



**IRN Conference 2020**  
DATE Thursday, March 12th, 2020  
START 8.30am sharp  
VENUE Croke Park, D03 P6K7

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# A TIME FOR CONSENSUS?

Anchoring industrial  
relations, social progress  
and sustainability in  
uncertain times

**SUBJECT TO UPDATE**



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# Morning

7.30: *Registration & Tea/Coffee*

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8.30: *Conference opens*

## PRIVATE SECTOR PAY

8.35: **THE IRN-CIPD PAY AND WORKING CONDITIONS SURVEY, 2020**

**MARY CONNAUGHTON, DIRECTOR, CIPD IRELAND**

Mary Connaughton will present the findings of the IRN-CIPD joint private sector pay and employment practices survey, 2020, conducted among IRN subscribers and CIPD member firms.

This survey, the latest in an ongoing series, will include pay prospects for 2020, and feature issues such as recruitment & retention, gender & diversity, pensions, performance-management and non-basic pay rewards.

## A TIME FOR CONSENSUS?

9.00: **AFFLICTIONS OF AFFLUENCE: CAN TRIPARTISM STEER IRELAND TO A BETTER SOCIAL CONTRACT?**

**OPENING PRESENTATION BY DANNY McCOY, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, Ibec**

### **Panel discussion involving:**

- Patricia King, General Secretary, ICTU
- Prof Sean O'Riain, Maynooth University
- Prof Bill Roche, UCD
- Mary Connaughton, Director, CIPD

**THEME of SESSION:** Managing the benefits of economic growth has proved to be as difficult for the Irish political, social and economic system as coping with the challenge posed by the quite different crises of the 1980s and the late-2000s. At this time of continued economic prosperity, the dangers posed by Brexit and wider political and economic factors beg the question: is there a viable collective response that government, employers and trade unions can coalesce around in order to coordinate their approach to central policy issues like incomes, taxation and social provision?

Put simply, is it time for a 'trilateral' consensus, previously referred to as social partnership, that could help drive the policies we need in future-critical areas like education, infrastructure, investment and climate change?

## MANAGING CHANGE

10.05: **TRANSFORMING HEALTH SERVICES IN IRELAND IN AN INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS CONTEXT**

**PAUL REID, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, HEALTH SERVICE EXECUTIVE**

Paul Reid took up his post as CEO of the HSE in May 2019, following on from challenging, well-publicised roles across the private, public and voluntary sectors. In his current role as CEO, Paul is determined to succeed in what is undoubtedly the most difficult job in the country.

Drawing on his leadership and management experiences, Paul will outline some of the contrasting challenges in managing change in different sectors. He will set out his vision for the future of the health services, outlining some of the opportunities and challenges in an industrial relations context.

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10.35: **COFFEE/NETWORKING**

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## CASE STUDY

11.00: **THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF IRELAND: 'TRANSITION 2020' - HOW A MAJOR REFURBISHMENT SPURRED PROGRESSIVE INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS CHANGE**

**ANN TRAVERS, HEAD OF HR, NATIONAL GALLERY OF IRELAND**

The 2017 re-opening of the historic Dargan and Milltown wings of the National Gallery of Ireland was a key driver in establishing a "progressive industrial relations structure" at the Gallery. A new comprehensive agreement between management and SIPTU offered 'best in class' IR protocols; a first-instance consultation forum; the codification of rights for staff representatives; new career paths; staff development structures and a definition of management prerogatives. Most of all, the agreement signaled a major step change in the culture of the organisation.

## FISCAL CONTEXT

11.30: **PASCHAL DONOHOE, MINISTER FOR FINANCE AND PUBLIC EXPENDITURE AND REFORM**

## SIPTU 2020

12.00: **SIPTU 2020: POLICIES, PRIORITIES AND STRATEGY IN A NEW DECADE**

**JOE CUNNINGHAM, GENERAL SECRETARY, SIPTU**

Joe Cunningham is taking up the position of General Secretary of Ireland's largest union at a critical moment in the country's

history, Joe will provide a critical insight into SIPTU's approach to the challenges posed by the changing world of work and the union's priorities as we enter a new decade.

