http://www.ofmdfmi.gov.uk/together\\_building\\_a\\_united\\_community.pdf](http://www.ofmdfmi.gov.uk/together_building_a_united_community.pdf) accessed June 2013].

<sup>22</sup> DARD Key Inequalities- Action Plan 2011-2016, Corporate Goals, page 2 [available at [http://www.dardni.gov.uk/index/publications/pubs-dard-agenda-for-equality/audit\\_of\\_inequalities\\_action\\_plan\\_october\\_2011.htm](http://www.dardni.gov.uk/index/publications/pubs-dard-agenda-for-equality/audit_of_inequalities_action_plan_october_2011.htm) accessed June 2013].

More still needs to be done to increase women's representation in public and political life. A recent (May 2013) peace summit, organised by the Police Service of Northern Ireland to improve community relations, had a delegation of 30 men and only 3 women.<sup>23</sup> The Northern Ireland Assembly has the lowest proportion of female representation of any of the four parliaments in the UK, currently 19%. In Local Government the proportion of female elected councillors sit at around 22.3%. There are no women judges in the Northern Ireland High Court and very low levels in Magistrate and County Courts. There are still low levels of women in public appointments, sitting at around 33%.<sup>24</sup>

Women also feel their voices cannot be heard when decision making committees in their communities, in particular the deciding Committees on the Social Investment Fund for Northern Ireland, have an under representation of women.<sup>25</sup> The UK report makes reference to their aspirations for female appointments and states that by 2015, 50% of all new appointments to public boards will be women.<sup>26</sup> However, there is no detail in this on how this will be achieved in both the UK as a whole or in Northern Ireland. Application of UNSCR 1325 would help to address some of these issues and the clear reporting structures would be a step forward for the women of Northern Ireland.

**The Committee may wish to urge the UK to take action to ensure UNSCR 1325 is fully implemented in Northern Ireland and incorporate the women of Northern Ireland into their National Action Plan. The Committee may also wish to seek assurances from the UK Government that the women of Northern Ireland's representation in public life will be addressed- possibly through temporary special measures.**

### **3. Women's Socio Economic Rights**

The UK Government have announced a number of reforms to the benefits system under the Welfare Reform Act 2012. Similar legislation is now progressing through the Northern Ireland Assembly.

The UK report to the CEDAW Committee states that:

The Northern Ireland Executive introduced parity measures, as well as key developments in its own jurisdiction, which will make a real contribution to the social and economic well-being of women in Northern Ireland such as:

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<sup>23</sup> See 'Cardiff talks: 'Dialogue and non-violence essential' BBC News Online 19 May 2013 [available at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-22584610> accessed June 2013].

<sup>24</sup> Office of the First and Deputy First Minister Annual Report of Public Appointments 2010-2011, section 2, paragraph 8 [available at <http://www.ofmdfmi.gov.uk/public-appointments-annual-report-2010-2011.pdf> accessed June 2013].

<sup>25</sup> For example see the all-male Belfast North Social Investment Zone Steering Group [available at <http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/index/information-and-services/leisure-home-and-community/getting-involved-in-your-community/the-social-investment-fund/the-social-investment-fund-steering-groups.htm> accessed June 2013].

<sup>26</sup> UK 7<sup>th</sup> Periodic Report to CEDAW (June 2011), paragraph 98.

reforming the pensions system in Northern Ireland, introducing new provisions to simply the child maintenance process and the publication of the Northern Ireland Child Poverty Strategy.<sup>27</sup>

Notwithstanding the above there are however significant concerns about the regressive impact of welfare reform on women. These reforms will also have a more adverse effect in Northern Ireland due to its' post conflict situation.<sup>28</sup> There have also been substantial changes to the economy since the last CEDAW hearing in 2008 and this has had an adverse impact on women. In Northern Ireland this is manifested by the impact of the recession, emergency budgets and the impending welfare reform bill. Women paid 72% of the net cost of the tax and benefit changes in the UK governments June 2010 emergency budget.<sup>29</sup>

The effect on Northern Ireland of the new proposed welfare regime has been analysed by the Institute of Fiscal Studies. There are particular implications for women when looking at households in Northern Ireland in relation to the welfare reform measures to be introduced in between 2013-2015:

Northern Ireland has the second highest loss as a percentage of incomes within the regions and constituent nations of the UK. This is in part to do with the relatively high proportion of households with children, a section of the society which the IFS say will suffer particular losses, the burden of which will be carried by women.<sup>30</sup>

Northern Ireland has an equality duty where public authorities must pay due regard to equality of opportunity on nine grounds including gender.<sup>31</sup> These welfare proposals conflict with this principle as women will be adversely impacted and more so if they have multiple identities such as lone parent, disabled women or carers. The official Equality Commission for Northern Ireland has stated:

The proportion of lone parents in employment in Northern Ireland is well below the average for the United Kingdom, with female lone parents at the highest risk of poverty. Only one in seven lone parents in Northern Ireland is currently working. This is a smaller proportion of lone parents than for any other region within the United Kingdom.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> UK 7<sup>th</sup> Periodic Report to CEDAW (June 2011), paragraph 213 (adapted).