## DISPUTE RESOLUTION

12.30: **'ENSURING EFFECTIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION & PROTECTING EMPLOYMENT AND EQUALITY RIGHTS'**

**LIAM KELLY, DIRECTOR GENERAL,  
WORKPLACE RELATIONS COMMISSION**

Workplace Relations Commission Director General, Liam Kelly, will expand on the Commission's medium-term strategy, outlining how it delivers the highest quality early dispute resolution, mediation and adjudication services. Ensuring effective inspection and enforcement activity across the State is critical in ensuring enhanced employment rights protection for workers, while assisting employers in meeting their responsibilities.

1.00: **LUNCH**

## Afternoon

### DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

2.15: **DIVERSITY & INCLUSION: ITS IMPACT ON ORGANISATION CULTURE AND THE WORKPLACE**

**PANEL DISCUSSION:** Sandra Healy, Diversity Officer for Dublin City University; Mary Brassil, Partner, McCann FitzGerald; Jarlath Dooley, HR & Integration Director, Version 1 Software Limited

While Irish legislation sets minimum legal standards in regard to age, disability, race, religion, gender and sexual orientation, a comprehensive Diversity and Inclusion strategy must go beyond mere compliance. Diversity and inclusion are integral to how organisations attract, retain, develop and engage employees. Building diverse and inclusive workplaces enables organisations to foster creativity and innovation and improve employee engagement and productivity. Ensuring organisations are inclusive and make the most of diversity is not only the 'right thing to do' but a real business imperative.

### EMPLOYMENT LAW SESSION

3.05: **EMPLOYMENT LAW UPDATE FOR HR AND IR PROFESSIONALS; KEY ISSUES FOR 2020**

**TERENCE McCRANN, PARTNER, McCANN FITZGERALD**

4.00: *Conference close*

**CONFERENCE CHAIR INGRID MILEY** is Industry and Employment Correspondent for RTE. She is responsible for TV and radio coverage of news on various aspects of employment and industrial relations in Ireland.

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# about the speakers

**MARY BRASSIL**, Partner, Employment, Pensions & Incentives Group, McCann FitzGerald, advises domestic and international clients on all aspects of employment, equality and industrial relations law. She is expert in the employment law issues that arise from mergers and acquisitions, Transfer of Undertakings regulations, corporate restructurings, outsourcings and redundancy situations. Her practice includes representing employers in contentious employment law disputes. Mary writes and lectures widely on a range of topical employment and equality law issues including 'the Gender Pay Gap', and 'Diversity in the Boardroom'.

**MARY CONNAUGHTON** is Director of CIPD Ireland. In this role, Mary leads the development of the HR profession and people management in Ireland, and is passionate about developing people and workplaces to be at their best. Mary has a wealth of HR experience, having most recently headed up HR Development at Ibec, engaging with leading companies on strategic HR and organisational development initiatives along with legislative and policy developments. Mary has also held a Director position at Graphite HRM, as well as organisation development roles with Bank of Ireland Life and Emerge Consulting.

**JOE CUNNINGHAM**, General Secretary designate, SIPTU, first became involved with the union movement as an activist while employed by Lydon House, Galway. He was elected to the Western Area Branch Committee of the FWUI, which led to his appointment as a full-time official. When the FWUI and the ITGWU merged in 1990, Joe was appointed as a SIPTU official in the Midlands, representing and organising public, private and community workers. Subsequently appointed as a Regional Secretary, Joe was involved in major private sector processes, including rationalisations in Atlantic Mills and Dairygold. After SIPTU was restructured in 2010, Joe was appointed Head of the Strategic Organising Department.

**PASCHAL DONOHOE TD**, Minister for Finance and the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform. Paschal Donohoe was appointed to these roles in June 2017, previously serving as the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform (May 2016–June 2017), and Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport (July 2014–May 2016). He also held the position of Minister for European Affairs at the Dept of An Taoiseach and the Dept of Foreign Affairs from July 2013–July 2014. Paschal was first elected as a TD in February 2011 for the Dublin Central constituency.

**SANDRA HEALY**, Head of Diversity & Inclusion, Dublin City University. Previously, Sandra held a number of leadership positions in the telecoms industry across both the UK and Ireland; the most recent being Head of Customer Delivery for Vodafone (I). Sandra is also Director of the DCU Centre of Excellence for Diversity and Inclusion and has championed the work of the Ibec Diversity Forum, CWIT and 30% Club Ireland. In 2014 Sandra was the Irish Charter representative at the EU Commission High-Level Diversity Conference in Vienna, where she provided valuable technical input on measuring diversity.

**LIAM KELLY**, Director General, Workplace Relations Commission was formally appointed to his current position in May 2019. He had filled the post on an acting basis since November 1, 2018. Earlier, Liam was Chief Operations Officer of the WRC following its establishment in October 2015. Liam was directly responsible for the drafting of significant industrial relations legislation in connection with collective bargaining rights, minimum wage, and sectoral wage-setting frameworks. He has also worked in HR for an Irish State agency and was a Conciliation Officer and Advisory Officer in the Labour Relations Commission. Liam has Masters degrees in both in HRM and IR, a Higher Diploma in Public Administration and is a Certified Workplace Relations Adjudicator.

**PATRICIA KING**, General Secretary, ICTU and became the first woman to serve in this position when she took up the post in 2015. She is a former vice-President of SIPTU and served as one of two vice-Presidents of Congress. A full time official with SIPTU for over 25 years, she was the first woman to serve as a national officer of the union when she was appointed vice-President, in May 2010. Patricia has represented workers in in both the public and private sectors and was a lead negotiator in both the Croke Park and Haddington Road agreements. Patricia currently serves on the boards of Dublin Airport Authority (daa), the Apprenticeship Council, Court Services Board and the Low Pay Commission.

**DANNY McCOY**, Chief Executive Officer, Ibec. Danny became CEO of Ibec in 2009. He is President of the Statistical and Social Inquiry Society of Ireland, Honorary Fellow of the Academy of Engineers, member of the Export Trade Council and the OECD-BIAC working group on Corporate Taxation. Danny's extensive academic career includes positions at DCU, University College London, University of Oxford and TCD.

**TERENCE McCRANN**, Head of Dispute Resolution and Litigation Group, McCann FitzGerald, advises employers on all aspects of employment, equality and industrial relations law and has extensive experience dealing with employment cases before the Workplace Relations Commission (WRC), Labour Court and the courts, including employment injunctions and litigation. Terence also gives strategic advice to Boards, advises on whistleblowing-related issues and all aspects of the Digital Workplace. Terence is a leading commentator on employment law issues and gives the keynote legal overview at the annual IRN conference.

**SEÁN Ó RIAIN**, Professor of Sociology, NUI Maynooth. Sean's research interests are in the sociology of work and employment, comparative political economy, inequality and social change and the global information economy. Seán is the author of several books, including: 'The Rise and Fall of Ireland's Celtic Tiger: Liberalism, Boom and Bust'. He was also Principal Investigator for 'New Deals in the New Economy', a 5-year study of workplace bargains in Europe. Sean was a member of the National Economic and Social Council from 2011 to 2017.

**PAUL REID**, Chief Executive Officer, Health Service Executive. Paul was appointed as CEO HSE in May 2019. From 2014 to 2019 he was Chief Executive of Fingal County Council, one of the largest local authorities in the State. Between 2011 and 2014, Paul worked as the Chief Operations Officer in the Department of Public Expenditure & Reform where he was responsible for leading a reform programme, as well as negotiating the Haddington Road Agreement. From 2010 to 2011, Paul worked as Head of Corporate Affairs with Trócaire. His previous career was as the Executive Director of Networks & Operations with Eircom.

**PROFESSOR BILL ROCHE**, Full Professor of Industrial Relations & Human Resources at the College of Business, University College Dublin. A leading academic and media commentator, he has written and edited 13 books and published in excess of 100 articles in peer-reviewed journals. His recent books include: Austerity and Recovery in Ireland; Europe's Poster Child and the Great Recession, published by Oxford University Press and Managing Workplace Conflict: Alternative Dispute Resolution in Ireland, published by the Institute of Public Administration. He has led and contributed to major strategic reviews by such bodies as the Workplace Relations Commission, the Labour Relations Commission, the NES, the National Centre for Partnership and Performance and IBEC.

**ANN TRAVERS**, Head of HR at National Gallery of Ireland. Ann has worked in HR roles across the public and private sectors, particularly in Broadcasting and Financial Services. Ann has a MBS in Human Resource Strategies from Dublin City University and a Postgraduate Diploma in Conflict and Dispute Resolution Studies from Trinity College Dublin. Ann is an accredited mediator with the Mediators Institute of Ireland and is a Chartered Member of the CIPD.