<sup>28</sup> Horgan, Goretti 'Welfare reform: Implications and Options for Northern Ireland' (Oct 2012) [available at [http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/Documents/RaISe/knowledge\\_exchange/KESS-18-10-2012.pdf](http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/Documents/RaISe/knowledge_exchange/KESS-18-10-2012.pdf) accessed June 2013].

<sup>29</sup> 'The Gender Impact of the Cuts,' A TUC Briefing (Nov 2010), page 2 [available at <http://www.tuc.org.uk/extras/genderimpactofthecuts.pdf> accessed June 2013].

<sup>30</sup> CRC Peace Monitoring Report, page 95 [available at [http://www.communityrelations.org.uk/fs/doc/publications/NIPMR\\_2012\\_new\\_1.pdf](http://www.communityrelations.org.uk/fs/doc/publications/NIPMR_2012_new_1.pdf) accessed June 2013]

<sup>31</sup> Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 [available at <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/47/section/75> accessed June 2013].

<sup>32</sup> ECNI response to the DSD consultation on the welfare reform bill (NI) 2011 EQIA, paragraph 3.4 [available at <http://www.equalityni.org/archive/pdf/ECNIRresponseDSDWelfareReformBillEQIA141211.pdf> accessed June 2013].

One commentator has argued benefits overhaul does not take into account those in work poverty especially those women who take on low paid, high risk, part time jobs.<sup>33</sup> In the Women's Ad Hoc Policy Group briefing to the Northern Ireland Department for Social Development on the proposed Welfare Reform Bill it is said that, 'Reforms will result in reductions to women's income and reduce opportunity, capacity to work and to gain economic autonomy'.<sup>34</sup>

Under Universal Credit proposals couples will receive a single payment once a month to just one person in the couple. Couples will not be able to decide to have it paid more frequently, or to split to whom it is paid.<sup>35</sup> It is estimated that in 80% of cases the nominated person will be the man for most claiming families. Much research over the years shows that to reach children most effectively, money should be paid to those taking the main responsibility for their care.<sup>36</sup> For this reason, existing tax credits and money for childcare costs are currently paid to the main carer in the family (usually the woman). When these payments are replaced by universal credit, either the family has to agree that all their universal credit is paid to the main carer or the main carer will receive none of it. Although at the time of writing the Northern Ireland Executive have agreed some flexibilities with payments but this will not be guaranteed until the Bill is passed.<sup>37</sup>

Women account for two thirds of the Northern Ireland public sector workforce. Public sector cuts will therefore likely have a significantly greater impact on women than men. Not only this, currently we have no childcare strategy a significant barrier to work for women and a 'primary barrier to women's equality and participation'.<sup>38</sup>

It is 43 years after the Equal Pay Act (Northern Ireland) 1970 and 37 years after the Sex Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 1976 and we still have a gender pay gap, the 'Women in Northern Ireland' Labour Market, Statistics Bulletin from September 2012 shows:

The median gross weekly wage for full-time females at April 2011 in Northern Ireland was £427.80 while for full-time males the figure was £463.50. The ratio between male and female full-time median hourly earnings excluding overtime has increased to 102% (from 100.5% in 2010), which represents a slight widening of the full-time gender pay gap.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Hinds, Bronagh 'The Northern Ireland Economy: Women on the Edge?' (July 2011), page 121 [available at <http://www.wrda.net/Documents/The%20NI%20Economy%20%20Women%20on%20the%20Edge%20Report.pdf> accessed June 2013].

<sup>34</sup> 'Women and Welfare Reform' - Briefing to DSD Committee, 28 June 2012 [available at <http://www.wrda.net/Documents/Welfare%20Reform%20%20Women%20Briefing28thJune2012.pdf> accessed June 2013].

<sup>35</sup> 'Changes to benefits' Nldirect [available at <http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/changes-to-benefits-welfare-reform> accessed June 2013].

<sup>36</sup> Warburton Brown, Chris 'Should Mum Get the Credit?' [available at <http://www.social-policy.org.uk/lincoln2011/Warburton-Borwn%20P5.pdf> accessed June 2013].

<sup>37</sup> 'Tailoring Welfare Reform for Northern Ireland': McCausland (Oct 2012) [available at <http://www.northernireland.gov.uk/news-dsd-221012-tailoring-welfare-reforms> accessed June 2013].

<sup>38</sup> ECNI CEDAW submission to the pre-session working group meeting, (Oct2012), page 6

<sup>39</sup> 'Women in Northern Ireland', Labour Market Statistics Bulletin (Sept 2012), page 10 [available at [http://www.detini.gov.uk/women\\_in\\_northern\\_ireland\\_september\\_2012\\_final\\_version.pdf](http://www.detini.gov.uk/women_in_northern_ireland_september_2012_final_version.pdf) accessed June 2013]

The welfare reforms are taking place in the absence of a Northern Ireland Bill of Rights as committed to in the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement or a Single Equality Bill, both of which are currently outstanding. Both could have provided extra safeguards to protect women and the most vulnerable in relation to welfare and austerity.

**The Committee may wish to ask the UK to review and mitigate against the gender impacts of the welfare reform and public sector cuts in Northern Ireland, and implement single equality legislation and the Northern Ireland Bill of Rights.**

**Committee on the Administration of Justice (CAJ) Ltd  
June 2013**